

Press release: Announcing community winners

as colours of the canal flood The Jam Factory



The Oxfordshire Artweeks season opens today as the festival guide hits Oxfordshire streets and the county's artists celebrate the beginning of the event with an April exhibition ahead of the main May festival, sponsored by The Oxford Times and Hamptons International.

Inspired by the canal is a wide-ranging celebration of the Oxford canal by a range of different Artweeks artists showcasing some of the types of work you can see during the festival as a whole including painting, photography and print-making. These are accompanied by a cheerful range of canal-inspired tea cosies knitted in the bright colours of narrow boats, and a thought-provoking contemporary installation by Oxford Mail art critic and occasional Oxford Times contributor Sarah Mayhew Craddock in which she presents twelve water samples each associated with the secret stories and locations that form a small part of the history of this waterway.

The exhibition also includes some of the winning entries in the Oxford Canal Heritage Project's community art competition which attracted over 70 entries.

In the adult categories, Jericho's Fran Monks' black and white photograph of a canal dweller playing his guitar on a narrow boat and Clare Owen's 3D canal ceramic vase around which two canal boats encircle the pot endlessly won first prizes, while Mark Nash from Crisis Skylight was commended for his extraordinary photograph of a heron. The top award in the u22 category went to Olivia Brookes (14) of Henry Box School Witney with her study of the Oxford Canal from the towpath approaching Aristotle Bridge in Jericho.

For the u12s shoe boxes competition, sponsored by ECCO, 42 boats 'sailed' into a north Oxford kitchen for judging. The prize for the most imaginative narrow boat went to Fran Giles (8) of Wolvercote School for her jolly and colourful craft complete with a solar panels on the roof and Maisie Croft and Theodore Colbert (9) of St Barnabas School, Oxford with 'the Anaconda'.

All the first prize winners of Oxford Canal Art competition will be presented with their prizes at the launch of Oxfordshire Artweeks by David Pollock, the Chair of Oxfordshire Artweeks at the Private View of the exhibition on April 1st 2014 at the Jam Factory, Hollybush Row, Oxford OX1 1HU.

Photo opportunity 6.30pm 1st April, The Jam Factory

The exhibition *Inspired by the canal*, supported by ECCO, runs until Sunday 27th April.

