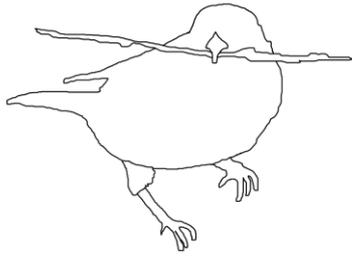


WELSH MAPPING PROJECT
Commissioned by ACW
Author: Elen ap Robert
May 2020

“Language has little meaning unless it is shared.... and memory shared, is belonging”



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As a part of Arts Council Wales' ambition to develop a sustainable vision for the Welsh language, I was commissioned in January this year to undertake a Welsh language arts activities mapping project, with a view to providing as complete and up-to-date a picture as possible of what is currently happening across Wales.

The purpose of this research was to identify the current levels of arts activity in Welsh, focusing on activity not currently funded by the Council, in order to make recommendations to the Council about the way forward in line with its objectives (See ACW Corporate Plan 2018 - 2023 For The Benefit of All <https://arts.wales/resources/corporate-plan-2018-23-for-benefit-all>.)

The research activity took place between January - March 2020, and before the Covid19 lock down. An online survey / questionnaire was co-created with Arts Council Wales, in order to gather both quantitative and qualitative information. 139 completed surveys were received. The survey findings provide the main focus for this research along with separate phone interviews and face to face meetings.

A full analysis report of the survey responses and follow up interviews, form the backdrop to this final report. The final report is presented in the following sections:

- Background and context
- The spectrum of Welsh language arts activity
- Increasing Welsh language arts product and activities and creative career pathways
- Accessible and Inclusive Welsh language arts activity
- Cultural Landscape: Perspectives and perceptions
- Partnership working: ACW leading the way
- The role of the arts portfolio
- Audience development and Marketing
- RECOMMENDATIONS (and associated actions)
- Conclusion

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Research around language acquisition shows us that the desire to understand and participate in cultural activities stimulates language learning and use of the language. It follows, therefore, that the arts sector and the Arts Council have a significant responsibility and role in contributing to the Welsh Government's target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050 (Cymraeg: 2050) as well as contributing to a "Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language" (Future Generations Act :2015)

The Council's data lead us to believe that the arts sector can create and achieve much more through the medium of Welsh and we think that we can do more to achieve the potential that exists within Wales, by working in partnership with other organisations.

In discussion with Arts Council officers, it was agreed that the main focus of the mapping exercise would concentrate on exploring the levels of arts activity and perspectives of the Welsh language development sector, namely organisations and groups working at grass-roots level and engaged with language development, promotion and culture. This exploration has included reaching out to the arts sector, namely arts portfolio organisations, and those outside the portfolio, freelance artists and creative practitioners as well as ACW arts associates, to gain more insight into what is already happening in the Welsh language, and what obstacles and opportunities there may be to delivering and creating more. The mapping has also included views around the roles and responsibilities of the arts portfolio Wales members and ACW in relation to Welsh language arts product.

As part of the mapping process I gave a presentation and lead a discussion with all 22 Mentrau Iaith at the Mentrau Iaith annual conference around this mapping work. Observations from this consultation and my reflections also of the UNLIMITED one day event exploring disability-led arts in the Welsh language held at y Ffwrnes in March, have also fed into this mapping work. Two face to face interviews were undertaken, with a regional arts venue and Merched y Wawr, prior to releasing the online survey.

85 Welsh medium surveys and 54 English language medium surveys were submitted, and included representation from the Welsh language sector organisations including 16 of the 22 Mentrau Iaith, The Urdd and National Eisteddfod, Eisteddfodau Cymru Society, The National Centre for Learning Welsh, Mudiad Meithrin and Wales Young Farmers movement, Arts venues and theatres, grass roots community theatre and dance organisations, producers, directors, artists, arts practitioners, authors and poets are included with 36 out of the 139 contributions received being from members of the arts portfolio Wales. There is representation from all arts forms, however it must be emphasised that intelligence gathered offers a snapshot only and is by no means representative of all that is happening in arts in the Welsh language in Wales currently. (See Appendix 1 for list of organisations who have contributed to this research)

Contributors were asked to kindly complete the questions which were relevant to them and to note work which was 100% in the Welsh language when asked about Welsh language activity. This did not include work which was bilingual. A question about bilingualism was asked later in the questionnaire in relation to language accessibility.

