

HENRY TAYLOR: B SIDE LABELS

Gettin it Done, 2016

Acrylic on canvas

Hudgins Family Collection

Untitled, 2016–22

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of Angella and David Nazarian

This painting depicts the civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. in a moment of leisure, tossing a football with four children. The football's upward trajectory might allude to King's famous pronouncement that "the arc of the moral universe bends toward justice," while the ominous presence of three white men in the distance may hint at the ever-present threat of violence faced by Black Americans.

See Alice Jump, 2011
Acrylic on canvas

Da Costa Gomez Family Collection

The track-and-field legend Alice Coachman, depicted here, set a record in the high jump at the 1948 London games, becoming the first Black woman to win an Olympic gold medal. Her success and barrier-breaking achievement symbolized hope and progress for Black Americans at a time when racial segregation and discrimination pervaded the United States. Taylor based this painting on a photograph taken of Coachman while she was a student at the Tuskegee Institute, one of the nation's first historically Black universities. By altering the photo and positioning Coachman as if she is jumping over houses in a neighborhood, Taylor metaphorically alludes to the social and economic barriers she overcame growing up in the segregated South.

the dress, ain't me, 2011

Acrylic on canvas

Private collection; courtesy Irena Hochman Fine Art Ltd.

Cora, (cornbread), 2008

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

This work is an homage to Taylor's mother, Cora, whose name the artist has playfully circled (as if in a word search puzzle) within the hand-lettered "corn bread" seen at the top. To further the connection with his mother, Taylor depicts items from his childhood that he associates with her: a large pan of golden cornbread (a staple at Cora's dinner table), an empty pot, and a container of Morton iodized salt. Hanging above the stove in anticipation of being poured over the cornbread is a bottle of Brer Rabbit syrup, a subtle critique of this country's long enabling of racist stereotypes.

Andrea Bowers talks about Taylor's love of food and family.

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Wegrett, 2006

Acrylic and cardboard collage on linen

Tilton Family Collection

Taylor depicts himself in this painting kneeling before his mother, who is standing in front of the partially obscured logo of W. E. Garrett & Sons Scotch Snuff, a tobacco product she used during his childhood. Taylor's treatment of the brand name to suggest the phrase "we regret" exemplifies his frequent use of text to add layers of meaning to his paintings. Here, the words may allude to the pain he feels about the hardships his mother faced in her life. As Taylor explained, "I painted a picture of myself on my knees in front of my mama, and I don't know why I painted that, but I just did, and I know I cried on that."

Untitled, 2022

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

This imagined portrait of the artist's brother Randy interweaves past and present. As a young man, Randy was associated with the Black Panther Party, a revolutionary organization founded in Oakland, California, in 1966. Today, Randy lives in Texas where he breeds dogs, an occupation suggested by the text "Dog Father" on the bag of dog food Taylor depicts in his brother's hand. In Taylor's composition, present-day Randy stands in front of a microphone on a small stage outside his Texas home as if about to deliver a speech, while a black panther looms behind him, a reminder of Randy's former political activism.

*Man, I'm so full of doubt, but I must Hustle Forward,
as my daughter Jade would say, 2020*

Acrylic on canvas

The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; museum purchase funded anonymously
and by Laura and James DeMare

i'm yours, 2015

Acrylic on canvas

Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; acquired through the generosity
of the Acquisitions Circle

Taylor based this work on a photograph of himself and his son. While creating the painting, he added a portrait of his daughter in the background. By filling the foreground with an imposing, closely cropped image of himself assertively staring at the viewer, and staggering the figures of his children as if they are receding into space, Taylor creates an unconventional family portrait whose ambiguous title, *i'm yours*, raises the question of who is being possessed and by whom.

Hear Taylor talk about how photography fits into his creative process.



