

The Drawings of Al Taylor

FEBRUARY 21–MAY 24, 2020

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The
Morgan
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Museum

Untitled: (Captiva), 1974

Ink, correction fluid, and graphite, with two sheets of onionskin paper taped to paper

Collection Debbie Taylor

This drawing was inspired by a trip to Captiva, the island off the west coast of Florida where artist Robert Rauschenberg, whom Taylor met in 1974, lived part of the year. Despite the recognizable image of a palm tree trunk, Taylor's interest in materiality and texture is evident in the two sheets of onionskin paper he taped to the primary support and in his application of ink on both the recto and verso of the sheet. The resulting tension between a formalist, self-referential emphasis and reference to the real world would remain an important characteristic of Taylor's work.

Untitled (McGrath), 1982

**Acrylic paint on printed magazine pages mounted on paper
The Morgan Library & Museum. Gift of Debbie Taylor;
2019.121**

When he traveled to Africa in 1980, Taylor became fascinated with the conception of time he encountered, more fluid than the twenty-four-hour cycle of the Western world. During the following years he conceived several series of works in which he tried “to visualize time.” “I would like my art to be like looking at a clock,” he explained, “a combination of choices, always changing, effortless, and irreversible.” The motif in the present work evokes at once a clock and a wheel, also a symbol of time. The use of pages from the *New York Times Magazine* reflects Taylor’s desire to rely on materials at hand, another lesson rooted in his time in Africa. “There is no trash there,” he recalled. “They use everything.”

***Untitled (The Hemingway Mystique)*, ca. 1982**
Watercolor and photocopy of magazine clipping
The Estate of Al Taylor

No title, ca. 1982
Watercolor
The Estate of Al Taylor

No title, ca. 1983
Ink
The Estate of Al Taylor

No title, ca. 1985

Acrylic paint on printed magazine page

Collection Debbie Taylor

No title, ca. 1985

Acrylic paint on printed magazine page

Private collection

No title, 1986

Acrylic paint on printed magazine page

The Estate of Al Taylor

No title, 31 October 1958

Gouache, ballpoint pen, and graphite on page of spiral-bound sketchbook

The Estate of Al Taylor

Executed when Taylor was ten years old, this drawing prefigures two features of the artist's later work: a predilection for shadows and the role of pets, which would culminate with the Pet Stains series of the early 1990s. Taylor often referred to pets when talking about art: "Let's say my cat walked across some wet ink on a piece of paper that was drying, that would normally make me a little angry. But if the cat could draw good, that would make me a little happy."

No title, 1975

Watercolor, ink, and ballpoint pen on page of spiral-bound sketchbook

The Estate of Al Taylor

“Draw one object from 3 views . . . ,” 1987

Watercolor, ballpoint pen, and graphite on page of spiral-bound sketchbook

The Estate of Al Taylor

Study for Mark Twain,

July 1987

Graphite and ink

The Estate of Al Taylor

A wooden pallet found on the street prompted this sculpture, which takes the form of a two-part raft in homage to Mark Twain, Taylor's fellow Missourian and one of his heroes. The artist shared the writer's dry sense of humor and fondness for making up stories—especially nonsensical ones.

