

Seafaring

Saturday 30 April – Sunday 25 September 2022

Opening this April at Hastings Contemporary, *Seafaring* brings together more than fifty works by (predominantly) British artists from 1820 to the present day, exploring in diverse media and a range of artistic styles the drama, beauty and strangeness of life at sea.

At the heart of the exhibition is *Lost at Sea*, a show-within-a-show featuring three oil paintings by eminent contemporary artist Cecily Brown (b.1969). *Oinops*, 2016-17, *Shipwreck (Papillon)*, 2017, and *Untitled (Shipwreck)*, 2017, are set alongside works by the Romantic artists who inspired the series: a pencil study by Eugene Delacroix (1798-1863) for *Christ on the Sea of Galilee*; a plaster maquette of *Moribond*, c1819, by Theodore Gericault (1791-1824); and the watercolour *The Loss of an East Indiaman*, c1818, by JMW Turner (1775-1851) (Cecil Higgins Art Gallery, Bedford).

In addition, *Lost at Sea* features lithographs by Martin Kippenberger (1953-1997), from his suite *Raft of the Medusa* (1996), alongside a rare 19th century mezzotint based on the painting by Gericault (National Maritime Museum).

The themes of shipwreck and rescue also play out across the wider *Seafaring* exhibition, as do those of voyage and migration, work and leisure, war and peace. The exhibition includes works based on artists' observation of the sea and the creatures that inhabit it, and depictions of the people who, for different reasons, travel the sea by ship or boat.

Amongst the artists included are Eric Ravilious (1903-1942), Elisabeth Frink (1930-1993), James Tissot (1836-1902), Edward Burne-Jones (1833-1898) Richard Eurich (1903-1992), Alfred Wallis (1855-1942), Edward Wadsworth (1889-1949), Frank Brangwyn (1867-1956) and Maggi Hambling (b.1945), to name but a few.

While visitors can look forward to seeing such works as Peter de Francia's (1921-2012) large-scale triptych *The Emigrants* (1964-6, on loan from Tate) and Hambling's *2016* (2016, on loan from Tate), which depicts a boat sinking, Hastings Contemporary will also display a selection of posters, on loan from the V & A, from the golden age of travel on transatlantic liners.

Other highlights include Edward Burne-Jones's emotive watercolour *Dorigen of Bretagne longing for the safe return of her husband* (1871, V&A); several wartime drawings of life aboard ship by Edward Ardizzone (1900-1979), Ronald Searle (1920-2011) and Anthony Gross (1905-1984); *The Emigrants* (1880) and *The Two Friends* (1881), etchings by James Tissot (on loan from Royal Museums Greenwich); a set of lithographs from Eric Ravilious' *Submarine Series* (1940-41), made during his time serving as an official war artist while in Gosport; and Eurich's harrowing *Survivors from a Torpedoed Ship* (1942, Tate). More light-hearted works include a delightful Edward Bawden (1903-1989) wallpaper, featuring linocut mermaids and whales, and Chris Orr's (b.1943) humorous print *Small Titanic* (1993).

"From JMW Turner to Cecily Brown, *Seafaring* brings together beautiful, powerful works by a stellar group of artists," says Hastings Contemporary director Liz Gilmore. "It is an exhibition about the shared human experience of being at sea, with depictions of fishermen and naval personnel, migrants and shipwrecked sailors. The age-old themes of voyage and migration, shipwreck and rescue are explored in different ways by artists working in a range of styles and media."

She adds: "Ten years ago our building opened on The Stade, home to the largest beach-launched fishing fleet in Europe. *Seafaring* is the perfect exhibition for our anniversary year, bringing to Hastings works by major historical and contemporary artists."

Guest curator James Russell, who also curated last year's exhibition *Seaside Modern* at Hastings Contemporary, says: *"From trawlermen to submariners, migrants to merchant seamen, people throughout the ages have shared the experience of being at sea. Seafaring explores the perils and pleasures of life at sea, while at the same time taking visitors on an art historical voyage from the Romantic age to the present."*

NOTES FOR EDITORS

[Hastings Contemporary](#) champions modern and contemporary art. An ambitious programme of temporary exhibitions showcases work by important Modern British artists, internationally celebrated artists and emerging practitioners, often in Kunsthalle-style displays throughout the building. The gallery has developed a reputation for its focus on painting. Innovative programming, partnerships and collaborations support a commitment to outreach, learning and participation. The award-winning building is located on the town's historic fishing beach among the net huts and working structures of the fishing fleet.

For more information about Hastings Contemporary, visit www.hastingscontemporary.org / Twitter @_art_on_sea / Facebook 'hastingscontemporary' / Instagram @_art_on_sea

FOR MORE INFORMATION, INTERVIEWS, AND IMAGES

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