

Writing a press release for your Artweeks exhibition



A press release is a tool to try and get your Artweeks exhibition additional attention through local media. The Artweeks office will try and help you do this, and is happy to channel press releases to the right places with, we hope, an additional touch of editorial credibility.

Here is a very simple guide to putting together a short press release which can inform the Artweeks office about your latest offerings and may also be used to interest journalists and feature writers.

Ideally we would receive initial news about your Artweeks exhibition in February as glossy magazines are planned several months in advance, and further information in early April for newspaper stories.

Things to bear in mind:

- The main audience for Artweeks publicity is the general Oxfordshire population, mirroring the general visitors for the Artweeks festival. They're not art aficionados and so try and keep the information about your work simple and appropriate to the everyday man in the street. However, journalists and editors will be more interested in your press release if you write about your work with energy and integrity, perhaps citing your influences, and providing contextual links to information about your practice.
- A series of landscape paintings, however freshly painted, or ceramics with a new shape or lustre, for example, do not constitute 'news'. In order to capture the attention of a newspaper/magazine editor, or radio/TV producer, there needs to be a **story**. And, with the exception of radio, it should be visual.
- Artweeks is about artists opening their studios and hearts to the public and your press release should reflect this – a newspaper/magazine readership/radio audience etc can be as interested in you/the artist behind an exhibition as the work itself.

What should the press release include?

- One or two engaging paragraphs about you and your work. This is essentially an artist statement for the show, and the key is to be clear, concise, and informative. You might include information on your inspiration, which is particularly pertinent to local media if it is Oxfordshire-based; the materials you have used, particularly if they are unusual or interesting; and also the venue if it is striking or quirky, with an interesting history or a story of its own.
- A short paragraph about you (the artist) including where you live/work, how long you have lived in Oxfordshire. Local media are always keen to cover local people talking about themselves as well as local places. How does Oxfordshire inspire you?
- An image, ideally of you (the artist) holding or working on a representative piece of work, which you are happy for Artweeks/the press to use for publicity purposes which should also be attached in high res.
- All the pertinent and logistical information: your (the artist's) name, the title of your show and that it is part of Oxfordshire Artweeks, the name and the location of the venue, your opening hours, a link to your website/Artweeks artist gallery and your contact information.

Send your press release to artweeks@artweeks.org entitled 'Press release: Headline'

From February to May the Artweeks office sends out dozens of press releases and feature ideas to editors and producers across the county and beyond. Sometimes the information or picture is used directly from a press release although we may never have heard back from the recipient. Other times we are contacted for further information and images. Magazines or newspapers may also contact you directly – in this case we may be unaware that they are following up your story so please do let us know!