Berkshire Museum Press Release
For Immediate Release: January 26, 2016
Media contact: Lesley Ann Beck, Director of Communications
413.443.7171 ext. 320; lbeck@berkshiremuseum.org

Berkshire Museum announces fourth annual Berkshire Awards
Award presentation and reception scheduled for Friday, March 4, 2016

[PITTSFIELD, MA] — The Berkshire Museum will present the fourth annual Berkshire Awards to Jane Burke; Sandra Burton and Don Quinn Kelley; and Lola Jaffe, honorees who have made significant contributions to creating, keeping, and promoting artistic, historical, and natural heritage in the Berkshires. Jane Burke is the founder and executive director of the Flying Cloud Institute; Sandra Burton and Don Quinn Kelley are community developers and founding steering committee members of the Lift Ev’ry Voice Festival; and Lola Jaffe is the founder of the Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center. They will be honored at an awards ceremony on Friday, March 4, 2016, at 5:30 p.m., at the Museum.

“The people of the Berkshire Museum are proud to recognize the accomplishments of these individuals, each of whom have made important contributions to the preservation of the unique cultural and natural heritage of the Berkshires,” says Bill Hines, president of the Berkshire Museum Board of Trustees. “By honoring those who have helped shape the quality of life we enjoy today, the Berkshire Awards is designed to inspire the next generation to take their place in shaping our future.”

The Berkshire Awards event includes video presentations on all three honorees, followed by cocktails and hors d’oeuvres.

Sponsorships and tickets for the Berkshire Award are now available. For more information, visit www.berkshiremuseum.org/support/berkshire-awards or call Bill Blaauw at 413.443.7171 ext. 313 or by email at wblaauw@berkshiremuseum.org.
Jane Burke

Jane Burke is the executive director of the Flying Cloud Institute, which she founded in 1980 with Lawrence Burke and David Schwarz. Located on a 200-acre colonial farmstead in New Marlborough, Massachusetts, Flying Cloud Institute (FCI) began as a center for community education specializing in environmental education, energy and land conservation, and the arts. In 1983 FCI shifted its focus to science and arts education for children, establishing a summer program with environmental themes, led by area specialists. FCI initiated after-school programs on-site and in area schools in 1988, leading to an ongoing partnership with the Southern Berkshire Regional School District. By 2000 FCI’s work in this district had expanded to reach 30 teachers and 600 students. Since its inception, FCI has become a major player in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) education with partnerships in four Berkshire County school districts. Flying Cloud Institute now reaches more than 3,500 students each year through in-school programs, summer programs, after school and summer programs for girls, and the Berkshire Environmental Educators Network (BEEN) Conference and the Youth Environmental Summit.

Sandra Burton and Don Quinn Kelley, PhD

Sandra L. Burton and Don Quinn Kelley are partners in ThinkLarge.US, an organization that both implements and supports projects of social relevance in the Berkshires and across the United States. They are both current and among the founding members of the Steering Committee of Lift Ev’ry Voice. Lift Ev’ry Voice offers a biannual summer festival and other events that commemorate the freedom of all Americans by celebrating African Americans and their rich traditions of community, arts, culture, history, and heritage. The Festival takes place from mid-June to early September, and encompasses an array of events, talks, performances, community celebrations, and family events at many venues across the Berkshires.

Sandra L. Burton, a dancer, choreographer, and educator, is the Lipp Family Director of Dance and senior lecturer in dance at Williams College. Her choreography for theater includes productions at the Williamstown Theater Festival, PlayMakers
Repertory Theater, and the Goodman Theater. She choreographed productions of Craig Harris’ God’s Trombones in the United States and Europe. Burton’s choreography has been performed at venues including Dance Theater Workshop, Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival’s Inside Out, Judson Memorial Church, and Mass MoCA. Burton serves on the board of the New England Foundation for the Arts, is a Trustee Emeritus of MASS MoCA, and retired from the Jacob’s Pillow board in 2007. She holds an M.F.A. from Bennington College and an honorary doctorate in fine arts from Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts.

Historian and filmmaker Don Quinn Kelley is Professor Emeritus, Interdisciplinary Studies at City University of New York where he was a founding faculty member of Medgar Evers College. In CUNY, he chaired a Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, coordinated Historical Studies, and directed a Digital Media Center. Kelley’s documentary films have been screened across the United States and around the world, including venues at the United Nations, the Organization of African States, HBO and the Black Filmmakers Foundation, and others. He is a trustee of the Samuel Harrison Society. Kelley holds a doctor of philosophy degree from Columbia University in the City of New York.

Lola Jaffe

Lola Jaffe founded the Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center in 2002 and served as board chair until 2013. She was the guiding force behind the reclamation and restoration of the former movie theater, now a 690-seat, year-round performing arts venue that serves an audience of more than 40,000 people every year. The Mahaiwe offers live performances, concerts, film events, and HD simulcasts and telecasts from the Metropolitan Opera in New York and National Theatre in London.

In 1997, Jaffe established the Anne Levinson Fund for Experiencing the Arts at the Berkshire Taconic Foundation. Named for her late mother, the Anne Levinson Fund is used to introduce Berkshire County high school students to the arts in New York City. Twice a year, Jaffe personally accompanies a large group of students on trips to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and a Broadway show.
The Boston Symphony Orchestra and Jacob’s Pillow are among the many arts organizations that have benefitted from Jaffe’s participation at the board level. Lola Jaffe studied acting at Carnegie-Mellon University and, in recognition of her contributions to the cultural community in Berkshire County, was awarded an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts by the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts.

About the Berkshire Museum

Located in downtown Pittsfield, Massachusetts, at 39 South St., the Berkshire Museum, a Smithsonian Affiliate, is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is $13 adult, $6 child; Museum members and children age 3 and under enjoy free admission. For more information, visit www.berkshiremuseum.org or call 413.443.7171.

In association with the Smithsonian since 2013, Berkshire Museum is part of a select group of museums, cultural, educational, and arts organizations that share the Smithsonian's resources with the nation.

Established by Zenas Crane in 1903, Berkshire Museum integrates art, history, and natural science in a wide range of programs and exhibitions that inspire educational connections between the disciplines. In the galleries, ArtZoo will be on view January 23 through May 1. Little Cinema is open year-round. Spark!Lab, Feigenbaum Hall of Innovation, Worlds in Miniature, Aquarium, and other exhibits are ongoing.

# # #