



For Immediate Release

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## ***Lethal Beauty: Samurai Weapons and Armor*** **To Explore Rare Weaponry of Ancient Culture**

July 28, 2014, Katonah, NY – The Katonah Museum of Art hosts the nationally-touring and critically-acclaimed exhibition, *Lethal Beauty: Samurai Weapons and Armor*, at its final stop on an extensive tour. Comprised of a dramatic array of objects and garments worn by the Samurai, an elite warrior class dating to the twelfth century, the exhibition exposes the remarkable beauty and craftsmanship of these rare and mesmerizing objects. The exhibition is on view October 12, 2014 – January 4, 2015.

The Samurai are universally renowned. Their heroics still enchant audiences of all backgrounds, cultures, and ages. Unique to warrior cultures, high-standing Samurai pursued artistic and spiritual pursuits as well as engaging in battle. Based on their refined sense of aesthetics, armor and swords were intricately and artistically designed and remain precious relics in Japanese culture. Selected from works of the finest quality, the exhibition features full suits of armor, helmets, warrior hats, face masks, long and short swords, daggers, and rifles, among other objects.

Resonant Samurai themes continue to play a vital role in contemporary popular culture. Action figures equipped with all variety of battle gear, anime characters with superhuman powers, and video games tracking the moves of online combat can all be traced, in some fashion, to the formative traditions of the Japanese war hero. Centuries later, their garments and accoutrements remain staggeringly beautiful.

“We are pleased to bring these remarkable objects to Westchester. In addition to the themes of honor and endurance that were so much a part of the Samurai, the exhibition underscores the extraordinary sense of style that pervaded their culture. These would be stunning works of design in any era,” says KMA Executive Director Darsie Alexander.

In addition to highlights of the Samurai epoch, the KMA will feature an exhibition-within-the-exhibition focusing on twelve striking kimonos from the Alexander Murray Collection. Equal in splendor to the decidedly masculine samurai garments, kimonos and the world of women’s fashion are elegantly portrayed in pieces ranging from the eighteenth to twentieth centuries. The ultimate in couture, each garment was exclusively designed, hand-dyed, painted, stitched, and embroidered to create a one-of-a-kind object.

The Katonah Museum of Art will be the last stop for this exhibition following a successful run at the Currier Museum of Art, Honolulu Museum of Art, San Antonio Museum of Art, Detroit Institute of Arts, and the Birmingham Museum of Art. *Lethal Beauty* was curated by Dr. Andreas Marks, Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Collection of Clark Center and tour organized by International Arts & Artists, Washington, DC. The catalogue was generously supported in part by the Japan Foundation, NY.

The exhibition was organized by Dr. Andreas Marks, currently Head of the Japanese and Korean Art Department at Minneapolis Institute of Arts. He is the former Director and Chief Curator of the Clark Center for Japanese Art and Culture in Hanford, California. The Clark Center is home to over 1,400 works of Japanese art, and in June 2013 the Center transferred its collection to the Minneapolis Institute of Arts to give it a permanent home and make possible significant public access. Dr. Marks has curated and co-

curated fourteen exhibitions on various aspects of Japanese art including paintings, prints, ceramics, and weaponry, as well as works of bamboo.

#### **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 *Tri-State Juried Exhibition* (January 18 – February 15, 2015), *Young Artists* (March 1 - 8, 2015) and *Chris Larson: The Relocation Project* (Opening March 21).

**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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