



MICHAEL TAYLOR
THE JUNGLE HUSBAND



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Michael Taylor (born 1979) is a South African artist who lives and works in Cape Town. He studied at Stellenbosch University, where he completed his Master's Degree in Visual Art. Primarily working in the mediums of painting and drawing, his work explores notions around narrative art, absorbing ideas from illustration and abstract representation. In 2013, Taylor was shortlisted as 100 Young Painters of Tomorrow by Thames & Hudson. In addition to numerous private collections Taylor's work is also included in the Woodner Collection New York. To date Taylor has held nine solo exhibitions and has shown single artist presentations at art fairs in London, New York and Amsterdam. This is his second solo exhibition with M Contemporary.

THE JUNGLE HUSBAND

AN EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS BY MICHAEL TAYLOR

"I received a collection of poems by Stevie Smith for my twenty seventh birthday. Unfamiliar with her work, my friend told me that I would find her writing humorous and imaginative. This was true, and particularly so about 'The Jungle Husband'. Its imagery resonated with me tremendously. And for years I would favour it as a text for illustration students to interpret as a visual narrative. Now, no longer teaching, returning to the story as I always do, I decided to draw my own version of it. Looking at each line of the poem individually, I created a series of portrait moments for Smith's troubled character."

-Michael Taylor

Taylor's jungle husband is in conversation with himself. He is alone in his wilderness, except for the company of an imaginary friend, and the occasional appearance of the devil. Dressed confidently, he seems familiar and at ease with the nature of things in his private world. He is, in Taylor's depiction, the jungle's husband.

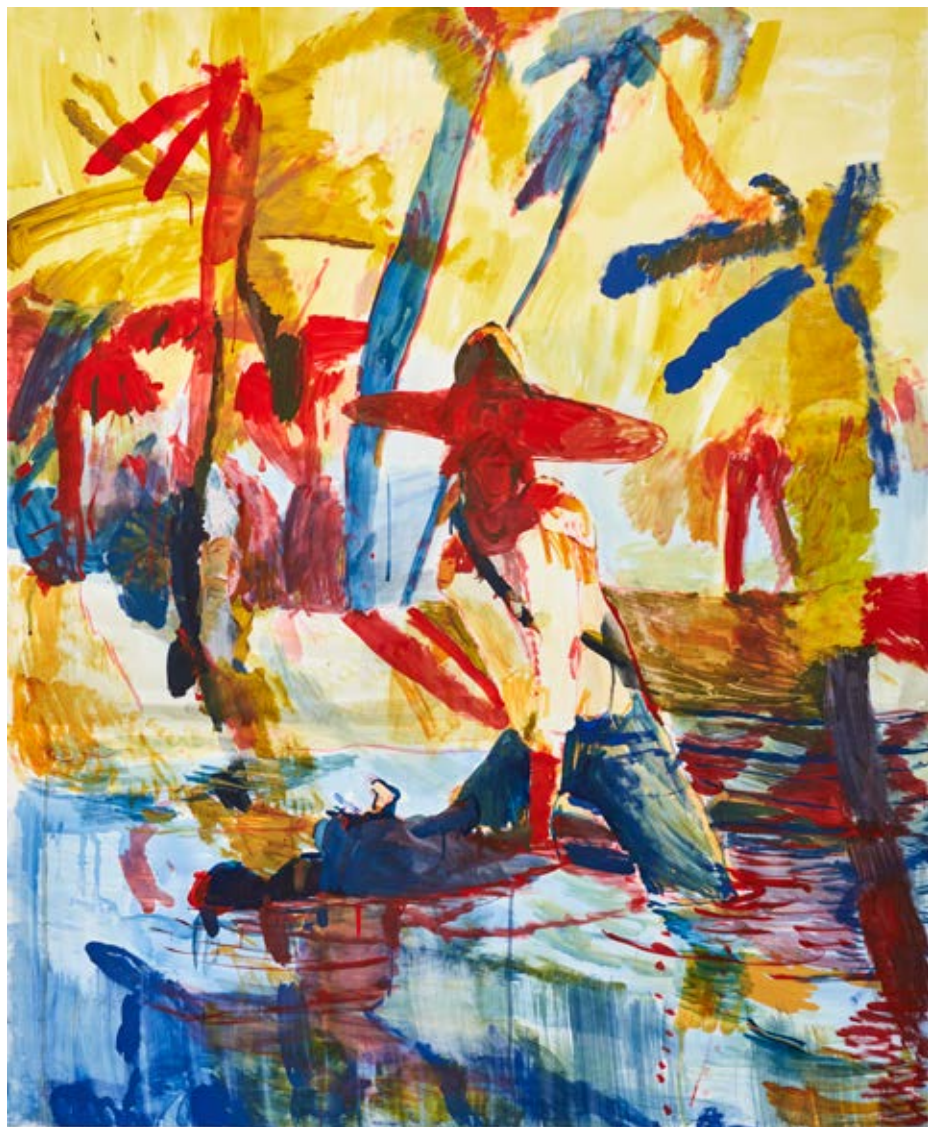
In his portraits, Taylor explores notions around masculinity, selfhood, and personal mythology. Themes of disillusionment, escapism, solitude, and longing, were important for the artist's own interpretation of Stevie Smith's poem. Contradicting the idealised image of a husband, this character represents an antihero for Taylor.



