

OXFORDSHIRE
art
WEEKS



OX MEETS:

Clive Goddard

ESTHER LAFFERTY

Oxford illustrator Clive Goddard wanted to be a cartoonist from his school days but was persuaded into a 'proper job'. It wasn't until his 40s that he took an art course and began drawing cartoons to send to magazines and newspapers in the hopes that they would publish one.



Incredibly, almost immediately *Private Eye* printed one, and on the strength of that with a sharpened pencil and boundless optimism – Clive decided to become a freelance illustrator and cartoonist. He has never looked back: he is now the author-illustrator of a series of children's books (*Fintan Fedora the World's Worst Explorer*) and Chairman of the Professional Cartoonists' Organisation which champions cartooning as an art form. It's great therefore to see cartoons lined up amongst paintings, sculpture and other art forms during the Oxfordshire Artweeks festival as Clive presents an exhibition of his work at The Gardener's Arms at 39 Plantation Road, Jericho in May (Artweeks venue 449)

Clive's cartoons, which regularly appear in *Private Eye* and other magazines and newspapers, reflect what is going on in the world around us. Rather than being overtly political, they are poking fun at the news, society, and the moral and cultural climate in which we live. One of his current favourites (and the winner of The Mel Calman Award for Pocket Cartoon of the Year 2022) was drawn during Liz Truss' brief spell as prime minister and alluded to the general disaster that the country found itself in.

"I used to be a real news junkie in the 1980s and 1990s, consuming every story I could find on every platform," says Clive, "and it wasn't healthy. News almost always makes you sad, angry or worried, so my cartoons are a reaction to that, a way of venting and yet also making light of a situation for both me and for the people who see them. Most of the cartoons are designed for a general audience but I also draw occasionally for more niche audiences. An old favourite of mine will only make sense to Bob Dylan fans (it references a famous heckle in Dylan's history), whilst a series produced for greetings cards includes innuendo and swearing – I was surprised to discover that people's card buying habits show that the smuttier the cartoon, the better the card sells."

How much does Clive give away of himself in his cartoons?

Probably more than I realise. Generally my cartoons expose my politics and opinions. People assume you must share Rupert Murdoch's political stance if your work is published in one of his newspapers but that ▶

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GODDARD



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"Er, excuse me... My eyes are down here, pal!"