Untitled, 2022

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

Untitled, 2022

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

Untitled, 2020

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

My Great Niece Taylor Watson, 2020

Acrylic on canvas

The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; promised gift of Jennifer Hawks Djawadi and Ramin Djawadi

Portrait of My Brother Robert Randy Taylor, 2010

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of Martin and Rebecca Eisenberg

Low Ride (99), 2004

Acrylic and collage on canvas

Collection of Craig and Lynn Jacobson

Untitled, 2022

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

The Love of Cousin Tip, 2017
Acrylic on canvas

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

Untitled, 2022
Acrylic on canvas

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

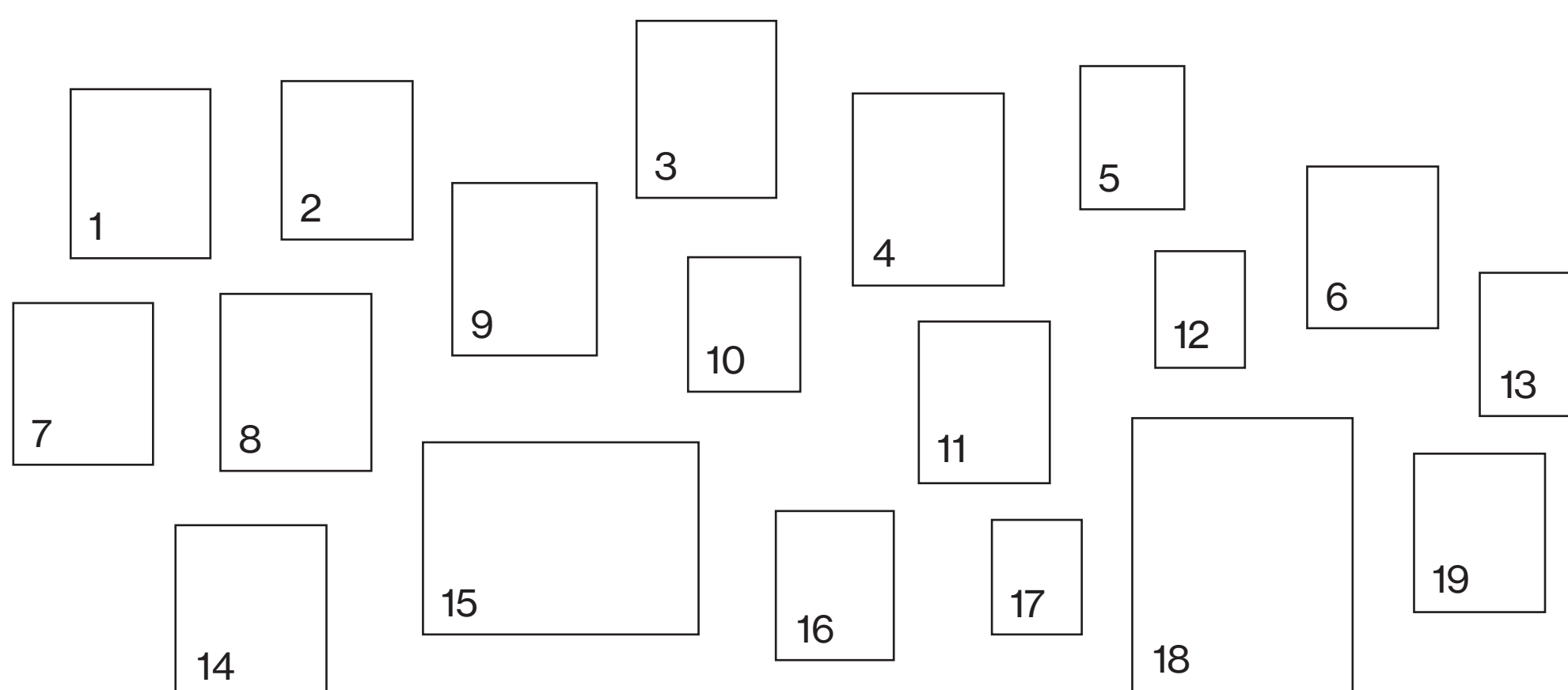
Untitled, 2021
Acrylic on linen

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

Taylor often remakes or “covers” the work of other artists just as a musician would adapt or remix a previously recorded song. He based this self-portrait on an unattributed late-sixteenth-century painting of the English king Henry V that he saw at London’s National Portrait Gallery. Substituting a regal image of himself for that of the English monarch plays on his nickname “Henry the VIII,” which he adopted in his youth as the youngest of eight children, while also challenging the stereotypes of European history painting that have typically excluded or demeaned Black people.

