



New hobby: Mark Lord in his home studio making lino prints. He became interested when his work as a photographer dried up during the pandemic

Lord! Photographer falls in love with lino printing

By **LILY SHANAGHER**

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AN artist is exhibiting his work in Watlington.

Mark Lord, a photographer, is showing his "Lino Lord" prints in the Granary Café in High Street until the end of this month.

The 47-year-old, who lives in Aston Rowant, took up lino printing during the covid pandemic after the restrictions caused his photography work to dry up.

Now he has more than 21,000 followers on his Instagram page and has exhibited his prints across the country.

Mr Lord is originally from Cornwall and studied photography at university. He moved to Oxfordshire in 2000 after successfully applying for a job as a portrait photographer in Marlow.

He said: "I was only going to do it for 12 months or so and, 23 years later, here we are."

"I lived around the Marlow area for four years, then moved to Watlington, which is probably one of the best things I've ever done."

"I rented a little cottage on my own and within a year or so, met my now-wife Becky."

"She was a picture framer in Wiltshire and helped my friend set up a studio near Marlborough."

"We got together and she moved up here. We lived in Watlington, then Cuxham, and have been in Aston Rowant for about 12 years."

"I am still a full-time photographer but my heart is with the makers, creators, producers, artisans, the kind of the good life, or the



Cuttings: some of the lino prints

People are looking locally and supporting local businesses."

Mr Lord has embraced social media as part of the changing landscape of the creative industry and has two Instagram accounts advertising his print-making and photography.

He said: "With Mark Lord Photography, you post a nice picture, you get likes and comments and you get work. People say: 'I saw your work on Instagram, can you come and photograph me?'" It certainly attracts business and I have a reasonable following.

"But with Lino Lord, I think Instagram has been pivotal in its development."

"In 2019, I started to do a few lino cuts. I wanted to make more of a creative space at home, so I converted the sunroom upstairs from a dumping ground into a studio. I sat down and thought: 'What shall I

do nothing — I struggle to just sit and read or watch TV."

"I had taken a foundation course in art and design in 1994 and the last thing I did before I picked up a 35mm film camera was a lino print. It might have always been subliminally in my head."

"The other thing that is very significant to where we are now is Jaime McCormack, who runs the Watlington division of the Oxfordshire Artweeks."

"She approached me in 2019 and asked if I would consider joining, not for my photography, but my printmaking."

"I was carving away and doing some reasonable prints but nothing brilliant. It was pre-pandemic so I was just doing what I could in the evenings."

"I decided to accept the challenge, keep my head down and get going with it. During the pandemic, we took an allotment off Kingston Blount and when I wasn't there, I was carving and printing here."

"Artweeks was virtual that year, then we set up an Etsy shop one week before Mother's Day and I took about 20 orders to the post office. I was delighted that people seemed to like my prints."

Mr Lord found lino printing to be a good alternative income to photography during the pandemic.

He said: "I could do a bit of photography, like garden design, but most went to the side. I could see printing as another area."

"My photography is always quiet in the winter months, so I thought about being a printmaker in the winter and photographer in the

do nothing — I struggle to just sit and read or watch TV."

"I like standing back at the end of the day, seeing my drying rack and saying: 'That's what I've done today'. It's a really nice feeling."

"I really enjoyed the fairs and Christmas markets. Last year was just fantastic. I did some amazing makers' markets and got invited to some really good ones by two creatives on Instagram whom I really admire."

"I'm really quite proud of where it's gone and we'll see where it goes."

Mr Lord will be participating in Artweeks again this year at the Orange Bakery in High Street, Watlington, where he has exhibited for the past two years. He has also exhibited in Watlington library.

He said: "I've had so much support from the local community. I've been around here since 2005 and I am really pleased to be part of the Artweeks group, they're a really lovely bunch."

"Somebody actually came from London and said: 'You're becoming the iconic look of the area'. It's a nice compliment and knowing people like the work and want to put it in their homes makes me very proud."

"We're very happy around here but we might one day move back to Cornwall. Even up here, landlocked Oxfordshire people love the coast. I am also inspired by the Suffolk area and hope to get an exhibition over there towards the end of the year."

"One lady walked into the Orange Bakery, pointed at a print and said: 'That's so Falmouth', which is where I'm from. It was just seven boats and water and was actually St Maves but for her to look at that and say that