

MESSUMS WILTSHIRE

ART DESIGN PERFORMANCE EDUCATION

Martina Amati UNDER

Messums Wiltshire, Barn
26 October – 1 December 2019

Preview screening and Supper Under the Sea with an introduction by Martina Amati: Friday
25 October, 7pm



Messums Wiltshire is pleased to announce an exhibition of artist and film director Martina Amati's immersive video installation *Under* (2015) as our inaugural MOVING IMAGE exhibition (26 October - 01 December 2019). This eleven-minute installation is comprised of two separate looped video projections, with each film named after a quantitative means of measuring free-diving ability: *Distance* and *Depth*. Underwater cinematographer Daan Verhoeven captured Amati's subaquatic performance, shooting every scene on a single, non-assisted breath of air.

With its vivid blue colouration and lens flares nostalgically evoking the primeval sun, Amati's film tantalisingly visualises the human origin story—Charles Darwin's initially outrageous idea that all life began in the sea. The two films will command the barn in its entirety, with *Distance* shown on a large screen at the far end of the space and *Depth* projected onto a custom built 'diving platform' suspended from the roof and floating above people's heads. Amati's accompanying documentary of the same name, one that explores the physical, mental and spiritual aspects of this extreme sport, will also be on show. The documentary, for which she worked with Professor Kevin Fong, features interviews with masters of free-diving including world record holder Enzo Maiorca, who was the inspiration for Luc Besson's 'The Big Blue', as well as scientists who research the effects of free-diving on the apparatus of the human body.

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Martina Amati is an Italian BAFTA-winning filmmaker and artist. With her short films Amati has won a UNICEF AWARD (*A'Mare*), a BAFTA in 2010 (*I Do Air*) and another BAFTA nomination in 2012 for *Chalk*, which also won a BIFA (British Independent Film Award), along side several other international awards.

Notes to editors:

This will be Messums Wiltshire's inaugural MOVING IMAGE exhibition for which Amati's work has been reconfigured and re-mastered to respond to the space of our thirteenth century barn. *Under* kickstarts a two-year programme of Moving Image at Messums Wiltshire, which will be continued by Sonia Leber and David Chesworth's exhibition of a new work in autumn 2020.

Under was supported by a Wellcome Trust Large Art Award; and produced by Pinky Ghundale for Cowboy Films.



About Messums Wiltshire:

Messums Wiltshire is a leading multi-purpose arts centre, which opened in autumn 2016 after a two-year restoration project. Originally set inside the thirteenth-century tithe barn, we have since expanded into a restored nineteenth-century dairy, called the Long Gallery. In early 2018 we opened The Mess, our restaurant.

Our aim is to offer a unique environment to experience and engage with the arts across genre including performance, dance, design as well as sculpture, painting, photography and ceramics. We are situated in an area renowned internationally for its ancient art-making, beginning millennia ago with Stonehenge, Salisbury Cathedral and Tisbury's Jurassic fossil coral, which is found underneath the hills of the Fonthill estate – and argued by Dr K P Oakley to be evidence of the first signs of human aesthetic appreciation. At Messums Wiltshire we recognise the importance of the hand's skill in art: especially pertinent to a future in which the digital is expected to dominate.

Notable events to date include our inaugural Festival of Spoken Word in July 2018 with contributions from Edward Fox and Rupert Everett; pioneering contemporary dance performances from The Alexander Whitley Dance Company with a world premiere of a *Between Two Fires* (2018) and Russell Maliphant's *Conceal / Reveal* (2016); Textile in Motion with collections by Henrik Vibskov, Joshua Millard and Sadie Williams as well as festivals celebrating Clay, Wood, Glass and Textile with contributions from some of the makers and minds in each field. A full list of past and future exhibitions can be found on our website.

For all press related requests email: hannah.hooks@messumswiltshire.com