



For Immediate Release
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PITTSFIELD, MA. -- EVERYONE IS A HERO: A COMIC AND CARTOON ART TRIBUTE TO OUR LOCAL HEROES

The Berkshire Art Association (BAA) is hosting an exciting comic and cartoon art show and events this August. “Everyone Is a Hero: A Comic and Cartoon Art Tribute to Our Local Heroes” runs August 6 – 28 at the Lichtenstein Center for the Arts in Pittsfield, featuring original artwork and signed auction items created by popular Marvel, DC, and Simpsons comic book artists Luke McDonnell, Penim Loureiro, and Bill Morrison. The show and its programs are dedicated to the memory of Pittsfield resident Paul Houston, with gratitude for his years of commitment and service to the BAA.

All are welcome to a sneak peek on Friday, August 6, 5-8pm, during Pittsfield’s First Fridays Artswalk. The opening party is Saturday, August 7, from 3-6pm. This festive family friendly event (sponsored by Berkshire Gas) will feature music, art, and comic-making with special guest artists Joe Staton (Green Lantern, Justice Society, and Scooby-Doo) and Luke McDonnell (Iron Man, Suicide Squad, and Batman) drawing awesome characters and teaching you how to make your own comics. Come dressed in your best comic- and cartoon-inspired costumes!

The show is curated by BAA board member and Pittsfield resident Lawrence Klein, founder of the Museum of Comic and Cartoon Art in New York City. “I came up with a few themes, and my idea was to ask American comic book artist Luke McDonnell and Portuguese comic book artist Penim Loureiro to create unique drawings from the same list of subjects,” says Klein. “How do two artists from different parts of the world view the same subject matter? They took up the challenge of creating their own visions and the results are amazing.” The show also features sketches and autographed items for auction by Bill Morrison, creative director of The Simpsons and Futurama, and Patrick McDonnell, creator of MUTTS. Local Berkshire artists will also show

their illustration work. “The show brings together an impressive group of artists and the result is great fun,” says BAA member Liz Bevilacqua. “You’ll see familiar heroes and heroines like Batman, Iron Man, and Harley Quinn in new and creative ways.”

A special fundraising event at the Berkshire Humane Society will feature Joe Staton creating custom art for sale and free hands-on art making activities.

On August 19 at 6 pm, at the Lichtenstein Center for the Arts in Pittsfield, comics industry veteran Danny Fingerth will present “Disguised as Clark Kent: Jews, Comics and the Creation of the Superhero.” Fingerth will discuss how many of the most significant comics and graphic novel creators were 1st and 2nd generation immigrants, and how the creators’ Jewish origins may have helped make superheroes some of the most familiar popular culture icons of all time. The innovators to be covered include Stan Lee and Jack Kirby, who invented major Marvel superheroes including the Avengers, Hulk, and X-Men; Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, creators of Superman; Bob Kane and Bill Finger, who created Batman in a Bronx apartment, and Will Eisner, who gave the world the landmark superhero The Spirit and pioneered the modern graphic novel. Danny Fingerth is a pop culture critic and historian with a focus on comics and graphic novels especially from a Jewish perspective. He is a longtime executive editor and writer at Marvel Comics, and author of books about comics, including *A Marvelous Life: The Amazing Story of Stan Lee*, which he will be signing at the event. This event is made possible thanks to a Jewish Community Grant from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, and The Wassermann-Streit Y’DIYAH Memorial fund, administered by The Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation.

“Everyone Is a Hero: A Comic and Cartoon Art Tribute to Our Local Heroes” will be open Wednesday through Saturday August 6 - 28 at The Lichtenstein Center for the Arts at 28 Renne Avenue in Pittsfield. The show and its programs are made possible by the generous support of Berkshire Gas, IDW Publishing, Mass Cultural Council, Pittsfield Cultural Council, Acme Archives, Bags Unlimited, Twisted Cedar Wines, and Chiaroscuro Studios. All proceeds from the sale of art created for and during the show will benefit the Berkshire Art Association’s programs for art students across Berkshire County, including the high school field trip program and college art student fellowships. For more than 60 years, the BAA has supported artists at all levels of their careers and connected the public with visual art and artists in the Berkshires.