

PRESS RELEASE

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Please contact: press@messums.org

KITTY SHEPHERD – NEW WORK

Messums London, 20 November – 20 December 2024



Messums London is thrilled to present a new highly anticipated series of vessels and tiles by internationally recognised British ceramic artist, Kitty Shepherd (b. 1960). Known for her bold use of colour with slip, Shepherd's practice is centred around her manual dexterity and exceptional craft aligned with her passion as an observer of cultural ephemera, and the emotional attachment we feel for inanimate, immediate items that conversely form an integral and lasting part of our collective experience and identity.

There is an innate juxtaposition between the timelessness of the extraordinarily fine craftsmanship involved in the creation of Shepherd's ceramic pieces and the shapes she chooses to employ, and the transient, mass-produced consumer objects that form the subject matter of their vibrant surface decoration.

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Shepherd’s work makes unexpected – often humorous – connections between iconic images and designs that she recalls as cultural milestones; for example, the Zoom Lolly Vase (2020), in which she places the repeat motif of a Zoom ice lolly over a backdrop of the CND peace logo – global consumer capitalism meeting international political activism, turning an innocent children’s treat into a sinister reminder of the pervasive impact and quasi-fetishisation of the arms race in the second half of the 20th century. The result is art as a form of play, involving the reframing of objects within a world of attention and manipulation of context; a context standing in a metaphorical relation to the world of everyday life.



“I believe that many of the objects we are attracted to today have been with us all of our lives. They may live deep inside our DNA, quite literally the fabric of who we are. I continually ask myself what are my favourite things and also the following questions: Why these objects? What power do they hold for me? What meaning? What memories do they conjure up? What emotions? And most importantly, what stories do I tell myself about them and through them? How have they become a part of who I am and what part of me do I leave behind in them?” – Kitty Shepherd

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Notes to editors

ABOUT MESSUMS – MESSUMS WEST, MESSUMS LONDON AND MESSUMS ORG

MESSUMS WEST: Established as Messums Wiltshire in 2016 by Johnny Messum, Messums West is a leading multi-purpose gallery and arts centre set inside a restored thirteenth-century tithe barn with surrounding buildings, 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.

Under the umbrella **MESSUMS ORG**, the business continues to evolve the role of the gallery from presentational space to one that offers multiple ways to access, experience, understand and engage with the creative process and its outcomes. This has included establishing a network of venues and arts communities in the West and East of England and connecting with our historic London gallery space, **MESSUMS LONDON**.

Our core specialisms are represented in the breadth of the arts we engage in as part of the programme of exhibitions and events at our venues. This encompasses painting, sculpture, ceramics, photography, and performance as well as film, architecture, textiles and more. Together with our exhibitions and events, we offer international artist residencies, contemporary dance premiers, symposia, and workshops. Underpinning all of this is an appreciation and respect for nature to which most artists and individuals would readily identify, and a belief that innovation like creativity itself runs at the vanguard of our thoughts.

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