

**BAMPFA Presents the Largest Retrospective to Date of Maren Hassinger**



***On View from June 6 through November 29, 2026***

**Career-Spanning Exhibition of Hassinger’s Work Will Feature Live Performance, Site-Specific Installations, Participatory Workshops**

*(Berkeley, CA) April 13, 2026*—The most comprehensive retrospective to date of Maren Hassinger will open at the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive this summer, featuring half a century of work by one of the most influential living artists in the United States. *Maren Hassinger: Living Moving Growing* encompasses the full scope of Hassinger’s output across an

eclectic range of forms, including large-scale sculpture, site-specific installation, video, and performance. The exhibition will display more than twenty of Hassinger's most notable works from the 1970s to the present, as well as participatory and performance pieces executed in partnership with the artist. *Maren Hassinger: Living Moving Growing* will be accompanied by an extensive exhibition catalogue, featuring new scholarly essays and previously unpublished documentation of Hassinger's work.

Hassinger began her career in the 1970s and brought new perspectives to contemporary art, positioned in dialogue with a cohort of Black artists, feminist artists, and artists addressing ecological concerns. Known for constantly experimenting with impermanent and industrial materials as well as performance, she has worked at the intersection of dance, sculpture, video, and installation over the past five decades. While her work has been featured in solo and group exhibitions at leading museums across the country, the ephemerality of her practice requires that many of her sculptures and installations be recreated anew for each presentation. *Maren Hassinger: Living Moving Growing* is the most ambitious retrospective to date of the artist's body of work, assembling major sculptures alongside temporary installations that will be recreated at BAMPFA. Notable examples include *Love* (2008), a site-specific sculpture composed of pink plastic bags inflated by human breath and filled with love notes; *Beach* (1980), a floor installation consisting of plaster, and wooden dowels; and multiple sculptures that incorporate recently harvested tree branches, which BAMPFA will realize in partnership with the University of California Botanical Garden.



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Over the course of *Maren Hassinger: Living Moving Growing*, BAMPFA will host a series of participatory workshops engaging visitors to co-create new work that will be incorporated into the retrospective—a major aspect of the artist’s practice, extending her work in performance to engage directly with audiences. On the exhibition’s opening day, following a series of tributes from key figures in Hassinger’s career, the artist will invite visitors to join her in twisting and knotting newspapers to create a new, large-scale installation entitled *Wrenching News*. The installation will be assembled at BAMPFA in a public workshop led by Hassinger herself, the first in a series of workshops that will add to the work throughout its presentation. Subsequent workshops will continue on a monthly basis, led by Berkeley-based artist Julia Goodman.

Hassinger will return to Berkeley on September 20 to restage one of her most iconic performances, *Pink Trash*, which she will execute for only the third time since its debut in 1982. Hassinger will expand on previous iterations of the performance to work with six UC Berkeley undergraduates, who will join the artist to scatter a collection of discarded litter that will be gathered and repainted pink, offering a powerful metaphor for humanity’s obligation to care for the natural world. The performance will take place on UC Berkeley’s Crescent Lawn, across the street from BAMPFA; more information about this and other public programs will be announced this summer at [bampfa.org](http://bampfa.org).

*Maren Hassinger: Living Moving Growing* will also feature archival video and photographs of many of Hassinger’s sculptures, performances, and installations—including previously unseen photos of the artist early in her career taken by Adam Avila, an early collaborator of Hassinger’s whom she met while working at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in the early 1970s. These black-and-white images, which will also be included in the exhibition catalogue, serve as important documentation of early works by the artist that no longer exist.

Born in Los Angeles in 1947, Hassinger studied dance and sculpture at Bennington College and received an MFA in Fiber Structure from UCLA. In the 1970s, she began collaborating with other artists as part of the collective Studio Z, including Senga Nengudi, Ulysses Jenkins, and David

Hammons, among others. In 1980, Hassinger had her first solo exhibition at Just Above Midtown Gallery in New York; the following year, she became the first Black artist to have a solo exhibition at LACMA. Hassinger relocated to the East Coast in 1984 to participate in the artist-in-residence program at the Studio Museum in Harlem. After several years on Long Island, she moved to Baltimore, where she became Director of the Rinehart School of Sculpture at the Maryland Institute College of Art, a position she held for twenty years. She currently lives and works in Harlem, New York.

*Maren Hassinger: Living Moving Growing* marks the culmination of a renewed interest in Hassinger's work in recent years, during which she has been featured in acclaimed group exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Museum of Modern Art, and The Whitney Museum of American Art, among other leading art institutions. Her retrospective at BAMPFA will be co-curated by Margot Norton, Chief Curator, and Anthony Graham, Senior Curator, with Omar Jason Farah, Curatorial Assistant.

