

12th January 2016

Art for everyone across Oxfordshire this spring



Around 1000 artists and designer-makers, including 150 who are first-timers for 2016, are preparing for more than 450 exhibitions and events across the county for Oxfordshire Artweeks from 7th-30th May, for the longest-running and biggest open studios event in the UK.

An A-Z of 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 in furniture, artists are telling tales of the past and the present, of wonderful places visited and people met, and sharing their inspiration and ideas, across venues, from Adderbury and Blewbury, to Wallingford and the Wychwoods.

Uncover tales of adventure behind tall timber that has travelled from flooded valleys in the far East to be fashioned into fabulous furniture with amber resin, or enjoy a gallery of personalities created in magnificent mosaics from Queen Elizabeth I to David Bowie; explore inside a Jericho tattoo parlour or uncover the unreliable history of tattoos as told by an acclaimed political cartoonist and illustrator from the national papers with cameo appearances by Queen Victoria and Winston Churchill; or navigate the world of Shakespeare with a map of his plays and characters in quirky watercolour.

Delight your senses with tactile sculpture and fibre optic textile art or enjoy olfactory paintings produced using perfumed oils in Wheatley; or drive the Cotswold Art Route with a pop-up exhibition at every turn, or stop awhile in a Wonderland garden of glass where the light twists and turns in different colours before your eyes or visit a West Oxfordshire wilderness of William Morris style metal sculpture from one of the county's most exciting young artists.

Explore the natural world, from the poles to the equator through the eyes of the county's artists, and delight in the misty mountains, sunlit valleys and wild seas captured for an Oxfordshire festival; find treasure set in silver or come face-to-face with funky porcelain monsters inspired by Grimm fairytales. Follow a journey through the lens of a talented photographer or be surprised by a new perspective on a local place you thought you knew.

Abingdon

In and around Abingdon, eighty painters and designers, potters and sculptors, photographers, jewellers and textile artists will be opening their homes, studios and other venues to the public for free to showcase their talent through exhibitions and demonstrations. From fashion to furniture, in collage, ceramics, mosaic, on fabric and on film, artists are telling tales of the past and the present, of wonderful places visited and people met, and sharing their inspiration and ideas.

In Abingdon discover art in a range of media inspired by human stories, consider the question of identity with Oxfordshire Mind, see the work of children across the town in the window of Stert Street Oxfam, or delight in sea-faring Cornish villages transposed into 3D ceramics in the beautiful threshing barn on Peach Croft Farm, alongside top quality paintings, silverware fit for the V&A by Stella Champion, funky upcycled lampshade and more by seventeen other artists, or head down East St Helen street to see art from Berlin, raising money for St Ethelwold's House.

Explore a pottery in a hidden garden close to the Thames and mosaics from the ancient marble in Culham or have a quick portrait sketched in Sutton Courtenay; enjoy a river view from a print-maker's garden studio in Lower Radley, or be delighted by jewellery, pastels, paintings and more at an exhibition in Lower Radley Boat House itself.

Banbury

In and around Banbury, more than sixty painters and designers, potters and sculptors, photographers, jewellers and textile artists will be opening their homes, studios and other venues to the public for free to showcase their talent through exhibitions and demonstrations. From fashion to furniture, in collage, ceramics, mosaic, on fabric and on film, artists are telling tales of the past and the present, of wonderful places visited and people met, and sharing their inspiration and ideas.

In Banbury town centre, meet new-comers to Artweeks for 2016: Tracy-Jane who creates contemporary handmade jewellery and Ella, who captures the character of soft toys on canvas and is working on a series of mixed-media pictures with a wall-paper theme. Visit The Mill for a varied exhibition on the theme of In a Land Faraway, or a talented photographer who captures the unusual from the ordinary with amazing results. Head to Middleton Cheney, where award-winning Caroline Chappell throws open the doors of her art-gallery home and invites you in to walk the past with her in Banbury landscapes rich with local history.

Venture further afield and discover a wealth of art in Sibford Ferris where the Temple Mill opens its doors to invite you in, or in the National Herb Centre at Warmington where three artists host a large exhibition of varied styles. Enjoy rural watercolours amongst the agricultural machinery in the magnificent Swalcliffe barn; pots for pleasure and purpose in an Old Pig Pen Pottery in Bloxham and hand-carved spoons by master wood-worker Martin Damen in Great Bourton. In Culworth see stone lithography prints inspired by the circus, or take a trip to Warden Hill where the Cool Contours arts and crafts centre where the tutors showcase their talent.

