

# WAN TAGE

TOWN MAGAZINE

Edition Nine 2024



What's On • Local Music • Oxfordshire Artweeks • Community Fundraising

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# The Return of the Ever-Growing Gallery



Oxfordshire Artweeks, the UK's oldest and biggest open studios and pop-up exhibition event, returns to Oxfordshire this year for three weeks in May (4-27) to showcase the art of up to 2000 artists, including more than 200 who are new to the festival for 2024. These range from world-class painters, photographers, ceramicists, jewellers, and sculptors to talented and enthusiastic members of a variety of community groups working in many media – and all venues are free to visit.



As Oxfordshire's creatives open their doors and offer a warm welcome, visitors are invited to explore art and craft, for free, in four hundred studios, galleries, homes and gardens, historic town halls, potteries and churches, and other fascinating venues across the county. These include the University of Oxford's Rhodes House, three university colleges, the grounds of Broughton Castle near Banbury, the Heritage and Rural Skills Centre in the National Trust village of Coleshill near Faringdon, and Oxford's Westgate shopping centre. Here in Wantage, as many as 20 artists in and around the town are opening their studios or hosting shows for ten days towards the end of the festival (18-27 May) and there's so much to see. It's also an opportunity to talk to the makers about their methods, their materials, and their inspiration. Just drop in, no appointment necessary.

## At the Vale and Downland Museum

For the whole of Artweeks (from 7-25 May) In the museum Patsy Jones and Jill Smith are hosting their perennially popular exhibition of local landscapes in oils and watercolours, mostly in a traditional style, along with other paintings, original hand-produced linocut prints, reproduction giclée prints of original paintings, collages, monoprints. Patsy's enjoys exploring pattern and colour in the landscape in

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its views, its archaeology and the wildlife of the Vale and Downland.

Jill is also inspired primarily by the local landscape and additionally finds herself drawn to anywhere with water and/or rocks. “When painting I aim to capture those fleeting light effects on the landscape or colour combinations that transform a scene and make it special. I tend to produce ‘recognisable’ images but have also painted some landscape montages that twist multiple views and meld them into an overall image – as Eric Morecambe said ‘...all the right notes, but not necessarily in the right order’,” she smiles. “I also add text and calligraphic forms into some of my pictures.”

### On Grove Street

In the very heart of Wantage, at Spring Cottage on Grove Street, interior designer, and artist Bahar Murphy is inviting visitors to her characterful studio, tucked away in a pretty garden behind a Victorian terrace (Artweeks venue 490). It’s a pleasure to visit: an intriguing space, that’s bright with flowers, bunting and stylish accessories that mirror at Bahar’s friendly and welcoming character. Her paintings are bold and busy, incorporating international architectural styles and a myriad of details from the built world. In her pieces, symbols and iconic motifs drawn from history, religion and global cultures are drawn together and reimagined in stylish compositions that capture a spirit of integration and internationalism. Looking closely and, you’ll see arches and domes, spires and skyscrapers, bridges, and waterways, all interwoven into a glorious world for the viewer to explore. As minarets meet medieval clocktowers and Gothic skylines meet modernity, Bahar builds new places with an exuberant dynamism, sweeping horizons and, often, bold colours to spark the imagination. Each is an aspiration for a harmonious way of life and could be a set for a magical dream.

“I’m an observer,” says Bahar. “Wherever I go, I observe – people, places, perspectives – and I try and include what I have seen and experienced all around the world in my paintings. They are never of just one place: they are nowhere and yet they are everywhere. I am uncomfortable, politically, with what is going on in the world in many countries, and I am passionate about global unity, that the world should see itself as a single entity whilst celebrating the wonderful diversity of cultures within it today. It’s that global ambition that I am representing in each of my pieces.”



“In May, during my Artweeks exhibition,” she continues, “much of my new work has been particularly influenced by Oxford and Oxfordshire. It’s a beautiful county and I feel very lucky to be living here. I think to really understand a place, you should live in it! For me Oxfordshire inspires a calmer, more subtle palette than the colours I use for lands under the burning a sun, and so I have used gentle pastel shades and muted hues, as well as strong black and whites for domes and spires, but of course there’ll always be some bursts of strong colour too.”

