

**DOD MILLER**  
**Birdmen**

16 - 31 July 2022  
Private View: Friday 15 July, 6:30pm  
Register interest [here](#)

Book Launch: *Birdmen* by Dod Miller, Saturday 16 July, 11 am.  
Pre-order your signed copy [here](#)

Messums Wiltshire  
Place Farm, Court St, Tisbury,  
Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP3 6LW



Dod Miller, *Birdman Prop head*, 1994. From the series *Birdmen*.

This summer, Messums Wiltshire presents *Birdmen* by documentary photographer Dod Miller.

The 'Birdman' competition is the quintessence of British humour and eccentricity. Held each summer along the south coast of England in West Sussex, people dressed in different garb attempt to fly as far as possible by jumping off a pier before splash landing in the water. The competition divides into different approaches, those who believe in science and those who do not. With that, a range of different contraptions and costumes take momentary or gradual flight, from professional hang gliders and engineers of homemade Leonardo Da Vinci style flying machines to costumes that suggest levity of mind is a matter also for the body. These impossible aspirations clothed in uplifting humour serve us a gentle reminder that it is not really the distance travelled but the taking part which has no peer, and all we have to do is jump with both feet.

From 1994 until 2001, in Brighton, Eastbourne and Bognor Regis, Dod Miller immortalised these human 'birds' with his Rolleiflex camera. Supermen, witches, dinosaurs, butterflies, ostriches, penguins and winged species of all kinds posed for Miller ready for their take off, armed with goggles and swimming flippers. The works exhibited are, in the main, unique vintage prints from the period.

Working primarily in black and white, Miller has covered some of the key events of modern history, as well as cultural and social manifestations that bring communities together. His work is imbued with a sense of theatre, casting light on the cinematic and the uniqueness in our existence.

## BIOGRAPHY

Dod Miller grew up in the former Soviet Union, the US and South Africa. He returned to the UK when he was 14 and continued his education in South London. After leaving school, he joined *The Hastings Observer* and *The Sussex Express* training as a photographer.

In the mid-1980s, Miller started freelancing for *The Times*, *The Sunday Times* and later for *The Observer*. He joined Network which was a London-based independent, cooperatively-owned picture agency in 1990.

His ability to bring humour into his photography has been widely recognised by national and international magazines and the advertising and design industry.

He has won many world press awards, exhibited at the National Theatre and The Photographers Gallery. He has been awarded two bursaries by The Arts Council and The Photographers Gallery. He has won D&AD's awards for his advertising and design work and also produced a Blue Note album cover.

## PRESS

For press images, please contact: [press@messumswiltshire.com](mailto:press@messumswiltshire.com)  
For further information about Dod Miller's' photographs, please contact Mary George at [photography@messumswiltshire.com](mailto:photography@messumswiltshire.com)

Launched in May 2021 with a programme of talks and exhibitions featuring international, renowned and emerging artists and photographers working in various parts of the world, **Messums Photography** favours dialogue between contemporary imagery and archives, reflecting on the evolution of photography as a storytelling genre.

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 and is home to our photography department.