Berkshire Museum Press Release
For Immediate Release: August 21, 2017
Media contact: Lesley Ann Beck, Senior Communications Manager
413.443.7171 ext. 320; lbeck@berkshiremuseum.org
Images available upon request.

Morgan Bulkeley: Nature Culture Clash opens
September 29, 2017, at the Berkshire Museum
Solo exhibition of paintings and sculpture represents a 50-year career retrospective

[Pittsfield, Mass.] – Morgan Bulkeley: Nature Culture Clash, a solo exhibition of paintings and sculptures by Berkshire-based artist Morgan Bulkeley, will be on view at the Berkshire Museum from September 29, 2017, through February 4, 2018. Humorous and ominous at the same time, Bulkeley’s vivid images offer compelling scenarios where humans are pitted against nature, with nature holding the advantage. An opening reception will be held Saturday, October 7, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Morgan Bulkeley: Nature Culture Clash is a significant career retrospective covering five decades of work, from drawings and watercolors created in 1967 and 1968 to a recent series of 12” x 9” gouache on paper pieces depicting a vivid array of birds. The exhibition also encompasses carved and painted wood masks and panels, tiny wooden “whimseys,” large oil paintings, sculpture, and a site-specific installation. A new video titled Egg Wars, featuring stop-action animation with Bulkeley’s hand-carved characters, will be included in the exhibition. Geoffrey Young, of the Geoffrey Young Gallery in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, is the guest curator.
“I try to make paintings that are beautiful, frightening, and funny all at once, similar to the Theater of the Absurd, which assumes things are so bad that you can only laugh,” says Bulkeley. “I see in nature and in the best of humanity an incredible beauty; but I also see in our technology and aggression a will and ability to destroy that beauty, either actively or inadvertently. The refuse of our consumerism, wafting down our streets, caught in the twigs of trees in our deepest forests or swirling in giant gyres in the ocean, is a steady reminder of our growing and smothering effect on our only habitable planet. I paint to try to make people think of the fragility in which we exist.”

Morgan Bulkeley is a storyteller whose colorful, complex canvases depict busy landscapes inhabited by flocks of birds, hordes of insects, groups of posturing humans, often punctuated by pop culture icons. Bulkeley has had solo exhibitions at the Berkshire Museum in 1973 and in 2012; the 50-year retrospective opening this fall will offer viewers a complete look at his distinguished and prolific career. A catalog to accompany the retrospective will be published in September.

Bulkeley’s art is strongly influenced by his Berkshire upbringing; his family has deep roots in the area going back several generations. Bulkeley’s wry humor, bold palette, and unfettered imagination are expressed in his depictions of animated, cartoon-like humans who interact with one another and with an array of detailed birds and wildlife, all grounded in an awareness of the landscape and the environment. Bulkeley’s sculptures are complex, cleverly carved and articulated.

About the artist

Morgan Bulkeley was born in the Berkshires of Massachusetts in 1944. He was raised on a small farm in the town of Mount Washington, where his parents, both naturalists, raised many wild, orphaned animals. He graduated from Yale University in 1966 with a B.A. in English Literature. After a stint in the Coast Guard, he spent a year in Newark, New Jersey, drawing and working with VISTA
programs. Subsequently he spent 14 years in Cambridge, Massachusetts, painting and sculpting. In 1985 he returned to his childhood home where he lives with his environmentalist wife Eleanor Tillinghast.

Bulkeley has had solo shows at the Danforth Museum in Framingham, Mass., the Welles Gallery in Lenox, Mass., the Bachelier-Cardonsky Gallery in Kent, Conn., the Carone Gallery in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., and the DeCordova Museum in Lincoln, Mass., among others. Bulkeley showed with the Stux Gallery in Boston, Mass., from 1983 to 1987; since then he has had eleven solo shows with the Howard Yezerski Gallery in Boston, Mass.

His work also has been included in group shows at the Danforth Museum, the Geoffrey Young Gallery in Great Barrington, Mass., the Janet Kumatowski Gallery in Brooklyn, N.Y., the St. Botolph Club in Boston, Mass., the Jeff Bailey Gallery in New York, N.Y., the Hudson River Museum in Yonkers, N.Y., the DeCordova Museum, the New Bedford Art Museum in New Bedford, Mass., the Art Complex Museum in Duxbury, Mass., and many others.

**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.

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.

The Berkshire Museum integrates science, history, and the arts in dynamic educational and engaging programs and exhibitions for visitors of all ages. **Curiosity Incubator** is now on view. **GUITAR: The Instrument That Rocked the World** is on view through September 4. Little Cinema is open year-round. Lab102,
Feigenbaum Hall of Innovation, Worlds in Miniature, Aquarium, and other exhibits are ongoing.

# # #