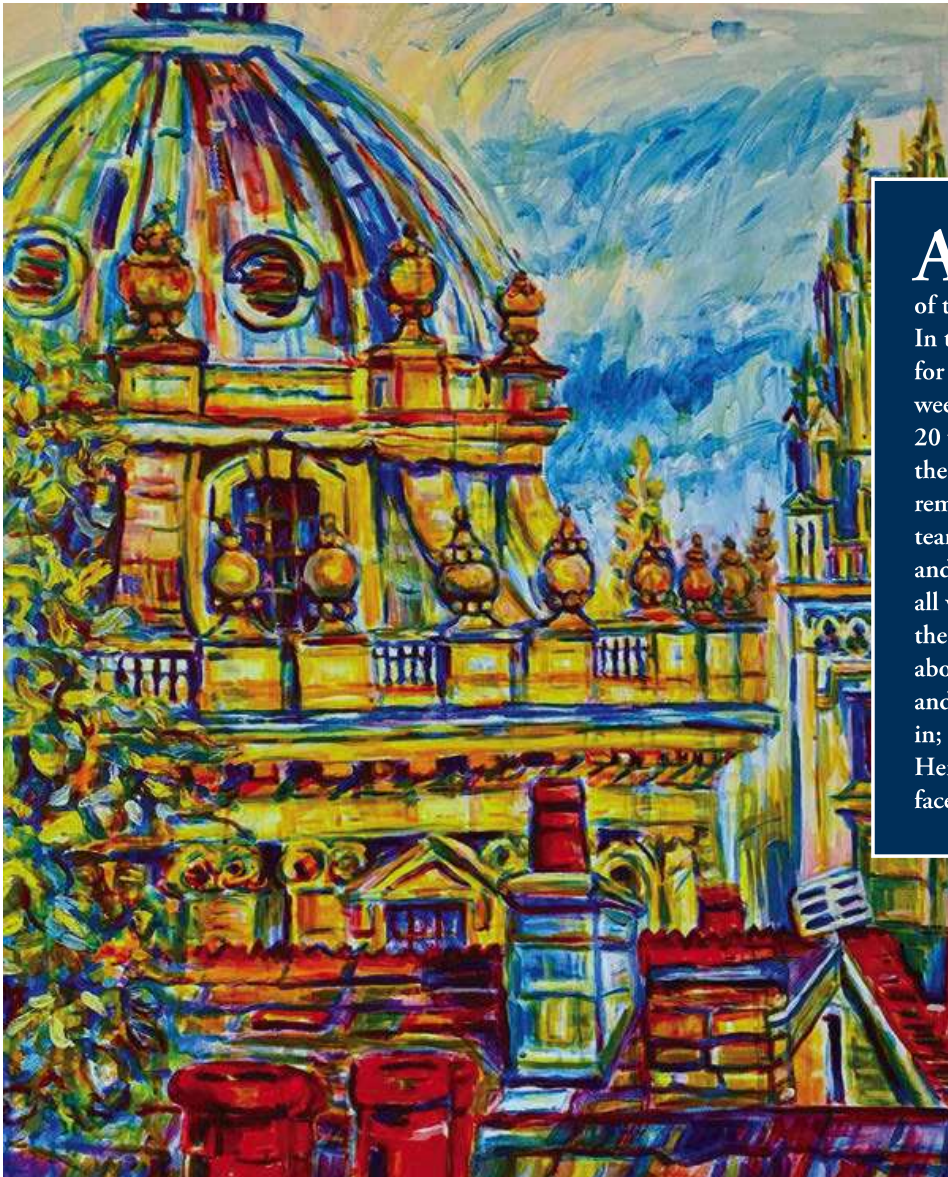


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Oxfordshire Artweeks

# 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 (4th-27th) 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.



Artweeks runs this year from 4-27 May, and each of the three weeks is different. In the third week (18-27) and for the late May bank holiday weekend, there'll be more than 20 venues open in Didcot and the surrounding villages. And remember, while some artists team up to host group shows and others open their studios, all welcome you both to enjoy the art on show and to chat about their materials, methods, and inspiration. You just drop in; no appointment necessary. Here, we introduce eight new faces to the festival this year...



