

WALES JAPAN 2025

CULTURAL PROGRAMME

Wales. Japan. Two nations that cherish the past. Live well in the present. And play their part in constructing a better future – for people and planet. A friendship forged over centuries but focused on the future. (Year of Wales and Japan 2025, Welsh Government).



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CULTURAL PROGRAMME

A creative and cultural bridge of friendship between Cymru (Wales) and Japan for the wellbeing of future generations.

In autumn 2025 an unprecedented showcase of cultural and creative collaborations between Wales and Japan takes place featuring 21 creative projects led by Wales Arts International, British Council and Welsh Government. The Wales Japan Cultural Programme features films, music, literature, visual arts, technology, language, dance and theatre, with a particular focus on cultural wellbeing and sustainability to mark the 10th anniversary of Wales' pioneering Well-being of Future Generations Act.

Our aim is to nurture deep rooted cultural relations and creative economy connections between Wales and Japan, igniting new partnerships that increase knowledge about Wales' culture and values in Japan and grow awareness about Japan in Wales. It's a showcase of Wales' creative response to global issues offering partners an opportunity to explore future sustainable collaborations and co-investments in Wales and the UK.



Credit: Jorge Lizalde

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The creative showcase in autumn 2025 includes:

HIJINX: MEET FRED IN JAPAN

With SLOW LABEL and Bird Theatre Festival

Tokyo • Tottori • Osaka | 25 September - 08 October 2025

www.hijinx.org.uk | insta: @hijinxtheatre | fb: @hijinxtheatre

www.slowlabel.info/ | @slow_label | www.birdtheatre.org/ | @birdtheatre_festival

The internationally acclaimed Meet Fred, produced by award-winning learning disabled and non-learning disabled company, Hijinx Theatre, will be in Japan for the first time. Fred is a Bunraku puppet directly inspired by Japanese puppetry traditions. His journey will be followed on social media as he and the cast collaborate with SLOW LABEL in Tokyo and Bird Theatre Festival, Tottori.

CIAN CIARÁN: 'RHYS A MEINIR' RE-INTERPRETED

Premiere at teamLab Borderless Tokyo • in-conversation at UK Pavilion EXPO Osaka Kansai

With teamLab & Yamaha

Tokyo • Osaka | 11 – 23 October 2025

www.cianciar.com | fb: @c.ciaran

Innovative piano re-interpretation of the classic Welsh narrative by one of the Super Furry Animals, featuring two self-playing Yamaha pianos synchronized to perform a piano reduction for four hands of the original orchestral score in teamLab Borderless TOKYO, Azabudai Hills.

GWENNO: UTOPIA IN JAPAN

Tokyo | 12-23 October 2025

www.gwenno.info | insta: @gwennoanders | fb: @gwennomusic

Award winning singer-songwriter, electronic producer and sound artist from Cardiff, Wales, Gwenno, will be launching Utopia, her most recent, trilingual album (Welsh, Cornish and English), in intimate store launches and radio sessions.



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KELTRONIKA - AN AUDIO VISUAL CELTIC CULTURE CLASH

Tokyo • 16 October 2025

MARK JAMES WORKS

www.markjamesworks.com | insta: @markjamesworks

Mark James is an independent multi-disciplinary artist and art director whose first solo exhibition in Japan, Culture Clash, was a sell-out show in 2022. Mark returns to Japan to present a new exhibition at 'Keltronika', the audio-visual Celtic culture clash featuring four Welsh artists: Gwenno, Cian Ciarán, Mark James and Dean Lligwy. The exclusive, multi-genre event at Wall&Wall Aoyama, Tokyo will feature his new and existing artworks, 'Anomalies', 'Mountain People' and 'Culture Clash'.

ONLY BOYS ALOUD: CHOIR TOUR OF JAPAN

Oita • Kitakyushu • Hiroshima • Tokyo | 08-15 October 2025

www.aloud.cymru | insta: @aloud.cymru | fb: @thealoudcharity

Aloud, the pioneering pan Wales organisation that empower young people through singing, is taking 12 members of Only Boys Aloud choir to Japan. They have collaborated online with schools in Oita and Kitakyushu for six years, but this will be the first time that the young people from both nations meet in person, and for many of the boys it will be their first opportunity to travel internationally.