***Untitled*, December 1986/July 1987**
Ink, enamel spray paint, and graphite
Private collection

***Wooden Drum Shell*, 1988**
Gouache, ink, and graphite
The Estate of Al Taylor

***Aug 13, 1987*, 13 August 1987**
Graphite and watercolor
Collection Debbie Taylor

***Lava*, November 1987**
Graphite, ink, and gouache
The Estate of Al Taylor

***Wire Instrument*, 1989**
Gouache, ink, and graphite
Collection Debbie Taylor

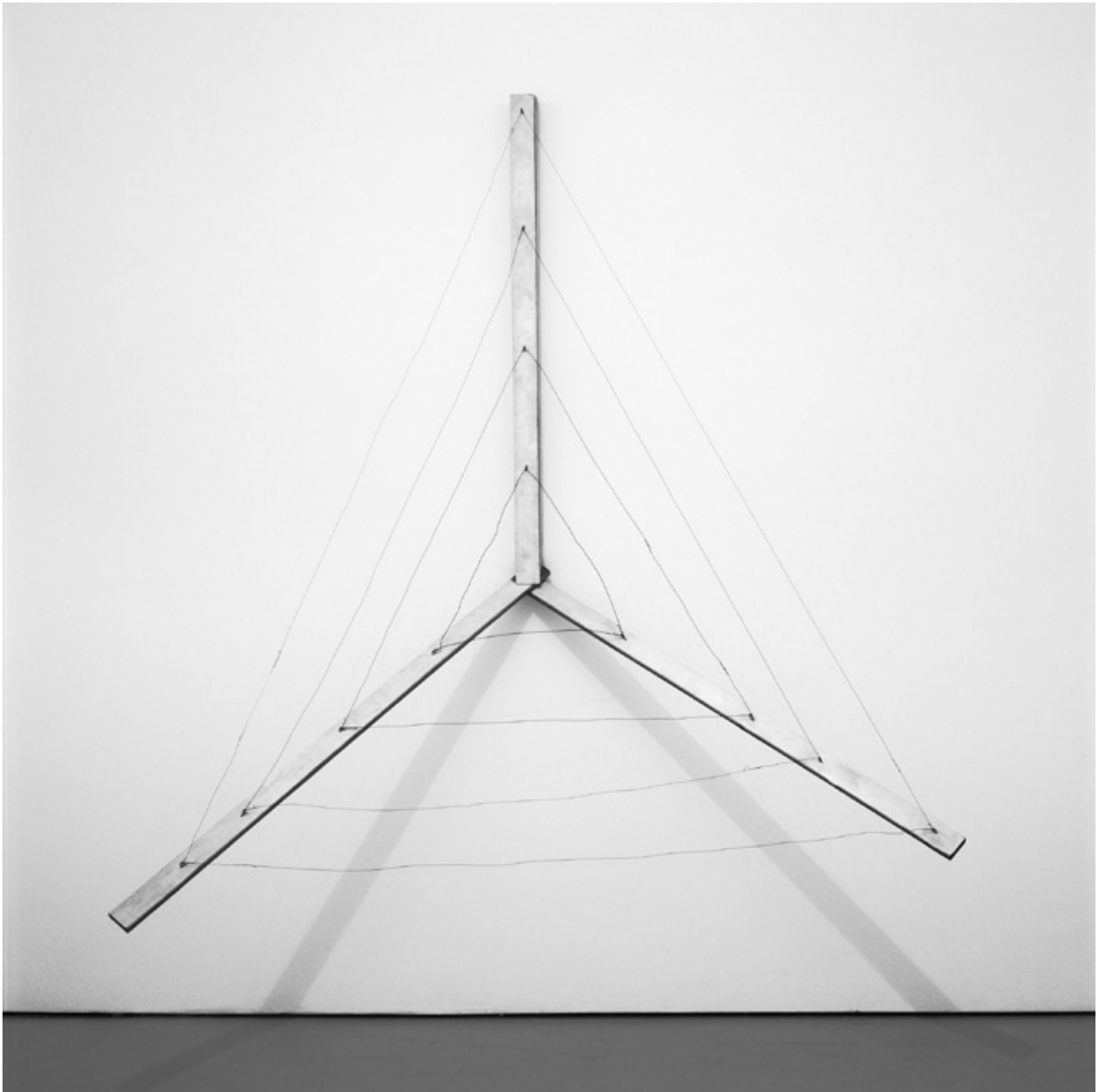
***Untitled (Tube Art)*, 1987**
Graphite, watercolor, and ink on page torn from
spiral-bound sketchbook
The Estate of Al Taylor

No title, 1989

**Graphite and ink on page torn from
spiral-bound sketchbook**

Susan and Leonard Nimoy

Taylor's Wire Instrument series epitomizes the proximity of sculpture to drawing in his work. Not only does wire materialize a line in space but its lightness and unassuming quality also relate to the modesty of drawing as a medium. The wall, to which the Wire Instrument sculptures are attached and on which the shadow becomes an integral element of the piece, plays a role similar to the sheet of paper in a drawing.



Untitled: (Wire Instrument), 1989. Wood, latex paint, and wire; 75½ x 72 x 33 inches (191.8 x 182.9 x 83.8 cm). The Estate of Al Taylor. © The Estate of Al Taylor, photography by Glenn Steigelman.

Layson a Stick, 1989

Graphite, gouache, colored ink, and correction fluid

Collection Debbie Taylor

Taylor described how he made the sculpture represented in this drawing: “I joined some broomsticks together imprecisely, causing a slight angle, and then I attached them to the wall with wires in a manner that played up this downward angle. At the point where the angle starts to droop I hung on some plastic Hawaiian leis. That started me thinking about the words ‘lei’ and ‘lay’—‘lay’ on a stick. So now on an adolescent level the work became a visual analogy for the sexual act . . . but, more importantly, it was a good excuse for using color. . . . Then it dawned on me that ‘lays on’ sounds like the French word ‘liaison’ which completed a circle of logic.”

Wagler's Pit Viper (Hair Style), 1986

Watercolor and ink

The Estate of Al Taylor

Taylor's admiration for African hairstyles prompted him to draw imaginary ones, to which he assigned playful titles. The series signaled a move away from abstraction and the introduction of everyday imagery in his work. At the same time, it ushered in a freedom to "use an element of humor in art," a shift Taylor also credited to his African experience. Stylistically, the loose handling and layered washes may have been influenced by the interest in calligraphy he developed after seeing an exhibition of Japanese calligraphy in New York in 1984.