“In ‘The Ridgeway, Oxfordshire’ series, I delve into the depths of my decade-long connection with this enchanting region. Oxfordshire, a canvas of history and beauty, has whispered its tales into my soul, each stroke a testament to the emotions it has stirred within me. With each painting, I weave a narrative of reverence, capturing the essence of its poetic landscapes and storied past. Through vibrant hues and expressive stokes, she celebrates this historic path that has seen the passage of kings and travellers over 5,000 years, and remembers the journeys of other people around the world, both now and those that echo through time, as they mark milestones with resilience and grace. “Others,” she says, “are a guiding light on unique and meaningful individual journeys, as well as those who act as beacons lighting are the way other after them.” ▶

**“I try and include what I have seen and experienced all around the world in my paintings”**





### Off the Challow Road

On Segsbury Road, opposite King Alfred's West Site, John Gunter is turning several rooms in his home into a pop-up gallery for a friendly May event (Artweeks listing 492). Although not all of John's engaging eclectic art is inspired by the coast, but visiting nonetheless feels like an excursion to the beach on a summer's day. With a preponderance of blue seas and sail boats beneath bright skies, golden sand, puffins (perhaps painted on slate), and driftwood, you feel ready for candy floss and fish and chips!

"I love painting seascapes to capture the emotion and beauty," smiles John. "I often visit the coast to experience the sea and the vast expanse of sky, then try to capture this in my work, from the sun reflecting off the sea to the people enjoying the beach.

I collect and re-appropriate reclaimed materials to include in or serve as a base for some of my work. Examining the natural environment, I find beauty in even the most discarded of waste materials, breathing new life into these objects and the landscapes they inhabit. Each piece is a unique journey of time and place, capturing both natural elements and my imagination."





## In the surrounding villages

In East Challow, Adelaide and Ben Hinton of a+b furniture (Artweeks listing 493) have a passion for simple modern design and creating beautiful handmade furniture and elegant homeware from wood, whether that's a smart sideboard with a splash of colour – sea blue, spring green or a bold orange – bespoke treasure boxes, or a quirky magazine rack inspired by the form of the Herdwick sheep, each piece showcasing the natural beauty of the wood.

Nearby in East Challow, Tania Watson is another new face for this year's festival (Artweeks listing 494). Tania has spent her working life within education both teaching and illustrating for organisations including BBC Education, BBC Worldwide, Oxford University Press and other publishers. It is this time spent in primary education that has been the main source of inspiration: her illustrations are rich with charm and character, subtle observations and a good sense of humour as she captures individual characters with great appeal.

South In East Hanney, artist and art teacher Sheila Hore invites you to visit her garden studio (Artweeks listing 487), a large light space where she draws and paints in watercolour/ gouache and pencil, and works with ceramics

(modelled, thrown and moulded), and in porcelain. "I particularly love representing animals in different forms, especially in 3 dimensions," says Sheila.

"It can be so rewarding, capturing their character and expression in a drawing, or in clay. I find that the camera is a great tool for recording valuable reference images, but also for producing photos as another art form. This season, my theme is 'Fragile Worlds' and is my choice for expressing many aspects of bird and human nature."

## Across the county

Elsewhere, choose to meet a milliner, explore Ikebana (the Japanese art of flower arranging); find exquisite papercuts of the human figure and talk sport ahead of Paris 2024 with nominated Olympian Artist, Annabel Eyres, one of only six worldwide; discover exhibitions and installations that challenge the perception of Oxford as a bastion of privilege or be wowed by the generative art created through computer coding and a cool robot called Stephen.

*There's so much to see! Where will you go first?*

**"It can be so rewarding, capturing their character and expression in a drawing, or in clay."**

# Artweeks

## LOCAL VENUES

### Patsy Jones and Jill Smith (Artweeks listings 488-489)

Vibrant landscapes in paint and print – mostly traditional - exploring pattern and colour in the countryside.

Vale and Downland Museum,  
Church Street, Wantage OX12 8BL  
9.30am-3.45pm 7-25 May  
(closed Suns and Bank holidays)



### Tania Watson (Artweeks listing 494)

Colourful watercolour and drawn images capturing school and family life.

Church Croft, Orchard Gardens,  
West Challow OX12 9TN  
11am-6pm; 18-24 May



### Bahar Murphy (Artweeks listing 490)

Paintings that celebrate the beauty and strength that emerges when diverse cultural symbols intertwine in a charming town centre studio.

82 Spring Cottage, Grove Street,  
Wantage OX12 7BH  
11am-6pm; 18-26 May



### Sheila Hore (Artweeks listing 487)

A range of artwork in watercolour (with pencil and gouache), and ceramics in a working garden studio.

Broad Meadows, Ashfields Lane,  
East Hanney OX12 0HN  
11am-5pm; 18-27 May



## TOWARDS FARINGDON

### The Garden Studio (Artweeks listing 495)

Four artists working in ceramics, mixed media, textiles and wood – including ceramics to make you smile and stunning painterly collage art with a delicate wow factor.

53 High Street, Stanford in the Vale  
SN7 8NQ  
12pm-6pm, 18-27 May



### Seeun Kim (Artweeks listing 491)

South Korean metal craftswoman and jeweller, visual artist, and educator: delicate metalworks balancing tradition and the modern.

