Josh Simpson: Galactic Landscapes
July 14, 2018, to January 6, 2019
Exquisite glass representing planets and deep space phenomena

[Pittsfield, Mass.] – This summer the Berkshire Museum will feature Josh Simpson: Galactic Landscapes, a solo show of innovative works by renowned glass artist Josh Simpson, from July 14, 2018, through January 6, 2019. Exemplifying the intersection of art and science, Simpson’s continued experimentation with technique and materials results in extraordinary, visually compelling fine art glass. This new exhibition focuses on works that embody the artist’s fascination with astrophysics, deep space, and the cosmos. Galactic Landscapes is generously sponsored by Lee Bank and October Mountain Financial Advisors.

Galactic Landscapes opens Saturday, July 14. An Opening Reception with the artist will be held that evening from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Reception tickets are $10 general, $5 for Museum members. Please RSVP to 413.443.7171 ext. 314 or visit Berkshiremuseum.org.

Josh Simpson: Galactic Landscapes will feature Simpson’s widely acclaimed imaginative Planets – solid glass spheres that suggest distant worlds and landscapes – along with large-diameter discs full of swirling textures and colors that evoke nebulae, colliding stars, and other astronomical events. A centerpiece of the gallery will be an original Orrery, a moving, mechanical model of the solar system, made in collaboration
with artist Erik Van Cort, that incorporates Simpson’s glass spheres as the sun, the planets, and their moons. This exhibit will also feature Simpson’s inventive Tektites and Portals, sculptural objects inspired by meteorites and geodes.

“It is a thrill to present this exciting exhibition of exquisite glass objects created by Josh Simpson. While his work is widely celebrated, he is very much a New Englander, based in nearby Shelburne Falls,” says Craig Langlois, the Berkshire Museum’s chief experience officer. “Because glassblowing is a convergence of art and science, especially when it takes the form of an exploration of space and astronomy, this work fits our Museum’s mission perfectly.”

Josh Simpson has been a glass artist since 1971, maintaining a studio in Shelburne Falls in western Massachusetts since 1976. There he uses ancient glass-blowing tools and techniques along with his own inventions and high-tech engineering to create his glass. Drawn equally to both science and art, Simpson is enamored of physics, high temperature chemistry, powered flight, the night sky, nature, all things mechanical, and the workings of the universe, as well as by color, form, contrast, iridescence, tessellating patterns, and complexity. His work also reveals a fascination with contradiction, paradox, magic, and the alchemy of glass. Living on a hilltop in Shelburne Falls enables Simpson to frequently witness natural phenomena such as a thunderstorm moving up his valley, the star-filled night sky, and sometimes the Aurora Borealis over the horizon, all of which inform his work in subtle, unexpected ways.

Simpson’s glass has been shown in many museums and galleries across the U.S. and internationally. Examples of major works are included in the collections at the Corning Museum of Glass, the White House Collection of American Crafts at the Clinton Library, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, the Renwick Gallery in Washington, D.C., the Yale University Art Gallery, the Mint Museum of Craft and Design in Charlotte, NC, the Fuller Craft Museum in Brockton, MA, as well as many other museums in the U.S. and around the world. He often gives presentations on the art and science of glassblowing, including a talk at TEDx Beacon Street. Simpson will spend part of 2018 as artist-in-
residence at the Corning Museum of Glass, researching the use and history of silver in glassmaking.

Manipulating sand and metallic oxides under intense heat is a process that continues to engage Simpson even after nearly fifty years. He describes glass as a material “that flows like honey” when molten. When it’s hot, he says, “glass is alive. It moves gracefully and inexorably in response to gravity and centrifugal force. It possesses an inner light and transcendent radiant heat that make it simultaneously one of the most rewarding and one of the most frustrating materials for an artist to work with. ... Most of my work reflects a compromise between the molten materials and me.” For more information on artist Josh Simpson, visit www.megaplanet.com.

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 is on view now through September 3, 2018. Curiosity Incubator is 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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