Adolescent Sex (Hair Style), 1986

Watercolor

The Estate of Al Taylor

Indoor Sun Dial, 1988

**Black and colored ink and graphite on page torn from
spiral-bound sketchbook**

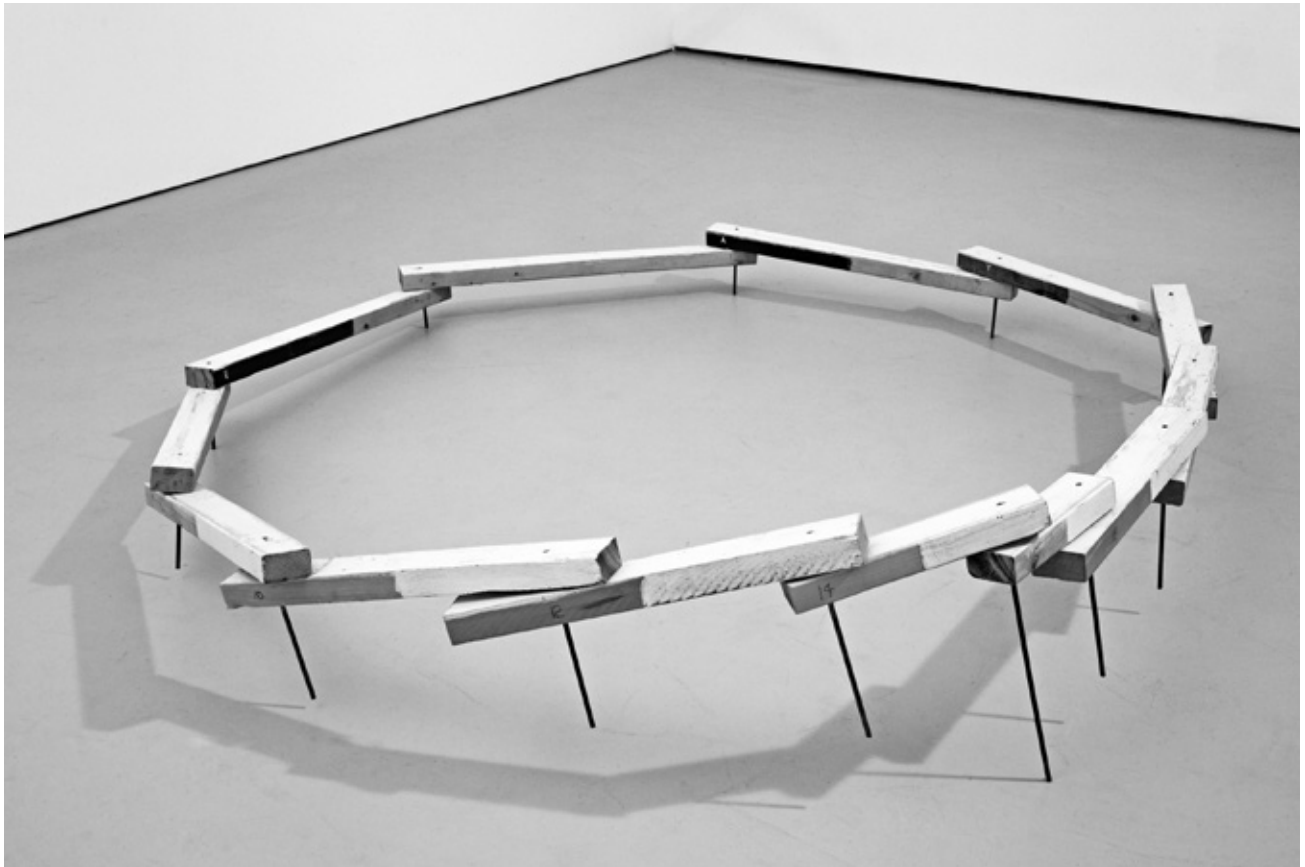
Private collection

Odd Vows, 1988

Watercolor, colored ink, graphite, and correction fluid

**Private collection, London; Promised gift, British Museum,
Department of Prints & Drawings**

Although some of Taylor's drawings were preparatory studies for sculptures, most of them, including the present one, were painterly renderings made during or after the fabrication of a piece. This drawing shows one possible configuration for its related sculpture, whose moving joints could be twisted in different directions. Despite the numbers and letters inscribed on the wooden boards, the nuanced brushwork and suggestion of light and shadow reveal Taylor's attraction to drawing as a form of painting rather than as a conceptual medium.



Odd Vows, 1988. Wood, latex and acrylic paint, correction fluid, graphite, and steel rods; variable dimensions, maximum 14 x 78 x 67 inches (35.6 x 198.1 x 170.2 cm), minimum 14 x 38 x 50 inches (35.6 x 96.5 x 127 cm). The Estate of Al Taylor. © The Estate of Al Taylor, photography by Glenn Steigelman.

