

Press release: July 2026

Edge: Where the Land Meets the Sea 26 September 2026 – 3 January 2027



Wolfgang Tillmans, *End of Land 1*, 2002 © Wolfgang Tillmans, courtesy Maureen Paley, London. Towner Eastbourne

Edge: Where the Land Meets the Sea is a major new exhibition at Hastings Contemporary exploring the fundamental connection between land and sea, and the vital role both play in sustaining life on our planet.

In an era of profound environmental change, *Edge* challenges conventional ideas of separation and presents the coastline as a dynamic zone of exchange, where rivers, soils and oceans converge.

Co-curated with The Land Gardeners, who presented the acclaimed exhibition *SOIL* at Somerset House in 2025, this ambitious, gallery-wide exhibition brings together modern and contemporary artists to examine these interconnected living systems, and their shared futures.

Inspired by Hastings Contemporary's unique location on a shingle beach, *Edge* marks the first of two landmark exhibitions supporting the gallery's mission to focus its exhibitions and public programme on ocean futures and sustainability. Its companion exhibition, *Horizon: Where the Sea Meets the Sky*, will open in autumn 2027.

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The edge is a place where terrestrial and marine systems meet: where rivers transport the materials and histories of the land into the sea, and where complex networks of fungi, microbes, water, carbon and nutrients sustain interconnected forms of life.

Bringing together art and ecological research, the exhibition explores the human impacts and processes that shape these environments, from biodiversity and regeneration to erosion, extraction and adaptation, revealing a powerful interdependency.

Through painting, photography, film, sculpture and installation, *Edge* invites visitors to explore these profound and often unseen connections, bringing together more than 40 works from artists including Wolfgang Tillmans, Cornelia Parker, Gillian Wearing, David Nash, Charmaine Watkiss, Maggi Hambling, Duncan Grant, Aimée Parrott, Nancy Cadogan, Emma Tennant, Mike Perry, Cedric Morris, Tanoa Sasraku and Thérèse Oulton.

Together, the works lead visitors on a journey from the living richness of the soil, through rivers, waterways and coastal margins, and out into the ocean itself.

Artist Anya Gallaccio brings us into direct contact with the land by transforming an entire gallery with a reimagined site-specific installation, *Days that cannot bring you near* (2005/2026). Using soil harvested from a local farm and arranged in a grid of slowly drying clods of earth, the work brings visitors into contact with the smell, texture and physical presence of one of our most fundamental natural materials.

Following the path of water towards the sea are a selection of works from David Nash RA's celebrated *Wooden Boulder* series (1978). Created over more than four decades, these drawings document the journey of a carved wooden sphere as it travels along the River Dwyrdd, its course shaped entirely by the force of the water.

At the shoreline, *Rockweed* (2023) sees sculptor Andy Goldsworthy record himself becoming submerged beneath rockweed as the tide rises around him. He recalls: "*I would look at the sky through a latticework of rockweed... listen to it crackle, be nibbled at by crabs. As the tide rose my breathing subsided – the cold-water ebbing and flowing, in and out, as if taking over from where my breathing had left off.*"

Taking visitors beneath the ocean's surface, leading Nigerian-born artist Otobong Nkanga's richly woven tapestry *Tied to the Other Side* (2021), with its abstracted plants, corals and human limbs floating in a landscape, reflects on the cycle of life, death and rebirth. Nkanga's work raises questions about the ownership of marine resources and the rights of water, while referencing the colonisation of marine frontiers and the loss of life at sea. She compares the depths of the sea to deep geological time, reminding us of our shared obligation to minimise human impacts on global ecosystems.

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This exhibition reveals the edge as a site of transformation, responsibility and renewal, where recognising the relationship between land and sea becomes essential to imagining more sustainable futures.

The Land Gardeners, Henrietta Courtauld and Bridget Elworthy commented: *"Edge provides a lens through which we explore the symbiotic partnership of these delicate, mutually dependent ecosystems. Life on land originated from the sea. And the soil beneath our feet does not stop at the edge but continues beneath the seabed. This invisible world is the giver of life. The edge is a litmus paper for the health of the land, sea and the planet. If we understand and respect the connection between these ecosystems, we can seek to rebuild their healthy collaboration, sustaining future life on earth: there is hope."*

Kathleen Soriano, Director of Hastings Contemporary said: *"From our position on the land, the exhibition Edge allows us to consider our relationship with the sea in ways that only artists could enable us to do. Through their eyes and unique world views, we are encouraged to understand the connections and to contemplate humanity's role in preserving the fine balance that exists between the elements – land and sea."*

Featured artists: Aimée Parrott, Andrew Merritt, Andy Goldsworthy, Anya Gallaccio, Cedric Morris, Charmaine Watkiss, Cornelia Parker, David Nash, Duncan Grant, Emma Tennant, France Bourély, Frances Kearney, George Ruoy, Gillian Wearing, Howard Sooley, Jem Southam, Jo Pearl, Joya Berrow, Leia Marasovich, Lewis Brander, Lubaina Himid, Maggi Hambling, Mariana Heilmann, masharu, Mike Perry, Nancy Cadogan, Otobong Nkanga, Susie Hamilton, Tanoa Sasraku, Theodore Roussel, Thérèse Oulton, Wim van Egmond, Wolfgang Tillmans.

NOTES TO EDITORS

[IMAGES FOR MEDIA USE CAN BE DOWNLOADED HERE](#)

For images, interviews, and requests, please contact Celia Bailey, Arts PR & Development:
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Hastings Contemporary is a bold, independent arts charity in the heart of Hastings Old Town. Through ambitious exhibitions, events and partnerships, the gallery brings inspiring art to Hastings for the benefit of everyone. With a programme anchored in ocean futures and sustainability, Hastings Contemporary brings together artists, scientists, fishermen and local communities to explore new creative frontiers and the challenges of our time – all within an award-winning building on the town's historic fishing beach.

Hastings Contemporary is a finalist for the [Art Museum Award 2026](#), coordinated by the European Museum Academy to recognise and celebrate the social role of art museums. The

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award honours museum projects that place art in innovative and pioneering contexts to address and respond to current societal issues.

Visiting the gallery

Open Wednesday to Sunday and bank holidays, 11am to 5pm. Under 18s visit for free. Hastings and Rother residents can visit for half price, from just £5. Become a member for unlimited free visits, special invitations, discounts and more, from just £32 a year.

Hastings Contemporary
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The Land Gardeners' mission is to raise awareness of the importance of soil health, sharing knowledge and solutions for healthy soil. They are gardeners, landscape designers, curators and soil advocates. The opening of Edge coincides with the launch of The Land Gardeners' not-for-profit LOVE SOIL which aims to educate, inspire and empower people to make change to heal our soils through art, research and education: healing our soils, healing our plants, healing our planet. They have developed an interactive *World Map of Soil Heroes* celebrating and sharing global stories of hope which includes their research from around the world on how to feed the soil without chemicals.

In 2025 they curated an exhibition at Somerset House, London "*SOIL: The World at Our Feet*" to raise awareness, through the power of art, about the importance of soil as the foundation for all life. Attracting over 45,000 visitors the exhibition was called a "*radical show*" by the Financial Times and "*startling, enthralling and highly original*" by The Observer. The Land Gardeners are now taking this evolving exhibition on soil around the world beginning in Milan and Geneva.

Each year The Land Gardeners run the *Soil Medic Tent* at Groundswell in England curating a series of talks for farmers on how to feed and heal soils. They have written three books including their latest: *Soil to Table* published by Thames + Hudson. www.thelandgardeners.com