

Colomen Colombia

Rhannu	Dysgu	Dathlu	Cefnogi
Compartir	Aprende	Celebrar	Apoyar
Sharing	Learning	Celebrating	Supporting

This proposal is built on the success of our performance tour ‘Canciones de los montañas/ Cân y mynyddoedd’ which took four Welsh musicians and a poet to northern Colombia in October 2019, and was partly supported by Wales Arts International. That initiative had a powerful impact in terms of developing future performance opportunities, fostering interactive relations between people and communities, and building an awareness in Colombia of Welsh language and culture. The excitement generated continues to develop new and further ramifications. It was also tremendous fun, and gave rise to a number of valuable friendships.

Performers are natural ambassadors, as was demonstrated last autumn. They are ‘ambassadors of the word’ and natural sharers whose art, experience and training open them to dialogue, interaction and the development of new opportunities and relationships. This is especially true of practitioners of the traditional arts, steeped in their native culture and always eager to admire and learn from the culture of others. All those involved in this new initiative – Welsh and Colombian - are dedicated to the support and promotion of all native languages and cultures. Three of the Colombian participants are from indigenous language communities, and just as we in Wales relish promoting our culture’s voice in the world and taking a place on the world stage, they are anxious to develop contacts and dialogues here which will enrich and help protect their own endangered languages and societies.

Colomen Colombia will bring three traditional musicians, two traditional dancers, a performance poet and a story-teller/documentary film-maker from northern Colombia to Wales, between 27th July and 6th August 2020. While here, they will rehearse and perform a multi-media, multi-art form and multi-lingual extravaganza, working with Welsh musicians and poets, to audiences across the country as well as offering workshops, film showings, presentations and discussions. They will develop awareness of the opportunities this interaction offers both face to face and through the media. In parallel with the music, dancing and poetry, a series of events to develop mutual support between Welsh and the indigenous languages of Colombia will take place during the tour. The visit will culminate in an explosive programme of events in and around the National Eisteddfod of Wales in Tregaron. During this period we will be able to cement the contacts between communities, language promotion agencies and the artists and promoters the performers have worked with, thus developing and extending the potential we began to discover last year. Their final day will be spent in Cardiff, working with displaced young people from Somalia, Syria and elsewhere to prepare an impromptu show, to be performed that evening on the stage of the Milenium Centre. During the tour, the mixed Welsh/ Colombian team will also be sowing the seeds of a longer-term creative collaboration between young people from the two cultures.

Although the performers will strive for excitement, artistic excellence and maximum audience impact in all their shows, they will be equally determined to engage with communities at every level, offering young people and others drumming and dance workshops, jamming and sharing ideas with other performers whatever their level of expertise, showing documentary films as a stimulus for

discussion, and thus celebrating the convergencies and parallels between Welsh and Colombian folk cultures. They'll devote their time off-stage to developing friendships, exploring opportunities for further links, and stimulating interactions in a variety of fields. And once again, to having – and sharing – fun.

The tour is already attracting wide support and offers of sponsorship. The Arts Council of Wales and Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Cymru have been pro-active and extremely positive. Partnerships are developing also with Planet Magazine, Braich Goch, Menter Maldwyn and Theatr Felinfach. Plans for the schedule are already well advanced, as can be seen below:

Date	Venue	Activities
Monday 27/7	Tŷ-Siamas, Dolgellau	Full day reheasal
Tuesday 28/7	Tŷ-Siamas, Dolgellau Y Tabernacl, Machynlleth	Full day rehearsal Concert
Wednesday 29/7	Yr Ysgwrn, Trawsfynydd	Media launch, workshops, concert
Thursday 30/7	Galeri, Caernarfon	Workshop and Concert
Friday 31/7	Amgueddfa Ceredigion, Aberystwyth	Concert
Saturday 1/8	Oriel Plas Glyn y Weddw, Llanbedrog	Workshop and concert
Sunday 2/8	Braich Goch, Corris	Workshops and informal concert
Monday 3/8	Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Cymru, Tregaron	Performance, workshops, meetings
Tuesday 4/8	Theatr Felinfach, Tregaron	Concert
Wednesday 5/8	Milenium Centre, Cardiff	Workshops and informal concert

Presentations and discussions on community cultural and language interactions

Thursday 30/7, 11am	Galeri, Caernarfon
Sunday 2/, 2pm	Braich Goch, Corris
Tuesday 4/8, time TBC	Eisteddfod Genedlaethol, Tregaron

Events marked in greyscale are still to be confirmed.

Four of the Colombian party worked closely with the visitors from Wales last Autumn. The full party will be composed of:

Camilo Andrés Hernández Orduz (Instrumentalist and singer)
 Diego Mauricio Téllez (Instrumentalist and singer)
 Juan Sebastián Peña (Instrumentalist and singer)
 Deiby Julián Afanador (Instrumentalist and dancer)
 Karina Archila (Dancer)
 Mateo Santero Peña (Performance poet)
 Heidi van Grieken (Storyteller, film-maker and Wayuu language activist).

As the peak of the summer is a very busy time for performers here in Wales, it would be unrealistic to expect the same musician and dancers to perform every night of the tour. We will therefore create a small, interactive pool of Welsh performers, who can all share fully in the project, supporting and replacing each other as commitments dictate. The team will include the three who toured Colombia (Osian Morris, Gwilym Bowen Rhys and Iestyn Tyne) supported by the Welsh Colombian drummer Javier Sanchez Rodriguez who travelled with them; also Tegid Rhys Roberts, Pixie Tom and Nicolas Davalan who make up the band 'Tacla', Cerys Havana and Gwenan Gibbard.

Staging and choreographing performances as complex as these will be will be challenging, and will place demands on the venues that host them as well as the performers. We hope to share the show in small community venues as well as larger ones, and therefore the content will need to be adaptable, while losing neither excitement or impact. We are already in dialogue with the venues concerned, and are grateful to Dwynwen Lloyd Llywelyn of Theatr Felinfach, who has offered to put her experience of staging and choreography at our disposal.

The team currently working on this project's development includes:

Alex Burnham – digital information and promotion

Dwynwen Lloyd Llywelyn (Theatr Felinfach) – staging and direction

Ethel Marie Cure – translation and communications

Javier Sanchez Rodriguez (Braich Goch) – accommodation and logistics

Liz Fenwick (Glasbrint) – design and publicity

Marion Burnham - evaluation

Meic Llewellyn – project development in Wales

Osian Morris - project development in Wales

Robin Llewellyn – project development in Colombia