

16th February 2015

Art for everyone in the Oxfordshire Cotswolds this May



Around 160 artists and designer-makers, including dozens who are first-timers for 2015, are preparing for more than 100 exhibitions and events in the Cotswolds for Oxfordshire Artweeks from 2nd-25th May, for the longest-running and biggest open studios event in the UK.

Painters and designers, potters and sculptors, wood-turners, photographers, jewellers 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. From fashion to furniture, in collage, ceramics, mosaic, on fabric, on film and on canvas, artists are telling tales of wonderful places and journeys travelled, sharing their inspiration and ideas, in interesting venues from The Wychwoods to Woodstock, Bloxham to Burford.

With stone carving incorporating poetry and prose in Burford, to silver and gold contemporary jewellery by Sarah Pulvertaft in the Ranger's Lodge at Cornbury Park, as worn by Deborah Meaden of the Dragon's Den & JKRowling; prints and artists' books inspired by music from violinist and artistic director of Oxford Concert Party, Isabel Knowland, and life-size horse sculpted from metal by Milton-under-Wychwood's Sophie Thomson, there's plenty to explore.

Both the theatre and town hall in Chipping Norton will be bursting with art as more than forty artists open their studios and show their work across the town: there's equestrian paintings by Melanie Wright just a stone's throw from tactile wood-turning and Raku ceramics. Over in Charlbury, meet silversmith Patricia Freeman who has made guitar buckles for Sir Paul McCartney or hear the tales of textile artist Sue Rangeley whose stunning floral embroidery creations have graced both catwalks and the V&A. Head to Burford where, in the ballroom of Asthall Manor where debutantes including the Mitford sisters were introduced to high society, find intricate ceramic shoes are fit for a fairy princess crated by Kate Hopkins Searle as shown in Liberty's, London.

Explore the natural world, from the poles to the equator, take a journey in a gondola through the Venetian archipelago, or travel back in time and share memories of childhood. Come nose to nose with a highland cow in a Cotswold pub, or follow the fine lines of a bird at flight in a bookshop. Find nature encapsulated in glass or enjoy art good enough to eat, or eat off!

Across Oxfordshire, visitors are invited into hundreds of interesting spaces, many of which are usually closed to the public, including Oxford Colleges, two of the finest medieval barns in England, a West Oxfordshire wind farm, and a classic 1930s barge on the river Thames. Art aficionados & everyday enthusiasts, adults & children alike will be able to follow art trails through Oxford streets, Cotswold villages and ancient market towns.

And with art talks, events, and workshops at The OU Museum of Natural History, The Ashmolean and art centres across the county, 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 listings are now available on-line at www.artweeks.org and the printed festival guide will be available from April.



Sue Rangeley



Kate Hopkins Searle



Sophie Thomson



Melanie Wright

Notes to editors

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 2nd- 25th May 2015

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 2014 over 100,000 people visited more than 400 exhibitions and a million pounds of art changed hands!

Further press information & lots of lovely colourful IMAGES contact **Esther Lafferty** 01367 242498 or 07776 196967 esther@artweeks.org

