



Devening Projects

TAJ MATUMBI

The Lower World

March 22 - April 26, 2026

Devening Projects

3039 West Carroll, Chicago, IL 60612 USA

312.420.4720 [deveningprojects.com](http://deveningprojects.com)

[dan@deveningprojects.com](mailto:dan@deveningprojects.com)

Devening Projects invites you to *The Lower World*, the first solo exhibition of recent paintings and drawings by Madison, Wisconsin-based artist by Taj Matumbi. The exhibition opens with a reception for the artist on Sunday, March 22 and continues until April 25, 2026.

Raised in Northern California, Taj Matumbi was shaped by skating culture, where skateboarding became his earliest form of self-expression. The lesson it taught; commitment to style and speed continue to shape his painting practice. Like the subtle variations in landing a hundred kickflips, his process involves creating multiple versions of a painting, seeking consistency while embracing change.

Prior to working figuratively, his practice was rooted in intuitive and formal abstraction. While in graduate school, he began a drawing practice which was based on the memories of characters he drew in his childhood. These drawings became a generative archive, functioning as compositional studies that later informed his paintings.

The constant in his painting is rooted in his obsession with formal and conceptual implications of the multiple. Through repetition and variation, he developed a language of flat, abstract figuration that blends autobiography, art history, and American history. This group of paintings formally explore night as a space of moral ambiguity, psychological projection, and compressed narratives.

Influenced by Hieronymus Bosch and Bob Thompson, the paintings interrogate Renaissance humanist ideals surrounding morality and spirituality, particularly their contradictions and failures. Night becomes the setting in which these values destabilize, remaining culturally resonant within the contemporary moment.

Currently living in Madison, Wisconsin, Taj Matumbi earned an MFA in Painting from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2021 and received a BFA in Ceramics and Painting from Maharishi International University in 2018.

Matumbi has presented two solo museum exhibitions, including at the Museum of Wisconsin Art's satellite gallery in Milwaukee and at the Paul R. Jones Museum at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa (2025). In 2025, he also participated in the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art Triennial and presented a solo exhibition at SooVac Gallery in Minneapolis. His paintings were featured recently in the Madison Museum of Wisconsin Art Triennial and is currently on view at the 2026 Museum of Wisconsin Art Biennial.

He has participated in numerous national group exhibitions in New York, Los Angeles, Birmingham, Seattle, Madison, and Minneapolis. His work is held in the permanent collections of the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts; the Paul R. Jones Museum, Tuscaloosa; the Wiregrass Museum of Art; and the Louisiana State University Museum of Art.





Taj Matumbi, Chicanery, 2026, acrylic on canvas, 48 x 60 inches  
\$3600





Taj Matumbi, Hoople Head, 2026, acrylic and graphite on canvas, 48 x 36 inches  
\$3000

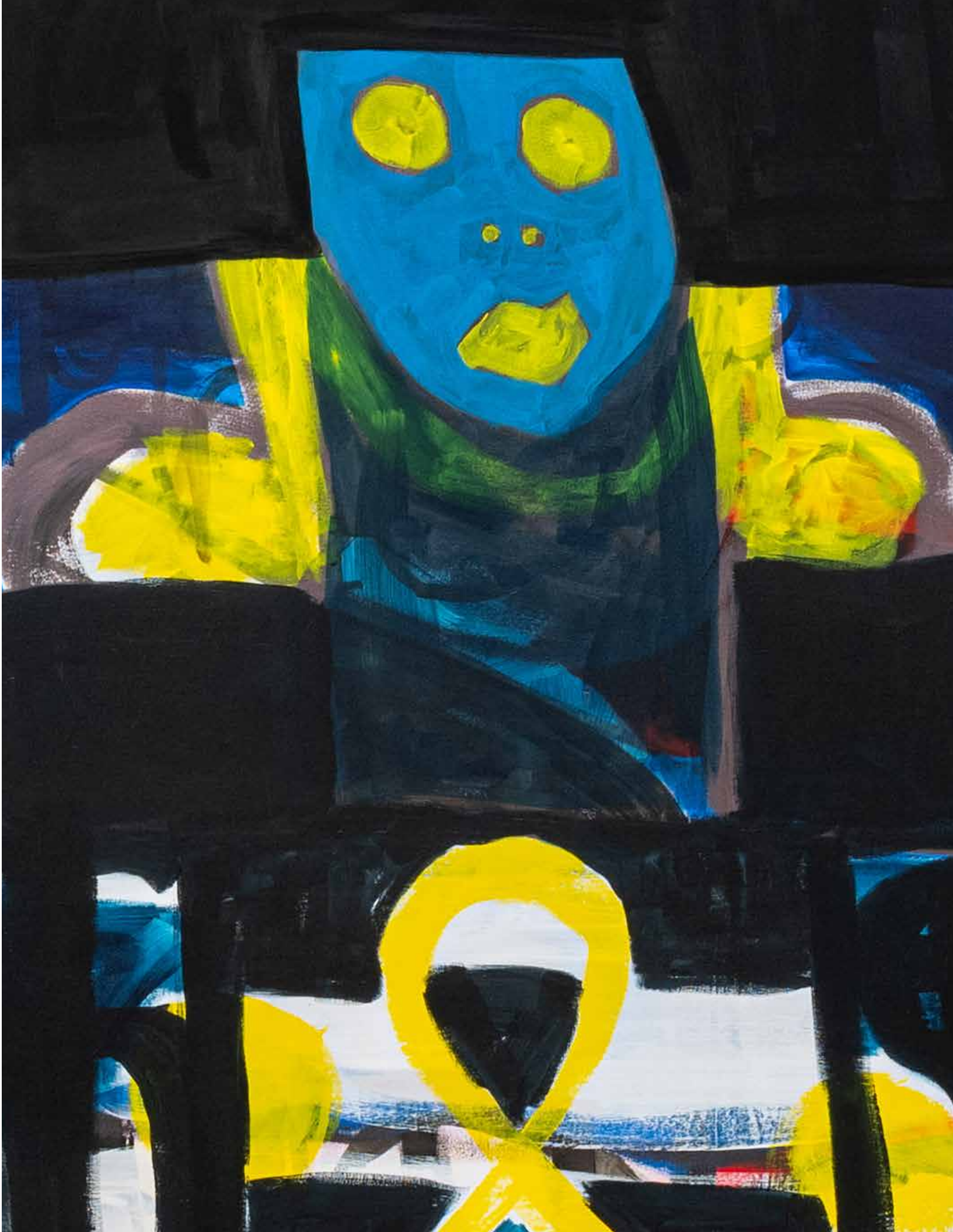
6.



