Artists get the chance to shine

By IAN COLLINS

This spring is seeing a springboard for hundreds of East Anglian artists - with three huge new opportunities to show and sell their work.

As more than 250 artists welcome the last visitors to the Norfolk Open Studios venture in May, across the Waveney another 135 are set to follow suit in Suffolk Open Studios over weekends in June.

And now, with less than a week to the deadline, the last call is sounding for entries for the eastern equivalent of the Royal Academy Summer Show... albeit in autumn.

Norwich Castle Open Art Show - to be held from October 18 to November 23 - is intended as a major showcase for any artist who lives in, or simply loves, Norfolk. Selection is by open submission among amateurs and professionals alike. Neither are there any restrictions on medium or subject matter.

Chairman of this year’s selectors is the veteran artist William Bowyer, a senior Royal Academician who lives and works in Walberswick and London.

Mr Bowyer is also a past president of the influential New English Art Club - and his two fellow judges, Peter Brown and Karn Holly, are now leading members of that national grouping which has had a strong showing in East Anglia ever since its co-founders worked at Southwold and Walberswick in the 1880s.

Staged in association with the East Anglia Art Fund - which has brought dozens of top-quality shows to Norfolk since 1991 - the Castle venture aims to repeat the success of a similar event three years ago.

Andrew Moore, the Castle’s keeper of art and senior curator, says: “This is an exciting opportunity for local artists to have their work exhibited at the Norwich Castle. It also offers a unique chance for visitors to buy work from our vibrant art community.”

The Castle Open, to be repeated at intervals in the future, will also form part of a larger celebration entitled Norfolk Painters 2008 at the Norwich centre this autumn.


William Bowyer’s Across the Harbour to Southwold, is an oil from the 2000 show.