

# A Year in the Arts

2012/13



Cyngor Celfyddydau Cymru  
Arts Council of Wales



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Front Cover: *Torchbearers*  
Mzansi Cymru project, Valleys Kids  
Part of Power of the Flame and funded by Legacy Trust UK  
Image: Glenn Edwards

*Shelters*  
Joanne Tatham and Tom O'Sullivan  
Arts Across the City 2012, Swansea, LOCWS International  
Image: © LOCWS International



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# Chair's Foreword

It has been a listening year for me and the Arts Council of Wales. I have listened, observed and participated since the summer of 2012 as independent Chair of the Arts in Education Review Panel which was commissioned by the Welsh Government to enquire into the current state and status of the expressive arts in the schools of Wales. All over Wales we have held Focus Group meetings of teachers, artists and arts organisations, of school students and parents and the general public; we made study visits to Scotland and England, and to schools in Wales; we researched and discussed the role of the education as practised from Singapore to Sydney, from Chicago to Calgary, from Finland to Fochriw. This autumn my Report will be published and the Ministers for Education and of Culture and Sport will pronounce on its recommendations. If they are implemented in full I predict a sea change in the relationship of arts and education in Wales, and a very creative future indeed. The listening, and the thinking, will have been worthwhile.

The listening did not stop there. In the spring my Council initiated Sgwrs Gelfyddydol, our conversations about the arts and our particular role, in day-long sessions held successively in Llandudno, Aberystwyth, Abertillery and Cardiff. Debate was lively and informative. We are successfully reaching out as never before and way beyond 'the usual suspects'. We will over the next year both continue to listen and respond as we ensure that our national policy for the arts is indeed perceived, understood and acted upon locally. After some intensive years of re-structuring and re-organisation we now need to ensure that the fuller social and civic engagement Council intends to make happen is based on the very best achievements and potential of the arts sector which we support.

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*Get Boys Dancing*  
Powys Dance at Theatr Hafren  
Image: Joe Purches

Already, we can see this happening in a myriad of ways, but perhaps both exemplified in 2012 by the Cultural Olympiad which the Arts Council of Wales orchestrated across Wales. We wished to touch younger people, disabled people and that wide swathe of our population who are not always directly affected by the arts. When sound and light and performance invaded our castles from Caernarfon to Caerffili we did so; when crowds pulled the fuselage of surprises that was Marc Rees' Adain Avion in Swansea and entered it in Ebbw Vale, we did so; when the Rhondda met Cape Town on stage with Valleys Kids' Mzansi Cymru, we certainly did so. All this, and so much more from our newer companies, whether Sinfonia Cymru or NoFit State, to the giants, old and new, that are Welsh National Opera and the National Theatre Companies, and whether in the setting of Tir Cymru or Tokyo.

We have seen the world come to Wales as when Mexican installation artist, Teresa Margolles, won Artes Mundi 5 with a visceral piece of prevention or when we learned in May that come the autumn of 2013 we will host the World Music Fair, WOMEX 13, with Wales selected from intense competition. We knew, too, that in taking Bedwyr Williams to the Venice Biennale as Wales' artist in that madcap extravaganza of the contemporary arts, we would not fail to stand out as a 'starry messenger'. And in the summer, notwithstanding western winds and water, Literature Wales launched the Dinefwr Literature Festival and banished the elements with Welsh words in both our languages.

How, I sometimes wonder, are we developing and sustaining all this, and more, on relatively small budgets – and, yes, that is a perennial appeal for financial enhancement, much returns for so little – and I had my answer, as always, when I presented our

Creative Wales Awards at the Grand Theatre in Swansea in March. The question is answered by talent, by skill, by passion and above all else, by the dynamics of creativity out of which comes the art which defines us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Dai Smith' in a cursive, flowing style.

Dai Smith



Above: *Cauldrons and Furnaces*  
Caerffili Castle

A partnership between Cadw and Arts Council of Wales, part of Power of the Flame and funded by Legacy Trust UK.

