

Cambridge OPEN STUDIOS

This month, artists around the county will open the doors of their workspaces to the public, providing a unique opportunity to enjoy the creative talent our area has to offer



This month sees the return of the enormously popular Cambridge Open Studios – an opportunity to explore workspaces belonging to local artists and craftspeople and enjoy the wealth of creative talent our county has to offer. Some 253 artists are involved in this year's event which, as ever, will take place each weekend in July at venues located all over Cambridge and the surrounding area.

The event, which is one of the oldest of its kind in the country, began in the sixties – created by a group of local artists with a goal of demystifying the arts, promoting the creation of new works and making them as broadly accessible as possible.

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Michelle Thompson

Artist and illustrator, 59 High Street, Saffron Walden

"I work both as a collage artist and an illustrator. My commissioned illustration work is mainly produced digitally on screen but my personal work tends to either be collage work or printmaking. I'm opening up my home, which is on a busy High Street – a prime location for walkers by to peek inside and come in and have a look. This is the first time I've been part of Open

One of the great joys of Open Studios is the diversity of what's on offer – exhibitors range from painters, illustrators, photographers and sculptors to jewellers, furniture makers and glass makers, amongst many others. It's an opportunity to view art outside a gallery context in a more informal, interactive setting, and see the processes behind an artist's work and their creative

Studios and I've been so impressed with how much support and promotion goes into the event – it's a great chance to see what we really do. As well as framed artwork I'll have my book covers and magazine illustrations on show, so visitors can see how my artwork is used within the design industry."



environment. Uniquely, it also gives visitors the chance to speak to the artists and learn about their techniques and materials, as well as providing an opportunity to buy and commission original pieces.

To find out more about what's on offer, we met four artists who will be opening their workspaces to find out what visitors can expect and why they love Open Studios.



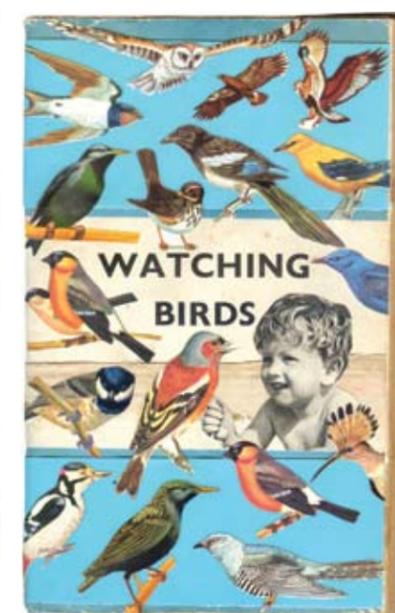
Katharina Klug

Ceramicist, 550 Coldhams Lane, Cherry Hinton

"I make hand-thrown porcelain vessels, garden ornaments and ceramic wall-hangings. My inspirations are contemporary design and traditional Korean pottery. I try to create harmony between shape, colour and texture. Visitors to my studio will enter through the garden and make their way to my workshop and gallery where they can see my materials, kilns, wheels and tools, alongside finished work. My outdoor work will be exhibited throughout the garden, too. My husband and I built my workshop together, it's a beautiful building and it's very special to me. I can sit at my wheel and look out onto my garden and it's a warm, bright space with books, sketches, photos and findings that help me in my creative process.

I love taking part in Open Studios, it's a great way to meet people and because I'm very passionate about my craft, I want to show people how my work is made – it's not mass-produced and people will see that I pour my heart into every piece.

There's a huge amount of talent in and around Cambridge and this is a wonderful opportunity to meet the artists and share their enthusiasm. It's a very different experience to visiting a gallery or exhibition, it's much more personal."



ABOVE: Images of artwork by ceramicist Katharina Klug (top) and collage artist and illustrator Michelle Thompson (below) both of whom will be showing off their work at Cambridge Open Studios this month



Paul Abbott

Oil painter, The Mill House, 11 Mill Hill, Swaffham Prior, Cambridge

"I paint in oils, mostly on canvas, and occasionally board. Much of my work is either a reflection of the local agricultural landscape (fields, barns etc) or seascapes and beaches taking a mixed inspiration from Norfolk, Suffolk and the Indian Ocean. I layer paint thickly with a palette knife and from a bright palette (mostly straight from the tube) to create colourful decorative pieces of all sizes.

I'll be opening my studio at home, which is next to the windmill in Swaffham Prior. I'm lucky to have a reasonably sized, dedicated space for a studio, and (when tidy!) and with the work hung for Open Studios, it's a very pleasant, welcoming space which I'm more than happy to hang out in for days on end.

Open Studios was the logical next step for me as an amateur. Once you've filled your own walls (and the loft etc) with your

own work, and have accepted kind compliments from friends and visitors, what's next?

Open Studios gives you an opportunity to show your work to a self-selecting group of art lovers who take a genuine interest in what you're creating.

On top of this it's no longer just dabbling with paints in a quiet moment – it's painting to deadlines, framing, hanging and all the commercial activity that goes into putting on a successful open studio.

Visitors of Open Studios get to meet some delightful people and see or hear the stories behind the creation of some wonderful artworks – as well as being able to buy some for very reasonable prices."



Carmen Renwick

Illustrator and painter
68 Green End Road, Cambridge

"I work in a variety of media. Through exploring a range of materials I can express my love of colour, line and texture in a very personal and lively way. My work is often illustrative in style but sometimes semi-abstract, inspired by observational studies made in my everyday life.

As this is my first Open Studios I am sharing a beautiful art space in the home of Constance Johnson who is an abstract artist. I am taking part because it has inspired me to work towards a goal with a time limit. It limits my coffee and shopping trips! I've always loved viewing other artist's work, especially seeing where and how they work. I urge everyone to visit Open Studios... It's fun!"



FULL DETAILS CAN BE FOUND on the Open Studios 2012 pages of the Cambridge Open Studios website (www.camopenstudios.co.uk), where you can search for participants by name, artist type, media or location. The printed Open Studios Guide is widely available, free of charge, from shops, galleries, libraries, colleges, surgeries and tourist offices – and from artists throughout the region. Studios are open from 11am until 6pm on both Saturdays and Sundays and entry is free. Weekend 1: 7-8 July ; Weekend 2: 14-15 July; Weekend 3: 21-22 July; Weekend 4: 28-29 July