Berkshire Museum Presents “Envisioning Emancipation: A Photographic History of Slavery and Emancipation”

Author and historian Barbara Krauthamer will discuss her award-winning book

[Pittsfield, Mass.] – Author Barbara Krauthamer will present “Envisioning Emancipation: A Photographic History of Slavery and Emancipation” on Saturday, July 16, at 10:30 a.m. at the Berkshire Museum. The illustrated talk is based on her book, “Envisioning Emancipation: Black Americans and the End of Slavery,” and will highlight nineteenth-century photographs of enslaved and free African Americans. This presentation is included with regular Museum admission.

“Envisioning Emancipation: Black Americans and the End of Slavery,” co-authored by Krauthamer and photographic historian Deborah Willis, won the NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work – Non-Fiction in 2014. Krauthamer and Willis amassed 150 photographs – some never before published — from the antebellum days of the 1850s through the New Deal era of the 1930s, to illustrate what freedom looked like for black Americans in the Civil War era. From photos of the enslaved on plantations and African-American soldiers and camp workers in the Union Army to Juneteenth celebrations, slave reunions, and portraits of black families and workers in the American South, the images challenge perceptions of slavery – showing not only what the subjects emphasized about themselves but also the ways Americans of all colors and genders opposed slavery and marked its end.

Author Barbara Krauthamer is a professor of history and associate dean of the Graduate School at UMass Amherst. She received her PhD from Princeton
University. She has written extensively about the history of slavery and emancipation in the United States and the lives of women in slavery, including the book “Black Slaves, Indian Masters: Slavery, Emancipation, and Citizenship in the Native American South.”

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. Finding Raven: Art and Stories of the Northwest Coast is on view through October 30. Tiny Titans: Dinosaur Eggs and Babies is on view through August 28. Living on Earth: The Work of Robert Hite, a solo show of sculpture and photography co-presented by the Berkshire Museum and Hancock Shaker Village, is on view at both venues through October 30. Little Cinema is open year-round. Spark!Lab, Feigenbaum Hall of Innovation, Worlds in Miniature, Aquarium, and other exhibits are ongoing.

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