SPECTRUM OF ACTIVITY

Contributors were asked to tell us about the parameters of their artistic work and cultural activities, which afforded an insight into the work currently underway in village halls, Ysgolion Meithrin nurseries, small village eisteddfodau of Eisteddfodau Cymru, Merched y Wawr clubs, Urdd Eisteddfodau, the National Eisteddfod and Young Farmers activities at local, county and national levels, as well as Mentrau Iaith activities located in communities throughout Wales, none of which was core funded by Arts Council Wales, and few only in receipt of project funding. Some activities which are well established including TÎM - Anglesey Young Theatre), this year celebrating its' 20th year of activity, had received sporadic project funding from ACW during its lifetime. There are examples of development work which could not be taken beyond its initial stages due to lack of funding, and organisations like The National Centre for Learning Welsh, initiating the commissioning of "Mewn Cymeriad" company to create two "one man/woman shows touring primary schools presenting Welsh history with fun and excitement". Various organisations in the language development sector are delivering participatory arts activity and Mentrau Iaith initiatives are

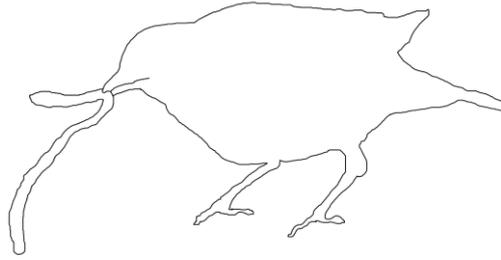
organising festivals showcasing Welsh culture (made possible via seed funding from Mentrau Cymru, the national organisation which supports the work of 22 local Mentrau Iaith across Wales) varying from very small scale to the successful large scale Tafwyl, organised by Menter Caerdydd and its many partners and which has grown from strength to strength since its inception in 2007.

There are some examples of partnership working between arts organisations and language development organisations, including a new festival by Menter Iaith Casnewydd in partnership Riverfront theatre, a progressive consortium initiative currently in its infancy, between Theatr Nanog, Canolfan Soar Merthyr, Canolfan Les Ystradgynlais and Awen Trust, (which aims to develop popular Welsh language theatre for schools and families,) participatory drama sessions for young people organised by Menter Sir Gar in partnership with Theatr Genedlaethol, Literature Wales working with Eisteddfodau Cymru Society to promote writing opportunities, and Menter Iaith Ceredigion (CERED) and Aberystwyth Arts Centre collaborating on informal ukulele orchestra sessions in the Welsh language, to name some. Closer partnership working in recent years between Theatr Genedlaethol and the National Eisteddfod is highlighted by many as a positive development too. Taking partnership working beyond arts and language sectors, there was evidence of an imaginative and progressive Welsh language LGBT commissioning programme instigated by the National Eisteddfod in partnership with Stonewall, and CERED, reaching out to under represented Syrian refugees through the arts. A handful only of examples are noted here, from the light touch to larger collaborations, some are fragile and most are in early stages of their development and it is evident there is the potential for more collaborative working and a more strategic approach to partnership working across arts and language sectors.

Contributors were invited to list their main Welsh language activity along with postcodes of the locations (see Appendix 2) - whilst there is rich and varied activity happening across certain parts of Wales, with an intensity of activity in the heart lands of the Welsh language namely North West Wales and Cardiganshire, there is inconsistent provision, particularly in Powys, Monmouthshire, Newport and parts of Carmarthen, from the evidence which was submitted.

Though many working within and outside the arts sector are evidently not aware of what is meant by “arts portfolio Wales” from the responses received, the work of Frân Wen, Theatr Genedlaethol, Bara Caws, Arad Goch, Theatr Nanóg and venues with a Welsh language focused vision namely Galeri, Felinfach and Pontio, are named by others as arts portfolio examples of good practice in the Welsh language, and the National Eisteddfod, and BBCNow shared some exciting collaborative models of working. Recent hit shows e.g “Llyfr Glas Nebo” by Frân Wen and “Tylwyth” by Theatr Genedlaethol (whose tour of Wales was sadly curtailed due to Covid19) are both mentioned as examples of good quality, relevant contemporary works which have drawn in good audiences and achieved high production values.

Worthy of mention too is a piece which has not alas, seen the light of day to date, but which could still be developed as a stage production subject to rights clearance, namely “2117”, a Welsh language opera by WNO, partially based on the story of Hedd Wyn, and set in the future after a nuclear disaster. This partnership with S4C, Ffilm Cymru Wales and Only Boys Aloud, which was to be filmed for cinematic release and then broadcast on S4C was of the highest quality, written by Gruff Rhys, composed by Stephen McNeff and was to be directed by Marc Evans, produced by Seven Screen, led by Ed Talfan Davies and Rondo Media.