## In Didcot itself

Mindful art facilitator artist Eden Faye is exhibiting at the Cornerstone Arts Centre (Artweeks listing 459), showing an intuitive messy and colourful exploration of neurodivergence. “‘Befriending my Brain’ is about feeling like I finally have started to understand my mind,” Eden explains, “after 33 years of feeling like a square peg in round hole after round hole. After realising I am neurodivergent things made a lot more sense.

My art is made intuitively which means I have no plan; I play around and make it up as I go along. It’s a way for me to process and express how I’m feeling in a chaos of colour and texture.

By doing what feels right moment by moment, creating art is my mindfulness practice. (Sitting still to meditate never really suited me!) I can be aware of thoughts and explore my senses as I smooch paint with my hands, scribble with oil pastels or pierce a needle and thread through fabric. This exhibition is about me being me and learning to accept myself.”

Also opening their at-home gallery are mother and daughter pair Wendy and Gio Botto.

“It is very special for me to be exhibiting alongside my 21 year old daughter Gio,” says Wendy, “because, 20 years ago, she was crawling around the floor of a shared gallery during my Artweeks exhibition at Braziers Park in Ipsen, and that’s where she did her first acrylic on canvas. And now she’s a Fine Art degree student and we’re going to be painting alongside one another again during Artweeks.”

Both opt for boisterous colours to set your retina alight.

Last year, a video of Gio painting construction workers a la van Gogh - the men working laying down speed bumps outside her house – went viral on TikTok (where she is known as @signed.tanks) garnering over 11.6 million views. On their bright orange and neon yellow clothing, with muck on their trousers, “it’s such an aesthetically cool profession,” she says! Another of her works depicts a

digger beneath a Van Gogh sky, and the collection includes brawl and bouts in the boxing ring (meet the artist on page 26).

“I am often asked where the colour comes from in my work,” continues Wendy. “I am inspired by ‘The Fauve’ Artists and post-impressionists, and the use of a very limited pallet, omitting black. I am not seeking to create realistic tonal painting; my work is a non-abstract, fun, energetic, celebration of the colours and painting process. The colours are not random; rather they’re enhanced from what I see, using colour temperature to add depth. I work quickly using both hands, all over the canvas creating movement and energy as I build the paint up and I love the freshness of paint, especially when wet and up close. The subjects of my paintings reflect my life, places that I have experienced – the smell, atmosphere, and whole scenario - from the Italian Liguria, Portofino, Cinque Terre, Venice, Sicilian Scenes, Oxford Spires and rooftops to Blewbury, The Ridgeway or Didcot Great Western Park as well as pigs, dogs, still lifes, sunflowers and poppies. When looking at paintings, I recommend always getting right up close to view the paintings, in the place where the artist stood, to become engulfed in them!”

Over in **Sutton Courtenay**, you’ll find yet another Artweeks newcomer Emma Cavell whose ‘Peace by Piece’ mixed media mosaics re-create beauty through brokenness. Take a moment, perhaps to linger by her sculptural vessel ‘Open’, an abundance of floral joy, forest fungi & butterfly beauty and you’ll see the many materials used in this vibrant mix: vintage china, porcelain flowers, ceramic beads, shell, amethyst and carnelian crystals, shells, recycled glass, ceramic beads & a variety of mixed media. The rim of the vessel is encrusted with vintage china teapot lid-knobs - depicting an enchanted circle of forest fungi, crystals, tiny antique glass beads, porcelain violets, green/gold porcelain leaves, and tiny hand rolled nodules of antique gold metalized braid, suggesting little beads of dew nestled within the flowers and fungi.

