

HAUSER & WIRTH

Press Release

James Jarvaise & Henry Taylor. Sometimes a straight line has to be crooked

Hauser & Wirth Limmatstrasse
12 June – 5 September 2026



Opening during Zurich Art Weekend 2026, ‘Sometimes a straight line has to be crooked’ is the first European exhibition bringing together the work of Henry Taylor, one of today’s most celebrated artists, in dialogue with that of his teacher, California modernist James Jarvaise (1924 – 2015). It is significant that Taylor’s debut at Hauser & Wirth in Zurich takes place in dialogue with Jarvaise—the artist who saw something special in Taylor when he was a student in the 1980s. The exhibition coincides with Taylor’s major solo exhibition at Musée national Picasso-Paris, opening 8 April 2026.

Travelling from Hauser & Wirth Los Angeles, the exhibition will feature over seven decades of works that explore the artists’ mutual interest in the figure and landscape. On view will be paintings and drawings from Jarvaise’s Hudson River School series, which was included in the famous 1959 exhibition ‘Sixteen Americans’ at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, in which Jay DeFeo, Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg and Frank Stella also debuted as emerging artists. These historic works will be presented along with modernist collages from the 1950s and figurative paintings from the 1960s that were specifically chosen by Taylor. Encapsulating more than three decades, Taylor’s own work is represented by over 40 paintings to concentrate on portraits of friends, family and strangers, figure studies, neighborhood scenes and landscapes.

Henry Taylor credits James Jarvaise with having been the first to recognize his talents in the early 1980s. At the time, Taylor was supporting himself as a psychiatric technician at the Camarillo State Mental Hospital while pursuing a range of interests, including classes in journalism, cultural anthropology and set design at Oxnard College. There, he repeatedly enrolled in Jarvaise’s painting class, where he was introduced to the works of Max Beckmann, Jean Dubuffet, Philip Guston, Cy Twombly and other modernists who were entirely new to him. The title is taken from advice Jarvaise imparted to his student: the words of a vital teacher who offered Taylor many lessons on how to build a painting with integrity.

When exhibited together, the works of Jarvaise and Taylor appear to be in clear dialogue with one another. Works such as Jarvaise’s Hudson River School Series, alongside Taylor’s paintings featuring landscapes, have a strikingly similar resonance and shared sensibility. ‘Sometimes a straight line has to be

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crooked' connects Jarvaise and Taylor formally—works on view spotlight the two artists' approaches to massing flat shapes that move between figuration and abstraction, and their talent for deploying off-beat colors, strong tones, straight horizons and curvaceous lines—and unites them energetically across time.

About James Jarvaise

A California regionalist who taught generations of students at schools in and around Los Angeles, James Jarvaise gained national acclaim when his work was included in the historic 1959 exhibition 'Sixteen Americans' at The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Writing for *The New Yorker*, critic Robert Coates commended 'the coolly green, strongly linear group of abstract oils called 'Hudson River Series,' all with landscape motifs, by James Jarvaise.' Over subsequent years, Jarvaise exhibited regularly at the Felix Landau gallery in Los Angeles and elsewhere before turning his focus to home: after moving his family to Santa Barbara in 1970, Jarvaise dedicated his time to crafting an artist's paradise where he continued to work in peaceful privacy. In 2012, a survey of his work at Louis Stern gallery in Los Angeles was accompanied by a monograph. Over the course of his teaching career, Jarvaise was affiliated with USC, California Institute of the Arts (formerly Chouinard Arts Institute), Occidental College, Santa Barbara Art Institute and Oxnard College, where he retired in 2004. Prominent among generations of his students are Charles Arnoldi, David Novros, Peter Plagens, Henry Taylor and Robert Therrien. His work was collected by museums including the Albright Knox Gallery, Buffalo; Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; The Museum of Modern Art, New York and the Smithsonian's Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden.

About Henry Taylor

Henry Taylor lives and works in Los Angeles CA. His work will be the subject of a major solo exhibition at Musée national Picasso-Paris, opening 8 April 2026. In 2022, a survey exhibition dedicated to the artist, 'Henry Taylor: B Side,' his largest to date, was exhibited at The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles CA and was then on view at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York NY until January 2024. Taylor's work was recently featured in the following group exhibitions: 'Flight into Egypt: Black Artists and Ancient Egypt, 1976–Now' at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York NY; 'The Time is Always Now: Artists Reframe the Black Figure' at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia PA and 'World Without End: The George Washington Carver Project' at the California African American Museum, Los Angeles CA. Taylor's work is in prominent public collections including the Bourse de Commerce – Pinault Collection, Paris, France, Broad Museum, Los Angeles CA, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh PA, The Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris, France, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles CA, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington DC, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston MA, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles CA, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

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NY, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles CA, Museum of Fine Art, Houston TX, Museum of Modern Art, New York NY, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco CA, The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York NY, and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York NY. In 2018, Taylor was the recipient of The Robert De Niro, Sr. Prize in 2018 for his outstanding achievements in painting. Taylor's work was presented at the Whitney Biennial at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York NY in 2017 and the 58th Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy in 2019.

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Opening hours:

Tue – Fri, 11 am – 6pm
Sat, 11 am – 5 pm

www.hauserwirth.com

Caption and courtesy information:

James Jarvaise
Hudson River School Series (Segora Hills)
1963
Oil on canvas
139.7 x 127 x 4.4 cm / 55 x 50 x 1 3/4 in
© The Estate of James Jarvaise
Courtesy the Estate and Hauser & Wirth
Photo: Keith Lubow

Henry Taylor
Untitled
2022
Acrylic on canvas
213.4 x 182.9 x 4.4 cm / 84 x 72 x 1 3/4 in
© Henry Taylor
Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth
Photo: Fredrik Nilsen

Henry Taylor
James Jarvaise, "Sometimes the 'straight' line has to be crooked" Santa Barbara, CA
2015 - 2025
Acrylic on canvas
182.9 x 152.4 x 3.2 cm / 72 x 60 x 1 1/4 in
© Henry Taylor
Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth
Photo: Jeff McLane

James Jarvaise
Man in the Room
1963
Oil on canvas
152.4 x 152.4 x 2.5 cm / 60 x 60 x 1 in
© The Estate of James Jarvaise
Courtesy the Estate and Hauser & Wirth
Photo: Keith Lubow

James Jarvaise
Man by Fountain
1962
Oil on canvas
30.5 x 30.5 x 2.5 cm / 12 x 12 x 1 in
© The Estate of James Jarvaise
Courtesy the Estate and Hauser & Wirth
Photo: Keith Lubow

Henry Taylor
Elan
2013
Acrylic on canvas
50.8 x 40.6 x 1.6 cm / 20 x 16 x 5/8 in
© Henry Taylor
Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth
Photo: Jeff McLane