Bicester

In and around Bicester, forty painters and designers, potters and sculptors, photographers, jewellers and textile artists will be opening their homes, studios and other venues to the public for free to showcase their talent through exhibitions and demonstrations. From fashion to furniture, in collage, ceramics, mosaic, on fabric and on film, artists are telling tales of the past and the present, of wonderful places visited and people met, and sharing their inspiration and ideas.

In the town centre, OYAP and the Youth of Bicester are holding two exhibitions to showcase the work of the town's young people, while new to Artweeks for 2016, printmaker Alexandra Buckle invites you into her home studio where you'll discover stunning linocuts of the countryside, rich in colour and contrast. The members of Bicester Sculpture Group once again provide a visually stunning array of sculpture alongside St Edburg's churchyard, created from a range of materials and if you head further afield to Otmoor Crossing, enjoy a large exhibition of local landscapes by professional painter William North and a garden with lakes and ponds through which you are invited to wander.

Head to the Heyfords for model boats and ceramics, textile art by newcomer Jane Fitzalan, and contemporary design and other things to make you smile (including cake) at Heyford House. There really is something for everyone.

Cotswolds

Drive the ten-mile A361 from Burford to Chipping Norton next May and you'll discover, at every turn, exciting and unexpected art venues just a mile or two off the beaten track. Visit the Burford Affordable Art Gallery where popular Cotswold artist Rupert Aker shows his latest paintings created with bold sweeps of a palette knife at locations across the Cotswold countryside, or an ostrich farm in Church Westbrook where the paintings are all populated by Yellow Hat wearers. Explore the five acre garden of Kingham Lodge which will host the work of 30 Zimbabwean sculptors before stopping for tea in the village of Chadlington which has only a hundred houses yet bursts into life for Artweeks with seventeen art exhibitions from the figurative to fine furniture. There's something for everyone, whether an art aficionado or an art enthusiast.

The Shaven Crown in the heart of Shipton under Wychwood, opposite the church and village green, is a medieval hostelry and one of the oldest Inns in the UK. It was founded in the 14th century by the monks of Bruern Abbey to house pilgrims and as a hospice for the poor and needy but following the dissolution of the monasteries in the 16th century the Crown seized the hotel and Queen Elizabeth I later used it as a royal hunting lodge. Subsequently it was given to the village on condition that it became an inn with the proceeds being used to help the community. And this May this fascinating building opens its doors to that community and invites locals and passers by to an exciting display of artist talent including contemporary animal portraits that burst off the canvas, giant iron sculpture created in a loft gallery in neighbouring Ascott-under Wychwood and exquisite ceramic shoes by Chipping Norton based Kate Hopkins Searle.

Kate's delicate vintage shoes are built around lasts, of an exaggeratedly pretty size 6 (narrow and high arched): these dainty pieces are part inspired by the collection in the Bath Fashion Museum, styled in a late 18th century roccoco, graceful ornate curved pieces in light colours, playfully decorated with gold and bows on, or more recently with the patterns for which Gustav Klimt is renowned. Kate traces her interest in shoes back to the funky footwear her babysitter wore in the 70s, and vowed then that one day she'd have amazing shoes even if she had to make them herself, and now, after a stint in the costume department in the Sydney Opera House where she did her first shoemaking course, she not only makes her own shoes in delicate ceramics but also sells them in Liberty's!

Didcot

In and around Didcot, around 40 painters and designers, potters and sculptors, photographers, jewellers and textile artists will be opening their homes, studios and other venues to the public for free to showcase their talent through exhibitions and demonstrations. From fashion to furniture, in collage, ceramics, mosaic, on fabric and on film, artists are telling tales of the past and the present, of wonderful places visited and people met, and sharing their inspiration and ideas.

In the Cornerstone discover art in a range of media on a theme of patterns, an exhibition of life-drawings with drop-in sessions for all, and incredible impressionist images inspired by Monet's Parisian station as emerging Oxfordshire talent Andrew Mason captures Oxfordshire Industries in vivid brushstrokes on giant boards. Meet Ruth whose animals and flowers canvases are warm and vibrant and Charlie with delicate silverware, or have a quick portrait sketched in Sutton Courtenay; smile at colourful squashed drawings in Harwell or a characterful ceramic on The Green in Steventon. And to the south, you'll be welcomed to a beautiful barn in Blewbury, a new venue for 2016 that includes mixed-media mosaic and analogue photography, or enjoy striking local landscapes, cats, bugs calligraphy, and travels through Nepal, all in Aston Tirrold.

