Berkshire Museum presents

BerkshireNow: Michael Boroniec,
September 4 through November 22, 2015

[Pittsfield, Mass.] – The BerkshireNow gallery space at the Berkshire Museum will feature a solo exhibition of complex ceramics by Michael Boroniec, September 4 through November 22, 2015. The BerkshireNow gallery is open during regular Museum hours. In addition, Berkshire Museum is part of Pittsfield’s monthly First Fridays Artswalk events, when admission to the BerkshireNow gallery will be free to the public, from 5 to 8 p.m., on September 4, October 2, and November 6. An opening reception for BerkshireNow: Michael Boroniec will be held on Friday, September 4, at 5 p.m., part of September’s First Fridays Artswalk.

Boroniec is known for creating distinct bodies of work and BerkshireNow: Michael Boroniec includes a number of the sculptor’s signature spiral vases as well as work from his series built on casts of human skulls.

By slicing the familiar vase form into a visually exciting coil, unwinding upwards in space, Boroniec’s spirals create a sense of energy not often seen in ceramic sculpture. “What began with teapots and a single spiral, has evolved into a series of vases that vary in form, degree of expansion, and number of coils,” says Boroniec. “Each vessel is wheel thrown then deconstructed. This process reveals aspects of the vase that most rarely encounter. Within the walls, maker’s marks become evident and contribute to the texture. The resultant ribbon effect, reminiscent of a wheel trimming, lends fragility, elegance, and motion to a medium generally perceived as hard and heavy. This emphasizes a resistance of
gravity, allowing negative space to unravel and become part of the form. The result is a body of sculptural objects, resembling and born of functional vessels.

The exhibition also includes a number of skulls. The human skull has been woven into art history for centuries; artists from the Flemish vanity painters of the 17th century to Andy Warhol and Jim Dine have interpreted the skull. “One cannot deny the depths of death and the soul while confronted with a skull,” says Boroniec. This series of skulls, in one vein, portrays pop icons, as the skull itself undeniably is a kitsch pop reference. The other vein exhibits the skull as a decorative object.

Both bodies of work illustrate Boroniec’s extremely high level of technical expertise in throwing and glazing and reflect his focus on ceramic as a dialog between the historical and contemporary implications of clay as a fine art material.

Though Boroniec’s primary material is clay, he has also found success in painting and print making. Boroniec received a BFA from Rhode Island School of Design in 2006 with a concentration in ceramic material.

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. Immortal Present: Art and East Asia is on view through September 7, 2015. 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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