Right: *Birds*  
Leila Bebb, Unusual Stage School  
Image: Phil Cope









# Chief Executive's Foreword

No-one who saw Danny Boyle's magnificent Opening Ceremony to the London Olympics could have doubted the ambition, imagination and sheer exuberance of Britain's creative talent. It was there, on stage in all its glory, for the world to enjoy. Determined not to be overshadowed by metropolitan preoccupation, the Cultural Olympiad across Wales was itself an emphatic reminder of the particular qualities that so exemplify the essential contribution that the arts make to our national life.

Perhaps now, as we face unprecedented economic austerity, it's more important than ever that we remind ourselves why this is so.

First and foremost, the arts matter to the people of Wales. Forget lazy assumptions of so-called elitism. The enjoyment to be had from a good night out isn't confined to a well heeled minority. Successive public surveys show that those who enjoy and take part in the arts come from all spectrums of society, and across all parts of Wales. And they're being rewarded with work of exceptional quality and distinction.

An annual review such as this can only scratch the surface. But what you'll see in the pages that follow is abundant evidence that the arts in Wales are punching above their weight. Sustained investment in the arts from the Welsh Government during the first decade of the devolved administration has seen a flowering of Welsh culture and creativity. Government should be applauded for its foresight. There is a spirit of confidence and ambition not seen for decades, and it makes good business sense to ensure that this continues.

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## *Strafed*

Drilled plastic chairs and table, lights, 2012

Bedwyr Williams

Image: Courtesy Ceri Hand

That the arts in Wales are a genuine success story – and popular too – should be their only justification. But the arts are also a vital engine for the Welsh economy. They contribute directly in terms of jobs and the generation of wealth not only through their own creative endeavours, but through the distribution and retail of goods and services. Some parts of the cultural sector form significant tourism attractions, generating demand for transport, accommodation, catering and other tourism-related business. But they also help put Wales on the international map, raising its image world-wide.

At home as well as abroad, the way that culture can become a catalyst for regeneration is one of the defining characteristics of our time. The quality of a locality's cultural facilities has a powerful influence on business people when they're thinking about where they should base their companies. Unsurprisingly, business decision makers want a good quality of life for themselves, their families and for their employees.

And in a 21st century globalised economy, these employees will possess unrivalled creative skills. This is why what happens now in our schools, colleges and universities is so important. One of the most basic expectations of general education has always been that it will enable young people to get a job when they leave school. But even now, significant elements of our modern system of education are based on strategies that were planned, in part, to provide the manually skilled workforce for the post war manufacturing economy. More than 60 years on, the key corporations of the future will increasingly be in the fields of communications, information, entertainment, science and technology. These all



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Above: *Plancha*, 2010,  
Teresa Margolles, Artes Mundi 5  
Installation with 10 heated steel plates and water from the morgue  
Courtesy the artist and Galerie Peter Kilchmann, Zurich  
Image: Wales News Service

Right: *Y Storm*  
Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru  
Part of the London 2012 Festival and World Shakespeare Festival  
Image: Toby Farrow





require high degrees of creative imagination and entrepreneurial vision – qualities that arts are ideally placed to nurture and promote.

The most important developments in civilisation have come through the creative process, but ironically, most people have not been taught to create. Increasingly, employers emphasise the need for qualities and aptitudes which academic qualifications are not always designed to produce – powers of creativity, of communication, of empathy, adaptability and social skills. So we await with eager anticipation the outcome of Government's Arts in Education Review, commissioned earlier in the year and led by our Arts Council chair, Dai Smith.

The common theme here throughout is the need to invest in the individual creative capital that we all possess, and to unlock our imagination, vision, and creative potential. The country's social, cultural and economic well being depends on it. Without it, we risk becoming a moribund society – economically, creatively and imaginatively. We understand, of course, the financial pressures currently faced by government, but funding cuts would be a demoralising step backwards nonetheless. The arts in Wales might be small by size, but they're big by impact. Consistent levels of funding – modest within the overall scale of government spending – would guarantee continued transformational results.

