



CREATIVE

Oxfordshire Artweeks, the UK's oldest and biggest open studios and pop-up exhibition event, returns May 3rd-26th to showcase the art of more than 1,000 creatives



GENIUSES

Artists, makers and designers from photographers, sculptors and ceramicists to silversmiths, textile artists and glassworkers, including more than 200 new to the festival this year will be showcasing their work.

Some artists team up to host group shows while others open their studios, and there are hundreds of venues, some of which are extraordinary in themselves. This year, as well as medieval churches and magnificent Manor Houses, the 400 venues include two Oxford colleges, hidden cloisters, The Abbey in Sutton Courtenay, Oxford's historic Covered Market, medieval barns, manor houses, woodlands and even a canal boat.

Artweeks is not only about the art and craft on show: it is about the artists and makers who have created it and the stories they have to share. At most studios and exhibitions, all

of which are free to visit, you can meet the creative and talented people and chat about their materials, methods and inspiration. Simply drop in during their opening hours and be amazed, surprised and inspired.

Over the last five years, Watlington has become a top Artweeks destination with dozens of artists along the High Street and over at Christmas Common. Here, from 10th-18th May, you'll find everything from contemporary still life to experimental ceramics, heirloom jewellery, portraiture in freehand embroidery, mosaics for the garden and 3D animals for the wall.

Also, offering a warm welcome are six artists at the Busby K Studio & Gallery in Nuffield, a converted barn and working studio and where you'll find artist Caroline Busby at the easel. Her fresh contemporary style paintings in oil and watercolour inspired by the surrounding countryside and its towns catch the light on these built and natural landscapes and the interplay of colours, shapes, textures, lights and darks.

Here, too, find painter Wendy Hopcroft who grew up in Zimbabwe and has lived and travelled across the globe: her subject matter

is diverse as a result, from English street scenes to African wildlife as she tickles the senses and awakens memories – or dreams. These contrast with Fiona Scutcher's detailed realist pencil drawings of bugs and animals, as she illustrates how different each individual creature is. "A big part of my process involves observing how they interact with their environment," she explains. "The intention behind my art is to convey how beautiful the seemingly simple things in life are, when we take time to slow down and notice them."

Elsewhere, visitors can explore political satire in papier-maché and wire sculpture, steam-punk upcycling, and serendipitous portrait photography taken in strange places. Discover collage art with 'Where's Wally'-esque details, and 'Not So Still Life' paintings and look out too for female stories that explore the social impact of art through the life and work of artist-activist Barbara Steveni in Modern Art Oxford and, in Woodstock's Oxfordshire Museum, 'Michael Black, chisel, wood, stone'. This exhibition explores the work and legacy of the Oxfordshire sculptor best known for carving the Emperors' Heads outside Oxford's Sheldonian Theatre in the 1970s.

● Pick up a festival guide from a local information point or browse the events by location or type of art at artweeks.org

OXFORDSHIRE

art

WEEKS