Taylor discusses his approach to self-portraits.

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1. *Untitled*, 1991
Graphite on paper
2. *Untitled*, 1992
Graphite on paper
3. *No one knows why (he did it)*, 1992
Graphite on paper
4. *Untitled*, n.d.
Pastel, colored pencil, and ink on paper
5. *Untitled*, 1991
Graphite on paper
6. *Untitled*, 1991
Graphite on paper
7. *Who feels it knows it*, 1995
Graphite on paper
8. *Untitled*, 1989
Graphite and pen on paper
9. *Catatonic*, 1991
Graphite and colored pencil
on paper
10. *She Called Me "Bill"*, 1990
Graphite on paper
11. *Client*, 1988
Graphite on paper
12. *Untitled*, 1990
Graphite and collage on paper
13. *I'm sorry for causing you so much
consternation*, 1991
Graphite on paper
14. *It sure is a nice breeze*, 1990
Graphite and colored pencil on paper
15. *Untitled*, n.d.
Graphite and charcoal on paper
16. *Split Person*, 1992
Graphite on paper
Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth
17. *Scholar*, 1990
Graphite on paper
18. *Untitled*, 1985
Graphite and charcoal on paper
19. *5Points*, 1991
Graphite on paper

All works: Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

Taylor describes making drawings while working as
a psychiatric technician.

Untitled (Saddle Shoes Stepping on Bald Head), 1992
Acrylic on canvas

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

Happy Meal, 1992
Acrylic on canvas

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

Girl with blue Hand, 2014
Acrylic on canvas

Collection of Greg and Heidi Hodes

Where Thoughts provoke, getting deep in the shallow water, 2015
Acrylic on canvas

Collection of Thomas Houseago

Blacks Hurting in LA, n.d.
Acrylic on canvas

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

Screaming Head, 1999
Oil on canvas

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

Untitled, 1992
Acrylic on canvas

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

Peanuts, 2007
Acrylic on canvas

Hudgins Family Collection

I Left the Jungle and Found Jung, 2011
Acrylic, pencil, and fiber-tipped pen on canvas

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

too much hate, in too many state, 2001

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of Andrew Hahn

This painting places the viewer in the vantage point of James Byrd Jr., a Black man who was abducted and murdered on June 7, 1998, in Jasper County, Texas, by three white supremacists who chained his ankles to the back of their pickup truck and dragged him to his death. The brutal murder led to a national outcry, prompting calls for stronger hate crime legislation. In contrast to Social Realist painters of the 1930s, such as Ben Shahn, whose work addressed incidents of discrimination and injustice in which they did not directly participate, Taylor provides a personal response to attacks against his own community.

Trail, 2005

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of Craig and Lynn Jacobson

This richly layered painting includes, among other things, references to George Jackson, the incarcerated political activist whose 1970 book, *Soledad Brother: The Prison Letters of George Jackson*, helped raise awareness about the brutality and racism faced by Black prisoners. Rather than depict Jackson's likeness, Taylor invokes him and his incarceration by including a menacing image of a sheriff in profile along with Jackson's inmate ID number while in prison next to an image of Bob Dylan whose 1971 song "George Jackson" paid tribute to the author and activist. With no real foreground or background, Taylor's dynamic composition echoes the complexity and rhythmic, improvisational quality of jazz.

Warning shots not required, 2011

Acrylic, charcoal, and collage on canvas

The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; purchase with funds provided by the Acquisition and Collection Committee

This painting features Stanley “Tookie” Williams—the larger-than-life cofounder of the notorious Los Angeles street gang the Crips, professional bodybuilder, and convicted murderer, who in his later years became an advocate for antigang education while serving a death-row sentence at San Quentin State Prison. Taylor paints Williams standing amid an array of symbolic motifs in front of a high prison wall. The image of the horse, which figures in this and many of Taylor’s other works, may refer to the artist’s grandfather, a horse trainer, who was ambushed and shot to death by white vigilantes in Texas in 1933. The work’s title, stenciled onto the composition, refers to policies that allow police officers to fire often deadly shots without warning if they consider themselves or another individual to be in imminent danger.

