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Oxfordshire Artweeks 2012: The Caravan Gallery brings a 'wonderfully anarchic celebration of Oxford' to Oxford Castle Quarter

See Oxford as you've never seen it before with The Caravan Gallery:

Oxford Pride of Place Project at Oxford Castle Quarter and O3 Gallery, 5 to 27th May 2012

The Caravan Gallery: Is Britain Great? exhibition on site at Castle St Square from 5th - 12th May 2012 only

Images attached: The Caravan Gallery outside Tate Britain plus two shots Caravan Gallery shots in Oxford

During Oxfordshire Artweeks 2012, Castle Street Square at Oxford Castle Quarter will be home to The Caravan Gallery, a small but perfectly formed gallery in a 1969 mustard caravan, containing a photography exhibition that celebrates the reality and surreality of everyday life in contemporary Britain. An additional exhibition in neighbouring O3 Gallery will focus on Oxford in all its multifaceted glory to find out what makes it tick.

Jan Williams and Chris Teasdale, the artists behind The Caravan Gallery, have travelled thousands of miles and exhibited in hundreds of locations in the UK and abroad taking art to people and places other galleries might not easily reach. Since setting up their project in 2000 to document 'the way we live today', Williams and Teasdale have produced a hugely popular series of *Is Britain Great?* books, reality postcards and calendars, all of which provide a refreshing antidote to the airbrushed views of places we are usually fed by the tourist industry. The Caravan Gallery definition of what is photogenic and worth looking at is broader and more inclusive than most.

During Oxfordshire Artweeks O3 Gallery will be transformed into a dynamic hub for the *Oxford Pride of Place Project*, an evolving exhibition and creative collaboration by The Caravan Gallery and visitors to the space. Williams and Teasdale will set the scene with a selection of their own photographic impressions of Oxford. An engaging collection of *Oxford Video Portraits* created by students from the School of Arts at Oxford Brookes University in association with The Caravan Gallery will give visitors illuminating insights and entertaining sound bites as Oxford people talk about their city. Members of the public can contribute to the project by adding their own observations and places of personal significance to a large *People's Map of Oxford* that will become a colourful and informative artwork in its own right. They will also be invited to share their views in a curiously entertaining *Caravan Gallery Survey of Oxford*, create souvenirs and postcards in O3 Gallery's special Creative Zone or bring along something they've made in school, at home or in their studio.

Jan Williams says: 'We hope the *Oxford Pride of Place Project* will be a wonderfully anarchic celebration of the city. We're really interested in sense of place and how people relate to where they live. We can't wait to find out how the people of Oxford see their city. The exhibition will grow as contributors get involved by adding their creative input to our investigations so it'll be worth dropping in on a regular basis. We're relying on the good people of Oxford to help us make an exhibition to remember!'

"Our *People's Maps* have proved really popular in Portsmouth, Guernsey and Liverpool. Rather than focus on obvious landmarks we want people to bring places to life by filling in the gaps with their own stories, attractions and unattractions. You can learn a lot from our maps - donkey burial sights, favourite kebab shops and ghost sightings have all been demarcated in The Caravan Gallery's subversive cartography. If all goes to plan the overall outcome of the *Oxford Pride of Place Project* will resemble a thoroughly entertaining alternative Tourist Information Centre."

Oxford Castle Quarter Events and Marketing Manager Sarah Mayhew said: "We are thrilled to be hosting The Caravan Gallery at Oxford Castle Quarter. For more than 10 years The Caravan Gallery has been photographing across Britain and Europe to document how people really live – the artists are such personable people, so it'll be very interesting to see how they engage with the residents of Oxford, and fascinating to see what sights they uncover, and which images they select to represent the city and exhibit in O3 Gallery."

The Caravan Gallery is also coordinating the photography exhibition *Here and Now* in conjunction with Arts at The Old Fire Station, O3 Gallery, Oxford Castle Quarter, Crisis Skylight, Grandpont Children's Centre and The Redbridge Travellers Women's Group. Oxford residents are also invited to enter the *Here and Now* photography competition. Winning images will be exhibited at the Old Fire Station during Oxfordshire Artweeks. The deadline for submissions is 12 noon on 13 April and details can be found here <http://shopattheoldfirestation.blogspot.co.uk/p/here-and-now-photo-competition.html>

'distressingly perceptive, beautifully absurd , seriously thought provoking'

ENDS

CONTACTS

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The Caravan Gallery: www.thecaravangallery.co.uk; admin@thecaravangallery.co.uk 07808 160207

LISTINGS INFORMATION

Oxford Pride of Place Project - The Caravan Gallery at Oxford Castle Quarter

(with complementary displays at the Old Fire Station and Modern Art Oxford cafe).

A series of photographic and video exhibitions and participatory activities involving the people of Oxford and the internationally acclaimed Caravan Gallery.

O3 Gallery, 5 - 27 May 2012: Exhibition of museum quality colour prints of the 'real and surreal' Oxford by The Caravan Gallery and an evolving display created by visitors to the exhibition - see participatory activities below. Free entry.

The Caravan Gallery on site at Oxford Castle Quarter

5-12th May - The Caravan Gallery (a mustard 1969 Bluebird Europe) will set up camp in Castle St Square in front of O3 Gallery. Exhibition will feature classic images from The Caravan Gallery's *Is Britain Great?* archive and publications of same name. Free entry.

Public talk by The Caravan Gallery - *O3 Gallery*, Wednesday 9th May, 6pm. The artists will talk about their work, their travels and discoveries in Oxford. Free entry.

Oxford: Video Portraits - *O3 Gallery, Old Fire Station and Modern Art Oxford cafe*. Illuminating insights and entertaining sound bites from the people of Oxford about their city, created by students from the School of Arts at Oxford Brookes University in association with The Caravan Gallery.

Participatory activities - *O3 Gallery*: People's Map of Oxford; drop-in souvenir and postcard making; The Caravan Gallery Oxford Survey. *Old Fire Station*: Oxford: The People's Perspective - the display will grow as members of the public add their Oxford-related drawings, photos writings and miscellaneous ephemera to a designated wall

Here and Now photography competition - Oxford residents show their city as they see it. Winning entries will be displayed at the Old Fire Station. Closing date 13th April 2012.

O3 Gallery is open Tues-Fri 12-5pm and Sat-Sun 11am-4pm. Closed Mondays.