Faringdon

In and around Faringdon, more than 30 painters and designers, potters and sculptors, photographers, jewellers and textile artists will be opening their homes, studios and other venues to the public for free to showcase their talent through exhibitions and demonstrations. From fashion to furniture, in collage, ceramics, mosaic, on fabric and on film, artists are telling tales of the past and the present, of wonderful places visited and people met, and sharing their inspiration and ideas.

In the Market Place discover vibrant and bold landscapes and animals, some of which are set to V&A wallpaper, with painter Tara Parker Woolway, who is also opening her Bourton studio to the public for Artweeks; visit the Portwell Angel for tales of colour on canvas with Ilona Pimbert, Quod for the striking photographs of traditional dark room photographer John Newman, and The Piano Gallery for largescale abstract digital photography that will make you wonder. Just a couple of streets away, Kathy Webster's popular 'dotty dog' line her walls alongside fresh countryside imagery by new artist Louise Thompson, neighbouring village Great Coxwell is bursting with artists, printmaking, wood carving, hand-made books, jewellery and more, while the villages beneath Uffington's White Horse plays host to three sculpture gardens, the Uffington potters, a Shrivenham textile artist (new for 2016), and sculptural metalwork lamps that are perhaps a modern twist on William Morris floral designs by emerging local artist Samantha Wadham.

Enjoy bold sculpture in bronze, stone and wood in Garford, and a garden studio in East Hanney, and with world-class sculpture in South Fawley, there's something for everyone.

Henley and Watlington

Between Henley and Watlington, eight artists including potters, painters, woodworkers, a textile artist and a glass artist will be opening their homes and studios to the public for free to showcase their talent through exhibitions and demonstrations. From fashion to furniture, in collage, ceramics, mosaic, in fabric, on film and with cake, artists are telling tales of the past and the present, of wonderful places visited and people met, and sharing their inspiration and ideas.

Start at the stunning Ewelme Pottery where five professional artists have work inspired by water, alongside paintings and prints of polo horses and their riders, with wooden sculptures of birds and fish and lustrous ceramic stones for mediation and decoration, as well as pottery that is tactile, rich and functional, decorative glass art and handwoven scarves and shawls in silk, linen and cashmere.

Enjoy landscapes and figurative paintings in Ipsden and Stoke Row, be amazed at the illusory furniture in Nuffield, where Louise Cropper has been inspired by Escher and creates chest of drawers that look as if they are curved when they're not! For more furniture to amaze, discover Philip Koomen's Checkendon workshop and hear his stories of sustainability and craftsmanship as he explores the relationship between art, craft and design.

Oxford - East

In East Oxford, around 100 painters and designers, potters and sculptors, photographers, jewellers and textile artists will all be opening their homes and studios 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 skin, artists are telling tales of the past and the present, of wonderful places visited and people met, and sharing their inspiration and ideas, from a huge exhibition by professional artists in the hallowed cloisters of St John the Evangelist to community art in the Ark-T centre, with pop-up sculpture gardens off the Iffley Road, children's creations in St Mary and St John's Primary School, and an invitation to explore jewellery created in Oxford's only bead shop.

You'll find quirky sculpture at the bottom of Headington Hill, made by Sara Banerji, an author and creative writing teacher, and stone work and quirky lampshade by Paloma Rockwell in a riverside studio, or can hear the stories of a tough New York up-bringing from new-to-Artweeks painter and fashion-designer Tommy Watkins exhibiting for the first time in Oxfordshire. Meet four Belgian artists collaborating with four fine art graduates from Oxford Brookes as they collaborate in multi-media at the Fusion Art Centre; trace the tale of ceramic stories created by Rose Wallace, be surprised by handwoven fibre optic textile art and interior products by award-winning designer Cassandra Sabo and it with a drink and enjoy pictures of the city in Rick's Café on the Cowley Road or in The Chester Arms.