Learn about the complex figure Taylor put at the center of this painting.

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The 4th, 2012

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of Marcia Dunn and Jonathan Sobel

Artist Patrick Martinez discusses this painting.

 505

Untitled, 2021

Mixed media

Private collection

*THE TIMES THAY AINT A CHANGING,
FAST ENOUGH!, 2017*

Acrylic on canvas

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from Jonathan Sobel and Marcia Dunn 2017.192

This painting, which depicts the 2016 police killing of Philando Castile during a traffic stop outside Minneapolis, places the viewer in the position of Castile's girlfriend, Diamond Reynolds, who livestreamed the aftermath of Castile being shot from her cell phone as she sat next to him in the car. Taylor has said that he was motivated to paint this scene immediately upon learning about it—"I don't even think I thought about ever showing that one when I painted it; it was just something I had to get out of my head." Taylor's title, a reversal of the well-known Bob Dylan lyric, visually laments the far-too-common deadly interactions between Black Americans and law enforcement. In depicting the last moments of Castile's life, Taylor draws on familiar art-historical precedents, such as Jacques-Louis David's *The Death of Marat* (1793) and deposition paintings of Christ.

Taylor recalls the decision to make this painting of Philandro Castile.

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Resting, 2011

Acrylic and collage on canvas

Collection of Martin and Rebecca Eisenberg

In *Resting*, Taylor depicts his niece and nephew sitting on a couch in their home with a reclining figure behind them. In the background, he portrays a tractor trailer and a group of uniformed men lining up in front of a penitentiary wall stenciled with the words “Warning Shots Not Required.” Among the materials collaged on the coffee table in the painting’s foreground are Canteen Correctional Service forms that family members fill out to authorize items prisoners can purchase at the commissary. The inclusion of these elements alludes to the personal interaction many Black families have with “the system,” lending a bitter irony to the work’s title.

Hear about how Taylor combines his love and critique in this painting.

*I Was King, When I Met The Queen—Syllable X’s**Rhythm Equals Mumbo Jumbo, 2013*

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of Jeff Magid

Untitled, 2022

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

“Watch your back”, 2013

Acrylic on canvas

Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; purchase

That Was Then, 2013

Acrylic on canvas

Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh; The Henry L. Hillman Fund

Taylor often reflects on his Southern heritage in his work. This painting of an elderly Black man standing amid plowed fields is one in a series of works Taylor based on Farm Security Administration photographs of Southern sharecroppers in the 1930s, and while it is not explicitly a depiction of a Taylor family member, it honors his ancestors' legacy. Taylor adds the word “BOY” three times to the background of this work as if to suggest that the man was called that degrading epithet many times. Given the persistence of racially abusive language in the United States, the painting's title is likely ironic.

Y'ALL STARTED THIS SHIT ANYWAY, 2021

Mixed media

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

Hear how Taylor mixes improvisation and politics.

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*Go Next Door and Ask Michelle's Momma Mrs Robinson
if I can Borrow 20 Dollars Til Next Week?, 2017*

Acrylic on canvas

Private collection

Untitled, 2006
Acrylic on wood

Collection of Mandy and Cliff Einstein

A Different Background, 2010
Acrylic and charcoal on canvas

Collection of Jeremy Kost

Likely inspired by Taylor's trips to Africa, this work is based on a photograph published in a 1999 *National Geographic* article on African marriage rituals. The painting reflects Taylor's voracious mining of print media that began in college where he studied journalism and cultural anthropology. "I used to be a journalism major," Taylor said, "so I have a habit of going through the newspaper—not that I want to get bogged down and get depressed, but because that's the way I was taught."

Rock It, 2008

Wood, cardboard, foam, mannequin head

The Lumpkin-Boccuzzi Family Collection

Elan Supreme, 2016

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of Suzanne Butler and Didier Loulmet

Untitled, 2022

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

Fatty, 2006

Acrylic and plastic tape on canvas

Collection of R. Blumenthal

Artist Patrick Martinez unpacks the details in this painting.