No title, 1988

Watercolor, colored ink, and graphite

Aaron and Barbara Levine

Odd/Even, 1989

Gouache, watercolor, ink, and graphite

Private family collection, Brooklyn

No title, 1989

Ink, graphite, and acrylic paint on page torn from spiral-bound sketchbook

Collection David and Monica Zwirner

Doupple Ganger, 1989

Gouache, ink, and graphite

Collection of Gail and Tony Ganz

Hanging @ Folding Study, 1991

Graphite, gouache, and correction fluid

Collection Debbie Taylor

Hanging Puddles, 1992

Ink, graphite, and correction fluid

**National Gallery of Art, Washington. Gift of Debbie Taylor
in honor of Judith Brodie, 2018**

Hanging Puddles (Cornered Puddles), 1991

Graphite

The Estate of Al Taylor

Study for Fold, Hang, Flood, 1991

Xerographic toner fixed with solvent, and graphite

The Estate of Al Taylor

Lazarus Puddle, 1991

**Xerographic toner fixed with solvent, and graphite
Collection Debbie Taylor**

The title of this drawing refers to the figure of Lazarus, who, according to the Gospel of John, had been dead for four days when Jesus restored him to life—a miracle that is a common subject in Western art. With a touch of irreverence, Taylor applied the name to a puddle raised improbably from the ground by means of a wire contraption.

No title (bus plans of Paris), September 1990

Graphite and gouache on page of spiral-bound sketchbook

The Estate of Al Taylor

During a trip to Paris in September 1990, Taylor made drawings based on the diagrams of city bus routes—here, Routes #49, #52, and #80. Consisting of one or two meandering lines with black dots to mark the stops, these maps resemble the patterns of Taylor’s Pet Stains drawings. In fact, back in New York, Taylor appears to have used these diagrams as models for large stain drawings. A note in another sketchbook reads: “If it really goes bad, add left side of Paris line #22.”

“A de Kooning seen sideways,” 1990

Graphite and gouache on page of sketchbook

The Estate of Al Taylor

**Drawings on pages of *Florentine Art Treasures* by
Rosa Maria Letts (London: Roydon, 1970), ca. 1990
Ink, gouache, marker, and correction fluid
The Morgan Library & Museum. Gift of Debbie Taylor;
2016.5**

Taylor altered this used copy of a book on Italian Renaissance painting by drawing on its pages. He blacked out parts of the text to change its meaning and offered his interpretation of the paintings' compositions through the addition of ink, gouache, and white correction fluid. The puddle-like motifs and wordplay relate to the Pet Stains and Pet Names drawings Taylor was making at the same time.

***Mouse Ear Puddle*, January 1992**

Graphite and gouache on page of spiral-bound sketchbook

***Drive-In Piss*, March 1991**

Graphite on page of spiral-bound sketchbook

The Estate of Al Taylor

Lists of pet names, ca. 1990–92

Estate of Al Taylor archives

Taylor kept a file of handwritten lists of names to be used in his Pet Names drawings. Some were random names heard on television or read in newspapers and magazines. Others were more systematic compilations—names of art dealers, for instance. He would strike out a name once he had used it.

No title, November–December 1992

Graphite on page of spiral-bound sketchbook

The Estate of Al Taylor

In the spring of 1992, Taylor traveled to Greece. The falling drapery folds of ancient sculpture inspired the long fluid curves of some of his subsequent stain drawings. This pencil sketch shows the careful planning that could sometimes characterize Taylor's pet stains compositions, even while others followed the random movement of the liquid medium.

Puddle Descending a Staircase, 1990

Graphite on printed Leo Castelli stationery

The Estate of Al Taylor

No title, January/February 1991

Graphite on page of spiral-bound sketchbook

No title, September/October 1990

Watercolor and graphite on page of spiral-bound sketchbook

The Estate of Al Taylor

Pet Stain Removal Device, 1989

Ink and graphite

Susan and Leonard Nimoy

Untitled (Pet Stain Removal Device), 1989/91

Gouache, ink, and correction fluid

Collection Debbie Taylor

Untitled (Pet Stain Removal Device), ca. 1989–90

Gouache, enamel paint, and graphite

Collection of Gail and Tony Ganz

Early Paris Piss, 13 September 1990

Gouache

Paris Piss, September 1990

Gouache and ink

The Estate of Al Taylor

In September 1990, Taylor was staying at a friend's apartment in Paris, on avenue Junot, a picturesque street that curves up the hill of Montmartre. Leaning from the window, he was attracted to the patterns formed by dog urine running down the sidewalk. Using ink, gouache, and a brush, he imitated them in small drawings such as the present ones.

