

Maggi Hambling: *Real time*

March 10 — April 30, 2022

Floors 1 & 2

Press Release

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The Directors of Marlborough are very pleased to present Maggi Hambling in her first and long overdue exhibition in New York, opening March 10, 2022. Hambling has been a prominent and controversial figure in the United Kingdom for over fifty years and will be presenting here a significant body of work from the past decade. With a well-documented voice of social engagement, Hambling joins a long history of groundbreaking exhibitions supported by Marlborough including Juan Genovés (1967) and Philip Guston (1970). Embracing the social and political situations in which her paintings are produced, and the vacillations between figurative and abstract readings, her new paintings rhetorically perform as figures of speech. Her most recent *Edge* paintings, made on tall canvases reminiscent of Chinese ink scrolls, depict mountains and polar wastes through bold accumulations of indigo and white, to suggest an internal-psychological-wilderness as much as a physical setting. In a sequence of smaller paintings, wild animals are realized in states of movement or flux—alive with predatory energy, wracked with torment, or edging slowly towards death. Close in appearance to ink drawings, these works combine empathy with outrage. Her challenge is to provoke the viewer's participation in the construction of meaning—where meaning accumulates in the process of viewing.

Featured on the second floor will be a group of paintings from Hambling's acclaimed *Wall of water* (2010–2012) cycle. These large-scale works, depicting explosions of water inspired by the experience of watching waves crash into a concrete sea wall, were created in the wake of the death of a close friend. Conveying a dual sense of aliveness and disintegration, they resonate with the works of painters as diverse as Twombly and Bacon. The *Wall of water* paintings were first shown at the National Gallery, London, in 2014. At the time, Hambling commented, "I feel younger now than I ever did when I was young. I seem to be painting more freely...I'm trying to paint death with as much life as I can."

Maggi Hambling (b. 1945, Sudbury, UK) has been at the forefront of the British art scene, and a celebrated gay icon, for several decades. She studied in the 1960s at Benton End, Suffolk (the legendary art school run by Cedric Morris and Arthur Lett Haines, where Lucian Freud was also a pupil), Ipswich School of Art, Camberwell School of Art, and the Slade. Over the last decade, she has staged major exhibitions at CAFA Art Museum, Beijing (2019), The British Museum, London (2016), The National Gallery, London (2014), and The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (2013). She has achieved renown and controversy for her various public art commissions, which include *A Conversation with Oscar Wilde* (1998) at Charing Cross, London, *Scallop* (2003) on Aldeburgh Beach, Suffolk, and *A Sculpture for Mary Wollstonecraft* (2020) at Newington Green, London.

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Wall of water VI, 2011
oil on canvas
78 × 89 in. / 198.1 × 226.1 cm

Effective February 1, 2022, Marlborough requires all staff and visitors over the age of 5 to show proof of at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine for entry. Proof of vaccination may include CDC Vaccination Card (or photo), NYC COVID Safe App, New York State Excelsior Pass, NYC Vaccination Record, or an official immunization record from outside NYC or the U.S.



Dancing Bear, 2020–21
oil on canvas
48 × 36 in. / 121.9 × 91.4 cm



Edge XIV, 2021
oil on canvas
84 × 36 in. / 213.4 × 91.4 cm

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