



# Marilyn Church's Courtroom Illustrations Now on View at the Library of Congress

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by Pat Rogers

Marilyn Church's illustrations are an integral part of a new group show opening this week at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. "Drawing Justice: The Art of Courtroom Illustrations" features original art that captures the drama of high-profile court cases in the last 50 years.

The exhibition opens on April 27, 2017 and remains on view through Oct. 28, 2017, in the South Gallery on the second floor of the Library's Thomas Jefferson Building, 10 First St. S.E., Washington, D.C. The exhibition features the work of 12 illustrators that trace the history of illustrating the dramas unfolding in courts from 1964 to the present day. Photography was traditionally forbidden in court cases with authorized illustrators tasked with capturing moments for the trial for prosperity and the public at large. The exhibition can also be viewed online by clicking [here](#).

"These do more than capture individuals," stated Sara Duke, a curator in the Prints and Photographs Division, [in an article published by the Library of Congress](#). "For scholars who want to look at how attitudes shifted over time in the courtroom, here's a good place to start."

"Drawing Justice: The Art of Courtroom Illustrations" features the work of Howard Brodie, Aggie Kenny, Pat Lopez, Arnold Mesches, Gary Myrick, Joseph Papin, David Rose, Freda Reiter, Bill Robles, Jane Rosenberg, Elizabeth Williams and Marilyn Church, who divides her time between the Hamptons and New York City.

Church's courtroom drawings are well-respected. The Library of Congress has collected more than 4,500 pieces of her work and the Smithsonian has a large number as well.



"Bekowitz with Gold" by Marilyn Church. Courtesy of the artist.

The exhibition's illustrations—part of the Library's extensive collection of more than 10,000 courtroom drawings—represent the work of talented artists hired by newspapers and broadcast outlets to capture the personal dynamics of legal trials, which for many decades were off-limits to photographers and television cameras, according to the Library of Congress. The artwork brings the theater of the courtroom to life, capturing gestures, appearances and relationships in a way that humanizes the defendants and plaintiffs, lawyers, judges and witnesses.



“Woody Allen” by Marilyn Church. Courtesy of the artist.

The 98 illustrations on display span court cases from 1964 to the present day, including trials for murder, crime and corruption, terrorism, political activism and landmark legal issues. Among the notorious depicted are [Jack Ruby](#), [James Earl Ray](#), Charles Manson, David Berkowitz, John Gotti, the Chicago Seven and Bernie Madoff. Artifacts from the Library’s Manuscript Division and the Law Library supplement the drawings in the exhibition from a legal perspective.



“Gotti with Gravano” by Marilyn Church. Courtesy of the artist.

The exhibition also includes an introductory video and interactive video station that show drawings in the exhibition being featured on television nightly news broadcasts. The footage helps highlight the important contribution courtroom illustrators make in capturing the drama of the court, and an understanding of the day’s events, into the homes of millions of Americans, according to the Library of Congress.

The earliest work in “Drawing Justice: The Art of Courtroom Illustrations” is represented by [Howard Brodie](#) (1915-2010), who popularized reportage-style courtroom illustrations with his documentation of the Jack Ruby trial in 1964 for CBS Evening News. Ruby had been charged with killing Lee Harvey Oswald, who allegedly assassinated President John F. Kennedy in 1963. Brodie supported and encouraged the first generation of artists who created the artwork for television and print media. Brodie donated his trial drawings to the Library of Congress, which spurred the development of the courtroom-illustration collections.



“Truman Capote” by Marilyn Church. Courtesy of the artist.

Marilyn Church is a long-time courtroom artist. Working in colored pencils, crayons and pens, Church has captured courtroom dramas for over 40 years. Some of the high-profile cases she has depicted include those involving Martha Stewart, J.K. Rowling, Bernard L. Madoff, Jaqueline Onassis, Woody Allen and Mia Farrow, John Gotti, Bernhard Goetz, John Lennon’s assassin Mark David

Chapman and many more, according to the [Library of Congress](#). A selection of her courtroom drawings in the collection of the Library of Congress can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

In addition to her illustrations, Marilyn Church has a vibrant fine art practice. Her paintings include abstraction and figuration. A frequent contributor to East End Hospice's Box Art Auction, Church's fine art has been the subject of solo shows and numerous group shows held in New York City, The Hamptons and the New York Metropolitan area. Her work has won two awards at Guild Hall's Artists Members Exhibition (Best Representational Painting in 2016 and Best Mixed Media in 2008).

Recent exhibitions in New York City include those presented at [Carter Burden Gallery](#) in Chelsea and [Bernarducci Meisel Gallery](#) on 57th Street.

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**BASIC FACTS:** "Drawing Justice: The Art of Courtroom Illustrations" is on view from April 27, 2017 to October 28, 2017, in the Library of Congress's South Gallery on the second floor of the Library's Thomas Jefferson Building, 10 First St. S.E., Washington, D.C. The exhibition is free and open to the public Mondays through Saturdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tickets are not needed. The exhibition can also be viewed online by clicking [here](#).

To discover more about Marilyn Church and her art, visit [www.marilynchurch.com](http://www.marilynchurch.com).

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