

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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1315 MASS MoCA Way, North Adams, MA 01247

[link to online exhibition](#)

Ferrin Contemporary presents
Know Justice: Justin and Brooke Rothshank
at 1315 MASS MoCA Way in North Adams, Mass.

North Adams, Mass. – Ferrin Contemporary will present a two-person show of work focusing on American politics, the Supreme Court, and presidential history titled *Know Justice: Justin and Brooke Rothshank* at their gallery at 1315 MASS MoCA Way. The full exhibition will open September 10 and continue through November 13, 2016. Brooke's miniature watercolor portraits and Justin's decal-printed tableware will be complemented by their collaborative works.

Timed to coincide with the 2016 election, this exhibition at Ferrin Contemporary continues the gallery's interest in artists who convey contemporary content through reference to and the use of historic forms, techniques, and concepts. The Rothshanks' focus on political subject matter and commemoration is particularly suited to familiar formats found in decorative arts, in particular ceramics and miniature painting. Justin's work uses photographic collages sourced from public domain web imagery, then applied as decal transfer prints onto hand-thrown dinnerware, pitchers, trophies, and objects used in ceremony. Brooke's miniatures are hand-painted watercolors featuring the Supreme Court justices, significant buildings, and singular objects related to the court. The collaborative works feature Brooke's finely drawn and carved portraits of the nine justices and their presidential nominators on Justin's hand thrown and decorated platters. Through this exhibition and its installation, the artists share their interest in the current judicial and political systems with the goal of documentation and encouraging reflection on powerful individuals and their roles within our political system.

"Art is a powerful vehicle for conveying social commentary," said Leslie Ferrin, director of Ferrin Contemporary. "For outspoken artists, the work they produce provides a means to explore, teach, rage, plead, and pray for change. Throughout the thirty-year history of our gallery, we have exhibited work of our time by both established and emerging artists who demonstrate social concern as well as deliver criticism. As a public gallery, we consider one of our missions is to

provide a free cultural space where artists and the public engage in dialog and inspire ideas through visual art.”

The gallery selected the work of Justin and Brooke Rothshank, long before real-time political events provided the opportunity to discuss specific issues of the campaign. The title *Know Justice* took on additional meaning with the death in February of Antonin Scalia, Associate Justice for the U.S. Supreme Court (1986-2016) and how the nomination process revealed our country’s deep divides during this election year.

The Rothshanks’ exhibition with its wall of justices overlooking the Presidential table, invites visitors to engage with and reflect upon history, discuss current events, and theorize about future consequences. The outcome of the ongoing presidential race on November 8 will answer who will nominate the next Supreme Court justice and also who will be featured at the head of the table as our 45th president.

In a statement about their work, Justin and Brooke Rothshank said: “This show is an introduction to the Supreme Court Justices and our country’s long history of elected government leadership. The Supreme Court has shaped the laws of our country for generations and has become an integral part of our current political and social situation. As we learn about these leaders, we can participate more fully and meaningfully in the conversation about how justice is shaped in our country.”

THE PRESIDENTIAL TABLE

Starting Saturday, August 13, the public is invited to preview the exhibition *Know Justice* and see Justin Rothshank’s twenty-foot table-scape of original decal-printed ceramics depicting the 44 US presidents. Installed with a blank place setting at its head, the table will be completed with a setting featuring the winning candidate on November 8. The Gallery is open daily, 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. through Labor Day.

EXHIBITION

The full exhibition will be presented September 10 through November 13 at Ferrin Contemporary. The Gallery is open Wednesday through Sunday, 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. after Labor Day.

DOWNSTREET ART RECEPTION

Thursday, September 29, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

MEET THE ARTIST: JUSTIN ROTHSHANK

Public reception and conversation with artist, Justin Rothshank

Saturday, October 15 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. in the gallery at Ferrin Contemporary

JUSTIN ROTHSHANK

Justin Rothshank is recognized for his ceramic tableware decorated with decals of pop culture images. Having worked independently with clay since his foray into the medium in high school, Justin developed his signature work by appropriating the techniques and styles of artists and mentors he observed and took workshops with, naming Howard Kottler and Ron Nagle as great inspirations. Although his work is completely functional, it is, more importantly, a canvas for his hand drawn, digitally produced, and decorative commentary. Many of the decals in his work were created from his wife Brooke's paintings, which he then embellishes to convey his take on social and political systems that need careful review and change. Justin's ceramic work has been exhibited and published nationally and internationally, including articles in *Ceramics Monthly*, *American Craft*, *The Studio Potter*, *The Log Book*, and *Neue Keramik*. He has been a presenter, panelist, visiting artist, and artist-in-residence at numerous universities, schools, conferences, and art centers throughout the United States and abroad.

BROOKE ROTHSHANK

Brooke Rothshank is known primarily for her mastery of detailed techniques and a variety of two-dimensional media evidenced in both full scale and miniature drawings and paintings. Brooke is inspired and informed by American painters Andrew Wyeth, Norman Rockwell, Grant Wood and illustrators Margaret Rice Brown and Garth Williams. Brooke's work as a miniature artist has been exhibited nationally and featured in both *Miniature Collector* and *Dollhouse Miniatures* magazines. Brooke has illustrated three children's book for Herald Press, and is currently working on a fourth illustration project that she is pursuing independently. Brooke's painting has been exhibited at the Penland Gallery, the Andy Warhol Museum, and the Chicago International Miniature Show. Brooke is a member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators and the International Guild of Miniature Artists, and was awarded artisan status and independent study grant from IGMA. In this exhibit, her 1/12th scale portraits capture the essence of each subject in watercolor. Despite or possibly because of their tiny scale, she commands attention be paid to the importance of these powerful social and political individuals and the policies they represent.

ABOUT FERRIN CONTEMPORARY

Ferrin Contemporary specializes in ceramic art circa 1950 to the present. For more than 30 years, private collectors, institutions, and the media have made it their preferred source for artwork by established and emerging artists whose primary medium is clay. Based in the Berkshires of Western Massachusetts, Ferrin Contemporary exhibits curated projects and solo shows in their year-round gallery space and through innovative partnerships with leading museums and galleries throughout the US and abroad.

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HIGH RESOLUTION IMAGES ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Contact Leslie Ferrin at info@ferrincontemporary.com



Brook Rothshank, "Abraham Lincoln" 2016, watercolor.
Justin Rothshank, "Abraham Lincoln" 2016, decal, underglaze, glaze, earthenware, 13".



Brooke Rothshank, "Ruth Bader Ginsburg" 2016, watercolor, 1".



Justin Rothshank, "George Washington" 2016, decal, underglaze, glaze, earthenware.



Brooke and Justin Rothshank, "Sonia Sotomayor" 2016, decal, underglaze, glaze, earthenware, 13".



Brooke and Justin Rothshank , "Ruth Bader Ginsberg" 2016,
decal, underglaze, glaze, earthenware, 13".



Brooke Rothshank



Justin Rothshank