The Welsh Government's vision – which we wholeheartedly endorse – is that everybody in Wales should live in well connected, vibrant, viable and sustainable communities with a strong local economy and a good quality of life. It's an approach to

regeneration that's about transforming underperforming places, reducing inequalities and ensuring economic growth which is inclusive, sustainable and focused.

It's an approach that requires a different set of political calculations when the tough choices are being made. The Arts help us to understand the world around us, the wisdom of previous generations, the courage needed to formulate a stronger, more equal, more exciting society in the future. As our Year in the Arts ably demonstrates, arts and culture are the essential ingredients of everyday life. They are a proper matter for our celebration, and for government's closest attention.



Nick Capaldi

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*Adain Avion*  
National Waterfront Museum, Swansea  
Wales' Artists Taking the Lead commission, included in the London 2012 Festival  
and part of London 2012 Cultural Olympiad  
Image: Warren Orchard









# Who we are and what we do

Arts Council of Wales is an independent charity, established by Royal Charter in 1994. Its members are appointed by the Welsh Government's Minister for Culture and Sport.

Our principal sponsor is the Welsh Government. We also distribute funding from the National Lottery and raise additional money where we can from a variety of public and private sector sources.

We are the country's funding and development organisation for the arts.

Our staff members are based in Colwyn Bay, Carmarthen and Cardiff Bay.

## Our priorities

**Our vision is of a creative Wales where the arts are central to the life of the nation.**

### Our priorities are:

- supporting the creation of the best in great art
- encouraging more people to enjoy and take part in the arts
- growing the arts economy
- making Arts Council of Wales an effective and efficient business

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Concerts for Deaf, deafened and hard of hearing audiences  
Andy Pidcock, BBC National Orchestra of Wales  
Image: Betina Skovbro

As well supporting and developing high quality arts activity, some of the activities that we perform day to day are:

- distributing Lottery funds
- providing advice about the arts
- sharing information
- raising the profile of the arts in Wales
- generating more money for the arts economy
- influencing planners and decision-makers
- developing international opportunities in the arts
- promoting small scale performances in local communities

Our job is to ensure that the contribution of the arts is recognised, valued and celebrated.



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Above: *La bohème*  
Welsh National Opera  
Image: Catherine Ashmore

Right: *Elemental, Cauldrons & Furnaces*  
Head for Arts at Blaenavon Ironworks  
Image: Cadw, Welsh Government (Crown Copyright)







# A Year in the Arts

It is difficult to imagine life without the arts. The arts, in all their forms, define and shape humanity: they articulate human experience, provoke and exasperate, challenge and fulfil, inspire and delight in equal measure. In that context, The Arts Council of Wales believes that investing in the arts can be justified for its own sake: an investment in the nation's creativity - Wales's cultural capital. Our vision and passion for high quality, engaging arts activity is a constant reminder (as you'll see reflected in the pages of this review) that Wales always deserves the best.





# Spring 2012

## Who's Afraid of Rachel Roberts?

Alongside the great and the good Hollywood stars, the shy Welsh minister's daughter that was Rachel Roberts, became a Bafta winning, Oscar nominated actress. *Who's Afraid of Rachel Roberts?* was a production from Torch Theatre Company.

Written by another award winning actress, Helen Griffin, who explained that the play set out to remind us that "Rachel was her own worst enemy... but her biggest redeeming feature [was] her sense of humour. Even in her darkest, bleakest moments, she could make you laugh." The audience didn't need to know who Roberts was to enjoy the show as Helen explains further: "the themes in her life and in our play – an obsession with celebrity, an addiction to alcohol, an inability to let go of a lost love – are eternal and perhaps more relevant than ever today."