Dearest Evelyn, I often think of you, 2016
Gouache on paper
150 x 125 cm



Out with the guns in the jungle stew, 2016
Gouache on paper
150 x 125 cm



Yesterday I hittapotamus, 2016
Gouache on paper
150 x 125 cm



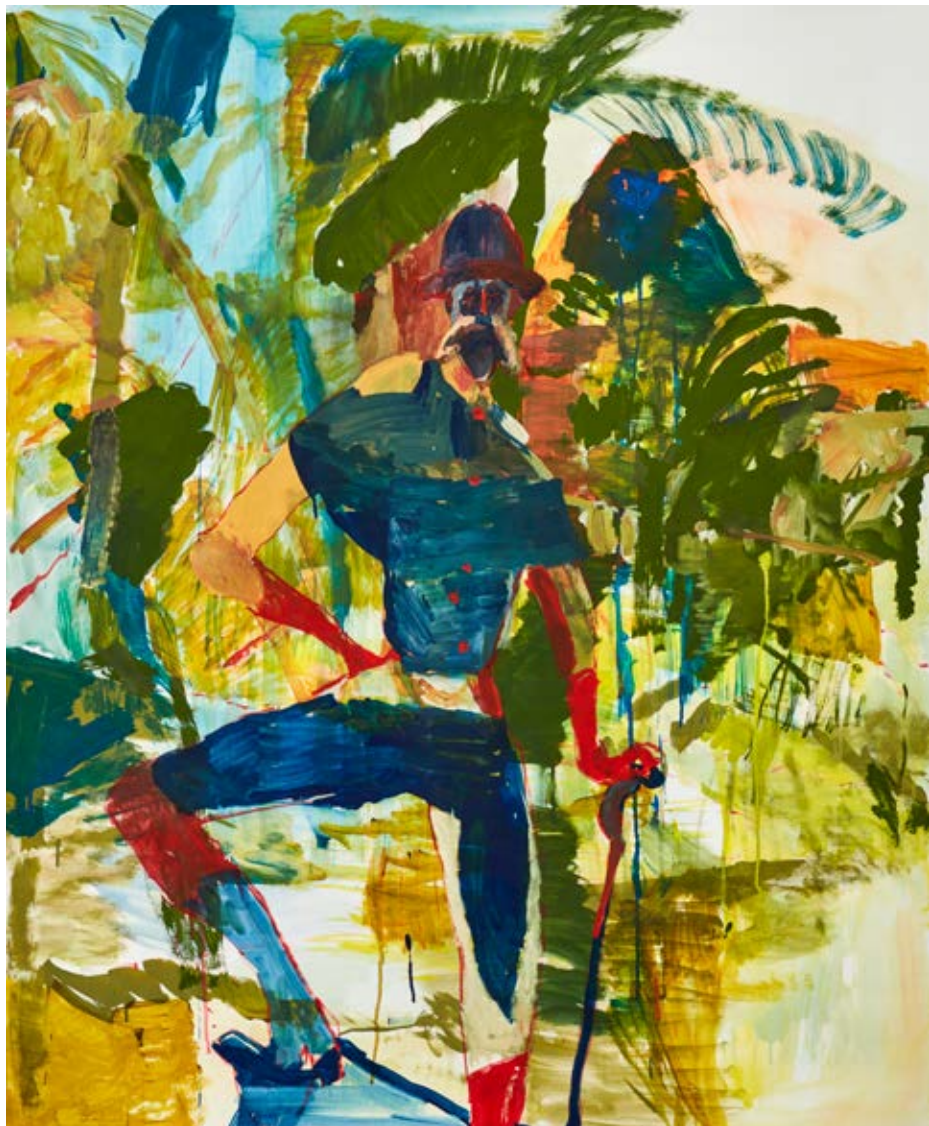
*I put the measurements down for you
but they got lost in the fuss, 2016*
Gouache on paper
150 x 125 cm