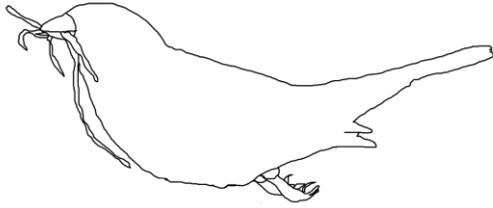
INCREASING WELSH LANGUAGE PRODUCT AND FORMING CREATIVE PATHWAYS

The focus of this mapping exercise was on Welsh medium activity and a number of contributors from the arts sector expressed their view that bilingual work was more suited to their organisations and the communities they serve than purely Welsh medium activity, with a few of the opinion that the Welsh language is not a priority for them or not relevant to them. Bilingual work, is not a main focus in this research other than in relation to accessibility to the Welsh language. I believe there is potential for more focused research to be done in this area, so as to be clearer around what is meant exactly by “bilingual” when describing creative work and when reporting back to funders on creative work, but also when considering “why” create bilingual work, and “for whom”.

When asked what % of work had been Welsh language activity in the past 3 years, the vast majority of those who submitted English medium questionnaires point to it being less than 25% with the majority of those completing Welsh medium questionnaires pointing to more than 75% activity in the Welsh language. The Welsh language sector organisations, Welsh speaking artists and practitioners / companies and Welsh medium arts organisations funded by ACW who submitted Welsh medium questionnaires demonstrate an awareness of the relevance of the Welsh language but it was interesting to note that there is less emphasis on Welsh medium activity within arts organisations who’s ethos or culture is predominantly non Welsh speaking.

Nearly all contributors point to a measure of challenges in delivering, creating and increasing Welsh language activity, noting a lack of availability of product, a lack of variety of product and inconsistent quality of product as explanations for this. Indeed the need for more light and shade, and more entertaining live theatre in the Welsh language, was mentioned on a number of occasions : *“There is a need for more fun”!* It was also felt that there was room for more experimental theatre and an aspiration to create larger scale ambitious work. On a separate matter, there is also a clear view that ideas are not lacking.

There is a missed opportunity, it is suggested, to introduce the arts in the Welsh language to children of pre-school age. Mudiad Meithrin feel that this age group is not acknowledged as an area which could benefit from artistic intervention, saying that there is a lack of perception around the artistic potential and contribution of very young children.



The absence of a long term strategy and the lack of investment in Welsh language product, was considered as a very real barrier to a cohesive, thriving Welsh language arts sector: *“Increased, realistic investment in the creation of Welsh language product. Increased investment in the development of audiences for work in all languages across Wales. Investment in*

the individual careers of Welsh language theatre makers” was noted as themes needing urgent attention, by one major national venue. It was also noted that there is a lack of capacity to make work happen beyond the few organisations funded by ACW to produce Welsh product. There are repeated references to lack of funding for Welsh medium content and evidence of glaring gaps in Welsh language provision in certain parts of Wales.

A very common theme throughout, was the absence of training programmes and pathways for creatives and facilitators in the Welsh language with one national arts organisation calling for *“targeted training in partnership with a University or Conservatoire to train animators and participatory practice leaders to run work in the community using the Welsh Language”*. The lack of Welsh speaking dance tutors is mentioned specifically on a number of occasions and there were other calls for more support for young, Welsh speaking artists returning to Wales from arts colleges, and conservatoires, and at the start of their careers - emphasising the need to find ways to retain them, particularly in rural areas. On a separate note, one well known artist notes that the visual arts mainly take place in the English language in Wales, and that this needs to change.

One contributor refers to Gŵyl Map Festival, as an interesting event to help raise awareness of opportunities in the Welsh language in the arts and more widely. This was funded by Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and held at Yr EGIN (a hub for the creative and digital industries in Carmarthen) The event afforded students from 3 Universities the chance to hear from numerous practitioners and gain insights into the reality of a career creating, in the arts and more widely in the creative industries.

All the above points to a fragile ecology - requiring us to take a long term view of funding underpinned by careful strategic planning. It also shows there is demand for Welsh language activity from both Arts and Language sectors, which suggests that increased cross sectoral holistic working and joint up thinking with partners would be beneficial.

ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE WELSH LANGUAGE ACTIVITY

The mapping activity reveals a wealth of examples of inclusive Welsh language work, with examples of good practice and innovative development work currently underway with under represented groups.

There is evidence that accessibility to the Welsh language via Theatr Genedlaethol's Sibrwd app has enabled learners and non Welsh speakers to have access to, and a positive experience of Welsh productions: as one Canolfan Soar audience member noted in relation to a recent production by Theatr Genedlaethol:

“Pryd Mae’r Haf” was fab - aside from the great performances I, weirdly, particularly liked the inter-scene set changes) Sibwrdd was really interesting – I was in an odd state of being both slightly adrift and of complete comprehension! Absolutely not a negative, I felt included in a way that I wouldn’t have been possible otherwise. Da lawn.”

There are exciting ways in which companies have thought creatively about language accessibility within the creative work itself and in relation to narrative and form : “A Good Clean Heart” : Neontopia / Wales Millennium Centre has set the standard in this direction, and more recently, “Drudwen”: Cimeria circus company, “My Body Welsh”: Invertigo Theatre, “BARDD”: bilingual rapping and poetry partnership, are all cases in point, as well as eg., BLAS arts participatory project for young people in Bangor where the young people themselves devise totally bilingual shows.

And if we consider how under represented groups are being included - we can point to the Welsh medium work of e.g Theatr Genedlaethol, Theatr Iolo and the National Eisteddfod, all of whom have casted some BAME performers for their work, as demonstrated in “Cylch Sialc”, “Chwarae” and “Hwn yw Fy Mrawd” productions. There is however an urgent need to increase performing opportunities for Welsh speaking BAME performers, and indeed opportunities for BAME people within all aspects of the creative and production process.

Lesser represented LGBT communities take centre stage in the Eisteddfod’s pioneering “Mas ar y Maes” commissioning strand, developed in partnership with artists from the gay community and working with STONEWALL LGBT campaigning organisation, and long awaited “Tylwyth” - descendent of “Llwyth” of 10 years ago, by Theatr Genedlaethol continues with the next chapter of this provocative commentary on contemporary Welsh life as gay couple Dan and Aneurin embark on family life.

Alongside this, The National Centre for Learning Welsh relayed to us how working with Theatr Genedlaethol in relation to “Tylwyth” has helped them to “introduce diversity into Welsh classes. This, they say “was also true when working with Theatr Genedlaethol to create a lesson around “Y Tad” when introducing the subject of dementia - the arts can really help with introducing some subjects”

There are inventive examples of disability and Welsh language being explored, as in the Alun Saunders and Taking Flight R&D “I said I Loved you” (working title) with a deaf artist. Here BSL and the Welsh language are being explored together, having in common the fact that they are both languages that have suffered oppression. Also in development there is Vertical Dance Kate Lawrence’s bilingual aerial dance and music R&D project for the visually impaired “Yn y Golau/ In-Visible Light”. There is also evidence of light touch implementation of BSL signing within small scale mainstream Welsh language productions e.g Theatr Clwyd and Pontio Christmas show “Llew a’r Crydd” 2018. Sensitive, and impactful use of signing accompanying main scale productions is evident in eg., Cwmni Frân Wen’s powerful one woman show “Anweledig.”

But to ensure real longterm change, Hijinx, who work with individuals with learning disabilities/autism believe “*A shift in Special Education Provision,*” is required “*enabling more young people with LD and/or autism to learn Welsh - increasing the number of Welsh speakers entering our Academy programme, and therefore being involved in the creation of work.*”

There is a tendency to lose sight of the varied work happening in the Welsh language in the area of accessibility and inclusion - and a danger for Welsh work and Welsh audiences

to be viewed through one lens only - when the true picture is kaleidoscopic. These explorations and examples of good practice, require time to evolve and are heavy on resources. These initiatives need to be acknowledged, and celebrated, supported further and built upon.

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE: PERSPECTIVES AND PERCEPTIONS

An emerging theme throughout the mapping is the relationship between the language and culture in the Welsh language, along with the varying perspectives around this within the language and arts sectors:

A regional arts portfolio venue shares their heartfelt belief with us that “*culture and language in Wales go hand in hand - as a Welsh language artist, one has grown up with the Urdd, Eisteddfod as part of their DNA therefore community arts is as the root of people's souls*”. One could say that “Dawnsio gwerin” - folk dancing, “Cerddoriaeth werin” - folk music “Cerdd - dant” - the art of presenting or performing poetry to harp accompaniment, and “Cynghanedd”, the ancient strict metre in poetry, are all examples of traditional cultural activities in the Welsh language that happen at grassroots, often voluntarily and with a competitive dimension - there is a deep felt need to preserve these traditions alongside a desire to reimagine them and to make them current and relevant to today. Furthermore...a self funding Welsh language grass roots theatre cooperative does not differentiate between professional and amateur - believing culture belongs to everyone, as it is about relationships between people, and belonging.

