

## Oxford's new Lord Mayor to open Padua twinning art exhibition.



Hannah Gauntlett: Ripples, mixed media on wood

This is the first time that Oxford and Padua have collaborated through art. The twinning agreement between the Comune di Padova and Oxford City Council was signed at Palazzo Moroni in Padova in April 2019, by the Mayor of Padova, Sergio Giordani, and the then Lord Mayor of Oxford, Colin Cook.

At the same time, Oxford Padova Link was set up, under the umbrella body of Oxford International Links and in collaboration with Oxford City Council, with the objective of facilitating cultural exchanges between the two cities.

The exhibition is being held at The Barn Gallery, St. John's College, generously supported by the college, as well as Oxford City Council and Oxford International Links. It will be opened by Oxford's new Lord Mayor, Lubna Arshad. The exhibition will be open to the public (free

of charge) from 2<sup>nd</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> July 10am – 6pm daily. Hannah Gauntlett, who is well known in her city, has been invited from Padua and Diana Bell is representing Oxford.

The title of the exhibition evokes the flowing of water, symbol of life, which unites distant lands and people through time. The power and presence of water is vital for humanity and the artists have researched this in different ways. Water is also a symbol for the flow of thoughts and ideas which unite our two cities. It makes reference to the key role played by rivers and canals in each city – In Padua the River Brenta to the north and the River Bacchiglione to the south, and the Thames and Cherwell in Oxford.

Each artist has researched the meaning of water in different ways. Hannah Gauntlett refers to the flow of people in the city, the passing of time and the relationship between water and the environment. She has also studied different shapes of water in all its complexity.

Diana Bell presents us with an installation symbolic of a river and invites the audience to participate by adding their thoughts about the future. She is involving children by holding workshops in primary schools and their work will be added to the installation. Paintings and collages complement her work.

And it is not just art. On Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> July at 6pm there is a talk by Jude Barrett from the Ashmolean Museum and on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> July between 12 & 1pm a poetry reading on the theme of Water. All are welcome. Both events free.

On Friday 7<sup>th</sup> July Padova's Blubordò choir will be taking part in a concert titled 'Oxford and Padova Sing!' at the Town Hall, along with the Man Choir and Oxford Youth Choirs.

[www.dianabell.co.uk](http://www.dianabell.co.uk)

[www.hannahgauntlett.com](http://www.hannahgauntlett.com)

"Everything is water" Greek Philosopher Thales