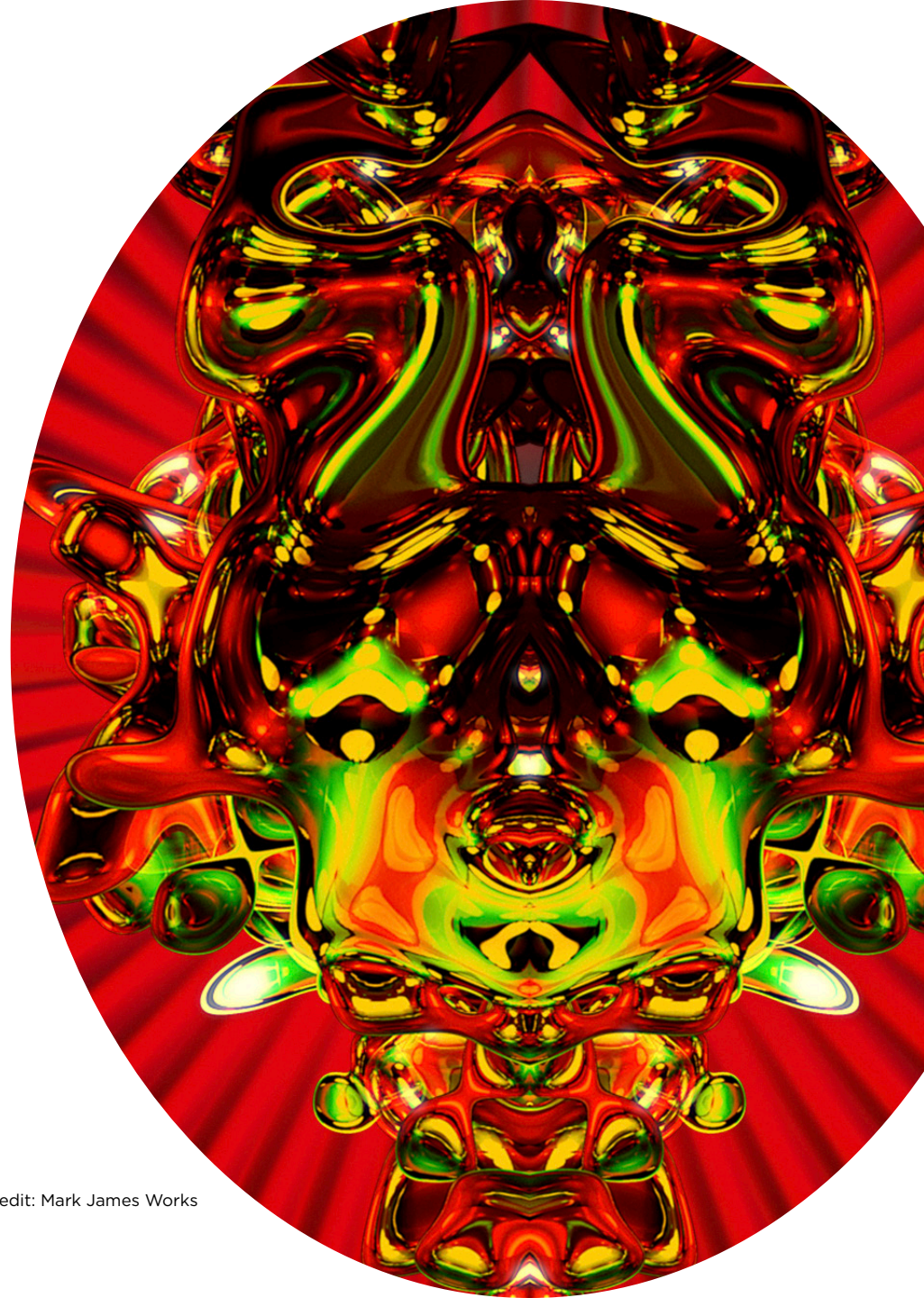
THEATR CYMRU/NATIONAL DANCE COMPANY WALES: DAWNS Y CEIRW & CREATIVE AND LANGUAGE TECHNOLOGY WORKSHOP

