

# MIKE HENDERSON

## TRACES OF PLACES

MAY 1 - JULY 3, 2014

Opening reception: First Thursday, May 1, 5:30pm – 7:30pm

Featuring live music by the Mike Henderson Band

Haines Gallery is pleased to present new work by pioneering Bay Area artist Mike Henderson, who has exhibited with the gallery for over twenty years. Through his highly gestural and tactile paintings, Henderson reveals a palpable connection to post-war abstraction, coupled with a defining instinct for improvisation. With a growing distinction between figure and ground, surprising colors and nested forms, these paintings signify a new direction for the artist. *Traces of Places* alludes not only to the works' subtle evocations, but also to Henderson's underlying inspiration: his lived experience, those moments that "stick in your retinas," according to the artist. He conjures conversations he has had, sounds he has heard and places he has visited – manifesting these experiences through texture, form and color.

Rather than working from preconceived plans, Henderson is guided by an openness and responsiveness to the medium's potential, believing that "painting comes from the ground, through you and out you." Working with a palette knife as much as a brush, his rough-hewn canvases testify to the physicality of his approach and his visceral relationship to material and surface. The exhibited works oscillate between light and dark, loose and defined, order and chaos, producing a visual tension that invites contemplation and rewards sustained looking. In some of these new works, Henderson adopts a more subdued palette of neutral and earth tones, intermittently incorporating the bright reds, blues and purples for which he is best known. The aesthetic shift embodied in *Traces of Places* retains the underlying lyricism that has come to characterize Henderson's career over the last forty years.

To compliment the exhibition, Haines Gallery is partnering with several Bay Area organizations to present a screening of Mike Henderson's award winning experimental films from the 1970s and 80s, premiering newly restored 16 millimeter prints that attest to Henderson's groundbreaking work in the medium. This film screening will take place on June 4th at the Exploratorium, Pier 15, San Francisco, from 7-9:30pm. Admission is free.



*At Any Moment*, 2013, Oil on canvas, 24 x 18 inches

Henderson received a Guggenheim fellowship in 1973 and is a two-time recipient of the National Endowment for the Arts Award. His work as a painter and filmmaker has been exhibited at institutions such as the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; de Young Museum, San Francisco; di Rosa Preserve, Napa; and Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento. They are included in the collections of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Phoenix Art Museum; and Honolulu Academy of Art, as well as many other public and private collections. Henderson retired from the University of California at Davis in 2013, where he served as a professor in the Art Department since 1970. In addition to painting, Henderson is an accomplished blues guitarist who has performed at music halls and festivals around the world.