It's not good to drink out here, 2016
Gouache on paper
150 x 125 cm



You know I've practically given up dear, 2016
Gouache on paper
150 x 125 cm



Tomorrow I am going alone a long way, 2016
Gouache on paper
150 x 125 cm



Into the jungle. It is all gray, 2016
Gouache on paper
150 x 125 cm



But green on top, 2016
Gouache on paper
150 x 125 cm



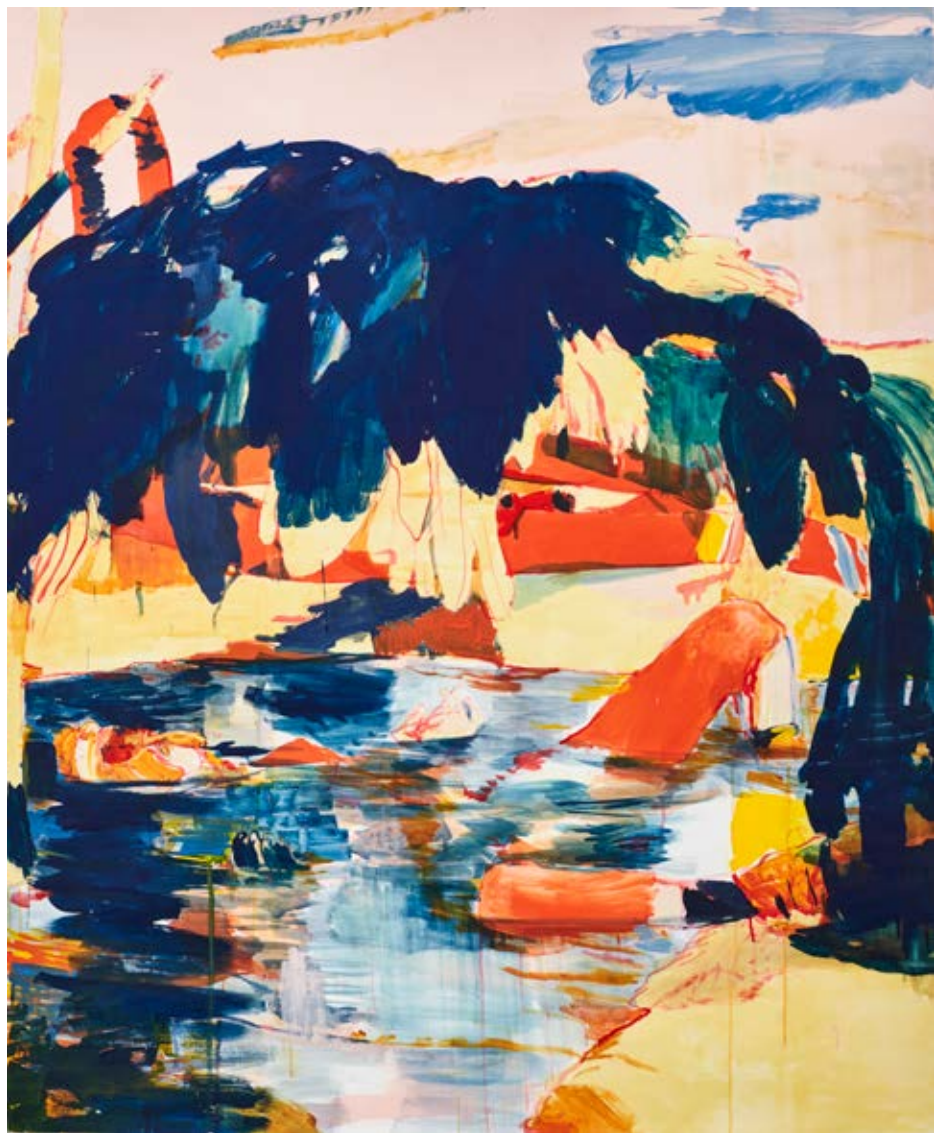
Only sometimes when a tree has fallen, 2016
Gouache on paper
150 x 125 cm



The sun comes down pop, it is quite appalling, 2016
Gouache on paper
150 x 125 cm



