



Pictured (cw): *Low tide, St Ives* by Jane Puckerling; Jewellery by Jane Pitt-Pitts; *Matley Heath* by Claire Wiltsher; *Ready About* by Evelyn Bartlett

This year due to unforeseen circumstances the full Hampshire Open Studios event is not running, but after an overwhelming demand from local artists the New Forest and surrounding area will be exhibiting as usual. We have in this location an astonishing number of professional and gifted amateur artists, potters, sculptors, and craft makers.

From Breamore and Woodgreen in the north of the area to Milford on Sea and Keyhaven in the south and from Verwood at the western boundary to Blackfield and Dibden Purlieu to the east, the New Forest and its surrounds are rich with creativity, which this annual event ably demonstrates. Not only that, but the journey around the region from one venue to the next will be part of the adventure;

finding studios tucked away down leafy lanes, stopping for an ice-cream on the waterfront, or for a pub lunch in the Forest, it's all part of the experience.

Most artists, when given the opportunity, like to talk about their work. And from the standpoint of the viewer, seeing where an artist creates their work, learning something about a piece or a particular body of work – what inspired the artist, what technique might they have used – only adds to the enjoyment.

Here are just some of the artists taking part in the event:

Claire Wiltsher is a professional landscape painter who is currently working on a new body of work related to the New Forest and Dorset coastline. She has recently moved to the area and has set up her own studio in Lyndhurst, and she has just been accepted for The Society of Women Artists. Wiltsher's paintings



Pictured (cw): Yellow coat by Ellen Fellows;
Ceramic Hares by Anne-Marie Marshall;
Tower of Wisdom by Andrea Finn

capture the different weather and mood of land and sea. Her mixed media canvases combine oils, inks, photo-fragments and recycled materials.

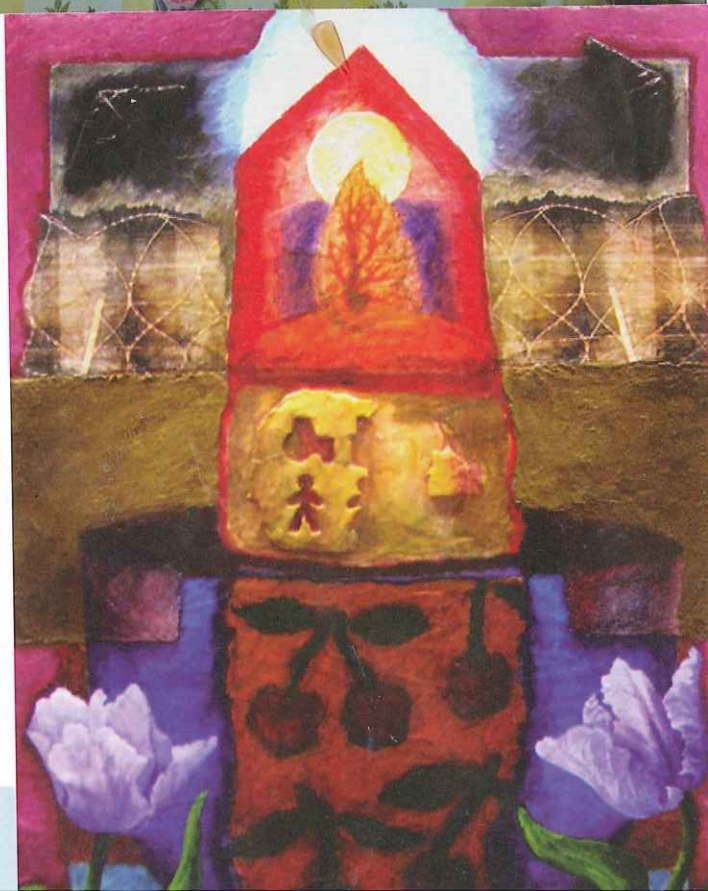
Ellen Fellows makes a range of individually styled jackets, bags and other items, hand-made from unusual and striking fabrics. Her unique collection, entitled *Bellesque*, is a combination of fabrics and imagination. She started making clothes about 5 years ago. With an ethos of recycling she realised she could design unusual, unique clothes to a budget and enjoy the challenge of creating clothes from unlikely fabrics. Some fabric is contemporary, some antique and some are often very rare.

Pete Gilbert says, "living in the New Forest, my passion for painting the landscape is constantly rejuvenated. I tend to work on site to capture the immediacy of the moment with pastels and watercolour, then using those sketches either finish them back in the studio or use them as reference for larger canvases in oil. Since turning professional in 2000 I have had numerous exhibitions and awards. I have worked on commissions for private collectors, businesses and public bodies. I also tutor regularly and open my studio each year as part of the Hampshire Open Studio Arts Trail. Exhibiting with me this year are photographers Zak, Hugh Lobley and Steve Yeo."

Most of us are influenced in some way by our environment. Artists seem not only to absorb the qualities of their surroundings but are also able to express those qualities in their chosen artworks. How fascinating it is then, to be able to see and experience those artworks in the very environment which inspired them.

See the adverts on following pages for further information on selected artists. And for the full listings, including a brief description of each artist's work and their venue address, pick up one of our pink guides for Hampshire Open Studios – available from the mentioned artists and the following outlets:

Visitor Information Centres in Ringwood, Fordingbridge, Lymington, Lyndhurst, Salisbury, some local shops, libraries, tourist centres and galleries eg Coastal Gallery in Lymington, Landfall Milford on sea, and Sandy Balls Holidays.



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