

FOTOFOCUS

FotoFocus Announces *Big Tent* Gallery Talks Program

FotoFocus Center | 228 East Liberty Street, Cincinnati
On View May 29–August 22, 2026
Opening Reception Friday, May 29 | 6–8pm



Asa Featherstone IV, *The Gift*, 2023. © Asa Featherstone IV. Courtesy of the artist

Cincinnati, OH (May 5, 2026)—FotoFocus is pleased to announce its program of talks for *Big Tent*, the inaugural exhibition at the new FotoFocus Center, a 14,700 square foot, purpose-built structure to house photographic exhibitions and year-round programs. To expand the artistic and intellectual scope of *Big Tent*, FotoFocus will present a series of talks touching on themes that resound throughout the exhibition: equality, pluralism, freedom of speech, and the democratic values the United States has long championed, now perceived to be under threat.

“*Big Tent* is uniquely suited to engage viewers in dialogue around the question of photography and its relationship to democracy,” said FotoFocus Executive Director Katherine Ryckman Siegwarth. “This series of talks will meaningfully expand upon the curatorial vision and demonstrate that photography can be a catalyst for conversations that inspire and challenge in equal measure.”

Big Tent brings together photographs that span the better part of the past century, from celebrated masterworks to more recent experiments with form and contemporary meaning, to create an exhibition that celebrates the democratizing potential of photography. Partly inspired by the poem 'In This Place (An American Lyric)' by Amanda Gorman, the exhibition takes the concept of 'big tent'—commonly defined with reference to a political party's policy of permitting or encouraging a broad spectrum of views among its members—as a metaphor for the fraught yet aspirational nature of American civic life and its democratic ideals. With work spanning several decades and of vastly different photographic styles and formats, *Big Tent* demonstrates the radically diverse character of contemporary America, seeing it as a point of pride rather than shame, as cause for celebration instead of reaction.

Big Tent includes work by Francis Alÿs, Marco Anelli, Tina Barney, Gary Beeber, Dawoud Bey, Sheila Pree Bright, Elliott Jerome Brown, Jr., Chivas Clem, Andrew Dadson, Moyra Davey, John Divola, Elena Dorfman, Alyse Emdur, Mitch Epstein, Roe Ethridge, Asa Featherstone IV, Lola Flash, Stanley Forman, Robert Frank, Jill Freedman, Rico Gatson, Katy Grannan, Melvin Grier, Tina Gutierrez, Sky Hopinka, Madeleine Hordinski, Samuel James, Stacy Kranitz, Justine Kurland, An-My Lê, Builder Levy, Danny Lyon, Robert Mapplethorpe, Elaine Mayes, Jackie Nickerson, Taiyo Onorato & Nico Krebs, Catherine Opie, Trevor Paglen, Gordon Parks, Judith Joy Ross, RaMell Ross, Ruddy Roye, Tommaso Sacconi, Collier Schorr, Allan Sekula, Fazal Sheikh, Accra Shepp, David Benjamin Sherry, Cauleen Smith, Tabitha Soren, Alec Soth, Paul Strand, Ian Strange, Larry Sultan, Stephanie Syjuco, and Michael Wilson.

The event is free and open to the public, but registration is requested. Those interested can register [here](#). For more information, please visit fotofocus.org. Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) will be provided, with live captions viewable via any mobile device with internet connection. For questions regarding accessibility accommodations at FotoFocus events, please contact info@fotofocus.org.

This program is financially assisted in part by H.B., E.W. & F.R. Luther Foundation, Fifth Third Bank, N.A., Trustee. Additional support generously provided by the Ohio Arts Council.

Artist Talks Program

Saturday, May 30 | 1–5pm

1pm Light Bites and Refreshments
2pm Rico Gatson and David Benjamin Sherry
3pm Marco Anelli and Stacy Kranitz
4pm Alyse Emdur and Accra Shepp

Saturday, July 18 | 1–5pm

1pm Light Bites and Refreshments
2pm Asa Featherstone IV and Melvin Grier
3pm Tina Gutierrez and Samuel James
4pm Madeleine Hordinski and Michael Wilson

Saturday, August 22 | 6–8pm

6PM Closing Reception and Exhibition Catalogue Release

About FotoFocus

FotoFocus is a Cincinnati-based nonprofit arts organization that champions photography and lens-based art through exhibitions and public programming. Since 2010, the organization has engaged art and educational institutions throughout the region to support and expand the cultural dialogue around the medium that has come to define our time. With an emphasis on intellectually and academically rigorous programs, the organization provides uniquely enriching access to lens-based art, film, and practices inspired by photography. FotoFocus has collaborated with organizations, curators, academics and more than 3,500 artists and participants, to present over 800 exhibitions and programs.

Signature FotoFocus programs include the Biennial, which has been held in October since 2012, most recently taking place in 2024 with the theme *backstories*. Past editions have presented work across the Cincinnati region by historic and contemporary artists, including Berenice Abbott, Eugène Atget, John Edmonds, Roe Ethridge, Rotimi Fani-Kayode, David Hartt, Baseera Khan, Zanele Muholi, Tony Oursler, Barbara Probst, Thomas Ruff, Ming Smith, Ian Strange, Chip Thomas, and Akram Zaatar. Other landmark programs include the Symposium, which has contributed significant dialogue and insight to culturally relevant topics including the controversial Mapplethorpe exhibition and the Lecture and Visiting Artist Series, which has brought globally renowned artists such as Matt Black, Sky Hopinka, Zoe Leonard, William Wegman, and Roger Ross Williams to Cincinnati.