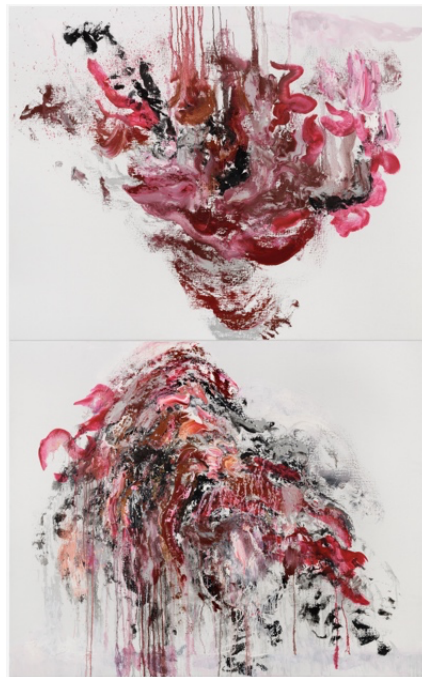


PearlLam

Hong Kong

MAGGI HAMBLING: THE NIGHT

Exhibition dates 26 March–16 May, 2024 Monday–Saturday, 10am–7pm
Venue Pearl Lam, G/F & B/F, Printing House, 6 Duddell Street, Central, Hong Kong



MAAGGI HAMBLING b. 1945, UK, **About to Kiss**, 2023, Oil on canvas, Diptych, Each: 121.9 x 152.4 cm (48 x 60 in.)
Courtesy of the artist and Pearl Lam

- The acclaimed British artist will exhibit new and recent series of works in Asia for the first time since 2019, coinciding with Art Basel Hong Kong.
- Pearl Lam continues its commitment to fostering an international dialogue between the East and West.

Hong Kong—Pearl Lam is delighted to announce *Maggi Hambling: The Night*, a solo exhibition by renowned British artist Maggi Hambling at Printing House in Central, Hong Kong from 26 March to 16 May, coinciding with this year's edition of Art Basel Hong Kong. This marks the first solo exhibition by Hambling in Asia since the artist's museum retrospectives in Beijing and Guangzhou in 2019. Pearl Lam will also showcase an important new *Wall of Water* painting by the artist at its Art Basel Hong Kong stand.

Hambling occupies a unique position as an artist who has consistently embraced a spirit of rebelliousness throughout her career, making her one of the most celebrated female artists in the British art scene. This spirit is evident in her tributes to seminal intellectual figures such as Mary Wollstonecraft, an important advocate for women's rights in the 18th century, and memorial sculptures honouring figures like the 19th-century author Oscar Wilde and the 20th-century composer Benjamin Britten.

Rooted in her own lived experiences, Hambling's work remains a reflection of and draws inspiration from people, places, and her identity as a pioneering artist with a queer perspective. Viewing painting as an intimate and physical experience, Hambling believes that regardless of the time dedicated to a painting, it must culminate in a single moment—akin to the profound physicality of love.

The Night will include two new series of paintings that have never been seen before. This includes her 2023 series with works titled *Sexy*, *Sexy Dream*, and *About to Kiss*, which explores the seduction and intimacy to which the silent night and shifting clouds can bear witness. It also includes Hambling's *Night Sky* and *Night Clouds* paintings from 2021 that present a universal subject connecting the East and West along with the North and South. Shimmering clouds appear; beautiful and fleeting, they are omens of peace and serenity above our turbulent world.

For Hambling, nighttime has been an enduring subject, having first painted the night sky from her bedroom window at age fourteen. Over six decades later, the artist returns to the night as her subject, which she considers to be a mysterious realm: silent, reflective, seductive, shifting, and intimate, both real and fabled where dreams and reality coexist. Hambling cites Austrian poet Rainer Maria Rilke's poem *The Night* as being central to both these series of paintings:

You, darkness, of whom I am born—
I love you more than the flame
that limits the world
to the circle it illuminates
and excludes all the rest.

But the dark embraces everything:
shapes and shadows, creatures and me,
people, nations—just as they are.