Avenue Junot (2), 1990

Xerographic toner fixed with solvent

**Private collection, London; Promised gift, British Museum,
Department of Prints & Drawings**

Crosby @ Howard, 1 June 1991

Graphite

David White and Anthony Gammardella

Pet Names, 1991

**Gouache, ink, xerographic toner fixed with solvent,
and graphite**

The Estate of Al Taylor

Taylor was sensitive to the properties of materials and the effects they produced. To make his stain drawings, in addition to relying on traditional liquid media—gouache, watercolor, and different types of ink—he experimented with more unusual ones. After a lithography project introduced him to xerographic toner, a medium that creates a thick and glossy surface, he began to incorporate it into his drawing practice. The particular brand of toner he used for this sheet includes a purple dye, which, when fixed with solvent, produced distinctive purple-hued stains.

Pet Names, 1991

Gouache, ink, graphite and spray fixative

The Estate of Al Taylor

The Peabody Group #29, 1992

Watercolor, gouache, ink, coffee, graphite, colored pencil, and ballpoint pen

The Morgan Library & Museum. Gift of the Modern & Contemporary Collectors Committee; 2011.7

The Peabody Group, which includes forty-one sheets, marks the culmination of Taylor's Pet Names/Pet Stains series. The names inscribed on them mix well-known personalities and fictional characters with cities, foods, plants, and other items, creating a vast network of allusions that broadens the implications of the drawings. Fond of wordplay, Taylor often chose words with multiple meanings. The title *Peabody*, no doubt picked for its homophony with "pee-body," may refer to Mr. Peabody, the dog in the popular 1960s television series *The Rocky and Bullwinkle Show*, but also to prestigious scientific institutions such as the Peabody Museum of Natural History at Yale and the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard, lending an aura of authority to Taylor's humorous classification of drips and blobs.

Hanging Puddles, 1992

Gouache and graphite

Private collection

Untitled (Can Studies), August 1994

**Ballpoint pen and graphite on page torn from
spiral-bound sketchbook**

The Estate of Al Taylor

Untitled (100% Hawaiian), April/May 1994

Gouache and graphite

**The Morgan Library & Museum. Gift of Hamish Parker;
2019.53**

This drawing relates to a sculpture that features two open cans suspended from wires between a pair of vertical wooden boards. Combining materials to heighten the rich contrasts of light and dark, Taylor made effective use of each medium's properties. On the lid at bottom left, for instance, he drew in pencil over gouache, exploiting the characteristic sheen of graphite to render the metallic surface.

No title, August 1994

Gouache, watercolor pencil, graphite, and correction fluid

The Estate of Al Taylor

Can and Chopsticks/Tatlin and Malevich, 1993

Gouache, ink, graphite, and correction fluid

Private collection

The art-historical reference in the title of this drawing evokes the famous rivalry, in the early twentieth-century Russian avant-garde, between Constructivist Vladimir Tatlin and Suprematist Kazimir Malevich. While the former built wood-and-metal constructions that argued for the social usefulness of art, the latter created paintings of pure geometric forms imbued with spiritual significance.

***Untitled (Tide Tab)*, ca. 1993**

Grease pencil, wax crayon, graphite, and gouache

The Estate of Al Taylor

The luscious colors and painterly handling of this drawing contrast with the banality of its subject. A typical example of Taylor's aptitude for finding artistic motifs in the most insignificant details of everyday life, it was inspired by the tabs of Tide laundry detergent boxes, which curl when pulled to open the carton.

***Untitled (Layson a Stick)*, ca. 1992–93**

Gouache, colored pencil, grease pencil, and graphite

The Estate of Al Taylor

***On Becoming (A Happy Face)*, 1992**

Graphite, gouache, ink, and correction fluid

Private collection

***Greek Puddles (with Fish Parts)*, 1992**

Gouache and ink

**Private collection, London; Promised gift, British Museum,
Department of Prints & Drawings**

***Fish Parts*, January 1992**

Graphite, ink, and ballpoint pen on page torn from spiral-bound sketchbook

***Fish Parts*, January 1992**

Graphite on page torn from spiral-bound sketchbook

***Bad Idea*, January 1992**

Ballpoint pen on page torn from spiral-bound sketchbook

***Fish Parts*, January 1992**

Ballpoint pen and marker on page torn from spiral-bound sketchbook

***Fish Parts (in Plexi-Boxes)*, 4 February 1992**

Ballpoint pen on page torn from spiral-bound sketchbook

The Estate of Al Taylor

These small sketches record Taylor's experiments with various arrangements for a sculpture made from a sectioned swordfish replica. One sheet shows a fairly conventional still life composition on a table. In another, Taylor imagined hanging the five fish parts along a vertical axis. Ultimately, he opted for a horizontal scheme stretching the fish over nearly

twelve feet—an allusion to stories in which fishermen “seem to make the fish longer with each telling of the catch,” Taylor explained, adding: “I liked that fact of a lie.”

