

Press release March 2016

Local earthworks win award for Middleton Cheney artist.



Oxfordshire Artweeks are delighted to announce that Banbury artist Caroline Chappell is the winner of the 2016 Mary Moser prize, an award established in 2003 to mark the work of a local artist who has taken up art as a second career later in life.

Caroline spent many years as principal art teacher at The Warriner School in Bloxham Nr Banbury. "I loved working with the young people but teaching and raising a daughter left little time for my own art" says Caroline. It wasn't until I took early retirement that I was able to devote the time to develop my painting and make a profession of it."

Caroline, 65, trained as a potter originally, a craft where she literally took the land in your hand, digging the clay out herself and creating art from the earth itself. Always interested in the landscape and the way human generations have left their mark upon it, Caroline later enrolled on an Oxford University Further Education course 'Walking the Past', a fascinating introduction into our local landscape, and Oxfordshire's hill forts, henges and standing stones.

And now, working in the heart of a new eco-home that she designed herself around the life of a modern-day artist and using paint that include pigment ground from Oxfordshire stone, Caroline records the intangible 'sense of place' that springs from the prehistoric land beneath our feet, inspired by the ancient landscapes and the hidden traces of our past.



'The surface of the land provides the clues to what has gone before,' Caroline explains. 'For example, you can see the ridges of ancient ridge and furrow agriculture picked out in stark contrast as the sun sets and the shadows lengthen. Standing alone, hearing the landscape as I sketch, I feel tiny, in comparison to the grandeur and enormity of these ancient views.'

An exhibition of Caroline's canvases will be on show in Middleton Cheney's Heseltine Gallery in April, and in her studio, Hamptons in Banbury and in Burford At Gallery for Oxfordshire Artweeks during May.

To see Caroline's work visit
<http://www.carolinechappell.co.uk/>

Notes to Editors www.artweeks.org

Oxfordshire Artweeks is Oxfordshire's largest visual arts festival and the UK's oldest and biggest Open Studios event, a three-week celebration each May that celebrates the county's artistic and creative talent. Around 800 artists open the doors to their homes and studios and welcome the public to see their creations and watch them work. An estimated 100,000 people visit around 400 venues across the county each year.

All exhibitions are free

Oxfordshire Artweeks 2016 will run from Saturday 7th – 30th May 2016

and is organised into three geographical areas

City Exhibitions: Saturday 7th - Sunday 30th May

South Oxfordshire Exhibitions: Saturday 14th - Sunday 22nd May

North Oxfordshire Exhibitions: Saturday 21st – Monday 30th May

The *Oxfordshire Visual Arts Festival (Artweeks)* is a non profit-making company, limited by guarantee and owned by its members. Everyone is welcome to take part and there is no selection process for artists wishing to participate.

The Mary Moser annual prize honours the work and commitment of Lady Mary Moser who took up art seriously on retirement and became a printmaker; first working in silk screen and latterly in etching and woodcuts, Mary was also chair of Kids@Art, the Oxfordshire Artweeks Education Charity which provided residencies in schools until 2009.

Previous winners include Crabby Taylor in 2012, a raku-ceramacist based in Chipping Norton with whom Caroline will be exhibiting in the Heseltine Gallery; Martin Smith, a stone carver from Headington, Oxford and last year, Kamal Koria, a painter from Oxford whose paintings are inspired by a colourful Indian childhood.

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