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Untitled, 2022

Acrylic on canvas

Forman Family Collection

Too Sweet, 2016

Acrylic on canvas

The Museum of Modern Art, New York; gift of Lonti Ebers

Taylor based this canvas on a photograph he took from inside his car of a man asking drivers and passengers for help. In the source image, the man's sign reads "Anything Helps." By removing the text and depicting the individual larger than life, Taylor monumentalizes his subject, presenting him in the grand scale of historical portraits. The work's title, *Too Sweet*, may refer both to the See's Candies store in the background and to the character of the depicted individual.

Untitled (Ethiopian Pharmacist), 2016

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of Alan Hergott and Curt Shepard

emery lambus, 2016

Acrylic on canvas

The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; promised gift of Hudgins Family Collection

Emery Lambus, an artist residing in Los Angeles, is the subject of several of Taylor's portraits, of which this is one example. The two men met over ten years ago during a period in which Lambus was living on Skid Row in downtown LA. Lambus began to help Taylor in the studio and Taylor occasionally would buy paintings from Lambus. Over time, they developed a close friendship. Taylor has continued to actively support Lambus and encourage his art making, providing him with supplies and studio space, as well as organizing the first public exhibition of Lambus's work.

Taylor talks about his friendship with this portrait's sitter.

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Untitled, 2020

Acrylic on canvas

The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; promised gift of Gary Steele and Steven Rice

Untitled, 2022

Mixed media

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

I'm not dangerous, 2015

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of Beth Rudin DeWoody

Girl with Toy Rifle, 2015

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of Shelly and Neil Mitchell

1. *Untitled*, n.d.

Fiber-tipped pen and acrylic
on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

2. *Untitled*, n.d.

Acrylic on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

3. *I'm Here (White Dixie Flag)*, 1990s

Acrylic and graphite on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

4. *Untitled*, n.d.

Acrylic on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

5. *Untitled*, n.d.

Graphite and acrylic on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

6. *Untitled*, 1990s

Acrylic on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

7. *Untitled*, n.d.

Acrylic and graphite on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

1. *Untitled, 2004*

Acrylic on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

2. *Untitled, n.d.*

Fiber-tipped pen on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

3. *Untitled, n.d.*

Pastel and acrylic on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

4. *Untitled, n.d.*

Acrylic on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

5. *Untitled, 2009*

Acrylic on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

6. *Untitled, 1990s*

Acrylic on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

1. *Untitled*, 1990s

Glue on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

2. *Untitled*, n.d.

Acrylic and collage on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

3. *Untitled*, n.d.

Collage on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

4. *Untitled*, n.d.

Acrylic on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

1. *Untitled, 1990s*

Acrylic on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

2. *Untitled (Grill Painted on Cardboard), n.d.*

Acrylic and graphite on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

3. *Untitled (hot dogs in pan), 2011*

Acrylic on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

4. *Untitled, 1990s*

Acrylic on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

5. *Untitled, n.d.*

Acrylic on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

6. *Untitled, 2007*

Acrylic on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

7. *Untitled, n.d.*

Acrylic on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

1. *Untitled*, n.d.

Acrylic on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

2. *Untitled*, n.d.

Acrylic on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

3. *Untitled (Henry Louis Gates)*, n.d.

Charcoal and acrylic on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

4. *Untitled*, n.d.

Collage on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

5. *Untitled*, n.d.

Collage and acrylic on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

6. *Untitled (Cancer Zodiac Descriptions)*, n.d.

Mixed media and collage on cardboard

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

7. *Untitled*, n.d.

Acrylic on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

1. *Untitled*, n.d.
Fiber-tipped pen on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

2. *Untitled*, n.d.
Graphite and acrylic on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

3. *Untitled*, n.d.
Acrylic on wood

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

4. *Untitled*, 2001
Collage, mixed media, and acrylic
on cigarette box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

5. *Untitled*, n.d.
Fiber-tipped pen on cardboard box

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

Typewriter case pedestal

Untitled, n.d.

