

# Christian Taylor

October 13, 1995 – August 7, 2015 (19 years old)



## **How did you first hear about the Dearly Beloved project?**

Heard of it since its last year's exhibition of Dearly Beloved where it took place in Dartmouth.

## **What was your motivation behind participating in this project?**

I believe that police brutality is definitely an ongoing problem in society, especially for minorities. My motivation was the fact that my art would be raising awareness of an important issue still currently going in society today.

## **Who did you paint? Why?**

I painted Christian Taylor a young Black boy that was killed unjustly and whose death has not been dealt with justice. I painted him because his story touched me and can represent many people his age that have suffered due to discrimination.

## **Did you conduct research on the victim before you started the painting? If so, what was that experience like?**

I conducted some research in order to know who Christian Taylor was and who cared for him. The experience felt heartbreaking, the pain expressed by his loved ones alone motivated me to paint him - to paint him with all his colors.

## **What has collaborating in the Dearly Beloved project meant to you?**

To me it's meant more than just artist activism but also giving voice to those whose voice have been taken.

## **Were there any changes in your views, ideas, perceptions, from the time you started this project to the time you finished?**

This was the first portrait I have done in the Dearly Beloved series that has been more conceptual with the additions of postmodern elements. I took an artistic risk by putting a bandaid\* over his mouth, some can see it as inconsiderate towards his life, but I see it as an intentional and important artistic choice. The act itself represents what society does to victims like Christian; silence them and see it as something you can easily fix or move on like a bandaid placed on the person to "elevate" the pain. But we won't be silenced. *\*The bandaid was removed for the quilt.*

*Danilo Martinez is a local artist.*