***Labor Day*, 6 September 1993**

Ballpoint pen, graphite, and colored pencil on page of spiral-bound sketchbook

The Estate of Al Taylor

***Mexican-Danish*, 6 February 1998**

Graphite on page of spiral-bound sketchbook

The Estate of Al Taylor

***5 Fish Parts*, 5 October 1992**

Ink, grease pencil, and graphite with collage of printed paper on brown paper

The Estate of Al Taylor

Fish Parts (#1 and #2), 14–15 January 1992

Ink, xerographic toner fixed with solvent, and graphite

The Morgan Library & Museum. Gift of Debbie Taylor in honor of Isabelle Dervaux; 2019.90a

One day, Taylor retrieved from a trash bin a six-foot-long swordfish replica that had once decorated a bar. He sawed it into five sections and hung them on the wall. The drawings he made of these isolated fish parts, suspended simply with wire and nails, have an unusual poignancy. The fluid handling, especially where the solvent used to fix the toner ran down the lower part of the sheet, gives the impression that the fish has just been pulled out of water and is still dripping.

***Fish Parts (#3)*, 14–15 January 1992**

Ink, xerographic toner fixed with solvent, and graphite

The Morgan Library & Museum. Gift of Debbie Taylor

in honor of Isabelle Dervaux; 2019.90b

***Untitled (Fish Part)*, July 1992**

Ink, gouache, and ballpoint pen

Private collection

***Untitled (Fish Part)*, ca. 1992**

**Graphite, wax crayon, and correction fluid with
collage of printed paper**

Private collection

Untitled: (Hoop Study), September 1993

Graphite, gouache, acrylic mica mortar, and correction fluid with collage of printed paper

Nancy and Fred Poses, NY. Courtesy Meredith Palmer Gallery Ltd, New York

Pea Passing Device, 28 March 1992

Gouache, colored ink, and graphite with collage of a photographic print

Collection of Doug Woodham and Dalya Inhaber

Lily Trap Study, August 1994

Gouache, ink, watercolor pencil, and graphite

Collection Greg Lulay and Sertac Konuk

The title of this drawing refers to a device that friends of Taylor's built to prevent their cat, Lily, from stepping into their flowerpots and destroying the plants. According to a partly erased inscription at lower right, this particular sheet shows a collapsed trap.



Untitled (100% Hawaiian), 1994. Wood, tin cans, and wire.
As exhibited at Galerie Fred Jahn, Munich, May–June 1994.
Photograph by Al Taylor. Estate of Al Taylor archives.

Untitled, September 1995

**Graphite, gouache, aluminum paint stick, and
correction fluid**

Glenstone Museum, Potomac, Maryland

Face-Off Device for a Shrunken Head, February 1993

**Gouache, ink, graphite, colored pencil, red photo marker,
and correction fluid**

The Estate of Al Taylor

Plastic Rat with a Vision, ca. 1993

Gouache, grease pencil, graphite, and correction fluid

The Estate of Al Taylor

***Untitled (Full Gospel Neckless)*, December 1997/**

February 1998

**Gouache, ink, graphite, grease pencil, colored pencil,
and wax crayon**

The Estate of Al Taylor

***X-Ray Tube*, September/November 1995**

**Gouache, ink, grease crayon, colored pencil, correction
fluid, and graphite**

**Private collection, London; Promised gift, British Museum,
Department of Prints & Drawings**

***What Are You Looking At*, December 1995**

Gouache, ink, correction fluid, and graphite

David White and Anthony Gammardella

Untitled (New Mexico Project), 1997

Ink, colored pencil, and graphite

The Estate of Al Taylor

During a trip to New Mexico, Taylor came across an area littered with beer cans pierced with holes and surrounded by bullets. The scene inspired drawings such as this one, in which straight lines reconstruct the trajectory of the bullets through the cans, like in a crime scene investigation.

Full Gospel Neckless, October 1997

Gouache, ink, graphite, and correction fluid

**Private collection, London; Promised gift, British Museum,
Department of Prints & Drawings**

Full Gospel Neckless (Dog Walk), November 1997

Ink, graphite, Conté crayon, and grease pencil

The Estate of Al Taylor

Full Gospel Neckless is the enigmatic title Taylor gave to a 1997 series of sculptures and drawings. The sculptures are made of fragments of industrial plastic pipes and tubes strung on wire or telephone cable and arranged into suggestive shapes. The present drawing and its related sculpture evoke three dogs of different breeds out on a walk. As is often the case in Taylor's work, the richness and sensuousness of the drawing contrast with the ordinary material of the sculpture.