## NoFit State kicking up a storm

NoFit State Circus returned to Pontardawe last May with their sensational new show, *Barricade* – a high octane production full of aerial thrills on an iconic new set by world renowned designer Dan Potra. The story began with the building of a barricade against the coming storm, setting the scene for a maelstrom of high skill aerial and acrobatic feats, comedy, powerful imagery and a breathtaking fire show finale.

The characters and impromptu happenings during the lead up to the performance laid the foundations for an inspirational and celebratory circus exploration of the mighty human effort required

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*Barricade*  
NoFit State  
Image: Matt Smith

to overcome the walls, barriers and defences we find, or place, in our path. *Barricade* invoked a glorious spirit of resistance to empower its people to fight for freedom. This was a world class circus spectacle for us all to enjoy right on our very doorsteps.

### World Music and Wales at Hay Festival

At the world renowned Hay Festival, Cerdd Cymru : Music Wales and WOMEX 13 present a performance by the ground-breaking 9Bach in The Sound Castle, as part of a special taster of what to expect at WOMEX 13, which is taking place in Cardiff at the end of October 2013.

### Bedwyr for the Biennale

Bedwyr Williams in a project jointly curated by Mostyn and Oriel Davies and supported by the Arts Council of Wales is chosen as the artist to represent Wales at the 55th Venice Biennale 2013 International Art Exhibition. His comedic and poetic live performances and installations deal with Welshness, otherness and difference. He has in the past assumed different personas in his work - a one-eyed preacher, a Grimm Reaper and Count Pollen.

***“I'm interested in worst case scenarios and the people that get caught up in them”***, he says.



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Above: 9Bach  
Sound in the Castle, Hay Festival

Right: *Who's Afraid of Rachel Roberts?*  
Helen Griffin, Torch Theatre  
Image: Craig Sugden







# Summer 2012

## In-flight entertainment like no other

Under the visionary curatorship of Welsh artist Marc Rees, a mobile arts space created from the transformed body of a DC-9 aeroplane – *Adain Avion* travelled across Wales last summer igniting the imagination of the nation for the London 2012 Festival. The plane nested in Swansea, Ebbw Vale and Llandudno, between 24 June and 14 July, for three weeks of extraordinary cultural activities reflecting the distinctive history and culture of each area. All activities were filmed and stored in the plane's 'black box' recorder and revealed to thousands of visitors at the National Eisteddfod of Wales in Llandow (4 – 11 August 2012).

A participatory and interdisciplinary social artwork in association with *Adain Avion* was *Vetch Veg - An urban utopia*. Transforming a section of the iconic former home of Swansea City AFC, The Vetch, (which if still standing, would have celebrated its centenary in 2012), lead artist Owen Griffiths created a temporary vegetable patches with members of the local community over one growing season. This social artwork culminated in a flower and produce show held around Avion's nesting site in front of the Waterfront Museum, and a harvest supper for the local residents aboard the plane. Talking about the project, Owen Griffiths says: "Reconnecting with the process of growing food and self sufficiency is becoming increasingly significant as food prices rocket and financial cuts increase. It is also in some way a shift to a more entrepreneurial and creative society. Reusing, reshaping and rethinking resources such as the Vetch to have a temporary use as an edible land are an obvious and necessary way of negotiating a new sense of land management".

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*Vetch Veg - An urban utopia, Adain Avion*  
The Vetch, Swansea  
Image: Owen Griffiths

## Plans to celebrate 100th anniversary of the birth of Dylan Thomas unveiled

### Success for inaugural Dinefwr Literature Festival

“Those who were there were in at the beginning of something quietly huge”. Horatio Clare

The Dinefwr Literature Festival, which took place at Dinefwr Park in Carmarthenshire, West Wales, was hailed a triumph. The inaugural festival – a three-day celebration of literature and landscape – saw over 2,500 visitors through the gates who, despite battling the unseasonal weather, enjoyed over 100 events with authors, poets, musicians, artists, actors and comedians.