In contrast, a smaller arts portfolio organisation differentiates “professionally produced Welsh language arts activity which responds to audiences and participants, from community led arts activity through organisations like the Urdd and eisteddfod and companies like Cwmni Theatr Maldwyn” pointing to a perceived split between community and professional work.

Many note that there is a perception that Welsh medium artistic work is for Welsh speakers only and as total Welsh speakers are small in number, the audience potential is limited, leading to a financial risk for those organisations who are located in areas of Wales where there are less Welsh speakers or whose programme is not focused on Welsh language activity.

The National Eisteddfod believes that the view in Wales that Welsh language product is for Welsh speakers only is unique to Wales - and not true internationally. The National Eisteddfod in Cardiff in 2018 proved that language is not a barrier to enjoying the arts in Welsh and that quality can transcend perceived language barriers.

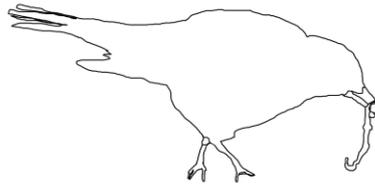
One well known world music band who perform on the international stage in Welsh only believe passionately that they should “not make a big deal of the Welsh language” and that they should simply say with confidence :” *this is what we do*” and that “*it's normal and brilliant*”.

Another contributor talks about seeing bilingualism as a spectrum. They suggest that the arts sector could benefit from working with the Higher Education sector, to promote the concept of the “Multilingual Turn” which releases people, opening their minds to the way in

which everyone, if we have the right attitude, can appreciate artistic endeavour that derives from cultures and in languages other than a first language.

Many contributors to this survey are of the opinion that a shift in perception of language is required - so that the Welsh language can be seen, not only as the domain of those who speak it... but as something inclusive - as everyone has a right to access it. The mapping exercise does point to the need for an improved Welsh language awareness and an enhanced understanding of its cultural and historical context within the arts sector - which could, in turn help to highlight its relevance.

Others shared a view that language should not be politicised and that it isn't about language at all - it is about creating!



PARTNERSHIP WORKING: ACW LEADING THE WAY

Whilst the Urdd is developing a number of grass roots partnerships with arts organisations eg NEW Dance, it has a vision, looking to the future, to increase its community arts output across Wales (and internationally). Valleys Kids are working with their local Menter Iaith and schools to develop Welsh medium activity - saying that they believe "partnership is key". Peak are calling for "*Cross-disciplinary opportunities*" expressing a view that "*visual arts organisations could be linked to partners in the sector where Welsh language content is embedded, to help deliver content*" and Small World Theatre see value in the arts sector partnering with non arts sector organisations referring to richness of their outdoor work with CERED and the Eisteddfod. Indeed, without partnership working with the Eisteddfod, the Torch believe their Welsh Language version of GRAV and imminent tour of Wales would not have been conceivable.

Whilst there are clear examples of cross sectoral working there is also a clear consensus from submitted responses and conversations undertaken in addition to the survey, that there is a need and genuine desire for far more partnership working - between arts and language development organisations.

Many are of the view that Arts Council Wales should lead on the development of a strategic relationship with the language sector as well as having a responsibility for developing the positive environment and circumstances to enable this to happen, through instigating the setting up of a cross sectoral consortium of organisations, whose purpose would be to drive network building and the sharing of information. A key action is the setting up and managing of a central data base of Welsh speaking arts practitioners. One idea mooted by several contributors is the creation of a new post, namely a Welsh language arts officer to assist the arts sector with developing Welsh language strategies to develop cross organisational collaboration (indeed, this is already beginning to happen at a grass roots level -

interestingly Head4Arts have an ongoing relationship with the Menter laith organisations in their area, developing projects together and have recently arranged to share hours of one member of staff to support the work of their respective organisations)