Acrylic on typewriter case

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

In windowed gallery:

Untitled, 2023

Charcoal and mixed media

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

In center of gallery:

Untitled, 2022

Mixed media

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

Untitled, 2022

Mannequins, leather jackets, and posters

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

Taylor created this installation in homage to the Black Panther Party and, in particular, to his brother Randy, who was active in the Party's branch in Ventura, California. The Black Panthers advocated for self-defense and community empowerment, and established social programs—including free food, clothing distribution, and health clinics—to uplift marginalized communities. By including photographs of individuals recently killed by the police alongside mannequins clothed in both the black berets and leather jackets the Panthers typically wore and more contemporary attire, such as Colin Kaepernick's San Francisco 49ers jersey, Taylor connects protests against racial injustice from the past and present.

Taylor describes conceiving an installation to celebrate the Black Panthers.

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1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15

1. Antwon Rose Jr. (2000–2018)
2. Dominique Clayton (1987–2019)
3. Michael Brown (1996–2014)
4. Botham Jean (1991–2018)
5. Christian Taylor (1995–2015)
6. Walter Scott (1965–2015)
7. Elijah McClain (1996–2019)
8. Breonna Taylor (1993–2020)
9. Tamir Rice (2002–2014)
10. Freddie Gray (1989–2015)
11. Jordan Edwards (2001–2017)
12. Amadou Diallo (1976–1999)
13. Sean Bell (1983–2006)
14. Alton Sterling (1979–2016)
15. Philando Castile (1983–2016)

Eldridge Cleaver, 2007

Acrylic on canvas

Private collection

In depicting Eldridge Cleaver, the American writer, political activist, and Black Panther Party Minister of Information, Taylor adapts James McNeill Whistler's 1871 painting *Arrangement in Grey and Black No. 1*, substituting Cleaver for Whistler's mother. Cleaver was a leading voice in the Black liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970s, known for his fiery speeches and radical views, including advocating violent response to police brutality and unequal economic opportunities. Using Whistler's iconic painting as a template for his portrait of Cleaver illustrates Taylor's wide-ranging mining of art history as source material.

Huey Newton, 2007

Acrylic and collaged photocopies on canvas

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; gift of Martin and Rebecca Eisenberg in honor of Adam D. Weinberg 2016.86

Taylor based this painting on a 1967 photograph of Black Panther Party cofounder Huey Newton wearing his characteristic black beret and holding a rifle and a spear, symbols of Newton's call for armed self-defense against racial inequality and oppression. In this portrait, Taylor links Newton's activism to the ongoing fight for racial justice through collaged fragments of news reports of the 2006 police murder of Sean Bell, whose portrait *Homage to a Brother* (2007) is also on view in this gallery.

Homage to a Brother, 2007
Acrylic and collage on linen

The Studio Museum in Harlem; gift of Martin and Rebecca Eisenberg

Homage to a Brother memorializes Sean Bell, a twenty-three-year-old Black man who was killed by plainclothes NYPD officers in Queens, New York, on the eve of his wedding in November 2006. Upon reading of Bell's death, Taylor was struck by how familiar he seemed, like a son or nephew. During a 2007 residency at the Studio Museum in Harlem, he visited Bell's neighborhood, where he gathered tokens of communal love and grief for the deceased—including a gold chain and cardboard letters spelling his name—which he then incorporated into this painting. Taylor's handwritten text includes the words "Sean, I ain't lying, I'm thinking about you. . . . Really I want to say I didn't know you but I love you."

Untitled, 2020
Acrylic on canvas

Private collection

Untitled, 2021
Acrylic on suitcase

Private collection

An example of Taylor's longstanding practice of painting on found items and everyday materials, this painted suitcase depicts Tyler, the Creator—the Grammy Award-winning rapper, singer-songwriter, record producer, and founding member of the music collective Odd Future. Taylor's portrait of his friend on a suitcase references Tyler's proclivity for carrying a suitcase on stage and on red carpets as a form of unabashed self-expression and style.

It's H. I. M., 2012
Acrylic on canvas

Collection of Amy and Harris Schwalb

This portrait of Haile Selassie, the former emperor of Ethiopia, was painted soon after Taylor's trip to that country. Depicted here in military regalia while standing before a throne, Selassie ("His Imperial Majesty," or "H. I. M.") championed the decolonization of African nations and played a pivotal role in establishing the Organization of African Unity, which later became the African Union. Taylor joins Selassie's image with textual references to coffee, Ethiopia's most profitable commodity, and to Tupac Shakur, the globally recognized rapper and actor whose music addressed social inequality, mass incarceration, discrimination, and anti-Black police violence.

