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# THIS WEEK

Section B

BERKSHIRE RECORD • JANUARY 19-25, 2018

## LECTURE



Photo contributed

Walker Evans will be the topic of Thad Kubis's lecture.

### Walker Evans' Life

LEE — The Lee Library Association invites the community to a lecture presented by Thad Kubis, photographer and educator, on Jan. 20 at 1 p.m. in the J. Peter Scolloro Gallery at the library. Thad Kubis will talk about his favorite photographer, Walker Evans (1903-1975). Evans, an American photographer and pho-

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## FILM



Photo contributed

'A Plastic Ocean' sheds light on a deeply disturbing topic of pollution in the ocean.

### 'A Plastic Ocean'

MILLERTON, N.Y. — On Jan. 21 The Salisbury Forum will present the documentary, "A Plastic Ocean," which explores the issue of how plastics in our oceans affect the marine ecosystems and human health. The movie will be shown at 11:30 a.m. at The Moviehouse on Main St. in Millerton, N.Y. Admission is free.

In the center of the Pacific Ocean gyre, a large system of circular ocean currents, researchers found more plastic than plankton. Instead of an anticipated solid mass that could be contained, the expedition discovered free-floating microplastics

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## MUSIC



Photo contributed

Whiskey Treaty Roadshow will open with special guest Connor Kelly.

### The Whiskey Treaty



Morgan Bulkeley poses alongside his works in his studio in downtown Great Barrington. 'Nature Culture Clash', Bulkeley's 50-year retrospective exhibit at the Berkshire Museum in Pittsfield will be on view until Feb. 4.

## Morgan Bulkeley: an artist of all seasons

By Joel Walliams

SHOWENSING a world that is comical, ominous, absurd, and terrifying, the Berkshire Museum's 50-year retrospective exhibit highlights the work of local artist Morgan Bulkeley.

Bulkeley's upbringing in Mount Washington guided his interests into the world of art.

"When I was a kid there were 32 voters in the town," Bulkeley said.

Subsequently, there weren't many kids around in the area. Bulkeley's parents were well described them, naturalists. His father was "essentially an ornithologist and a poet" and wrote a column for the Berkshire Eagle, titled

'Our Berkshire'.

"I'd always say, 'I don't know what to do, there's nothing to do,' and [my parents would] say, 'Go out and make something in the woods, or go do a painting, so I got an early dose of having to invent things to do and a lot of that was learning to whittle and carve, and eventually that sort of built into making sculpture and painting, too.'"

Some of the recurring themes and images in Bulkeley's massive body of work come from the natural landscape of his childhood in Mount Washington. Many of Bulkeley's paintings feature animals and birds, notably owls, many of which he grew up around.

"If someone cut a tree down and there was a nest of owls in it, they would take them to my

dad and he would raise them. We had owls and hawks and we had a fox and a deer and raccoon and crows — it was like living in Noah's ark, really," Bulkeley mused.

Bulkeley's work often depicts caricatures, so to speak, of human beings battling with each other, with nature, or pop culture figures at odds with the natural world. The images are cartoonish and comical, but reflect a certain level of bumbling savagery.

"I've been doing these people that are sort of abstractions of people, they're not particular characters," Bulkeley said.

Many of the cartoon characters featured in his

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## THEN AND NOW

By Gary Leveille





Joel Williams

Bulkeley's large painting in the background is titled "The Seven Deadly Sins."

## Nature Culture Clash on exhibit at Berkshire Museum

*Continued from B1*

work were drawn from models or action figures from Jarvis Rockwell's extensive collection. Bulkeley's studio sits in a center of artistry in Great Barrington, with writers and artists alike taking residence there, one of whom is Jarvis Rockwell.

Whenever Bulkeley needed a figure to draw from, he'd walk down to Rockwell's studio and say, "Hey, do you have a Woody the Woodpecker?" and Rockwell would sift through his collection and find the figure.

Bulkeley started off with portraits, bringing a level of absurdity to the realism of portraiture.

"This would be George Washington wrestling with Richard Serra who's a sculptor, and they're kind of duking it out. I had another one of George

Washington wrestling with Clark Kent," Bulkeley said.

"In the older work, that was the case, but now I've gotten to a place where most of my figures are, like these critters," Bulkeley said pointing to a group of paintings, "they're sort of nondescript, they're not any particular person."

A lot of the stories are about them doing stupid things, Bulkeley said.

In one series of paintings hanging in Bulkeley's studio is a tale of conflict between two of his humanoids. The first painting, "Spat" depicts an altercation between the two characters who are implementing a bow and arrow and a handsaw respectively. The second painting, "Escalation," brings in a large stick and a pair of scissors to the battle. In "Resolution" a gun is brought into the mix. "Epilogue" has the

two characters, one whose face is wrapped in bandages, cooking hot dogs and marshmallows over the fire.

While the violence depicted in Bulkeley's artwork is cartoonish, occasionally his work can be relatively dark.

One work, titled "The Seven Deadly Sins," depicts Bulkeley's humanoids engaged in comical mortal sin. The humanoids fumble about the rolling landscape, one with his arms so full of firewood that he can't see, another appears to be dancing with all manner of candy bars balanced on his arms and fingers. Birds fly in the air, some of them appearing disturbed or appalled at what they're seeing.

Bulkeley's exhibit, Nature Culture Clash, is on view at the Berkshire Museum in Pittsfield until Feb. 1.