“This was a literature festival with a difference – a little bit Glastonbury, mixed in with laid-back west Wales attitude, world-class writers and artists, with Welsh and English languages intermingling with ease and a sense of warm friendship. We took risks to put on a new type of festival, but we’re thrilled with the results.” Lleucu Siencyn, Chief Executive, Literature Wales

### Theatr Bara Caws production - *Ga'i Fod*

Nature calls..! *Ga' i fod..?* promised to be a breath of fresh air – literally, and it didn't disappoint. Five people meet for a week-end of LARPing, to experience life as animals. Going back to nature can be a weird and wonderful thing, and some are able to 'lose themselves more successfully than others.' Whatever happens they'll never forget the experience – naturally.



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Dinefwr Literature Festival  
Image: Emyr Young









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*Left:* Wales Millennium Centre  
Image: Derek Naylor

*Above:* *Ga' i fod*  
Theatr Bara Caws

This production was a translation of an original script by Madeleen Bloemndaal from the Netherlands.

“Coming to Wales has totally ‘Welshed-up’ the humour in *Ga’ i fod..?*, but at the same time it has remained universal so everybody can understand it – even if you don’t speak the language. To me this is important: finding common ground with the audience whatever their backgrounds may be”.

Madeleen Bloemndaal

### **South Africa Wales - Mzansi Cymru première**

“Waiting for the Olympic Torch in Treorchy Community development charity, Valleys Kids, gave me the experience of a lifetime and a challenge that became a pinnacle of Alpine proportions. Firstly as a writer, to create a piece with a cast of hundreds that would span two countries, Wales and South Africa, and would fill my every waking moment for four years.”

Laurence Allan, Writer, Director

Somehow on a vertical ride over Llanwonno Mountain, Larry plucked an idea out of Valley altitude that included Zulu, Nelson Mandela and the London Olympics that gathered momentum and rolled into a spectacular piece of theatre on the Donald Gordon stage, Wales Millennium Centre in Cardiff and Artscape theatre in Cape Town. The Mzansi Cymru – meaning South Africa Wales was spearheaded by Valleys Kids in Wales and Amampondo in South Africa and featured a number of different groups from each country. Inspired by the iconic film *Zulu*, *Torchbearers* is set in the same year and tells the story of Gerwyn, a young Welsh actor who

is in South Africa to film *Zulu* when he meets and falls in love with Thembesile, an African dancer. Against the backdrop of the Mandela drama, their lives are ripped apart by the brutal apartheid system. Will the lovers ever see each other again, or in 2012 will fate intervene and an Olympic destiny be fulfilled?

### **The reopening of the Arts Council’s Capital Programme enabling the nation’s key arts organisations to benefit from Capital Lottery funding once again**

Since 1997, the Council has distributed over £114,248,872 of Lottery funding to a total of 1,599 projects throughout Wales. In doing so, the Arts Council’s Lottery investments have transformed the built landscape of the arts in Wales: landmark buildings such as the Wales Millennium Centre and Newport’s Riverfront have created important new opportunities for people to enjoy the arts. The new strategy for the Lottery Capital Programme places “a greater priority on the refurbishment of existing facilities rather than new build schemes”. Other priorities in the strategy are capital investments designed to increase income and reduce costs; involvement in wider regeneration programmes; and public art projects, with all building-based projects expected to incorporate a public art strategy. Our ambition for our programme is to continue to bring significant benefits to the arts in Wales through capital investment and at the heart of our new approach will be making sure that the arts in Wales can fulfil their potential.



## Ballet Cymru present *COLD ROLLING / TIR*

Critics Circle award winning company, Ballet Cymru; present an extraordinary double bill of new work featuring Tanja Råman and Cerys Matthews.

