

Taj Matumbi
The Lower World
March 22 - April 25, 2026



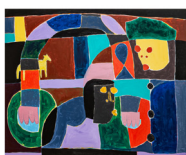
Hoople Head, 2026
acrylic and graphite on canvas
48 x 36 inches



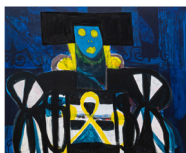
Wile, 2026
acrylic and graphite on canvas
48 x 36 inches



The Wall, 2026
acrylic, Flashe and graphite on canvas, 30 x 40 inches



Chicanery, 2026
acrylic on canvas
48 x 60 inches



Old Fashioned, 2025
acrylic and Flashe on canvas
48 x 60 inches



Boomerang, 2024
acrylic on canvas
60 x 48 inches



The Equatorial, 2025
acrylic and Flashe on canvas
60 x 48 inches

Devening Projects



After the Fourth Cup, 2026
acrylic and graphite on canvas
36 x 48 inches



1. Untitled, 2024, Posca, pastels on paper, 9.5 x 12 inches
2. Untitled, 2024, Posca on paper, 6.5 x 8.5 inches
3. Untitled, 2025, Posca on paper, 11 x 14 inches
4. Untitled, 2026, Ball-point pen and Posca on paper, 8.5 x 6.5 inches
5. Untitled, 2026, pastel on paper, 12 x 9.5 inches
6. Untitled, 2026, Ball-point pen and Posca on paper, 8.5 x 6.5 inches
7. Untitled, 2025, Pen and Posca on paper, 11 x 14 inches
8. Untitled, 2025, Posca on paper, 12 x 9.5 inches

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Devening Projects

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

Raised in Northern California and shaped by skating culture, Matumbi found in skateboarding his earliest form of self-expression. The discipline's commitment to style and speed continue to inform 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. In graduate school, he began a drawing practice based on childhood characters from memory, developing a generative archive of compositional studies that would later inform his paintings.

Through repetition and variation, Matumbi has developed a language of shallow, abstract figuration that blends autobiography, art history and American history. The paintings in *The Lower World* use an emergent formal vocabulary to explore *night* as a space of moral ambiguity, psychological projection and compressed narrative. Influenced by Hieronymus Bosch and Bob Thompson, the works 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.

Taj Matumbi earned an MFA in Painting from the University of Wisconsin–Madison (2021) and a BFA in Ceramics and Painting from Maharishi International University (2018). He 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, 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.

Taj Matumbi's 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.