***Untitled (Wave Theory with Floaters)*, 8 October 1998**

**Gouache, ink, acrylic mica mortar, graphite, and
correction fluid**

**Private collection, London; Promised gift, British Museum,
Department of Prints & Drawings**

Untitled (Wave Theory), 1998

**Ink and acrylic mica mortar on Chinese calligraphy paper,
and ballpoint pen on matchbook cover, both mounted
on paper**

Private collection

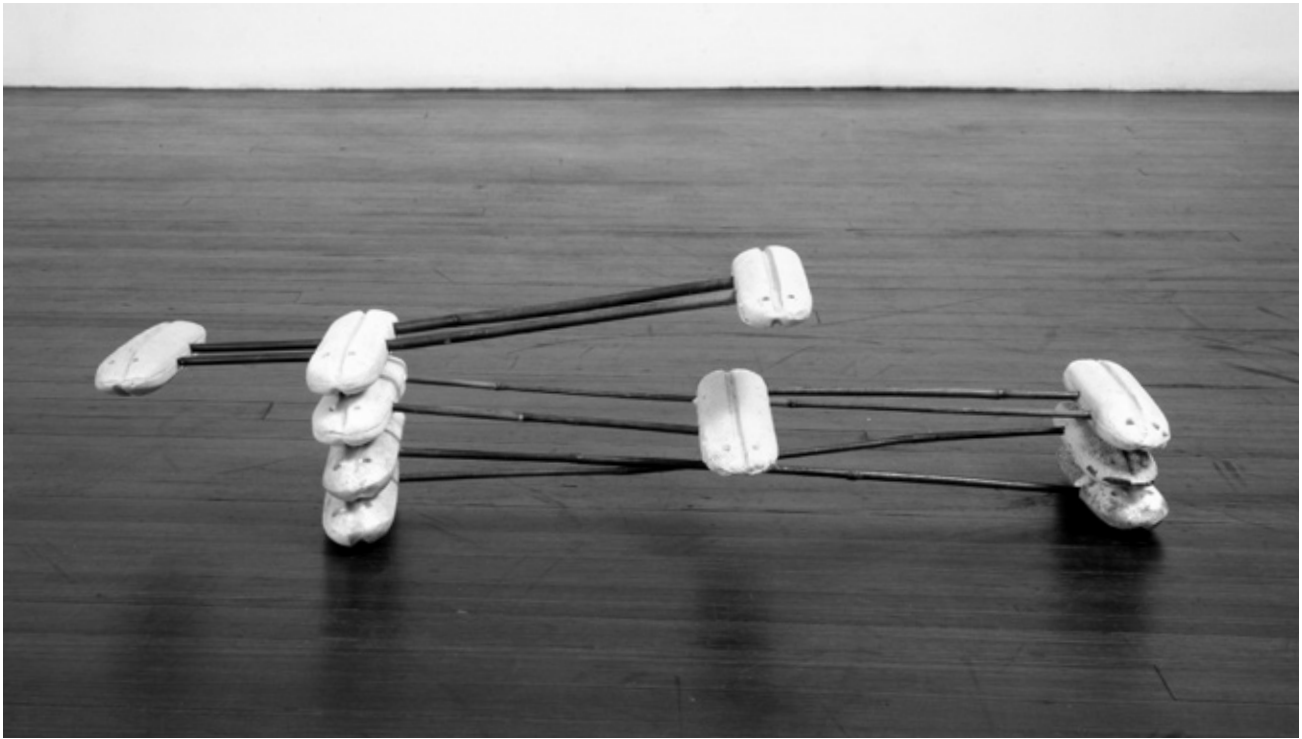
Taylor's interest in Hawaiian maritime culture gave rise to his unusual Wave Theory drawings based on ancient methods of navigation. Without maps or instruments, early navigators could direct their craft by observing the pattern of ocean swells, registering the height, length, speed, and direction of the waves. Using grid paper, Taylor combined a drawing that mimics a scientific chart of wave movement with a fluid wash application evoking the surface of the ocean. The scientific model allowed him to draw seascapes without the emotional trappings of such a typically romantic subject.

Untitled (Counting Without Riggers), 1998

Gouache, acrylic mica mortar, and graphite

Private collection

In Hawaii, Taylor collected plastic fishing floats that had washed up on the beach and used them in several series of sculptures. They also inspired drawings such as the present one, whose title alludes to Taylor's pseudoscientific approach. *Counting Without Riggers* is a pun conflating "counting without rigor" and "counting with outriggers"—a reference to the outrigger canoe typical of the Pacific Islands. The asymmetrical composition calls to mind the shape of the canoe, while the addition of mica mortar to the ink produces a shimmering effect, suggestive of a sunlit reflection.



(3 2 4 1 4 2 3): Counting Without Riggers, 1998. Foamed plastic fishing floats, bamboo garden stakes, and acrylic mica mortar; 9 x 35 x 10½ inches (22.9 x 88.9 x 26.7 cm). The Estate of Al Taylor. © The Estate of Al Taylor, photography by Robert McKeever / Gagolian.

