

## Inspired by the canal

An Oxfordshire Artweeks exhibition  
in support of the Oxford Canal Heritage Project.

The Jam Factory, 27 Park End Street, Oxford OX1 1HU  
1<sup>st</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> April 2014 10am-11pm



Follow Oxford's hidden waterway through art from the community, from children's work to professional artists', in an exhibition ranging from traditional paintings to thought-provoking contemporary installation.

Starting in Banbury, the canal to Oxford wanders through Wolvercote and creeps along the back of Jericho terraces, ending quietly at busy Hythe Bridge Street in Oxford centre. Despite being within the hustle and bustle of the ring-road, a stroll along this three mile stretch has the capacity to surprise even those who have spent their lives in the city. It's a secret byway, often undiscovered and unappreciated, a lush and verdant path leading residents and visitors alike into another world - the quiet backwaters of times gone by.

Artist Katherine Shock explains why she's always inspired by this tranquil stretch of water, 'The canal is a never-ending source of beautiful images, full of atmosphere, history and nature. It is peaceful and yet full of life. I love the reflections and the constant gentle movement either as you walk along it or when you stay still and life moves past you.'

Fellow painter Valerie Petts has lived close to the canal in Jericho for as long as she's been painting and loves that at every time of day it offers fresh enjoyment including the natural history, birds and a local heron, and life-affirming activities of boating, cycling and walking. She also appreciates the constancy and reliability of its presence. 'It doesn't flood!' she adds.

David Willoughby is a landscape photographer who finds himself ever drawn back to the canal after a childhood exploring and adventuring along Oxford's waterway. He loves the great contrasts of the canal, the old houses and factories that still line its sides, eroded and stained where the water has left its mark, and it is this marriage of man-made materials and the natural flow of the water that gives his work light and texture.

Caroline Maas too, is drawn to the darker and more industrial flavours of the canal and depicts, in striking etchings, a boat yard that refurbishes much larger vessels where the canal joins the Thames at Brentford, a proper dock until the 1960s where goods including Morris cars from Cowley were loaded onto lighters destined for the Port of London.

Sarah Mayhew Craddock, has created *Wait 'til it settles*, an installation inspired by the dark layers of mystery that Sarah identifies in the quietude of canals, and highlights the layers of history that make up The Oxford Canal, once one of the UK's most important arteries of trade. In this piece she draws parallels between the canal and the viewers' own personal histories, showing these unsettled waters normally hidden from view in a series of 'bottles' as if presenting a science experiment.

*'Inspired by the canal'* will also include the winning art from the Oxford Canal Heritage Project's community art competition, & canal boat tea cosies by The Jam Factory's acclaimed cake-baker!

This exhibition is supported by ECCO.

## Notes to Editors

Exhibitors include Artweeks artists Michele Field, Katherine Shock, Valerie Petts, Michael Collier, David Willoughby, Caroline Maas and Sarah Mayhew Craddock.

## Photo opportunities x 2

*Hanging the exhibition, between 11 and 2pm Monday 31<sup>st</sup> March.*

*Presenting prizes to the winners of the community art competition 6pm Tues 1<sup>st</sup> April.*

Contact Esther Lafferty (previously Browning) 01865 821090 or 07776 196967.

## Oxfordshire Artweeks [www.artweeks.org](http://www.artweeks.org) 3<sup>rd</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> May 2014

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 more than 400 exhibitions and events across the county. All exhibitions are free

Further press information & IMAGES contact Esther Lafferty (previously Browning) 01865 821090 or 07776 196967 [esther@artweeks.org](mailto:esther@artweeks.org)

**The Oxford Canal Heritage Project** will launch the Oxford Canal Heritage Trail on 3<sup>rd</sup> May with a day of talks, exhibitions, performances and music at the Old Fire Station, and a new website <http://oxfordcanalheritage.org.uk/> featuring maps, an audio trail, a selection of short plays, excerpts from oral histories of boaters old & young, past & present, & information about different aspects of the Oxford Canal. For more information contact maria parsons <[mariastraparsons@gmail.com](mailto:mariastraparsons@gmail.com)>



**Inspired by the Canal**  
**ART**

at The Jam Factory, Hollybush Row, Oxford, OX1 1HU  
1st-27th April 2014  
10am-11pm

an Oxfordshire Artweeks exhibition in conjunction with The Oxford Canal Heritage Project supported by ECCO and Hamptons

OXFORDSHIRE art WEEKS  
ECCO  
HAMPTONS  
The Oxford Canal Heritage Project

[www.artweeks.org](http://www.artweeks.org)

**Oxford Canal Art Competition**  
Inspired by the Oxford Canal

Oxford Canal Heritage Project, Oxfordshire Art Weeks and ECCO shoes invite you to submit art work that is inspired by the Oxford Canal.

With Heritage Lottery funding, the Oxford Canal Heritage Project aims to raise the profile of the canal and celebrate its culture and history. So we are looking for original and creative responses to the question: **What inspires you about the Oxford Canal? How does it make you (feel)? What do you enjoy most about it? Home-made, bridges, locks, canals, walking, sailing, seasons change?**

Children under 12 are invited to turn a shoe box into a narrowboat. No shoe box? Pop into ECCO shoes, 20 New Inn East Street, Clifton and get one.

The Canal Art Judging Panel including national and Oxfordshire Artweeks artists will award prizes to the most creative entries which will be exhibited as part of Oxfordshire Artweeks exhibition in the Jam Factory in April 2014.

Oxford Canal Art competition age groups:  
Children aged up to 12 years  
Young people aged 13 - 21 years  
Adults aged 22 - 62  
Older adults aged 63+

Free Canal Art Family workshops in the Museum of Oxford, 20 February 2014 @ 10.30am @ 2.30pm

Historica Shakespeare will lead 2 workshops for families with accompanied children and young people up to 13. Demonstrations of traditional Roses and Castles art by canal artists will take place.

Deliver or send entries by post (BAG to 53 Cutcliffe Road Oxford OX2 7ED) to arrive from Monday 10 March until Sunday 16 March when the competition closes. PLEASE include all contact details. Full competition details from Maria Parsons, Project Manager at [mariastparsons@gmail.com](mailto:mariastparsons@gmail.com)

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OXFORDSHIRE art WEEKS  
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