Oxford - Headington

In Headington, around 30 painters and designers, potters and sculptors, photographers, jewellers and textile artists will be opening their homes and studios 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 skin, artists are telling tales of the past and the present, of wonderful places visited and people met, and sharing their inspiration and ideas. Follow the travels of new face Angela Beatson Wood through Asia, find a South African influence in ceramics in St Andrew's church, or meet a photographer who captures the wilds of the Arctic and Antarctic. Be surprised by views closer to home, of New Headington through the lens of characterful Mazz or on the canvases of emerging young painter Andrew Manson who captures with colourful impressionist brush-strokes scenes of Oxford that only the local know.

You'll find mysterious paintings and small bronze cast flowers in Marston and quirky sculpture at the bottom of Headington Hill, made by Sara Banerji, an author and creative writing teacher or visit the Brookes degree Show 'Off The Wall' to see fresh creative thinking and the latest in Oxford's contemporary art scene.

Oxford - Summertown/Botley & Boar's Hill

Start in Summertown and head, via Wolvercote to Botley and Boar's Hill, or head into Oxford via the Botley road, and discover a hundred painters and designers, potters and sculptors, photographers, jewellers and textile artists who are opening their homes and studios 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 more, artists are telling tales of the past and the present, of wonderful places visited and people met, and sharing their inspiration and ideas.

In the West Oxford Community Centre find seven artists, each interpreting 'change' in their own style and medium; for 'A splash of colour' visit Lady Margaret Hall, or be amazed by beautiful framed studies of shells by conchologist and artist Ingrid Thomas in Oxford's Bainton Road. With seaglass and silver jewellery, abstract and travel photography and the striking papermache animal sculptures we now expect annually in Farrow&Ball, there's something for everyone.

Visit the Hamptons International office, to be captivated by three wonderful large hand-drawn maps including The Shipping Forecast, or discover a Wonderland of glass art behind Summertown library. Six professional artists are hosting an exhibition in St Michael's and All Angel's Church on Lonsdale Road and you'll find wonderful welcoming venues spilling along the Banbury Road beyond the ring road.

In Wolvercote, be amazed by porcelain vessels that look as if they are made of the finest fabric or watch portrait artists Tom Croft at work, and if you venture into Wytham Woods, see the flames of the Oxford Anagama kiln in action.

Thame

In and around Thame, twelve painters and designers, potters and sculptors, photographers, jewellers and textile artists will be opening their homes and studios 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 skin, artists are telling tales of the past and the present, of wonderful places visited and people met, and sharing their inspiration and ideas. In Brill, enjoy mixed-media landscapes and textiles in Brill created by Kate Turnbull whose cushions and Eastern inspired textiles are stocked in Liberty's, or consider commissioning a portrait of your loved ones, whether family or furry friend. In Thames itself, discover pottery inspired by flowers and coastal landscapes so real you feel as if you could step inside, or head to Milton Common to meet furniture maker Josh at Bates & Lambourne who'll give you a free hand-crafted chair if you buy an exceptionally expensive pint in the neighbouring pub. You can get a feel for some of the wonderful art that will be on show at the Artweeks event in Thame town hall on 30th April.

In addition Thame-based James Taylor, owner of the on-line Gallery Poseytude, and Thame Artweeks coordinator, is currently collecting submissions for a Change the World art competition and the finalists will have their work shown in Oxford Town Hall Gallery throughout May.

Wallingford

In and around Wallingford, more than sixty painters and designers, potters and sculptors, photographers, jewellers and textile artists will be opening their homes and studios 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 skin, artists are telling tales of the past and the present, of wonderful places visited and people met, and sharing their inspiration and ideas. In Brazier's Park, Ipsden, a group of artists invite you to escape from tyranny, while neighbouring artist Denny Webb has a tranquil exhibition of painting inspired by the beauty of the local landscape. Discover contemporary stylised embroidered textiles or witty and unusual wall-mounted 'theatres' in Dorchester-on-Thames; a lively pop-up exhibition including fresh 'digital painting' in Brightwell-cum-Sotwell; a wealth of talented woodworkers at the amazing Sylva Wood Centre in Long Wittenham, or a group of six talented professional artists working in ceramics, textiles, wood and more, all inspired by fish and water in an incredible setting alongside the famous Ewelme watercress beds.

In Wallingford you'll find intriguing textiles and imaginative dress-making filling the Methodist Church centre and be invited into the community group *Everyone's an Artist* who are, this year, working with Sustainable Wallingford on their Artweeks exhibition. And for something more off the wall, try 'optical illusion' furniture by Nuffield's Louise Cropper, or visit Benson's acclaimed political cartoonist and illustrator in the national papers, Paul Thomas, who presents the humorous *Unreliable History of Tattoos* with cameo appearances by Queen Victoria and Winston Churchill in his home studio!