24 Mill Street, Wantage OX12 9AQ  
10am-5pm; 18 20-25 27 May



### Nigel Edwards (Artweeks venue 501)

Unique ceramic bodies of work and glazes from local artist in studio.

The Spinney, 2 Bakers Square,  
The Green, Fernham SN7 7NT  
11am-5pm, 18-19 25-26 May



### John Gunter (Artweeks listing 492)

Painting and mixed media pieces, often inspired by the sea, as John makes art affordable for the enjoyment of everyone.

4 Segsbury Road, Wantage OX12 9XR  
11am-5pm; 18-26 May



### a+b furniture (Artweeks listing 493)

Contemporary design meets traditional craft in beautiful handmade furniture and homeware. Pop in to browse or discuss a commission.

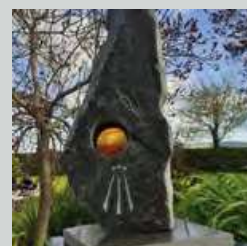
Unit 7 WandG Estate,  
East Challow OX12 9TF  
11am-4pm; 18 22-25 27 May



### Sharon Rich (Artweeks venue 502)

Unique hand-carved stone sculpture and stained glass inspired by nature, myth and magic.

Henleaze Farm Bungalow  
(B4508 next to Farmer Gow's),  
Fernham SN7 7PR  
Fri-Sun 11am-6pm; Mon-Thu  
2pm-5pm, 18-27 May



## Pat Elmore (Artweeks venue 503)

Sculpture garden and gallery with over 100 sculptures.

*Nutford Lodge (next to King and Queen pub), Longcot SN7 7TW  
11am-7pm, 18-27 May*



## Faringdon Artists

(Artweeks venue 496)

Painting, printmaking, mixed media and other creative works by talented local artists in historic Faringdon.

*Old Town Hall, Market Place, Faringdon SN7 7HL  
11am-5pm, 18-19 24-27 May*



## Faringdon taster exhibition

(Artweeks venue 497)

Art by exhibitors opening their studios in the surrounding villages in a stunning and surprising historic building in the heart of town.

*Great British Revivals, 1 Bromsgrove, Faringdon SN7 7JF  
10.30am-4pm, 11-27 May*



## Great Coxwell Artists

(Artweeks venue 500)

Ceramics, stone, painting, drawing, printing, glass, collage, jewellery, quilts, digital art, wire and wood. Refreshments all day.

*Holloway House, Great Coxwell SN7 7LZ  
11am-5.30pm, 18-19 25-27 May*



## Lechlade Art Society

at Buscot Park

(Artweeks venue 498)

Glass, Painting, Printmaking  
Ten experienced artists showing and demonstrating their art in the iconic surroundings of

*Buscot Park, Buscot Park Road, Faringdon SN7 8BU  
2pm-6pm, 4-12 May*



## National Trust Heritage

(Artweeks venue 499)

and Rural Skills Centre

A range of craftspeople will be exhibiting at the Heritage and Rural Skills Centre, showcasing traditional methods. Bellow, digital art, jewellery and paintings too.

*The Timber Store, NT Heritage and Rural Skills Centre, Coleshill SN6 7PT  
10am-4pm, 23-27 May*



## TOWARDS DIDCOT

### Eden Faye at the Cornerstone Arts Centre (Artweeks listing 459)

An intuitive, messy and colourful exploration of neurodivergence in paint and mixed media.

*25 Station Road, Didcot OX11 7NE  
10am-5pm; 4-25 May (closed Sundays and Bank holidays)*



### Wendy and Gio Botto

(Artweeks listings 460 and 461)

Paintings including semi-fauve/post-impressionist style acrylic landscapes, plus mixed media life drawing and oil paintings depicting boxers, construction sites and churches in varying non-abstract styles. Expect lots of colour!

*134 Brasenose Road, Didcot OX11 7BS  
11am-6pm; 18-20 25-27 May*



### Anna De La Mare

(Artweeks listing 453)

A wide variety of paintings, portraits, animals and pet portraits, landscapes, mostly representational. Acrylics, oils, gouache resist. Also open.

*59 Bridus Mead, Blewbury OX11 9PJ  
11am-6pm; 4-6 May and 25-27 May*



### Five artists at Blewbury Clubhouse (Artweeks listings 454-458)

Vibrant and intuitive paintings inspired by wild and ancient places; atmospheric still life with dappled light and reflections and quirky watercolours of floral abundance, and abstracted works; crockery hand-thrown with love, textile and embroidery art inspired by the beauty of the natural world.

*The Clubhouse, Boham's Road, Blewbury OX11 9HF  
10am-3pm/ Sat, Suns and Bank holidays 10am-5pm; 18-27 May*

