

PRESS RELEASE

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Summer/Autumn Programme of Exhibitions and Events

August – November 2023

Messums London and Wiltshire



Kaori Kato, *Wandering*, 2019

Materials Focus – PAPER

From 5 August, our in-depth focus on materials at Messums continues. Having built and fired a 3m high clay sculpture in a wood-fired kiln that brought the making process into the exhibition hall this spring, this summer Messums investigates paper. A series of exhibitions across our venues will present artists working with paper and will showcase the diversity, breadth and potential of the material with works ranging from print, drawing, sculpture and installation, and exploring a range of scale in two and three dimensions.

Japanese textile artist **Kaori Kato** will take over the barn gallery at Messums Wiltshire from 5 August with a site-specific installation. Kato creates geometric patterns and organic forms by hand-folding paper. As artist-in-residence for a short period at Messums Wiltshire, she will be making work on site as she responds to the interior of the thirteenth-century tithe barn. Her paper sculpture will dynamically integrate with the space – suspended from the ceiling, unfolding from the floor, rhythmically rolling over plinths and curling over the walls. This installation will be accompanied by a series of smaller scale wall-based works and will run until 8 October.



Works by Kaori Kato

Launching at the same time as Kaori Kato's installation, a group exhibition will open in the Long Gallery at Messums Wiltshire presenting the work of four female artists – **Becky Allen, Purdey Fitzherbert, Alice von Maltzahn** and **Emilie Pugh** whose practices are also dedicated to working with paper. While the practices of these artists vary in their nature and approach, there is a shared affinity in the work and their relationship with the material.

Becky Allen explores drawing as a form of meditative catharsis. Drawing on natural papers, such as Japanese mulberry and Chinese bamboo, with pencil or extremely fine rotiring pens, she channels the movement and energy of repeated mark-making to create artworks that express a visual record of a passage through time.

For **Purdey Fitzherbert**, the process of creation is paramount. She stresses the importance and the innate beauty of traditional craft techniques and embraces the full journey of this in her works, starting with hand-ground pigments all the way to relinquishing her dominant role as a maker and trusting the natural processes to carry through her artistic vision.



Becky Allen, *Full Circle I*, 2023 (detail)



Purdey Fitzherbert, *Bleached sepia and burnt sienna tones*, 2021 (detail)

Alice von Maltzahn creates structures that transform interior spaces, encouraging us to reimagine our surroundings and our place within them. She creates installations which explore the concept of wallpaper, growing intricately crafted, three-dimensional relief work across wall surfaces while other works include floating, hand-cut Japanese Kozuke paper panels that reanimate our field of vision, playing with the way light moves through nature's network of branches and leaves to create shadow patterns that shift as we pass through them.

Emilie Pugh draws inspiration from nature and belief systems, working between the spiritual and the scientific, the material and the immaterial. She experiments with a wide-range of mediums and processes, from unconventional methods of mark-making using incense sticks, soldering irons, chemicals and light, to the more conventional pen and ink.



Alice von Maltzahn, *Animate Matter* (detail), 2021



Emilie Pugh, *Flare* (detail), 2022

This group exhibition will run until 25 September and will be followed by an exhibition of the work of Australian artist and filmmaker **Daniel Agdag** continuing along the theme of paper. Agdag's exhibition will be presented in the Long Gallery at Messums Wiltshire from 30 September – 13 November. Agdag creates highly detailed sculptural pieces that have been described as architectural in form, whimsical and antiquated in nature and inconceivably intricate. Working primarily in cardboard, his work creates a paradox of fragility and strength with structures that resemble architectural forms and machines. Agdag's stop motion film 'The Lost Property Office' was shortlisted for an Academy Award in 2018 and won the Jury Prize for Best Animated Short at Newport Beach Film Festival in 2019. This exhibition of new work by the artist takes as its inspiration the duality of the relationship between architectural buildings or forms and water.

From architectural construction in paper to print, an exhibition showcasing an extraordinary body of painted carborundum relief prints by **Peter Godwin** will be on display at Messums London from 9 August – 8 September in an inaugural presentation in the UK. For over 15 years, Peter Godwin was painting, drawing and making prints while pursuing his teaching career, but at the time was hesitant to

exhibit his work. He is rapidly becoming recognised as one of Australia's most accomplished painters, and now expanding his practice into printmaking.

The extraordinary layered calligraphic landscapes due to be on display grew out of Godwin's trip to China as part of 'The Painter's Journey' with the Nock Art Foundation. Wall-sized, these transformative works resulted from several months of endeavour working with a master printmaker in England. Immersive in their large-scale, the prints express Godwin's gesture of line across the gallery space.