It lets me imagine
a great presence stirring beside me.

I believe in the night.

Influenced by Chinese and Japanese paintings, the works featured throughout *The Night* showcase a technique reminiscent of Chinese calligraphy, a connection rooted in Hambling's art student days when she would regularly study Chinese ink drawings on display at The British Museum. Drawing in ink at the start of each day has become a fundamental part of her daily creative ritual. These influences are perhaps most apparent in a new and large triptych titled *Edge XXX* and a new painting from the celebrated *Wall of Water* series, which has been ongoing since its debut at The National Gallery, London in 2014, to be showcased at Art Basel Hong Kong. The *Wall of Water* series explores the multifaceted nature of water, both its role as the sustenance of life and its ability to destroy, where one feels both powerless and yet peaceful, highlighting our inclination to seek identity in something more formidable.

A selection of new sculptures rendered in painted bronze expands on Hambling's celebrated *Aftermath* series, exhibited to date in museum shows across the UK, Italy, and China. The new *Aftermath* sculptures resonate simultaneously with the solidity of scholar's rocks and the lightness and shifting impermanence of clouds. A new solid silver sculpture titled *Silver Sleeper* will also be presented as part of a collaboration between Maggi Hambling and Beauty Papers, the groundbreaking creative duo (Maxine Leonard and Valerie Wickes) and celebrated publication, where art, culture and beauty collide. *Silver Sleeper* is Beauty Papers Artefact No. 1: an autobiographic manifestation, a portrait of Hambling captured in a sculptural form that redefines the territories and rituals of beauty.

Maggi Hambling says, "I'm excited to return to Hong Kong and to be working with Pearl Lam. The subject of my exhibition, the Night, is one I have returned to throughout my career. Night inhabits a mysterious territory where beauty, fear, desire and dream combine and invite us in."

Pearl Lam, Founder of Pearl Lam, says, “I’m delighted to present new and recent works by Maggi Hambling in a Hong Kong solo exhibition and in our group presentation at Art Basel Hong Kong. Her contributions to the British art scene are truly exceptional, and she is someone whom I believe has carved a path for a new generation of artists with a brutally honest and direct approach—consistently pushing boundaries and refusing to conform throughout her career. Her artworks continue to resonate with me on a deeply personal level.”

About Maggi Hambling

Maggi Hambling (b. 1945, Sudbury, Suffolk) is a contemporary British painter and sculptor. Hambling studied first at Cedric Morris’s and Arthur 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 in residence at the National Gallery, London.

Hambling’s work has been the subject of many solo museum exhibitions since 1980, including two solo exhibitions at The National Gallery, London in 1981 and 2014 along with solo exhibitions at the National Portrait Gallery in 1983 and 2009. Other significant museum exhibitions include The Yale Center for British Art, New Haven, USA (1981); the Yorkshire Sculpture Park (1997); The Lowry, Salford (2009); Walker Art 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, Hastings (2018); CAFA Art Museum, Beijing (2019); and Gainsborough’s House, Sudbury (2023). Hambling’s work has been acquired by many important private and public collections including in the UK by Tate, the National Portrait Gallery, British Museum, and outside the UK by CAFA, Beijing and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Public sculptures include *A Conversation with Oscar Wilde*, London; *Scallop* (for Benjamin Britten), Aldeburgh Beach; *The Brixton Heron*, London; and *A Sculpture for Mary Wollstonecraft*, London.

About Pearl Lam

Pearl Lam is a driving force within Asia’s contemporary art scene. Founded in 2005, the gallery plays a vital role in stimulating international dialogue and cross-cultural exchange between the East and West.

Following a rigorous programme, Pearl Lam presents museum-quality exhibitions that re-evaluate and challenge perceptions of cultural practice in Asia. With a thoughtfully balanced roster of Chinese and international artists, the gallery is strategic in its curation, positioning itself as an educator.

The gallery maintains spaces in Hong Kong and Shanghai. With a team of international staff, Pearl Lam’s reach is global, having presentations at major international art fairs including Art Cologne, Art Basel, Frieze Masters, and West Bund Art and Design.

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