ROLE OF THE ARTS PORTFOLIO WALES

Some believe the arts portfolio organisations have a key role to play in making Welsh language arts activity available for all, in all parts of Wales, with others of the opinion that the portfolio could be leading and inspiring the creation and delivery of more Welsh language activity. There is a view that the delivery of Welsh, and Welsh language activity should be a core portfolio membership condition, whilst another contributor comments on ACW documentation as follows: *“In the documentation I note that their (arts portfolio) role as regards developing Welsh product and activity is: marketing (bilingual communications etc): planning to increase Welsh in the workplace, and to developing Welsh amongst staff and Board representation”* The contributor goes on to question whether or not there should be more emphasis on CREATING through the Welsh language, noting that otherwise *“there is a danger that the list of requirements suggest a set of administrative targets rather than a creative vision in relation to the Welsh language”*

AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING

There is a view in certain quarters of the arts sector that Welsh language audiences are underdeveloped, with some feeling that there is a need for research into what Welsh audiences would like to see. Many others believe that the Welsh speaking audience needs to open up and draw in new audiences including learners and non Welsh speakers. “Y Ganolfan Dysgu Cymraeg Genedlaethol expressed their eagerness *“to work with any groups / organisations who would like to promote Welsh medium artistic opportunities for learners”* emphasising that learners don’t need bilingual work but rather Welsh at their own level. Bilingualism is useful for those starting to learn and non Welsh speakers”. The sharing of such language expertise points again to the value which could be derived from more cross sector partnership working and knowledge exchange.

It is evident from the wealth of their written contributions to this research, that Welsh language sector organisations feel they are well placed to help support the arts sector, theatres and arts centres in particular, to reach audiences because they know their communities. Menter laith Caerffili believes they *“have an opportunity to work closely with the arts sector to increase the number of Welsh medium arts activities available, develop the creative skills of local people and develop more arts practitioners that can deliver in the Welsh language “*

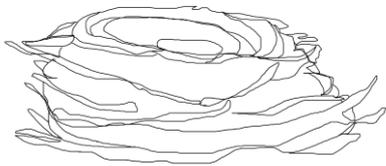
We are warned by several Welsh language organisations against the kind of marketing that happens too far from the people. Welsh language grass roots initiatives stress that engaging local communities sooner, communicating face to face with them and creating work with them, is important (This was also true of creatives who feel an earlier conversation could be beneficial to the creative process). Grass roots language initiatives also emphasise how taking performances out to the community would help to break down perceived barriers to entering a theatre space.

Menter laith Conwy explain how assistance with travel from some rural parts of Wales to see shows would increase theatre attendance as well as more regular Welsh medium product to serve the needs of Welsh speaking audiences in their coastal areas. Merched y

Wawr suggest performance times could flex to the needs of older members of the community - who are more likely to attend events and shows earlier in the day.

Turning our attention briefly to the promotion of Welsh medium participatory activity, an interesting point is made by one contributor as regards what draws Welsh speaking people to an activity, noting that they can be unwilling to attend on their own and for their own benefit: *"they are far more likely to take part if the project is framed as one that is for the wellbeing of others, or the well being of the community"*

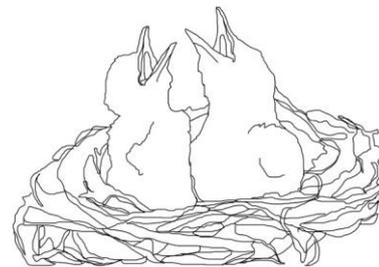
An interesting observation is made around the way in which the sector should think about translation. Marketing in the Welsh language is more than translating material into Welsh - it's about knowing your audience and not only communicating with them in their language, but most importantly in the idiom, or mode of expression, of that language.



MAPPING RECOMMENDATIONS:

CROSS SECTORAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

"Enabling the Arts Council to work more effectively, collaborating more imaginatively with like minded partners across Wales" (ACW Corporate Plan)



RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **ACW to lead on the creation of a longterm cross sector strategic partnership and associated Memorandum Of Understanding between the arts sector and Welsh language sector, adopting a match funding model for specific agreed initiatives and national projects (by March 1 2021)**
- **ACW / Welsh Language development sector to establish a Welsh Language Arts consortium and network made up of members of the Welsh language sector and Arts portfolio sector, to implement agreed priorities, and to develop closer collaborative working and sharing of expertise and knowledge (by April 2021)**
- **ACW language development sector to create a new joint post of Welsh language Arts development Manager to lead on implementing closer cross organisational sector working (ensure appointment by January 2021)**