## National Eisteddfod Vale of Glamorgan

Few festivals can boast an art gallery on site but the Eisteddfod's Lle Celf was back again in 2012 and bigger than ever with 44 artists work on display, 19 of those new to the Eisteddfod. Once again, the Arts Council of Wales was delighted to be a partner, inviting children and adults of all ages to experience tailored guided tours of the exhibition, and in order to stimulate greater engagement with the creative process, this year, the Arts Council aimed to illuminate and inspire young people with hands on arts workshops to capture young people's interpretations of what interested them in the art exhibited.

## Kaite O'Reilly's *In Water I'm Weightless*

A provocative look at the human body with dynamic staging that combines movement and live projections, Kaite O'Reilly's poetic, poignant and at times explosively funny texts were performed by a cast of six leading Deaf and Disabled performers with direction by John E McGrath and movement by Nigel Charnock. This radical, athletic production from National Theatre Wales celebrated the athleticism, diversity and skill of the company, whilst exploring the endless possibilities of human difference.



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Above: *COLD ROLLING / TIR*

Ballet Cymru, featuring Cerys Matthews and Tanja Råman  
Riverfront, Newport  
Image: Nicolas Young

Right: *In Water I'm Weightless*

Kaite O'Reilly and National Theatre Wales

*In Water I'm Weightless* was an Unlimited Commission for the Cultural Olympiad  
Image: Farrow's Creative







# Autumn 2012

One night, two operas

***“You come out feeling different – about love, life and death.”***

Financial Times

*In the Locked Room* by Welsh composer Huw Watkins, with a libretto by poet David Harsent, was directed by Music Theatre Wales's Michael McCarthy. Scottish composer Stuart MacRae's *Ghost Patrol*, with a libretto by novelist Louise Welsh, was directed by Matthew Richardson. Both operas were conducted by Music Theatre Wales's Michael Rafferty. *In the Locked Room* explored the growing obsession of Ella as she creates an imaginary love affair. What started as a means of escape from everyday life became an overwhelming and destructive reality. Whilst Stuart MacRae and Louise Welsh created a starkly different world in *Ghost Patrol* where the harsh reality of civilian life collided with the corrosive effects of war.

## I love Conwy, Conwy loves me

The 2nd Blinc digital arts festival took place in October in Conwy North Wales. Following on from previous success, the arts event showcased some of the most exciting artworks from 30 different artists. This event was dedicated to Alan Turing, the mathematical genius who helped to crack the German coding in the Second World War and is considered by many to be the father of computing. 2012 was his Centenary Year.

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*Ghost Patrol*

Music Theatre Wales in association with Scottish Opera

Image: Clive Barda

## Arts Council of Wales' commitment to digital development of the arts in Wales

In a new partnership with NESTA and the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), the Digital Research & Development Fund for the Arts in Wales will support new creative products and services that can be exploited across multiple digital platforms and in international markets with the goal of accelerating the growth of Creative Industries businesses in Wales.

### 9Bach in Australia

Indigenous Australian performance group The Black Arm Band Company and members of Welsh band 9Bach came together for a unique project supported by the British Council, that explored place, identity, culture and the preservation of language. 9Bach's Lisa Jên Brown and Martin Hoyland travelled to Australia to spend a month with members of The Black Arm Band Company, first in Melbourne, then in the Northern Territory region of Papunya. The global decline of world languages is endemic and rapid. According to UNESCO, languages disappear at a rate of one every two weeks, so it was significant that 9Bach joined the Black Arm Band on this project, as melding traditional language with contemporary music injected new life and purpose into endangered tongues, bringing them to new audiences, and raising awareness of their existence.



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Above: The Black Arm Band Company who performed with 9Bach in Australia  
Image: John Sones

Right: Blinc Digital Arts Festival, Conwy









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Left: *At Swim Two Boys*  
Earthfall  
Image: Hugo Glendinning

Above: Cerys Matthews  
Artistic Director of WOMEX 13 Opening Concert  
Image: Rhys Frampton © Cerys Matthews

### Earthfall become the first arts organisation to win Canmol Award

'Canmol' Awards celebrate the best marketing campaigns in Wales and in 2012 it was the first time in the history of the awards that an Arts organisation had won. Earthfall, a resident company of Chapter, Cardiff and a revenue-funded client of the Arts Council of Wales were honoured to receive a Chartered Institute of Marketing Canmol Wales Award for their *At Swim Two Boys* marketing campaign.

