Hunter Shaw Fine Art is pleased to announce Adam de Boer: Traveller's Palm, the artist's second solo presentation with HSFA, and the inaugural exhibition in the gallery's new permanent space in Los Angeles. Traveller's Palm is the culmination of an eight-year-long exploration of indigenous Javanese crafts which de Boer has studied with increasing intensity, most recently on a 2017 Fulbright fellowship to Indonesia. Throughout Traveller's Palm, techniques such as batik, woven pandan leaf, carved teak and rawhide are integrated with Western modes of landscape and figural oil painting to mount a rigorous investigation of authenticity within the hybrid forms of a post-colonial world, and his own identity as an American-born artist of mixed Dutch-Indonesian heritage.

For most of his life, de Boer's personal connection to his Eurasian ancestry was obfuscated by a decidedly American upbringing in Southern California. Although only one generation from possibly being born in central Java, de Boer's heritage was only accessible through grainy snapshots in a family album. This changed on a fortuitous surf vacation to Bali in 2010. Deeply impressed by the culture, atmosphere and people he encountered, the artist commenced on what has become the central focus of his career: untangling the threads of history to reveal the complex tapestry of post-colonial identity. Fusing Indonesian crafts with European painting, de Boer treats both traditions with equal reverence and critique, resulting in images and objects that are at once jarring and harmonious.

Steepled in historical and art-historical reference, the works in Traveller's Palm are deeply considered, from the choice of materials to the visual motifs employed. In many images, the land and people are depicted as if enmeshed within a seemingly endless sea of so-called “Portuguese Tiles.” These pressed cement tiles are actually English in origin, and were introduced to Indonesia by the Dutch in an effort to bring hygienic surfaces to the colonies. Featuring imagery and designs from around the globe, they are in fact a sanitized visual index of the European colonial project. De Boer deftly interweaves these icons with myriad other cultural signifiers to produce visual puzzles dense with historical technique and personal/political meaning.