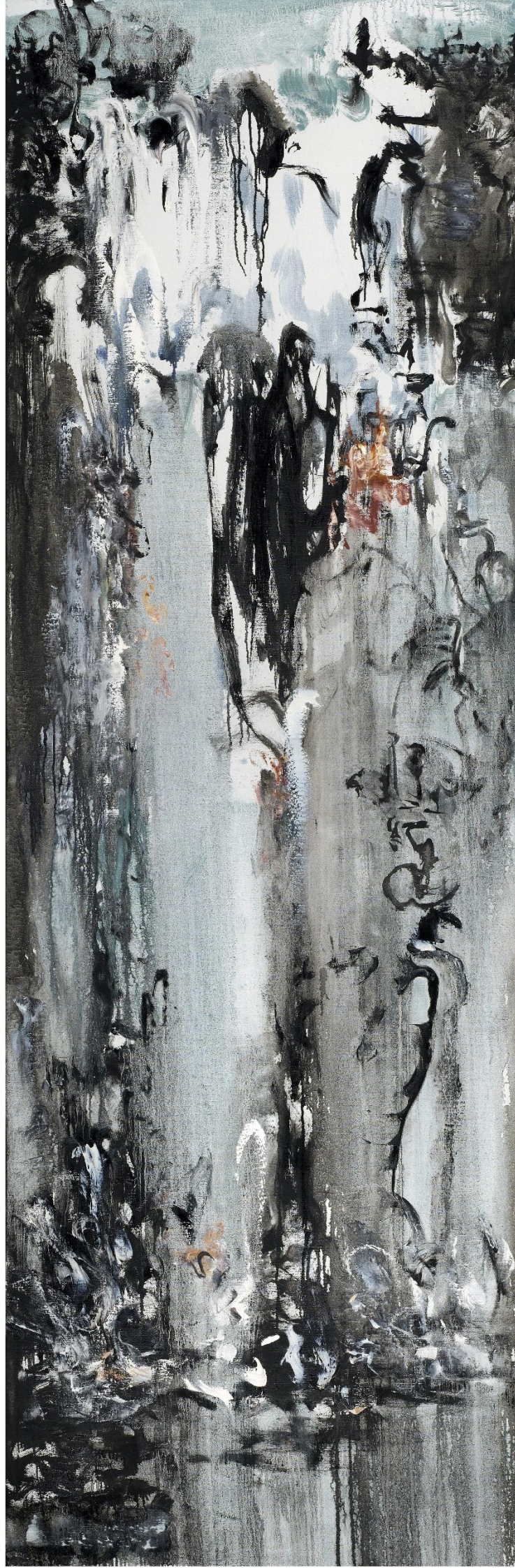


Maggi  
Hambling  
On the edge



## Maggi Hambling: On the edge

Ettore Fico Museum, in collaboration with Thomas Brambilla Gallery is proud to present an exhibition of the acclaimed British contemporary artist Maggi Hambling. *On the edge* is Hambling's first museum exhibition in Italy, showcasing an important survey of painting and sculpture that embody Hambling's unique vision on the intricate relationship between humanity and the natural environment that surrounds us.

Maggi Hambling (b. 1945) is one of Europe's leading contemporary artists, celebrated both for her paintings of people, the sea, melting polar ice-caps, environmental destruction and war zones, and for her public sculpture, including *A Sculpture for Mary Wollstonecraft* and *A conversation with Oscar Wilde* in London and the monumental *Scallop*, for the composer Benjamin Britten, on Aldeburgh Beach, Suffolk. She is widely recognized for work that traverses the boundaries of conventional artistic expression and which invites a meditation on the universal relationships between self and environment, people and place.

*On the edge* includes an important trio of *Waterfall* paintings that were made before the artist embarked on her large-scale paintings from the continuing series of *Wall of Water* paintings, first exhibited at the National Gallery in London, and more recently in museum retrospective exhibitions in China. Depicting explosions of waves crashing into a concrete sea wall the Walls of water convey the power of the natural world confronting mankind. Created in the wake of the death of a close friend, they convey the dual sense of disintegration and what it means to be alive, resonating with the works of painters as diverse as Twombly and Bacon.

As a counter-balance to the *Wall of water* series, the *Edge* paintings address mankind's destruction of the natural world - melting polar icecaps and a recent series of tall canvases reminiscent of Chinese ink scrolls, depicting mountains and polar wastes through bold accumulations of indigo and white which suggest an internal-psychological-wilderness as much as a physical setting.

Hambling's sculpture practice is represented by the *Aftermath* series. These painted bronze totemic works began as found pieces of dead wood. Out of gnarled natural forms, Hambling has coaxed the presence of imaginary beings. Alternately animal and human, familiar and otherworldly, the sculptures emanate a variety of moods and art historical resonance from Surrealism to medieval polychromy. The strange creatures of *Aftermath* conflate the forms of the ancient past - grave portraits, gargoyles and relics - with the spirit of life to create vital contemporary works of sculpture.

The exhibition will also include *Self-Portraits* and *Portraits* of important figures from Hambling's past, including her mentor, the artist Arthur Lett-Haines, and her lover and muse Henrietta Moraes. The portraits condense their subjects with rapid, gestural marks clinging to a white ground. Within these turbulent formations of paint, looser, more abstracted images emanate an emotional sincerity that springs from the artist's continuing engagement with life in the here and now. These portraits transmit double moods of humor and doubt, anger and joy, aliveness and mortality.

The show is scheduled to run from September 28th to December 17th, whilst the official celebration with the artist present will take place on Saturday November 4th, coinciding with Artissima Art Fair. The exhibition will be accompanied by a comprehensive catalog, featuring essays by leading writers and a detailed exploration of Maggi Hambling's artistic journey.

Hambling studied first locally at Cedric Morris' and Lett Haines' East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing, before going to the Ipswich (1962-64), Camberwell (1964-67) and Slade (1967-69) Schools of Art. In 1980 she was invited to be the first artist to have a contemporary artist in residence in the National Gallery, London.

Hambling's work is held in museum collections throughout the world including Tate, British Museum, National Gallery London, National Portrait Gallery, London, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York and CAFA, Beijing.

Solo museum exhibitions since 1980, include two exhibitions at The National Gallery in London, in 1981 and 2014 respectively; the National Portrait Gallery in 1983 and 2009. Other significant exhibitions have included The Yale Center for British Art, New Haven (1981), the Yorkshire Sculpture park (1997), Abbot Hall Art Gallery, Kendal (2007), The Lowry, Salford (2009), Walker Arts Gallery, Liverpool (2009), The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge (2010), Winchester Cathedral (2013), The Hermitage, St. Petersburg (2013), Somerset House (2015), The British Museum, London (2016) The Jerwood Gallery (2018) and CAFA Art Museum, Beijing (2019).

# Maggi Hambling: on the edge

September 28 – December 17, 2023

Opening reception: November 4, 2023

Opening hours: Thursday – Sunday 2.30 – 7.30 pm.

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[www.museofico.it](http://www.museofico.it)

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**MEF – Museo Ettore Fico**

Via Francesco Cigna 114, Torino

**[www.museofico.it](http://www.museofico.it)**

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