Taj Matumbi, Wile, 2026, acrylic and graphite on canvas, 48 x 36 inches  
\$3600

7.





Taj Matumbi, Old Fashioned, 2025, acrylic and Flashe on canvas, 48 x 60 inches  
\$3600





Taj Matumbi, The Equatorial, 2025, acrylic and Flashe on canvas, 60 x 48 inches  
\$3600



Taj Matumbi, *After the Fourth Cup*, 2026, acrylic and graphite on canvas, 36 x 48 inches  
\$3000

16.



Taj Matumbi, *The Wall*, 2026, acrylic, Flashe and graphite on canvas, 30 x 48 inches  
\$2400

17.



Taj Matumbi, Untitled, 2024, Posca on paper, 6.5 x 8.5 inches  
\$500 unframed



Taj Matumbi, Untitled, 2024, Posca on paper, 9.5 x 12 inches  
\$650 unframed





Taj Matumbi, Untitled, 2026, Ball-point pen and Posca on paper, 8.5 x 6.5 inches  
\$500 unframed



Taj Matumbi, Untitled, 2026, pastel on paper, 12 x 9.5 inches  
\$650 unframed



Taj Matumbi, Untitled, 2023, pastel on paper, 8.5 x 6.5 inches  
\$500 unframed

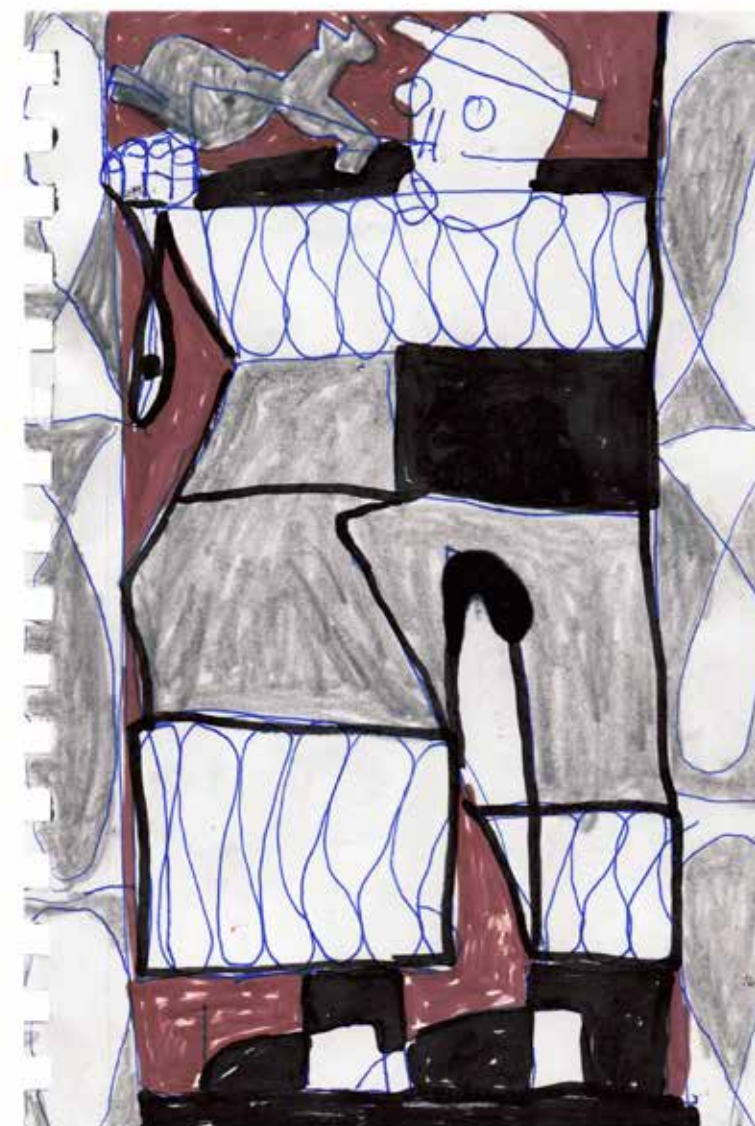


Taj Matumbi, Untitled, 2023, pastel on paper, 8.5 x 6.5 inches  
\$500 unframed





Taj Matumbi, Untitled, 2023, Posca and graphite on paper, 8.5 x 6.5 inches  
\$500 unframed



Taj Matumbi, Untitled, 2023, Posca, ball-point pen and graphite on paper, 8.5 x 6.5 inches  
\$500 unframed



Taj Matumbi, Untitled, 2023, pastel on paper, 8.5 x 6.5 inches  
\$500 unframed