### Cerys counts down WOMEX in Wales

“In October 2013 Wales and our music will be on show to the world when the World Music Expo is hosted right here in Cardiff. I want to leave the World Music delegates smiling, wondering and curious about our plaintive but passionate, harmony- soaked, land-of -song of ours and help them discover our new and ancient traditions.”

“We will welcome visitors to this lesser known Celtic land, to bask under the shadows of Dylan Thomas, Aneurin Bevan, and Sir Tom Jones, to experience terrace singing at full voice, pints of 'skull attack' ale, a cockle or two, leeks, daffodils and to be dazzled by our flag's red dragon. But I also want to make sure they are privy to our subtler charms too, and so delight in a fine turn of phrase, a lilt of a lullaby, and bathe in the yearning melodies of dreaming souls, because amidst the mountains, streams and coastal rocks survive a tribe of people whose love for strict metre poetry and harmony singing is still very much in evidence even as we tweet our way through the 21st Century.” Cerys Matthews





# Winter 2012

## Indian première of indo-welsh music collaboration

A new collaboration between Welsh and Indian Musicians, by Welsh singer songwriter Gwyneth Glyn and Indian musician Tauseef Akhtar was premiered in Mumbai. They also performed at two major festivals in India, the Amarrass Desert Music Festival in Delhi and the IndiEarth XChange in Chennai. The artists were selected by Wales Arts International and by Donal Wheelan, of Hafod Mastering, who works regularly with musicians in India and particularly the film industry in Bollywood. The collaboration was the first of a series of exchanges under the title *I Adra* spearheaded by Wales Arts International. It builds upon the ongoing success of the India Wales Writers Chain and looks ahead to Cardiff hosting the world music expo WOMEX 13 in October 2013, when Wales will welcome over 2,500 World Music delegates to the capital to explore our culture and music, do business, and watch showcases of the best world music on the planet.

## Teresa Margolles wins Arts Mundi 5

From a shortlist of 7, Teresa Margolles was chosen as the winner of the prize by a panel of international curators and directors. With a first prize of £40,000, Artes Mundi is the largest cash prize awarded for the arts in the UK and one of the most significant in the world. The winning work focussed on Northern Mexican social experience where drug-related crime has resulted in widespread violence and murder.

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*I Adra*  
Gwyneth Glyn and Tauseef Akhtar  
Image: Yotam Agam and Sonya Mazumdar

## Lottery boost for Wales's festivals

Festivals across the whole of Wales benefit from lottery funding to showcase cultural and creative talent. The Hay Festival of Literature and the Arts and Locws International both receive major funding awards of £100,000 each. The renowned Hay festival continues to attract internationally significant writers, filmmakers, comedians, politicians and musicians to inspire, delight and entertain. And for 10 days in May, Hay is full of stories, ideas, laughter and music. Locws International is a three-year programme (March 2012 – March 2015) of five festivals of site-specific contemporary art located in public spaces throughout the City of Swansea. The Vale of Glamorgan Festival continues its well deserved reputation for programming the work of international and Welsh composers and performers in a range of historic and contemporary settings. 2012 saw the commissioning of a number of high profile composers including Phillip Glass, Qigang Chen and Per Norgard.

## The fruits of the Arts Council of Wales and Welsh Rugby Union's partnership

What does Rugby mean to Wales? Where does the heart of rugby lie? These are just two of the questions Welsh author and poet Owen Sheers dissects in his latest book, *Calon: A Journey to the Heart of Welsh Rugby*. From sweaty changing room pep talks to a pitch-side view of some of 2012's most thrilling matches, he enjoyed an access all areas pass to the very heart of the nation's best-loved sport. *Calon: A Journey to the Heart of Welsh Rugby* was the culmination of a brand new artist in residency programme partnership launched between the Arts Council of Wales and the Welsh Rugby Union.

