

Press release 16th May 2023

Oxfordshire Artweeks' celebrity art to raise money for charity



As the Oxfordshire Artweeks festival continues across the county (until 29th May), visitors might be surprised to see famous faces and art by famous faces including a painting by Judi Dench and a mosaic designed by John Lennon amongst the wide array of pieces on show.

A host of celebrities are supporting an art exhibition of small original artworks, My Lovely Postcards, in the St John the Evangelist Arts Cloister Gallery on Iffley Road, Oxford from 20th to 28th May (closed 22nd & 23rd) as part of Oxfordshire Artweeks. At the end of the exhibition, all the postcard art on show will be auctioned to raise money for nurses at Sobell House Hospice Charity. Dame Judi Dench; actor, writer and director Mark Gatiss; The Repair Shop's Suzie Fletcher; comedian and TV presenter Mel Giedroyc who had a particular moment of fame churning butter during last weekend's Eurovision Song Contest; British actor Paul Chahidi and Irish actor and TV personality Siobhán McSweeney have all submitted artwork for Beth's Bursary Fund which was set up by the family of a young woman from Oxford who died of bowel cancer at 32 years old. Beth's Bursary Fund exists to help pay for additional skills training for specialist palliative nurses and palliative care staff.

Guy Foreman, Beth's brother said the name, My Lovely Postcards, came from their dad, Neil's, use of the term 'my lovely' with Beth. Meanwhile her friend, Veronica Brooks, who is also involved in the project said they wanted to 'very appropriately honour' Beth's creativity, describing the fashion design graduate as 'such a lively, creative young woman'.

Dame Judi Dench said: "Sobell House were so wonderful to my friend Joanne Hope who died last year. I visited her there and I know how comfortable she was and how much easier they made it for her. I thank them very much indeed and hope this project raises a huge amount of money."

More than 180 artists– from budding creatives to award winners have submitted original artwork the size of a postcard into the exhibition which will be curated by British artist and paint pioneer, Annie Sloane, and more than 400 pieces of artwork can be bid on on-line from today, May 16th at <https://uk.givergy.com/SobellHospiceOnlineAuction2023/> to May 28th.

The postcards range from vibrant green cacti in red pots by Brize Norton artist Sonja Coles to abstracted Oxfordshire forest scenes by Jo Lillywhite in which soft sunlight and trees stripe the paper. There's also a trilogy of special local places on black embellished with golden lincout butterflies handmade ochre ink on soot ink by Woodstock artist Mary Blackshaw. "I grew up with Beth in the same small Oxfordshire town," says Mary, "so each postcard is a memory of that. The first one is her treehouse which was scarily high but that may have been because we were small. The second postcard is eating chips under the town hall as teenagers and the last postcard remembers all the festivals we frequented. Beth liked butterflies on everything!"

Across the county, in Kingham in Chipping Norton, Sculpture at Kingham Lodge prepares to open its doors to five acres of sculpture on Saturday (20th). This exhibition will also include The Psychedelic Eye by John Lennon, a mosaic he designed in 1965 to be the end wall of his pool at his home in Surrey. It recently returned from a world tour as part of the major V&A exhibition 'You say you want a revolution, records and rebels 1966-1970' and will be sold at auction at Bonhams in the autumn... potentially never to be seen in public again.

The Lord-Lieutenant, Marjorie Glasgow will 'unveil' the piece to visiting school children on Thursday 18th May as part of the educational outreach of Sculpture at Kingham Lodge where more than 500 sculptures will be on sale to raise money for both local and African charities.

Also on show during the festival visitors find King Charles III by Paul Minter; Boris and Carrie who are understood to have moved to Brightwell-cum-Sotwell where Valerie Dearlove's painting of the couple was on show; Audrey Hepburn at the Races and Kiera Knightley as Anna Karenina, by Motoko Aritake-Wild, at The Forge Gallery in Ascott under Wychwood, and a felted sculpture of Jeremy Clarkson by Denise Warner in St Mary's Church Chadlington, a replica of her piece on show at Clarkson's Diddly Squat Farm Shop. A full set of sculpted Clarkson's Farm characters will also be raffled for charity later in the year.



Notes for editors

For info on My Lovely Postcards exhibition at SJE

For more information or interviews, please contact Beth Marsh, on beth.marsh@sobellhospice.org.uk or call 0791 767 1173 .

For info on Sculpture at Kingham Lodge

Chris Stockwell 01608 658 226 www.sculptureatkinghamlodge.com

Oxfordshire Artweeks www.artweeks.org 6th-29th May 2023

The Artweeks festival is Oxfordshire's largest visual arts festival and the UK's oldest and biggest artist open studios and pop-up exhibitions event. In May each year, it is a three-week not-for-profit celebration of the county's artistic and creative talent encompassing the visual arts in their broadest sense. Around 2000 artists, makers and designers open the doors to their homes and studios or take part in pop-up exhibitions 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, area-specific details within Oxfordshire, interview ideas, and/or high res images, contact **Esther Lafferty** esther@artweeks.org 01367 242498 or 07715 640228