

First Time Friends Julie and Jan

Two Abingdon artists and friends, Jan Morter and Julie Edge are participating in Oxfordshire Art Weeks for the first time. Their work will be on display at 27 St John's Road, Abingdon OX14 2HA from 7-14 May from 11am to 6pm each day.

Jan specialises in ceramics, mixed media, painting, and Sgraffito pottery which is created by applying layers of colour, underglazes or coloured slips to leather hard pottery, before scratching off parts of the layers to create contrasting images, patterns and textures, revealing the clay colour beneath. The pottery items she creates include vessels you might choose to use in your home every day or put on display from bold jugs for flowers and liquids, lanterns and lamps, mugs and plates or ever-popular bird feeders to hang in your garden. All her work is hand thrown and fired in Abingdon.



We asked Jan more about her work and what gives her inspiration.

"I have dabbled with clay since the early 1980s but only seriously got into it after having children as a way of spending some mindful time alone. Watching Channel 4's 'The Great Pottery Throwdown' has really inspired me and I enjoy learning new techniques, stretching myself in the art of ceramics. When I was studying music and education, the music department was above the art studio, and I loved to watch the potters at work. There is something mesmerizing about watching a lump of what is essentially 'mud' being transformed into a vessel. Having attended classes at Sunningwell School of Art for a year as well as summer schools, my own creative techniques have developed, and I am really excited about being part of this year's Oxfordshire Art Weeks. I get a lot of my inspiration from nature and enjoy decorating my pots with botanical forms. Hopefully, visitors will like my work too!"

Painter Julie Edge creates her pictures using acrylic, oil, and mixed media to portray abstract landscape elements drawn from the coast and wild places. She is a keen gardener and grower so is also drawn to flowers and still life involving plants.

"I have been painting for about eight years, initially learning watercolour at evening classes and later taking up oil then acrylic painting. When I retired, I was able to spend more time on art and enjoy learning new techniques with new media, which is why I paint in so many different styles. Having worked as a paediatrician at the Oxford Children's Hospital for the past 30 years, until I retired, I had no artistic background. I did, however, love visiting art galleries and looking at all types of art and would put my creative talents to sewing and knitting, a different type of creativity.

I take inspiration for my paintings from walks, holidays, working in my garden and on my allotment. I love colour and getting involved with using a wide range of materials and techniques in my artwork. I am really looking forward to the challenges of displaying several works in Jan's lovely space. It will be interesting to get feedback and hopefully, our work will attract a good number of visitors, all of which will be a fun and good experience!"



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