

Oxfordshire Artweeks shows the world as hundreds of artists open their studios.



Around 1000 artists and makers, including nearly 200 who are first-timers for 2014, are preparing for more than 400 exhibitions and events across the county for Oxfordshire Artweeks, the longest-running and biggest open studios event in the UK.

Painters and photographers, potters and sculptors, silversmiths, and textile artists will all be opening their homes and studios across the county to the public for free to showcase their talent through exhibitions and demonstrations throughout May. From steam punk sculpture to ethical fashion, jewellery inspired by Fabergé eggs to drawings depicting heaven and hell in the world of ballet, mirrors ensconced in driftwood to a day in the life of a local farrier told in photographs, there'll be plenty to interest and amaze everyone this May.

Without leaving the county, festival visitors all be able to travel America's iconic Route 66 through the eyes of a Jericho photographer, explore Russian culture both old and new in Abingdon, navigate the waterlilies of the Botswanan delta in Chadlington through a series of etchings, and explore arctic waters with Burcot's Frances Brann who travels and paints aboard a 49 foot sailboat. From Banbury to Blewbury and Witney to Wheatley, you'll find New York cityscapes and oil paintings of rural India, the alps through French eyes, and Japanese influenced stoneware, well as exhibitions inspired by landscapes closer to home.

Visitors are invited into hundreds of interesting spaces, many of which are usually closed to the public, including one of the finest medieval barns in England which will house an exhibition of African animals; Ardington, a Ridgeway village overrun with sculpture and a classic 1930s barge on the river Thames that isn't usually open to the public.

Art aficionados and everyday enthusiasts, adults and children alike will be able to follow art trails through Oxford streets, Cotswold villages, along the Thames or through the county's market towns.

And with an art talk by the new Director of Modern Art Oxford, Paul Hobson, demonstrations, workshops and trails, there's something to inspire all ages and aspirations. Visitors will have the chance to see the art produced in their own communities, to ask local artists about their influences, techniques and materials, and even have a go themselves.

The definitive festival guide will be available from libraries, Hamptons branches and local information from April or visit www.artweeks.org.

Artweeks is celebrated across Oxfordshire in partnership with local arts centres, museums, and other Oxfordshire organisations, with support from The Oxford Times and Hamptons International.

Notes to Editors

Oxfordshire Artweeks www.artweeks.org

Artweeks is Oxfordshire's largest visual arts festival and the UK's oldest and biggest Open Studios event, a three-week celebration in May each year of the county's artistic and creative talent encompassing the visual arts in their broadest sense.

Almost 1000 artists open the doors to their homes and studios and welcome the public to see their creations and watch them work. In 2013 approximately 100,000 people visited nearly 500 exhibitions and events across the county.

All exhibitions are free

Oxfordshire Artweeks 2014 will run from Saturday 3rd – 26th May 2014

and is organised into three geographical areas

South Oxfordshire Exhibitions: Saturday 3rd - Sunday 11th May

North Oxfordshire Exhibitions: Saturday 10th - Sunday 18th May

City Exhibitions: Saturday 17th – Monday 26th May

The *Oxfordshire Visual Arts Festival (Artweeks)* is a non profit-making company, limited by guarantee and owned by its members. Everyone is welcome to take part and there is no selection process for artists wishing to participate.

Further press information & LOTS OF GREAT IMAGES available from Esther Lafferty (previously Browning) 01865 821090 or 07776 196967 **esther@artweeks.org**

Esther Lafferty, Festival Director, and dozens of artists, are also available for interview.

Follow us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/OxfordshireArtweeks>

Or Twitter @OxonArtweeks