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Richard Hoare
An Alchemy of Light

4 December – 10 January 2021
MESSUMS WILTSHIRE

Richard Hoare had a full immersion in the British countryside from the moment he was born. He grew up on a farm outside Dedham in East Anglia; an area made famous by Constable and Gainsborough. The inspiration for Hoare's work goes back to his earliest memories of roaming the woods and plains there, magnified by his experiences walking the pilgrim routes of England, France and Spain, recording the journey all the way.

Richard's work never stagnates, always evolving and moving forward, reflecting perhaps the experience of the pilgrimages. This is despite the apparent paradox of his regular return to stand on the same spot in the same locations seen in his work, year after year. The journey begins, rests and then continues with every step, enriched by his experience of Light.

In this exhibition Hoare explores the landscapes of Wiltshire, where he now lives, Dorset and North Cornwall.

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A focus is the lake belonging to the Fonthill Estate near Tisbury. Central to the park laid out by the estate's original owner William Beckford in the 18th century, the lake is surrounded by a myriad of caves and bridged by a weir which features in many of Hoare's paintings.

Hoare captures the mesmerising effects of the large stretch of water at different times of day and year. The lime green of the sycamore trees in spring contrast with the grey trunks and rich tobacco-coloured browns and ochres of the same scene on a moonlit night in summer. The water changes from limpid and calm - an effect Hoare creates by not touching the canvas at all - to staccato-like dapples and dots giving the impression of ripples and waves.

Other paintings in the exhibition are of the knolls, bosky glades and towering chalk escarpments of Berwick St John, Dinton Park, East Knoyle and Horse Hill – an Iron Age hill fort near Shaftesbury.

In addition are works featuring three Monterey Pines atop a tidal creek near St Just in Roseland, North Cornwall; a scene which Hoare has painted repeatedly since 1984.

It was here, he says, that he felt his first 'ignition' into painting finding a fluid and intuitive way of working at high velocity which has been the hallmark of his practise ever since.

'When the tide is out you are looking at dark sand and yet a few hours later when it comes in the same spot turns into a mirror,' he says.

In the last decade Richard has worked in various countries including Ireland, America and the Argentinian and Chilean Andes, exploring the archetype of the 'Mountain of Light' as a guiding focus. In 2018 he concluded a two-year project with a residency in Koumi, Japan, which led to the two-month solo exhibition at The Kougen Museum of Art.

Richard's work is held in a number of collections including Wiltshire County Council, C. Hoare & Co. Bank, Fleet Street, London, The Bridgeman Art Library, The Lowther Art Collection and Falmouth Art Gallery.

This is his first exhibition at Messums Wiltshire

For further details please contact press@messumswiltshire.com or contact Polly Pentreath 0207 4375545

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M E S S U M S L O N D O N is modernist gallery space on Cork Street where the family have had a presence since 1992.

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