***Untitled (Floaters)*, 1998**

Ink, acrylic mica mortar, and graphite

Collection Debbie Taylor

***Bondage Duck*, 14 October 1998**

Graphite, ink, gouache, acrylic mica mortar, grease pencil, wax crayon, and correction fluid

The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Museum purchase funded by Leslie and Jack S. Blanton, Jr.; 2002.444

Taylor transformed some of the plastic fishing floats he found on Hawaiian beaches into duck heads by cutting them in half and reassembling the two parts at a 90-degree angle. The colorful rubber bands—at once bandage and bondage—inspired the playful series title. Comical and tender at the same time, the sculptures and drawings merge references to African art and to American popular culture, as in the allusion to Donald Duck.



Bondage Duck #2, 1998. Foamed plastic fishing floats, rubber bands, latex coating, bamboo garden stake, and sand-filled coffee can with plastic lids; 18 x 4 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 4 $\frac{1}{16}$ inches (45.7 x 10.3 x 10.3 cm). The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Museum purchase funded by the Eric and Karen Pulaski Philanthropic Fund of the Houston Jewish Community Foundation and by Bettie Cartwright and Colin Kennedy; 2002.3444. © The Estate of Al Taylor, photography by Glenn Steigelman.

Bondage Duck Study, 1998

**Graphite, ink, acrylic mica mortar, colored pencil,
grease pencil, and wax crayon**

Collection Debbie Taylor

Bondage Duck in Mexico, 6 March 1999

Graphite

Collection Debbie Taylor

Rat Guards, 11 June 1998

**Ink, acrylic mica mortar, and solvent wash on
newspaper mounted on paper**

Private collection

Rat Guards, October 1998

**Colored ink, gouache, acrylic paint, and acrylic mica mortar
Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Maine. Gift of Sarah-Ann
and Werner H. Kramarsky; 2003.026.9**

Rat Guards, 1998

Ink, solvent transfer, and graphite

Collection Debbie Taylor

Among all the beauty of Hawaii, Taylor was attracted to the metal rat guards wrapped around the trunks of palm trees to prevent rodents from climbing them. The drawings they inspired present a refinement at odds with the concept of a pest-control device. In the present sheet, Taylor created a rich surface by mixing techniques such as newsprint transfer and ink-blotting with a paper towel, which left a recognizable diamond pattern at lower left.



Full Gospel Neckless (Dog Walk), 1997. PE plastic tube, PVC plastic pipes, galvanized steel wire, and plastic-coated copper telephone cable; 108 x 99 x 62½ inches (274.3 x 251.5 x 158.8 cm). The Estate of Al Taylor. © The Estate of Al Taylor, photography by Glenn Steigelman.

***Untitled (Plant Studies)*, 7 February 1998**

Colored pencil and graphite

Private collection

***Untitled (Plant Studies)*, 1998**

Graphite, colored pencil, grease pencil, and spray fixative

The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Gift of Debbie Taylor;

2002.3445

***Bottom Lit*, 31 December 1987**

Ink on page of spiral-bound sketchbook

No title, 26 October 1987

Watercolor on page torn from spiral-bound sketchbook

The Estate of Al Taylor

When Taylor first went to Hawaii in 1987, working as an art handler for a hotel developer, he was captivated by the beauty of the islands, which he recorded in sketches and watercolors. A friend with whom he shared a room recalled Taylor getting up at the crack of dawn to draw on the balcony: “I watched as he lit his first Marlboro of the day, sat down, put a watercolor pad in his lap and started painting as the sun came up. Quick sketches, one right after another. The light changing, moment to moment. . . . Some black ink washes. Another coffee. Then he switched to watercolors. After an hour he came in . . . and we left for work.”

No title, September/October 1987

**Gouache and marker with chopstick wrapper taped to
page of spiral-bound sketchbook**

The Estate of Al Taylor

***Wave Theory* studies, 18 November 1998**

Graphite on page of spiral-bound sketchbook

The Estate of Al Taylor

No title, July 1998

**Graphite, wax crayon, and watercolor on page of
spiral-bound sketchbook**

The Estate of Al Taylor

Hawaiian Polish Pride, 16 March 1998

Graphite on page of spiral-bound sketchbook

The Estate of Al Taylor

No title, 1998

Graphite on page of spiral-bound sketchbook

The Estate of Al Taylor

***“I am going to track you down and beat you like a circus
monkey” . . . , 1999***

Marker and graphite on page of spiral-bound sketchbook

The Estate of Al Taylor

Untitled: (The Big Spill), 1988

Ink mixed with baking soda, and graphite

Collection Debbie Taylor

In 1988, exploring the idea of works that would “make themselves somehow,” Taylor began creating large stain drawings in which the pattern was partly left to chance. Working on the floor, he spilled ink, mixed with baking soda to give it more body and slow its movement, onto the paper and manipulated the sheet to guide the flow. Although the concept recalls Jackson Pollock’s 1940s drip paintings, the simple motif, bare background, and scroll-like sheet may derive instead from Taylor’s interest in calligraphy.