Berkshire Museum presents BerkshireNow: Melissa Matsuki Lillie, September 2 through November 20, 2016

[Pittsfield, Mass.] - The BerkshireNow gallery space at the Berkshire Museum will feature the work of artist Melissa Matsuki Lillie from Friday, September 2, through Sunday, November 20, 2016. The exhibition will open on Friday, September 2, from 5 to 8 p.m., in conjunction with Pittsfield’s First Fridays Artswalk, when the Museum’s BerkshireNow gallery is open to the public at no cost.

Melissa Matsuki Lillie is an artist whose work references natural forms using a personal visual language of vibrant colors and complex layers to reflect on the macroscopic and microscopic world. Her paintings and collages evoke a sense of space that has been flattened and layered, revealing strands and structures of line and color interacting fluidly with hidden landscapes. In addition to painting she frequently works sculpturally, creating forms that celebrate both line and color.

“I like to be observant of the small details of the interaction of shape and line in nature,” says Lillie, something she learned at an early age by being a naturalist. She has always appreciated flora and fauna, part of being influenced by her father, who was a keeper at the National Zoo for 30 years as well as a dedicated lover of nature who taught her how to identify birds, fish, plants, trees, rocks, and minerals.

“Now as an artist, I take this skill of observation and apply it to the world around me,” Lillie says. “I love to apply my own language of color to the patterns in what
I see. I like the idea that all things in nature are made from organic structures based in mathematics. Things that seem so organic and flowing still have a basis in something very straightforward and logical. There is an organized chaos about organic forms that is very appealing to me that I try to incorporate into my work.”

Born in Maryland, Lillie attended the Maryland Institute College of Art where she earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. She currently lives in Richmond, Massachusetts.

*BerkshireNow* features four exhibits each year ranging from solo artists to group shows. Outfitting the nine-hundred-square-foot gallery space for the new exhibition series was made possible in part by a grant from the Pittsfield Cultural Council.

**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. *Tiny Titans: Dinosaur Eggs and Babies* will be on view through August 28, 2016. *Finding Raven: Art and Stories from the Northwest Coast* will be on view through October 30, 2016. *Living on Earth: The Work of Robert Hite* is on view through October 30, 2016. Little Cinema is open year-round. Feigenbaum Hall of Innovation, Worlds in Miniature, Aquarium, and other exhibits are ongoing.

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