
Meet the artists

Andrew and Kerry Forkner

On Manor Road, Witney husband and wife team, Andrew and Kerry Forkner are exhibiting a varied display of work inspired by the natural world in their home studio/gallery from 4-12 May as part of Oxfordshire Artweeks.





of recreating the textures, shapes and form is slow and painstaking, allowing the setting to dominate the composition so the wildlife he depicts is embedded in its habitat as you might see it, if you were lucky enough. Each piece therefore draws attention to both the beauty and importance of our natural world and the species that inhabit it, whether capturing the grace of a soaring bird or the powerful intensity of a hunting predator, to provide a powerful message about conservation and environmental awareness.

This year's show includes pieces from Andrew's new collection of British wildlife in which he portrays a range of the species that benefit from the ecological farming practices at FarmED on Honeydale Farm, in Shipton Under Wychwood, a diverse 107-acre mixed Cotswolds farm with a mission is to inspire, educate and connect people to build sustainable farming and food systems that nourish people and regenerate the planet. Their fields have become a haven for a variety of farmland birds, including – and we love these collective adjectives – a charm of goldfinches, a crowd of redwings, a wisp of snipes, along with fieldfares, kestrels, kites, buzzards, and the ever-glorious kingfisher by the pond. Hoping to remind people that the way we use the land affects their populations, Andrew brings the wildlife we don't often spot to the fore: a wren perches in brambles in the delicious light of an autumn morning and a bullfinch is camouflaged amongst rosy apples, whilst a selection of birds of prey roost, a stoat hunts and the European badger peers from behind a drystone wall.

During the exhibition whilst you might see a Tawny Owl sitting against the weathered wood of an old farm building in which the colours ►



Andrew Forkner is an accomplished self-taught wildlife artist known for the intricate detail and lifelike qualities he captures in his art using graphite pencil, coloured pencil, acrylics, and pastel. He is a keen naturalist and has travelled in both this country and abroad in search of wildlife. At the start of his career Andrew mostly produced illustration work, drawing birds and animals for journals, magazines, and books; now his subjects range from delicate garden birds to majestic predators. Presenting the character and personality of each animal with a keen eye, Andrew portrays the essence of each species and its unique habitat with colour and texture, combining traditional artistic techniques with a modern sensibility and scientific accuracy. In his work, Andrew is constantly tempted by complex images, such as the pebbles on a beach, for which the process

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and marks in the wood mirror its plumage patterns. You can also venture further afield – in ‘Roof of the World’ Andrew has purposely tried to reflect the patterns of the Snow Leopard with the lichen patterns on the rocks. “I had to resist the temptation to produce a close-up of this beautiful cat, and to place it as a small element of a much bigger environment.” he smiles.

Alongside, visitors can browse hand-dyed, quilted, and embroidered textiles and jewellery by textile artist Kerry, a qualified fashion designer and dressmaker. In her art, she uses stitch to explore and interpret different surfaces, especially those from organic, natural, and historical sources as she explores ideas of our links to the history of the landscape in intriguing ways. “The landscape around us has been shaped by thousands of years of human activity and natural forces,” says Kerry, a keen walker. “In recording textures and patterns, mapping memories using fabric and stitch, I aim to interpret an atmosphere of place.”

With a strong ecological ethos, Kerry chooses natural fabrics in ethereal muted shades from sage green and gentle mustards to elegant greys and a soft lilac: her colour schemes are derived from dyeing with plant material native to her walk locations. By folding or scrunching fabrics during dyeing she creates rhythmic markings



reminiscent of landscape topography. She then stitches patterns derived from surfaces, ancient or modern, trodden beneath the feet. By adding prints or stitch patterns of flora or architectural details to dyed materials or layered between translucent fabrics, Kerry creates unique pieces for wear – including rather lovely ‘pebble brooches’ and decoration; and by scanning and digitally-printing dyed explorations she makes repeating designs on a variety of fabrics for home furnishings and embellished accessories.