In conjunction with the retrospective, BAMPFA is publishing a fully illustrated catalogue on Hassinger, in association with DelMonico Books / D.A.P. The most extensive scholarly publication on this artist ever assembled, the catalogue features an introductory essay by Graham and a roundtable conversation moderated by Norton with Hassinger's collaborators, including Just Above Midtown gallery founder, filmmaker, and activist Linda Goode Bryant, and artists Senga Nengudi and Ava Hassinger—who is also Maren's daughter. In addition, the catalogue will include a new interview with Hassinger conducted by art historian Lowery Stokes Sims. Additional essays will be contributed by Robyn Farrell, Senior Curator and Director of Curatorial Affairs of The Kitchen; Kristen Juarez, Senior Research Specialist at the Getty Research Institute; and Hilton Als, UC Berkeley professor, author, and longtime critic and essayist at *The New Yorker*.

"Maren Hassinger's practice has been of great influence for generations of artists—from her early collaborative performances and experimental installations with Studio Z and JAM to her

direct impact over decades as a teacher, and through her monumental sculptural installations in major museum collections across the United States,” said Norton. “We are thrilled to finally bring her artworks and their stories from across her career together through our exhibition, and to showcase Hassinger’s profound contributions to contemporary art.”

“For decades, Maren Hassinger has created sculptures and installations that transcend disciplinary boundaries, transforming industrial and mass-produced materials into evocative abstractions,” said Graham. “This exhibition showcases how these innovative works have drawn attention to subtle movements and forms of our everyday lives, connecting us to one another and to the world around us.”

“Maren Hassinger’s work invites us to reflect on the beauty and complexity of human connection—through movement, material, and shared experience. Presenting this landmark retrospective at BAMPFA underscores our commitment to amplifying artists whose practices challenge conventions and inspire collective engagement across generations,” said BAMPFA’s Executive Director, Julie Rodrigues Widholm.

### **About Maren Hassinger**

Maren Hassinger (b. 1947) has spent the past five decades building an interdisciplinary practice that articulates the relationship between nature and humanity. Carefully choosing materials for their innate characteristics, Hassinger has explored the subjects of movement, family, love, nature, environment, consumerism, identity, and race. The artist uses her materials to mimic nature, whether bundling them to resemble a monolithic sheaf of wheat or planting them in cement to create an industrial garden. Over the past decade, Hassinger has been commissioned to make work for Sculpture Milwaukee (curated by Ugo Rondinone); The Art Institute of Chicago; Dia Bridgehampton; Socrates Sculpture Park, Queens; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; the Rockefeller Foundation, Tarrytown; and the Aspen Art Museum. Hassinger was recently honored with an exhibition focused on her collaborative performance work with Senga Nengudi at the Cooley Gallery, Reed College,

Portland, OR traveling to the Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, OH (2024), as well as a two-person survey alongside Nengudi at the Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Valencia (2025).

Hassinger is the recipient of the Women's Caucus for the Arts Lifetime Achievement Award. Her work can be found in the permanent collections of the Art Institute of Chicago; the Guggenheim Museum; the Hirshhorn Museum; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the San Francisco Museum of Art; the Walker Art Center; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, among others.

### **About BAMPFA**

Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA) ignites cultural change for a more inclusive and artistic world. BAMPFA has been uniquely dedicated to art and film since 1970, with international programming that is locally connected and globally relevant. It holds more than 25,000 artworks and 18,000 films and videos in its collection, with particular strengths in modern and contemporary art and historical Chinese painting, as well as the world's largest collection of African American quilts. As part of the University of California, Berkeley, BAMPFA is committed to artistic diversity through its robust slate of art exhibitions, film screenings, artist talks, live performances, and educational programs that shed new light on the art of the past and connect our audiences with leading filmmakers and artists of our time. BAMPFA sits on the edge of campus and downtown Berkeley, where it welcomes visitors from across and beyond the Bay Area in a repurposed building designed by Diller Scofidio + Renfro.

### **Sponsorship**

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### **Image credits**

1. Maren Hassinger: *Tree Duet I*, 5617 San Vicente Blvd, Los Angeles, c. 1977/2021. Silver gelatin print, 20 x 30 in. Photo: Adam Avila. Courtesy of Susan Inglett Gallery, NYC.
2. Maren Hassinger, *Love (Pyramid)*, 2008/2015. Installation view, The Sondheim Finalists, Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, MD. Pink plastic bags filled with air, breath, and love notes, steelhead pushpins, Dimensions variable (unique). Courtesy of the Artist and Susan Inglett Gallery, NYC.

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