

Valentine, Victoria L. "Maren Hassinger is Now Represented by Susan Inglett Gallery," *Culture Type*, 6 June 2018.



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by VICTORIA L. VALENTINE on Jun 6, 2018



SUSAN INGLETT GALLERY announced its representation of Maren Hassinger today. The news comes the week after the artist's exhibition, "Maren Hassinger: As One." concluded at the gallery. The show featured recent works examining issues of equality. "Love" was made with hundreds of pink plastic bags, inflated with "breath" and containing love notes. Another work, "Our Lives," was composed of countless pages of the New York Times tightly wrapped and twisted. The mixed-media works reflect Hassinger's overarching concern about the state of our humanity and her ability to transform common materials, imbuing them with meaning and beauty.

"I don't think my work has so much to do with ecology, but focuses on elements, or even problems—social and environmental—that we all share, in which we all have a stake. I don't think that's an ecological statement. I want it to be a humane and humanistic statement about our future together," Hassinger has said.

"I don't think my work has so much to do with ecology, but focuses on elements, or even problems—social and environmental—that we all share, in which we all have a stake." — Maren Hassinger

For more than 40 years, Hassinger "has explored relationships between the industrial and natural worlds in a practice that is both meditative and critical," expressing herself through abstract compositions, installations, performance, photography and video.

Born in Los Angeles, in the mid-1960s she attended school across the country at Bennington College in Vermont. She began as a dance student and by the time she earned her fine arts degree she was focusing on sculpture. After living briefly in New York, Hassinger returned home to pursue an MFA at UCLA. Migrating from the sculpture department, she joined the fiber arts program, graduating in 1973.

Many African American artists were active in Los Angeles at the time. Hassinger's peers included David Hammons and Senga Nengudi, with whom she often collaborated. She was an artist-in-residence at the Studio Museum in Harlem from 1984-85.

Over the years, she has remained dedicated to her art, while also establishing an academic career. She recently stepped down from her position as director of the Rinehart School of Graduate Sculpture at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) in Baltimore, after nearly 20 years. She currently lives and works in New York.

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MAREN HASSINGER, "Fight The Power," 2017 (Ink on newsprint, 20 x 175 x 15 inches overall, 20 x 35 x 15 inches each, 5 units). MH0010 | Courtesy Susan Inglett Gallery, NYC

The Spelman Museum of Fine Art mounted "[Maren Hassinger...Dreaming](#)," a long-overdue retrospective of the pioneering artist in 2015. Thoughtful consideration of her work continues through exhibitions and related programming at important institutions. "[Maren Hassinger: The Spirit of Things](#)" was recently on view at Art + Practice in Los Angeles. The exhibition is traveling to the [Baltimore Museum of Art](#) where it opens July 18. She is also participating in the Studio Museum's inHarlem project, a series of public art installations in neighborhood parks. "[Maren Hassinger: Monuments](#)," a yearlong site-specific installation, will be presented in Marcus Garvey Park beginning June 16.

Earlier this year, "Wrenching News" by Hassinger was featured in "[Magnetic Fields: Expanding American Abstraction, 1960s to Today](#)," the group exhibition at the National Museum of Women in the Arts. For the exhibition's [audio guide](#), she spoke briefly about how she has viewed her work over the years.

"My career has been an attempt to speak honestly about our world, our shared histories. More and more, I have been drawn to the way we treat each other and the world we have created together," Hassinger said. "While my work is being made in this very real season of change it persists in finding value. It speaks of equality and hurricanes and tyrants yet I believe in the power of the previously disenfranchised and the possibility for accumulative joy of recovery." **CT**

TOP IMAGE: MAREN HASSINGER, Installation View of "Maren Hassinger: As One," (April 26-June 2, 2018), Susan Inglett Gallery, NYC | Photo by Adam Reich, Courtesy Susan Inglett Gallery, NYC

BOOKSHELF

Maren Hassinger and her work are documented in the catalog for "[Now Dig This! Art & Black Los Angeles, 1960-1980](#)." Her work was also featured in the historic exhibition "We Wanted a Revolution: Black Radical Women, 1965-85," which coincided with the publication of two catalogs "[New Perspectives](#)" and "[Sourcebook](#)." Co-edited by Erin Dziedzic and Melissa Messina "[Magnetic Fields: Expanding American Abstraction, 1960s to Today](#)" includes contributions by Valerie Cassel Oliver and Lowery Stokes Sims.