



For Immediate Release

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## **Katonah Museum of Art Celebrates 60th Anniversary with Diamond Jubilee**

March 7, 2014, Katonah, NY – Now in its 60th year, the Katonah Museum of Art (KMA) is celebrating with a spirited Diamond Jubilee on Saturday, May 10, 2014. This benefit event will start off with a silent auction in the Museum’s beautiful sculpture garden—with 75 items up for bid—followed by a live auction later in the evening. To commemorate this anniversary in style, hors d’oeuvres and cocktails will be served, as well as a four-course dinner and dancing under the stars.

This significant milestone presents an opportunity to honor the contributions of three extraordinary Katonah Museum of Art supporters who represent three generations of the institution’s history—Inge Brouard Brown, Betty Himmel, and Amanda Alfieri.

With encouragement from the Katonah Village Improvement Society, Inge Brouard Brown founded the Katonah Gallery, which started on the top floor of the Katonah Village Library in 1954 and ultimately became the Katonah Museum of Art. Native to Katonah, Ms. Brouard Brown has inspired multiple generations of local residents to participate in the presentation of art and the cultivation of ideas. In her own words, “It is important to thank each and every volunteer of the last 60 years. They are the ones who have created the illustrious history leading to this celebratory Diamond Jubilee!”

The Gallery Board in 1966 agreed to follow Ms. Brouard Brown’s suggestion to zero in on education as the primary mission of the Museum. “I suggested that with art education as our main goal, we could serve children of the region and increase membership. This daunting, intimidating task wasn’t possible without a larger work force. Soon close to 100 dedicated volunteers, with high standards in mind, offered to research and create excellent traveling exhibitions for 65 member schools, plus education-focused exhibitions worthy of bus trips to the Gallery. Soon we had tripled our membership—all because of such amazing volunteers!” To date, hundreds of thousands of children have benefited from exceptional learning opportunities and the KMA is nationally recognized for excellence in its exhibition program.

Betty Himmel has been instrumental in guiding and expanding the Katonah Museum of Art, first volunteering in 1968 and later becoming Board President in 1976, and again in 1991. She has also served as Board Vice President and is currently on the Board of Overseers. The annual Himmel Award and Lecture, created in her honor, recognizes innovative scholarship and vision in the arts. The first recipient, in 2009, was art critic and curator Robert Storr, also dean of Yale University School of Art. Mary Schmidt Campbell, dean of New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts received the honor in 2011, and in 2012 the awardee was artist and architect Maya Lin; this year’s recipient is renowned artist Christo.

Reflecting on the Museum’s 60th anniversary, Ms. Himmel said, “Watching the Katonah Museum grow and flourish has been a source of immense pride for me. Over a period of 60 years, the Museum has been true to its core values and mission—to provide ambitious and innovative programming always with a strong educational component. The Museum’s future has never looked brighter and more promising than it does right now.”

Amanda Alfieri joined the Katonah Museum as an Overseer in 2009 and became a Trustee the following year. She was Board Secretary in 2010 and has served on numerous committees. Ms. Alfieri brings spirit and passion to her work with the Museum, generously offering her time in support of programs and events. She says she loves being a part of the Museum. “Having a place to experience all different kinds of art, music, talks, and travel makes our lives richer and fuller” adding, “It is a delight and an honor to be in

such fine company as Inge Brown and Betty Himmel—their dedication over the years to advancing the Katonah Museum of Art has immeasurably improved the local cultural landscape.”

Darsie Alexander, who joined the Katonah Museum of Art as Executive Director March 1st, is impressed with the Museum’s history. “The inspiring backstory on the founding and growth of the KMA is a true testament to the vision of Inge Brouard Brown and all of the dedicated volunteers who carried it through, as well as to the commitment of the entire community, which has brought the Museum to life. The honorees for this year’s anniversary are perfectly chosen, each distinguished by years of passion and dedication. The Museum has touched many, many lives and will continue to do so for decades to come. I am truly honored to be a part of it.”

The Katonah Museum of Art has a remarkable history. Its first home in 1954, then called the Katonah Gallery, was in an abandoned attic room in the Katonah Village Library. In those early days, the Gallery’s board met twice yearly with a distinguished exhibition advisory board under the leadership of Jack Baur, then Director of the Whitney Museum of American Art. Eventually the Katonah Gallery outgrew its original space and renowned architect Edward Larrabee Barnes was hired to design a museum. Mr. Barnes designed the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, the Dallas Museum of Art, and IBM headquarters in Manhattan, among many other structures. Modernist in style and filled with light, the 1990 building offered professional space and an open office design with slanting skylights looking out onto a sculpture garden and a stand of towering Norway spruce.

There are so many reasons to celebrate. On the night of May 10, 2014 for the 60th Anniversary Diamond Jubilee, The Katonah Museum of Art is expected to be overflowing with art lovers and collectors, business and community leaders, and the many area residents who have benefited directly from the cultural enrichment consistently offered. Diamond Jubilee Co-chairs are board members Jeanne Markel and Cynthia Brennan. For event tickets and table sponsorship, please contact Christina Makrakis at 914.232.9555 ext. 2968 or [cmakrakis@katonahmuseum.org](mailto:cmakrakis@katonahmuseum.org).

Corporate sponsorship provided by Diageo, The Durst Organization, Glenmede, and Houlihan Lawrence Katonah Brokerage and Houlihan Lawrence Bedford/Pound Ridge Brokerage. Catering by Abigail Kirsch Catering Relationships.

#### **ABOUT THE MUSEUM**

The Katonah Museum of Art, committed to presenting exceptional art from all cultures and time periods, through innovative exhibition and education programs, promotes the understanding and enjoyment of the visual arts for diverse audiences. The founders’ decision to be a non-collecting institution resulted in a dynamic and flexible exhibition program, which remains one of the most distinctive features of the KMA. The KMA offers lectures, films, workshops, concerts and other events for a general audience; and presents innovative and substantive programs for over 100 member schools. Our Learning Center is the only interactive space in Westchester County where children can come on a daily basis to explore and create art.

**UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS** include *Jasper Johns & John Lund: Masters in the Print Studio* (March 23 – June 15, 2014) and *ICELAND: Artists Respond to Place* (June 29 – September 28, 2014).

**Katonah Museum of Art, 134 Jay Street, Katonah, NY 10536**

**\*Museum hours: Sunday: 12pm – 5pm, Tuesday through Saturday: 10am – 5pm, Closed Monday.**

**\*Admission: \$10 Adults, \$5 Seniors & Students, Members & Children (Under the Age of 12) Always Enter Free**

[www.katonahmuseum.org](http://www.katonahmuseum.org)

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