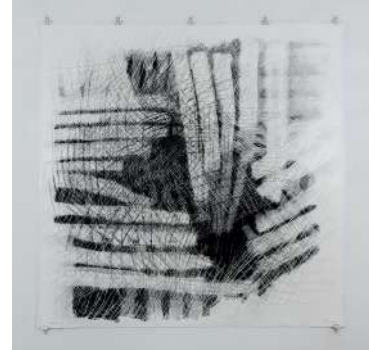


Peter Godwin with *Red Mountains, White Clouds, Version 2*

Following Peter Godwin's exhibition, Messums London will present the work of **Charlie Poulsen** (20 September – 13 October). Drawing has, in recent years, been Poulsen's primary means of expression which for him offers immediacy and a direct means of communication. He comments, "it evokes and suggests rather than fixes, it feels transitory and ephemeral, echoing the lives we live".

The exhibition will showcase a series of large abstract drawings by Poulsen realised in layers of pencil, wax and gouache. The drawings start with a square, chosen for its stability and calmness without the landscape or portrait associations. The drawings are without narrative or direct observation, looking beyond physical matter to the invisible energies, the basic form of things. These overlaying structures of irregular spatial elements are 'rooted' in a grid formation if only loosely. Poulsen thinks of the drawing as akin to organic geometry

These works will be accompanied by a series of six 3D works in wax which Poulsen describes as three-dimensional drawings, combining wax with paper, trade catalogues or household rubbish. The wax medium offers a translucent quality giving an impression of looking into and through the work.



Drawings by Charlie Poulsen

Together with Poulsen's exhibition at Messums London, a celebration of new ceramic work by Japanese artist **Makoto Kagoshima** will be presented. Kagoshima's joyful ceramics bridge gaps between folk art, craft and fine art through his dreamy motifs of the natural world, both animal and botanical. His colour palette is rich and bright, and his draughtsmanship is clean and illustrative, and the resultant works have a pattern-like quality that simultaneously recalls the decorated black and red narrative vases of the ancient Mediterranean and the refined geometric graphics of post-modern European design. In fact, Kagoshima worked at the Conran Shop in Japan but states he finds influence in the European Romanesque. This exhibition at Messums London will feature approximately 200 new works by Kagoshima that explore the subject of harvest.

On the weekend of 23-24 September, a **Film Festival** on the theme of the environment, and in relation to our Active Environmentalism programme, will be held in the barn at Messums Wiltshire. This festival will be in partnership with two companies dedicated to film focusing on environmental issues. These are **WaterBear**, the first interactive streaming platform dedicated to the future of our planet and **Earthrise Studios**, a digital media platform and creative studio dedicated to communicating the climate crisis.

Continuing our series of weekend events, our annual **Architecture Symposium** will take place on Saturday 7 October at Messums Wiltshire and will once again celebrate the latest innovation and evolution in construction and design through a series of talks and presentations by leading architects and experts in the field. This year topics will include spaces for arts in the community and a discussion on the role of beauty and aesthetics in architectural practice.

From 17 October until 17 November Messums London will host an exhibition of new work by **Christie Brown**. Brown is well-known for her whimsical and mischievous ceramic figures that hover in the tricky intersection between art and craft. Her examination of human nature, of in-built tendencies and shared psychological experience is a cornerstone of her work, demonstrated in figures that are not there to be observed but to provoke an internal dialogue with the viewer. However, it is little known that Brown's practice has, for her entire career, been rooted in life drawing,

not as preparatory sketches but as an exploratory exercise into the psyche, and very rarely have they been exhibited. In this exhibition, Brown presents a series of large-scale drawings that explore the relationship between life drawing and figurative sculpture, but in a second bold move Brown renders the figure in bronze. The permanence and robustness of the bronze relate to and contrast with the ephemeral drawings, which see the figure drift through space, time, and memory.

We hope you will join us to share in these exhibitions and events we have programmed from August through to November.



Thirteenth century tithe barn, Messums Wiltshire

PRESS

For further information and press images, please contact:
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MESSUMS WILTSHIRE is a leading multi-purpose gallery and arts centre set inside a restored thirteenth-century tithe barn and surrounding buildings with exhibition space, sculpture garden and restaurant.

MESSUMS LONDON is a 2,000 sq ft exhibition space on Cork Street behind the Royal Academy. It hosts a rolling programme of exhibitions for our contemporary artists.