- **ACW to make it a condition that all arts portfolio Boards have at least 25% Welsh speaking member representation (by April 2021)**
- **ACW To bring about a step change in the awareness of the Welsh language - its culture and its history, within the Arts sector (by March 2021) starting with an introduction and workshop on language, culture and the history of the Welsh language led by Professor Peredur Lynch and Professor Mererid Hopwood, with all ACW staff (by December 2020)**

Actions to include:

- Hold 3 Speed dating events for arts and language sector organisations, to meet and explore creative ideas as well as share relevant information, piloting 1 knowledge exchange “buddy” relationship initiative between key staff of arts, and language organisations e.g Fio and Menter Iaith Caerdydd.
- ACW to create list of key Welsh language organisations, initiatives, promoters and influencers for the Arts sector.
- The arts sector to work with language sector to identify potential Board members for arts sector organisations - increasing Welsh language board membership representation (along the lines of A&B Board skills bank initiative)
- ACW to work with The National Centre for Learning Welsh, new arts/language consortium to clarify how bilingualism is defined, to ensure consistency in the way the arts sector reports on bilingual medium artistic, engagement and marketing activity, and how this work is monitored internally with ACW.
- ACW to work with The National Centre for Learning Welsh, to introduce Welsh language awareness training for the Arts sector and within ACW, to develop a better understanding of the context, history and culture associated with the Welsh language, and so as to lead to a deeper understanding and sense of ownership of the Welsh language by all who live in Wales, regardless of whether they are Welsh speakers or not.
- Explore ways in which the arts sector can be represented on Welsh language fora in relation to promotion of Welsh language policies of County councils, taking note of best practice, in fora of Anglesey and Carmarthen councils and giving due consideration to an MOU currently in development between ACW and Cardiff Welsh language Partnership Forum. Alongside this work, to ensure ACW is named as an example stakeholder alongside “theatres” on page 34 Welsh Language Standards (Wales Sports Council is named here whereas ACW is not at present)
- Identify and deliver at least one national arts/language partnership project to match fund and pilot with consideration to 1) Pan Wales grass roots Mentrau Iaith music initiative, BocSwm in partnership with Community Music Wales, (and possibly in association with newly established, Anthem) 2) Mentrau Iaith / Theatr Genedlaethol / Llenyddiaeth

Cymru/ grass roots Welsh medium script writing initiative 3) Mentrau Iaith /Arts venues annual festivals collaboration project.

- Language sector to share with Arts sector knowledge and networks around language planning and development, including links to European network NPLD (Network to Promote Language Diversity) working in the area of language policy. (*Bethan Webb, Welsh Government Deputy Director Welsh language division, is deputy director of the network until 2021*) and methodologies around language learning e.g: “Croesi'r Bont”.
- ACW and Welsh language sector leaders, to lead a virtual Welsh language and Arts sector “Sgwrs” together as part of on line Eisteddfod - AmGen in August, to discuss the opportunities for working together strategically post Covid.
- ACW to facilitate a Welsh medium discussion led by Welsh speaking BAME artists and practitioners, around challenges and opportunities of working in the Welsh language (as part of ACW conference 2020 and as part of the Eisteddfod AmGen programme) in partnership with Welsh language sector.

WELSH MEDIUM PRODUCT / CONTENT

“reaching more widely and deeply into the communities currently underserved.”
(ACW Corporate Plan)

RECOMMENDATION:

- **ACW to include within its wider Welsh language strategy a bold and inspiring 5 year strategy (*along with an action plan with measurable targets*) specifically on increasing the level, variety and consistency of live arts product / content of quality, available for audiences across Wales (by March 2021)**

Actions to include:

- Developing Welsh language inclusive arts product, building on and growing models of good practice e.g. “Mas ar y Maes” Eisteddfod LGBT commissioning programme, (with view to rolling out national tour of venues and theatres) creative collaborations around Welsh language and disabilities e.g. BSL and the Welsh language and CERED and Syrian refugee cultural initiative with arts sector partners.
- Identifying successful small scale Welsh medium shows with potential to tour (including Christmas shows) which could be presented in less well served areas in Wales and small community venues, possibly as part of Night Out Scheme, and in partnership with Creu Cymru and the Mentrau Iaith.
- Implementation of an innovative artistic initiative pilot programme of disruptions / interventions and residencies at grass roots level for Welsh speaking artists / fledgling theatre companies, (including those wanting to develop their creative skills in the Welsh language) working with the Welsh language sector, and to be embedded meaningfully

within Merched y Wawr, Young Farmers, Mentrau Iaith, Mudiad Meithrin activity, and Urdd camps and with an artistic support / mentoring dimension from Arts portfolio orgs - a series of pilots could be located in the following settings e.g Canolfan Soar, Menter Iaith Caerffili, and a Merched y Wawr club in Powys area (these interventions will benefit from associated "action research")

- ACW to set up a 5 year pipeline of Welsh language theatre R&D projects along with a full production commission strand with an associated funding stream (building on and expanding the recent Welsh family friendly commissioning round) to include a broader spectrum of popular and more experimental offer, which will help to provide more choice and variety to audiences and in to address recent declines in Welsh language theatre audiences.

