

Press release 11th February 2021
Oxfordshire Artweeks offers both venues to visit and
a virtual festival this May (1st-23rd May 2021)

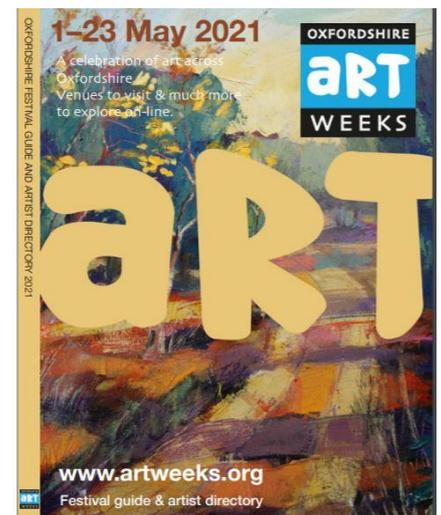


Oxfordshire Artweeks is the UK's oldest and biggest open studios and pop-up exhibition event, and the 39th edition this spring builds on the legacy of last year's lockdown, offering both a virtual festival and a selection of more than 200 Covid-secure venues to visit from 1st-23rd May. Over 600 artists – including 100 new faces – are taking part in pop-up exhibitions and on-line to showcase their creative talent. Their creations range from paintings and photography to pottery and jewellery, stained glass, mosaics, textile art, furniture, sculpture and installations. Visitors to both venues and virtual studios will be able to hear artists talking about their inspiration, explaining their materials and, often, demonstrating their methods.

Visitors can see iconic Oxford views and local landscapes through fresh eyes or, when summer holidays are likely to be in the balance, travel through art to the Far East, to Africa, Central America or icy terrain in pieces inspired by colours, styles and flavours fondly remembered from pre-pandemic travels.

In Oxford's North Wall, visitors can immerse themselves in a giant wild-flower meadow of paint; in Kidlington, marvel at shimmering glass meteorites or take a trip into the past with jewellery inspired by archaeology or the stunning mosaics by Becky Paton. Her latest portrait is Anne Lister, based upon Suranne Jones who played her in the recent TV series, Gentleman Jack.

Visitors will also be able to see traditional blacksmithing in Watlington and the Cotswolds, take an outdoor art trail through Chipping Norton or wander through a stunning five-acre garden in Kingham near Chipping Norton populated with hundreds of sculptures. In Burford, there are extraordinary hand-sculpted wooden tables to discover, each like a miniature tree, and Shipton-under-Wychwood animal artist Nic Vickery is planning to set up her 1968 caravan-studio 'Gertie' at a working metalwork studio in nearby Asthall where a metal forest grows! Gertie itself had a cameo role in last year's film Rocketman (the story of Elton John's life).



Closer to home, many exhibitions have been inspired by the unprecedented circumstances that we found ourselves because of the pandemic: from photographs and #portraitsforheroes to a 'COVID-quilt' at OVADA and quirky lockdown collages in East Oxford, there's something that everyone can relate to.

And for those staying at home, Artweeks is also presenting more than 20 themed art trails – from The Garden to The Coast - and hundreds of on-line exhibitions on the website www.artweeks.org.

"It's been a challenging year for many artists and for the Artweeks organisation itself," says Esther Lafferty, Festival Director, "and so we are hoping to offer everyone the chance to enjoy inspirational and safe days out in garden studios and airy spaces, firing the imagination and replenishing people's creative spirit."

Notes to editors

Oxfordshire Artweeks www.artweeks.org 1st-23rd May 2021

The Artweeks festival is Oxfordshire's largest visual arts festival and the UK's oldest and biggest Open Studios event. It 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. Normally, around 1500 artists 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! In 2020, in response to the pandemic and government regulations, the festival was 100% on-line.

Further press information, artist contact details, area-specific details within Oxfordshire, copy written to a word count, and/or high res images, contact **Esther Lafferty** 01367 242498 or 07715 640228 esther@artweeks.org