

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Henry Taylor
Here and There

Blum & Poe, Tokyo
March 24 – May 19, 2018
Opening reception: Saturday, March 24, 6 – 8pm

Blum & Poe is pleased to present an exhibition of new paintings by Los Angeles-based artist Henry Taylor. This is the artist's fifth solo exhibition with the gallery, and his first presentation in Japan.

Although often initiated by spontaneous encounters and intuitive connections with his sitters, Taylor's portraits carry a visual lexicon that he has developed over decades. He paints the individuals who surround him – friends, family, acquaintances – as well as notable figures of the African American community – musicians, activists, athletes. Sometimes painful chapters of Taylor's past are hidden or alluded to in symbols and signifiers, other times he employs unmistakable imagery that speaks to the facets of systemic oppression that affect Black life today and previously. His work articulates a certain empathy with and understanding of his subjects, these representations always imbued with dignity.

As curator Laura Hoptman once wrote, "For Taylor, though, portraiture is much more than an artistic convention of a realistic painter; the variety that he produces within the genre reshapes what might be considered a conventional language into a flexible vehicle for a much larger goal, which is to produce a multivalent but also highly specific view of contemporary life as seen through the eyes of an African American artist at the beginning of the twenty-first century."

This new suite of paintings was created during Taylor's travels over the past year through Lisbon, Tangiers, Accra, Antiparos, Paris, Guadalajara, and Havana. Self-portraits, domestic interiors, street scenes, and landscapes portray the figures and scenarios that Taylor encountered, a chronicle of his expeditions and of his roving community.

The first major monograph covering Taylor's life and work will be released this fall 2018, published by Blum & Poe and Rizzoli Electa, featuring contributions by Hilton Als, Charles Gaines, Rachel Kaadzi Ghansah, Sarah Lewis, and Zadie Smith.

Henry Taylor was born in Ventura, CA (1958) and received a BFA from the California Institute of the Arts. Recent solo exhibitions include *the floaters*, High Line Art, New York, NY (2017); *This Side, That Side*, The Mistake Room, Guadalajara, Mexico (2016); *They shot my dad, they shot my dad!*, Artpace, San Antonio, TX (2015); and a retrospective at MoMA PS1, Long Island City, NY (2012). His work has been featured in group exhibitions in museums worldwide including the Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY (2017); *Why Art Matters!*, Torrance Art Museum, Torrance, CA (2017); Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst, Ghent, Belgium (2016); Astrup Fearnley Museet,

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Oslo, Norway (2016); Whitney Museum of American Art, New York NY (2016); Hammer Museum at Art + Practice, Los Angeles, CA (2016); Camden Arts Centre, London, UK (2016); Studio Museum, Harlem, NY (2013); Carnegie International, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA (2013); Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA (2012); Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA (2011); and the Rubell Family Collection, Miami, FL (2011).

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