CREATIVE CAREER PATHWAYS

"strengthening the capability and resilience of the arts, enabling creative talent to thrive." (ACW Corporate Plan)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **To develop clear creative pathways into a sustainable career in the arts in the Welsh language with the FE/HE sector, Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, and ACW Creative Schools programme (by January 2022)**
- **ACW To set up and ensure ongoing management of a dynamic central data base of Welsh speaking arts practitioners / artists, thus helping to "provide expert information and advice about the arts " (ACW Corporate Plan) identifying present level baseline by (January 2021)**
- **To significantly increase the number of Welsh speaking arts practitioners by January 2022 by an agreed % (from baseline identified in January 2021)**

Actions to include:

- Developing clear Welsh medium creative career pathways: Participatory Arts practice in the Arts / Arts Marketing / Leadership in the arts.
- Devising a fit for purpose Welsh language learners programme, with Y Ganolfan Dysgu Cymraeg Genedlaethol / IAITH, tailoring to the needs of early career arts practitioners and those who are more experienced.
- Identifying with the URDD, the young talent coming through their cultural programmes of activity with a view to pointing them to Welsh medium creative career pathways.

AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING

RECOMMENDATION:

- **ACW to share with the sector, information around best practice in Welsh language marketing and marketing to Welsh language audiences and undertake related research into the needs of Welsh language audiences**

Actions to include:

- Undertaking research into what Welsh speaking audiences / participants would like to attend.
- Arts sector to work with language sector, to share knowledge and good practice around approaches to promotion of Welsh language activity which may include closer working with communities on the development of work, and tapping into local and grassroots networks and Welsh learner groups and engaging with influencers within Welsh communities.

CONCLUSION

Welsh culture and language go hand in hand in Wales - they are interwoven, intrinsically related - happening organically and at grassroots. This is a theme which has featured throughout this mapping exercise.

On its own, language is merely a set of rules - it can thrive, only when it has context. The arts and cultural activity provide the Welsh language with a context. They also enable us to explore and define our identity, to express who we are and our place in the world. Language need not be inward looking, and though it may need protecting, it is also for sharing...As Professor Mererid Hopwood conveyed so eloquently in her 2020 Hay Festival lecture...*"Language has little meaning unless it is shared.... and memory shared, is belonging"*

My engagement through this mapping project with a number of Welsh language grass roots groups, initiatives and language development organisations, individual artists, and arts organisations has left me with a distinct impression of a certain dynamic or mood around artistic and cultural experiences in the Welsh language - their significance, role, relevance and future, in all their complexities - and we are stood at a crossroads...

....a critical one... and despite flashes of genius and inspiration, of progressive thinking and bold visions, we are there, standing, fragile and fragmented... in need of urgent action, more joint up thinking, and intent on a new direction:

One independent producer from north Wales reiterates the view of many:

"The power of the arts is clear for all to see and ACW have an opportunity to make a big difference in the number and % of people who can speak Welsh, who use the Welsh language and their attitude towards it. But bold strides are required to do this, and the need

for clear leadership and a strong clear vision, and the willingness to take alternative routes so as to affect real change”

And as one community arts organisation in south east Wales succinctly put it, when asked if there was a shortage of Welsh language activity... *“there isn't enough coming together as a whole sector to address this”*.

Covid19 has propelled us to territory uncharted in our lifetimes, and Black Lives Matter has brought in to focus the need for structural change... and fair representation of people of colour at all levels, and in all sectors.

It is time to come together as an arts sector, yes, but for true sustainable long term progress to happen, we need to reach wider and deeper into our communities - and step forward as an arts sector, hand in hand with our Welsh language sector, forging a new, exciting, and inclusive path together. Along this new found route we will nurture the talents and voices of tomorrow, and share, far and wide, a Wales to which we all belong.



Illustrations by artist Manon Dafydd,
who has qualified from Central St Martins and is now based in North Wales.