Wantage

In and around Wantage, twenty painters and designers, potters and sculptors, photographers, jewellers and textile artists will be opening their homes and studios 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 skin, artists are telling tales of the past and the present, of wonderful places visited and people met, and sharing their inspiration and ideas. Enjoy bold sculpture in bronze, stone and wood in Garford, and a garden studio in East Hanney, be amazed by the intricacy of the textile pictures by Wantage's Jill Cooper, or visit an exhibition of talent including calligraphy and stained glass in Ardington where the tutors who teach the artists shows their best. You'll find colourful pictures by well-known local printmaker Catriona Brodribb in the Vale & Downland Museum, alongside striking photographs by a new exhibitor for 2016, Martyn Bull who explores the relationship between landscape and industry in South Oxfordshire. With world-class sculpture in South Fawley and sculptural lamps in Stanford-in-the-Vale, there's something for everyone.

Witney

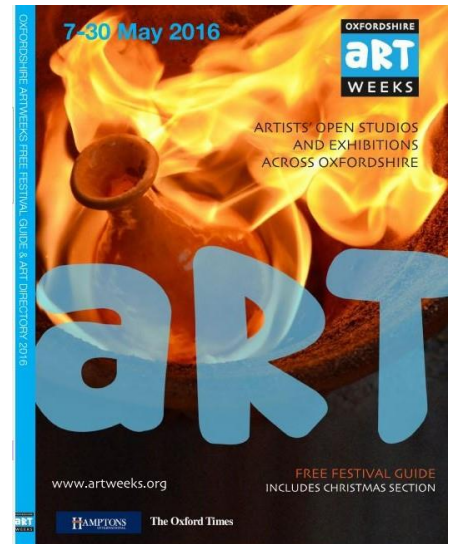
In and around Witney, thirty six painters and designers, potters and sculptors, photographers, jewellers and textile artists will be opening their homes, studios and other venues to the public for free to showcase their talent through exhibitions and demonstrations. From fashion to furniture, in collage, ceramics, mosaic, on fabric and on film, artists are telling tales of the past and the present, of wonderful places visited and people met, and sharing their inspiration and ideas.

In Witney discover amazing sculpture carved from wood by Andrew Harrison, and striking bold prints of flowers and seed-heads by Jennifer Crowshaw alongside other local art in the contemporary SOTA Gallery in Langdale Court; or visit the Mill in Crawley to see new land- and city-scapes in Jessica Parker's studio space. In Aston, the Aston Pottery hosts ceramics, jewellery, photography, wood and painting in an upstairs gallery, while Bampton burst with 'Good Vibes', a modern exhibition by professional artists in the historical West Ox Arts building. Bampton too plays host to the characterful paintings of Pip Shuckburgh, amongst others, who has been described as an Oxfordshire LS Lowry, as well as Pat Albreck, a long-time designer for EmmaBridgewater, the National Trust and other well-known brands, who has a fascinating tale to tell. Or head to Wilcote, to visit the Hunts Copse artist studios, opening their doors for the first time this Artweeks, to show everything from painting and Raku-style ceramics, to wood sculpture and stone-carving, or the neighbouring Gorselands hall for designer-goldsmithing, glass and photography. There's something for everyone.

Visitors are invited into hundreds of interesting spaces, many of which are usually closed to the public, including four Oxford Colleges, three of the finest medieval barns in England, a boathouse and a boatyard as well as city studios and country galleries, homes and halls across the county. 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 art talks, events, and family activities at The Ashmolean, OU Museum of Natural History 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 full exhibition listings will be available on-line from end February at www.artweeks.org & the printed festival guide will be available from April.



Notes to editors

Oxfordshire Artweeks www.artweeks.org 7th-30th May 2016
(City week 7th-15th; South Oxon 14th-22nd & North Oxon 21st-30th)

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.

Artweeks is Oxfordshire's largest visual arts festival and the UK's oldest and biggest Open Studios event, is a three-week not-for-profit celebration in May each year of the county's artistic and creative talent encompassing the visual arts in their broadest sense. Around 1000 artists open the doors to their homes and studios and welcome the public to see their creations and watch them work –over 100,000 people visit Artweeks exhibitions each year and a million pounds of art changes hands!

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