In **The Wittenhams**, in the perennially popular Clumps Orchard art spaces, two first timers are showing their art this year. In the Old Piggery, William Watkin’s first solo show is a collection of edgy contemporary abstracts are ▶



intense and dynamic explorations of colour, gesture, surface, and texture through the use of stripes. Influenced by grids, crosshatching and weaving. Almost illusory, his paintings are concerned with materiality, process, and thinking abstraction through geometric grids and complex colour combinations. In a neighbouring art space sculptor Ewan Shearer's uses smashed toughened glass which he then UV-bonds into figures, emphasising nature-based forms and historic deities. These detailed forms he scans in high definition for 3D printing enabling final sculpture to be produced in a range of materials and finished from metal and resin to those that appear to be rust, concrete or even bone.

Head to **South Moreton**, meet Morag Conway, whose earliest memories, growing up in rural Aberdeenshire, are of the joy of drawing, and putting to paper the things that excited, intrigued, beguiled, and

preoccupied me. "The abundance of nature, dramatic weathers, wonderful landscapes, and mystical stone circles that I grew up with have since shaped my understanding of my world and given form and direction to my inner emotional tides. Later years, spent enjoying the contrasting pace of city life (in the arts and antiques trade), left me longing for a return to green space and in the rolling vistas and vast skies of Oxfordshire I have found a new beloved aesthetic home" she says, "and watching my children draw and create unabashed, free, expressive, relentless, inspired me to rediscover my own unparalleled joy in painting. Creating art provides me with my essential sense of self." During Artweeks, she invites you to visit her studio and see her art in contemplation of nature, landscape, and motherhood.

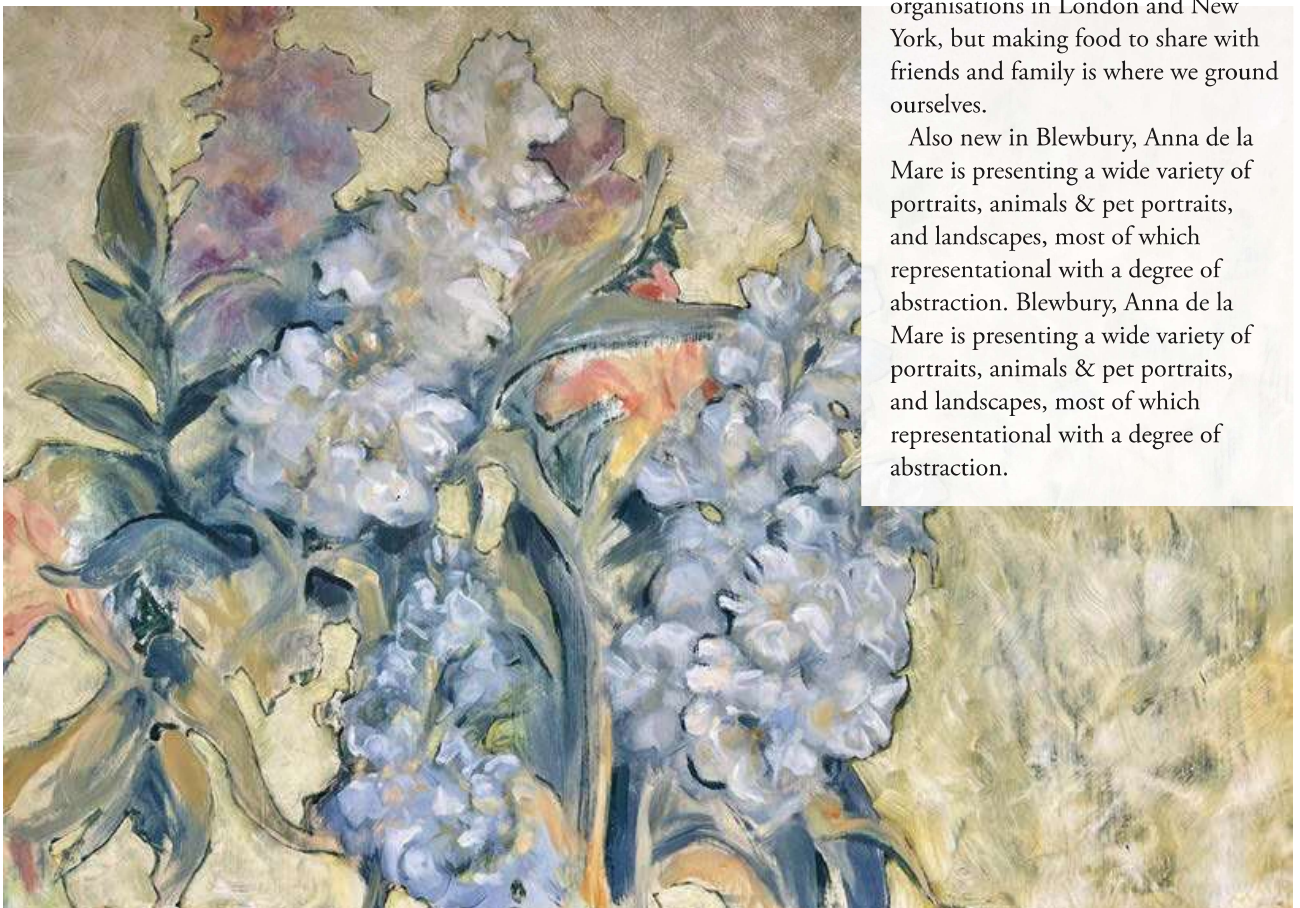
Down in **Blewbury**, joining a group of talented established artists, Julian March of Blewbury ceramics is taking part in the festival for the first time.



