Amid Cultural Closures, Berkshire Museum Goes Digital
Videos, podcasts, and downloadable worksheets allow community to access the Museum anytime, anywhere.

[PITTSFIELD, MA] – Berkshire Museum’s doors are temporarily closed, but that hasn’t prevented the community museum located in downtown Pittsfield from sharing thought-provoking, interdisciplinary experiences with area students, families, and lifelong learners. Just four days after announcing a temporary closure on March 13, Berkshire Museum began publishing a new series of digital learning experiences called Berkshire Museum@Home. The free, online resource has grown to include video, audio, text, and printable activity sheets. All of the materials are available to the public at berkshiremuseum.org/athome.

“This pandemic prevents us from welcoming visitors through our doors,” said Berkshire Museum Executive Director Jeff Rodgers, “but we are as committed as ever to providing engaging, thought-provoking, educational experiences for our community. We’re ‘open’ online for students, educators, lifelong and early learners, and every one of our neighbors. Our team is working remotely to share new ideas in new ways so that we all may continue learning, creating, and exploring the world together while we are physically apart.”

As a complement to Berkshire Museum@Home, fans of Berkshire Museum’s Little Cinema will be able to enjoy home screenings of the documentary film Botero via virtual ticket starting this week. This film is a pilot for the Little Cinema’s newest series: The Littlest Cinema, which will bring the best in independent, international, and documentary films on demand to patrons’ own devices. Each $12 virtual Botero ticket provides a 72-hour rental of the film and helps to support Berkshire Museum and the
Berkshire Museum@Home currently features five distinct series:

**What’s in the Basement? podcast**

There are more than 40,000 objects in Berkshire Museum’s collection, each with countless stories to tell. Chief Experience Officer Craig Langlois invites listeners to take a trip into collection storage to uncover these narratives one object – and five minutes – at a time in the new **What’s in the Basement? podcast**. Different guests join Langlois in each episode to share their research and passion for the topics as they shine a light on the Museum’s fine art, historical artifacts, and scientific specimens from mummies to meteors and everything in between. Three new episodes are released each week on Anchor, Apple Podcasts, Breaker, Google Podcasts, Overcast, Pocket Casts, Radio Public, Spotify, and berkshiremuseum.org/athome/podcast.

**WeeMuse Digital Discovery**

Berkshire Museum has long presented a robust schedule of programs for early learners as part of their popular WeeMuse series. During the closure, Early Education Specialist Elizabeth Anglin continues to engage children ages 0-5 and their families through the Museum’s new **WeeMuse Digital Discovery video series**. In each segment, children are invited to use their senses and their imaginations to explore a work of art or learn a new concept from the worlds of science and history. The videos average 3 to 5 minutes long and are available at berkshiremuseum.org/athome/on-demand, youtube.com/berkshiremuseum, and on the Museum’s Facebook page.

**Daily Doodle**

Anglin, joined by the Museum’s Experience Manager Peter Liffers, invites children and adults to discover new words and ideas through art by drawing and talking about the
Word of the Day every weekday in the **Daily Doodle video series**. Besides being a lot of fun, this kind of doodling promotes creativity, vocabulary growth, and life-long understanding. Daily Doodle videos average 4 to 6 minutes in length, and are available at berkshiremuseum.org/athome/doodle, youtube.com/berkshiremuseum, and on the Museum’s Facebook page.

**Berkshire Museum@Home Worksheets**

Parents and teachers of elementary school-aged children have a new resource available to them in Berkshire Museum’s downloadable, printable **Berkshire Museum@Home worksheets**. Designed to help keep students entertained, educated, and curious whether they’re in the classroom or at home, each sheet explores a Word of the Day, offers activity ideas, and invites children to doodle about the day’s topic. Each set of five worksheets also includes instructions or materials for activities that connect to the words in the set. Worksheets can be downloaded as PDF files at berkshiremuseum.org/athome/worksheets.

**She Shapes History Blog Series**

Berkshire Museum’s celebration of 100 years of suffrage continues online through a new **series of blog posts**. Inspiring stories and images originally featured in the exhibition She Shapes History bring the fight for American women’s voting rights and equality from the gallery to the living room. New posts are added every Wednesday at berkshiremuseum.org/athome/history.

**About Berkshire Museum**

Located at 39 South Street in downtown Pittsfield, MA, Berkshire Museum combines art, science, and history to create thought-provoking experiences for the whole family through interactive programs, interdisciplinary exhibitions, and engaging online series.
The Museum building is closed temporarily to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Museum staff are working remotely to create web-based Museum experiences for our community, while the Aquarium team continues to provide daily care on site for our living collection. Visit berkshiremuseum.org/athome to enjoy Berkshire Museum wherever you are.

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