The three year joint venture is part of a wider arts strategic policy that seeks to enable the arts to express and celebrate the ethos and character of Welsh society.

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*Calon: A Journey to the Heart of Welsh Rugby*  
Roger Lewis, Owen Sheers and Dai Smith  
© Welsh Rugby Union







# Spring 2013

## Sgwrs Gelfyddydol – OPEN SPACE – Live!

What is good art? What art is any good? How do we foster the best for the most? These were just some of the questions Arts Council of Wales asked during a series of national conversations on the future of the arts in Wales. We wanted to involve the arts community, artists, arts organisations and our partners, but we also wanted to reach out to all the people of Wales, as the arts touch all of our lives. It is paramount that we continue to promote a meaningful dialogue between ourselves and artists, the arts sector, participants, elected members, National Advisers, representative bodies and the audience members – not to mention listening to those who don't currently engage with the arts as to what the barriers or turnoffs might be.

## Learning with the arts can change young lives

In March 2013, Arts Council of Wales celebrated how Reach the Heights arts project has helped more than 7,500 young people improve their career opportunities, either through the acquisition of formal qualifications, re-entry into the formal education system, or increased confidence and presentational skills. The Welsh Government initiative is aimed at reducing the number of young people in Wales aged 11-19 who are NEET, or at risk of being so. The project has benefited from European Social Fund (ESF) via the 2007-13 European Convergence programme and since March 2009, a total of £19.6m has been awarded to the scheme, over half of which was for the First Footholds programme in which Arts Council of Wales took part. Arts Council of Wales has supported over 7,500 young people having worked with a range of delivery



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*Project Olion*  
Swansea Metropolitan University and YMCA  
Reach the Heights project

partners on nearly 80 projects across Wales. There are hundreds of success stories. One includes M, who lacked confidence, had few friends and couldn't wait to leave school. After taking part in the Reach the Heights project, she has made new friends, sung solo at the Disability Pride Festival at the Wales Millennium Centre, joined a social networking site for blind and partially sighted young people and had made the commitment to go back to school to study for her A levels.

Other success stories show that learning through and with the arts can offer young people a way of increasing their confidence and communication skills, enabling them to engage with further learning and employment opportunities.

#### **10 years. 200 artists. £3 million in awards to artists**

22 professional artists from across the arts received a Creative Wales Award from the Arts Council of Wales as the organisation celebrated 10 years of recognising the role of our nation's artists. Supported by the Arts Council of Wales and Lottery funding, Welsh artists received awards totalling almost £400,000 in a wide range of artforms including theatre, visual arts, crafts and music.







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Left: Sgwrs Gelfyddydol  
Wales Millennium Stadium

Above: *Before it Rains*  
Katherine Chandler, Creative Wales Award 2012/13  
Sherman Cymru

***“ Without support, artists will never achieve their full potential, and our country would be devoid of its one defining characteristic – its culture. The arts are at the heart of developing the confidence of a creative Wales and our projection on a world stage. It is important to the Creative Industries in Wales that investment is made in individual artists, as this support enables them to create new, experimental and innovative work that enriches artforms and artistic practice. Arts Council of Wales will continue to make the space and time available for the development of these incredible talents.”***

Dai Smith, Chair, Arts Council of Wales



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Left: *Unaffected Alterations*  
Matt Cook, Creative Wales Award 2012/13

Above: *Desire Lines*  
Ian Rowlands, Creative Wales Award 2012/13

Right: *Ghost Parade*  
Adain Avion at Ebbw Vale  
Steffan Caddick, Creative Wales Award 2012/13  
image: Warren Orchard







Cyngor Celfyddydau Cymru  
Arts Council of Wales

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