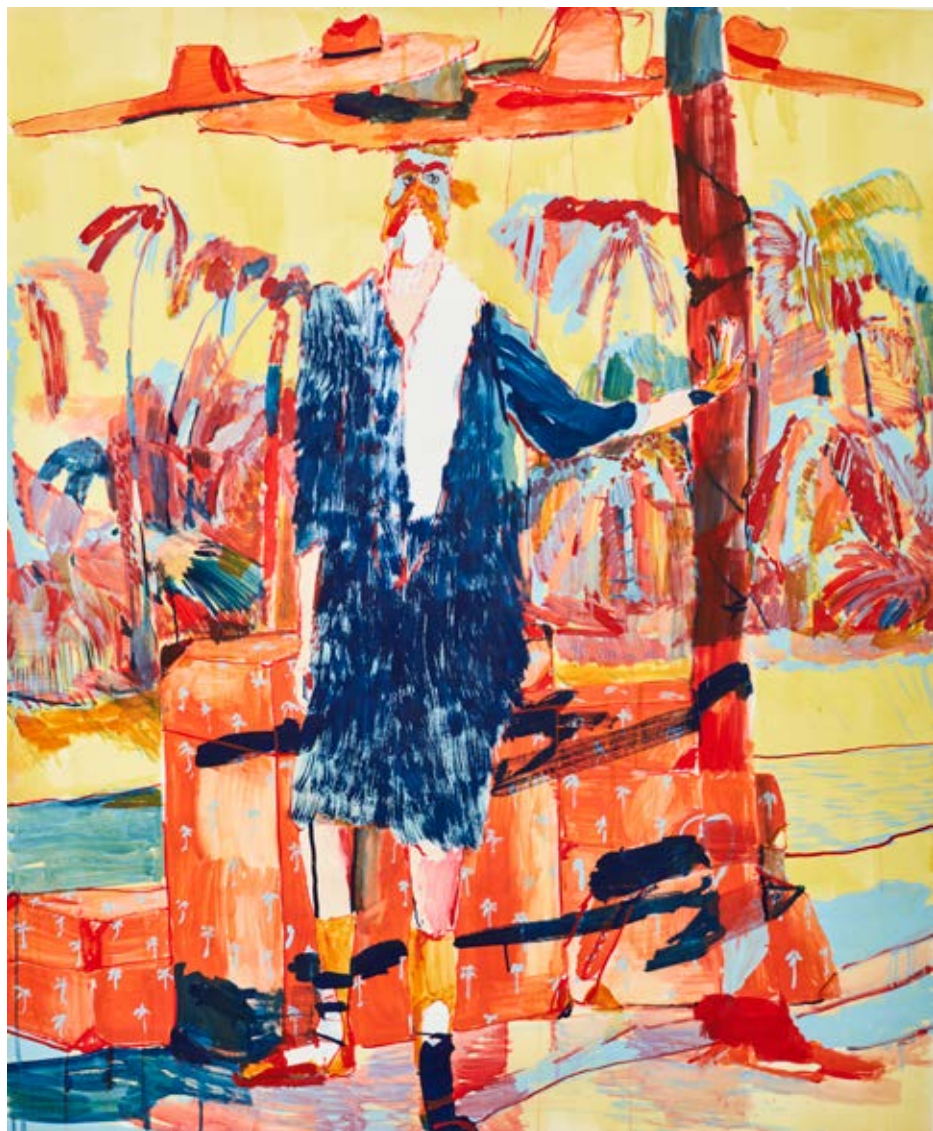
You never want to go in a jungle pool, 2016
Gouache on paper
150 x 125 cm



In the hot sun, it would be the act of a fool, 2016
Gouache on paper
150 x 125 cm



Because it's always full of anacondas, Evelyn, not looking ill fed, 2016
Gouache on paper
150 x 125 cm



I'll say. So no more now, from your loving husband Wilfred, 2016
Gouache on paper
150 x 125 cm



Titles are taken from Stevie Smith's poem, *The Jungle Husband* - first published in 1957.
All paintings are signed with the same titles and acknowledge the original text and author.



Contemporary is a gallery space that aims to create a cross-cultural conversation through exhibiting and supporting emerging and established artists from around the world. Since opening in Sydney in 2013, we have aimed to foster a strong appreciation for a new generation of Australian artists and to expose them to a wide audience of both novice and established collectors.

.M Contemporary has a strong focus on supporting these artists' ongoing presence through regular exhibitions and participation in international and local art fairs.

We see ourselves as progressive, diverse and all-encompassing, a place where artists are nurtured and supported while being exposed to a far-reaching yet astute audience.



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