A Jack Move — Proved It, 2011
Acrylic on canvas

Collection of Gary and Kathi Cypres

Jackie Robinson was a sports legend who integrated Major League Baseball in 1947 after more than sixty years of segregation. He played in six World Series with the Brooklyn Dodgers, and was key to the team winning the 1955 World Series championship. Robinson used his fame to advocate for racial equality and social justice. The painting's title employs a slang term for robbing someone or something—referring in this case to "Jack" Robinson stealing bases in a baseball game. Taylor slyly hints at this double entendre by including a trail of footprints, possibly leaving the scene of a crime, in the painting's upper left corner.

Untitled, 2021
Acrylic on linen

Collection of Rashid Johnson and Sheree Hovsepian

I Am a Man, 2017
Acrylic on paper

Private collection

Taylor's close-up portrait of the hip-hop mogul and businessman Jay-Z was commissioned for the cover of the 2017 holiday issue of *The New York Times Style Magazine* and painted from memory. The work's title recalls the slogan featured on the picket signs of striking Memphis Sanitation workers in 1968 and used during the Poor People's Campaign for economic justice, led by Martin Luther King Jr., in Washington DC that same year. Applying the phrase to this portrait suggests that even Jay-Z, despite his wealth and cultural status, is not beyond the reach of America's racism and still needs to assert his humanity.

Hamza (“smart”) Walker, 2016

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

Andrea Bowers, 2010

Acrylic on canvas

Private collection

Andrea Bowers talks about what it’s like to pose for Taylor.



Before Gerhard Richter there was Cassi, 2017

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of Jeff Poe and Rosalie Benitez

In *Before Gerhard Richter there was Cassi*, Taylor borrows from Gerhard Richter’s 1988 painting of his then-eleven-year-old daughter Betty to create a portrait of the artist Cassi Namoda. In Taylor’s “cover” of Richter’s painting, he retains Betty’s pink-and-white outfit and her pose of turning away from the viewer, revealing only a sliver of her face.

A young master, 2017
Acrylic on canvas

Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris

This painting imagines the artist Noah Davis as an adolescent. Davis—a cofounder of Los Angeles’s Underground Museum and a multidisciplinary artist whose figurative work portrayed real and imagined scenes of Black life—was a dear friend of Taylor’s and continues to be a significant influence in his life and art. Painting Davis’s portrait two years after his death from a rare form of cancer at age thirty-two was Taylor’s way of “keeping him here and present.”

Deana Lawson in the Lionel Hamptons, 2013
Acrylic on canvas

Collection of Neda Young

Taylor discusses making this portrait.



*Portrait of Rob Pruitt Done While Visiting
Autumn Knight, 2015*
Acrylic on canvas

Collection of Robert A. Pruitt

Portrait of Kahlil Joseph, 2019
Acrylic on canvas

Collection of Steve and Lizzie Blatt

Portrait of Steve Cannon, 2013

Acrylic on canvas

Hudgins Family Collection

Hammons meets a hyena on holiday, 2016

Acrylic on canvas

Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University; museum purchase with additional funds provided by the Blackburn Endowment and Nasher Annual Fund

This painting playfully alters a photograph by Dawoud Bey of the artist David Hammons performing his influential work *Bliz-aard Ball Sale* (1983). In that work, Hammons took on the role of a New York street vendor, selling a selection of snowballs meticulously organized atop a “North African rug” on the sidewalk in front of him. In 2016, the Whitney Museum commissioned Taylor to create a holiday card. Using Bey’s photograph as a springboard, Taylor pays homage to Hammons by depicting the artist standing in front of the Great Mosque of Djenné in Mali selling snowballs with a hyena looking on. In keeping with the holiday spirit of the commission, Taylor replaces the blazer hanging on the gate in Bey’s photo with a Santa Claus robe and adds a reindeer-pulled sleigh in the painting’s upper left corner.

carolina miranda, 2016

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of Jennifer and Dan Gilbert