Melville in Love is a full-length documentary on Herman Melville, the writing of Moby-Dick, and Melville’s secret love affair with Sarah Morewood, based on the recent book by noted biographer Michael Shelden. Filmed here in the Berkshires at Arrowhead and at other area landmarks, the movie was produced and directed by local filmmaker Seth Newton of Newton’s Law Productions.

Melville in Love (both the book and the film) tells the story of Herman Melville and the inspiration that led to the writing of Moby-Dick, his brilliant masterwork. Moby-Dick was not a success when it was published in 1851, ending Melville’s aspirations to literary fame. Because he kept few records, scholars know relatively little about the process that led him to create the obsessive Captain Ahab and the white whale.

Using fresh archival research, Michael Shelden, in his book Melville in Love, is able to reveal new information on this time in Melville’s life. He tells the compelling story of Herman Melville’s obsessive and passionate affair with a married woman named Sarah Morewood, an unconventional person with “libertine” impulses. In his research, Shelden found documents that suggest Melville and Morewood shared a resistance to the strict rules of social behavior of their time, and that sense of freedom inspired Melville in his
writing. The excitement of their romance as well as time spent with literary figures Oliver Wendell Holmes and Nathaniel Hawthorne led Melville to the writing of Moby-Dick.

Filmed in Pittsfield and the Berkshires, at Melville’s home, nearby houses and farms that Melville visited, and even the local cemetery, the documentary includes interviews as well as dramatized scenes. The film includes an original score by Michael B. White; the composer will be in attendance at the May 24 screening.

Michael Shelden is the author of six biographies, including the Pulitzer Prize Finalist Orwell: The Authorized Biography, which was also a New York Times Notable Book and has been translated into five languages. His Mark Twain: Man in White was a New York Times bestseller, and his Young Titan: The Making of Winston Churchill earned the Eugene and Marilyn Glick Fund’s 2014 National Author Award.

About the Berkshire Museum
Located in downtown Pittsfield, Massachusetts, at 39 South St., the Berkshire Museum 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.

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. Art of the Hills opens June 2 and will be on view through September 3, 2018. Curiosity Incubator and Objects and their Stories are on view. Little Cinema is open year-round. Lab 102, Feigenbaum Hall of Innovation, Worlds in Miniature, Aquarium, and other exhibits are ongoing.

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