"Ever since I did ceramics for Art A-Level (way back in the day), I've loved ceramics and pottery," he says. "I love the idea that we can make beautiful, life-affirming objects out of mud. Pieces can form a set, yet they're all different, and each have their foibles, just like us humans. Perfectly imperfect, or imperfectly perfect, whichever way you want to look at it.

I am all about soul food crockery. I am passionate about the honesty and simplicity of hand-throwing mud into vessels which help to nourish us. I've had a ridiculous career in global news organisations in London and New York, but making food to share with friends and family is where we ground ourselves.

Also new in Blewbury, Anna de la Mare is presenting a wide variety of portraits, animals & pet portraits, and landscapes, most of which representational with a degree of abstraction. Blewbury, Anna de la Mare is presenting a wide variety of portraits, animals & pet portraits, and landscapes, most of which representational with a degree of abstraction.



# Artweeks

## SIXTEEN VENUES TO DISCOVER LOCALLY

### Eden Faye

(Artweeks listing 459)

An intuitive, messy and colourful exploration of neurodivergence.

Cornerstone Arts Centre  
25 Station Road, Didcot OX11 7NE  
10am-5pm; 4 & 7-25 May



### Wendy & Gio Botto

(Artweeks listings 460 & 461)

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.

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



### Emma Cavell

(Artweeks listing 462)

Innovative, mixed media mosaics 'Peace by Piece' re-creating beauty through brokenness.

110 High Street, Sutton Courtenay OX14 4AX  
1pm-6pm; 18-19 22 25-27 May



### Charlotte Storrs

(Artweeks listing 463)

Functional stoneware ceramics, all wheel-thrown. Pottery in a beautiful secret garden close to the Thames. Children welcome.

8 The Green, Culham OX14 4LZ  
12pm-5pm; 18-27 May



### Sylva Wood School and Wood Centre (Artweeks venue 430)

Wood & more! Furniture, paintings, open workshops, demonstrations, and talks plus Anglo-Saxon living history, café & parking.

Little Wittenham Road, Long Wittenham OX14 4QT  
10am-6pm; 18-19 May



### Clumps Orchard

(Artweeks listings 431-434)

Colourful, expressive and textured abstract paintings by William Watkin; Photography from UK & alternative travel locations and sculptures in various materials by Ewan Shearer; contemporary abstract paintings by Liz Gascoigne, and unique, handbuilt ceramics by Vivien Shelton exploring form and texture.

Clumps Orchard, Little Wittenham OX14 4RE  
11am-6pm (Thu 2pm-8pm); 18-19, 23-27 May



### Jane Duff (Artweeks listing 435)

Paintings of Oxfordshire and Wales in a large gallery and a working studio plus teas and cake in a beautiful garden.

