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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rudy Shepherd: We are all Trayvon Martin

February 23 - March 25, 2017



In *We are all Trayvon Martin* we consider the role of the artist as witness to contemporary society. Rudy Shepherd's paintings and drawings investigate current events: deceased pop culture icons, politicians, and both criminals and victims of crime. By presenting these portraits, including the artist's self-portrait, with no visual distinctions, space is created for humanity to be recognized in people otherwise reduced to media headlines. This equalized rendering underscores the

complexity of people and their stories; and the grey areas between innocence and guilt, or public and private.

Shepherd's small-scale ceramic objects, called "Healing Devices," are meant as a counterpoint to what can seem like the insurmountable social and political challenges of our day. They offer the potential to identify our shared humanity, in a tactile physical form, ultimately uniting us in our similarities, and perhaps cleansing the negative. In this way they pose a possible solution, while questioning the viewer's belief in the power of art, and the power of belief.

Based in New York City, Rudy Shepherd received a BS in Biology and Studio Art from Wake Forest University, and an MFA in Sculpture from the School of Art Institute of Chicago.

Opening reception: Thursday, February 23, 5 - 7pm, with an informal artist talk.

Image: "We are all Trayvon Martin," 2014, acrylic on canvas, 19 1/2 x 34 1/4 inches; image courtesy of the artist.

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