The White Cottage,  
Little Wittenham OX14 4RA  
11am-6pm; 18-20 23-27 May



### Earth Trust Gallery

(Artweeks listings 436 & 437)

Immerse yourself in works from local creatives, inspired by the natural world. See Jayne Ford's oil paintings and pastel drawings.

Earth Trust Centre, Sires Hill,  
Little Wittenham OX14 4QZ  
11am-4.30pm; 19-27 May



### Brightwell Village Hall Artists

(Artweeks listing 438)

Paintings, pots and batik and by seven very different artists.

Stewart Village Hall, West End,  
Brightwell-cum-Sotwell OX10 0RY  
10am-5pm (Mon 10am-4pm);  
24-27 May



**North Moreton Artists**  
(Artweeks listings 439 & 440)

Paintings, prints and etchings, and drawings & sketchbooks by Ann Spencer, ceramics, silver jewellery, woodwork and rocking horses; all displayed in a beautiful church.  
*All Saints Church, Wallingford Road, North Moreton OX11 9AT*  
11am-5pm (Sun 11am-4pm); 18-27 May



**Morag Conway**  
(Artweeks listing 441)

Paintings in contemplation of nature, landscape and motherhood.  
*Westwards, The High Street, South Moreton OX11 9AD*  
10am-4pm; 18-27 May



**Anna De La Mare**  
(Artweeks listing 453)

A wide variety of works in paint, portraits, animals & pet portraits, landscapes, mostly representational. Acrylics, oils, gouache resist.  
*59 Bridus Mead, Blewbury OX11 9PJ*  
11am-6pm; 4-6 & 25-27 May



**Blewbury Clubhouse**  
(Artweeks listing 454-458)

Vibrant and intuitive paintings inspired by wild and ancient places by Josie Clouting; Oil paintings of atmospheric still life with dappled light and reflections & quirky watercolours of floral abundance by Lin Kerr; crockery for life, hand-thrown with love by Julian March; textile and embroidery artist inspired by the beauty of the natural world and museum collections by Yvette Phillips and semi-abstract paintings by Eleanor Wong exploring connections, inspired by play and childhood.

*The Clubhouse, Boham's Road, Blewbury OX11 9HF*  
10am-5pm (Mon 20th, Tue-Fri 10am-3pm); 18-27 May



**Caroline Vivian & Deb Sutcliffe**  
(Artweeks listings 442 & 443)

Painting and printmaking in a beautiful barn studio: local landscapes, still lifes and garden scenes in oil. Limited edition original prints from wood engravings and linocuts.  
*Finches, Baker Street, Aston Tirrold OX11 9DD*  
11am-6pm; 18-19 25-27 May



**Springfield House**  
(Artweeks listings 444-447)

Helen Young's oil paintings and cards inspired by a visit to Greenland and Svalbard. Bright, quirky & whimsical, still-life paintings by Pippa Smith, each as fresh as the seafood she paints; pet portraits and botanical art pieces in coloured pencil by Mandy Reid; and Shola accessories by Giulia Valentini.  
*Springfield House, Baker Street, Aston Tirrold OX11 0DQ*  
11am-6pm; 18-19 25-27 May



**Anna Dillon, Abigail Panzeri and Hedley Thorne**  
(Artweeks listings 448-450)

A welcoming village studio filled with vibrant landscape paintings and collages that tell stories of our heritage and environment; aerial landscapes, botanical realism and vibrant highly-detailed watercolour paintings and prints,  
*Heathersage, Aston Street, Aston Tirrold OX11 9DJ*  
11am-6pm; 18-19 25-27 May



**Susanna Brunskill and Lucinda Buletson**  
(Artweeks listings 451 & 452)

Mainly original oil paintings sold only here, with cards & prints, and slab-built textural ceramics.  
*Twitter, Aston Street, Aston Tirrold OX11 9DQ*  
11am-6pm (Sun/Mon 11am-4pm); 18-19 25-27 May