With Setagaya Street Arts Festival & Upopoy National Ainu Museum and Park

Tokyo • Shiraoi, Hokkaido | 15-23 October 2025

www.theatr.cymru • ndcwales.co.uk | insta: @theatr.cymru • @ndcwales | fb: @TheatrGenedlaetholCymru • @NDCWales

Written and performed by Casi Wyn (musician and Children's Poet Laureate 22-23) this enchanting co-production from Theatr Cymru and National Dance Company Wales travels to Japan for the first time. Performing to young audiences at the Setagaya Street Art Festival, Tokyo, the company will also collaborate with UPOPOY National Ainu Museum and Park in Hokkaido to hold Creative and Technology workshops around the use of the Sibrwd technology and its possible application for other Indigenous Languages.



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KREU MEDIA: WALES IN JAPAN - LANGUAGE AND FILM

With Cinema Amigo

Tokyo • Zushi | 23-30 October 2025

insta: @grifflynch | www.cinema-amigo.com/ | @cinemaamigo

Curated by Welsh filmmaker and musician Griff Lynch, six captivating Welsh-language films will be showcased in Tokyo and Zushi with Cymdeithas Dewi Sant Japan, Cinema Amigo, and Tollywood Shimokitazawa. The short introductory film weaves the personal journeys of Takeshi Koike and Yuko Nakauchi, two Japanese Welsh speakers whose passion for the language was ignited by their encounters with Welsh art, poetry, and film.

WALES ARTS INTERNATIONAL / ORCHARD MEDIA & S4C: PETHAU BYCHAIN

Tokyo | 15 October

Online, s4c global platform

@WAICymruWales | @s4c | #PethauBychain 2025 | Arts Council of Wales

Global Release on S4C of Pethau Bychain (Orchard Media) a multi-lingual showcase of Wales' Wellbeing Culture commissioned by Wales Arts International to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. Featuring Wales based Japanese artists Junko Mori and seven other artists presented by poet Iestyn Tyne. Free to watch.

PARTHIAN BOOKS: TRANSPLANTABLE ROOTS: EXPLORING CULTURAL CONNECTIONS THROUGH LITERATURE, HISTORY, STORIES AND PHOTOGRAPHY

With St Davids Society Japan

Tokyo • Osaka | October 2025

www.parthianbooks.com | insta: @parthian_books | fb: @parthianbooks |

www.cdsjapan.jimdofree.com/ | @stdavidsjapan

The programme will include supporting a creative residency and cultural exchange in Japan for four Parthian writers and artists Susan Karen Burton, Eluned Gramich, Catrin Menai and Elin Gruffydd. Working in collaboration with the St David's Society Japan to host public events in both Osaka and in Tokyo.



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LITERATURE ACROSS FRONTIERS & WALES LITERATURE EXCHANGE: A TALE OF TWO DRAGONS - CONNECTING WALES AND JAPAN THROUGH STORIES FOR CHILDREN

With International Institute for Children's Literature & Japanese Board on Books for Young People

Osaka • Kobe • Kyoto | 23 October – 04 November

@literatureacrossfrontiers | @jbby_kodomonohom | @iiclo_official

Literature Across Frontiers & Wales Literature Exchange are partnering with two significant Japanese literary organisations, the International Institute for Children's Literature (IICLO) in Osaka, and Japanese Board on Books for Young People (JBBY). The hybrid project brings together children's books creators and publishers from Wales and Japan to collaborate and establish new connections. Featuring acclaimed picture book author Yoshifumi Hasegawa and Welsh illustrators Valériane Leblond and Liz Fenwick.

MARI WIRTH X GREEN BIRD HIMEJI

Himeji • 14-16 November 2025

www.mariwirthpapercutart.com | insta @maritreeleaf

www.greenbird.jp/team/himeji/ | insta @greenbird_official

Wales based Papercut artist and illustrator, Mari Wirth, returns to her hometown of Himeji to collaborate and highlight sustainability and green society with the globally acclaimed Green Bird Himeji, a pan Japan volunteer charity who focus on removing litter from the streets with the concept of "cleaning your city can bring beauty into your heart".

RE-LIVE: STORY DEMENTIA COMIC

With Kenjin-kai Social Welfare Society

October– December 2025

www.re-live.org.uk | insta: @relive_arts | fb: @ReLiveArts

Wales based Re-Live and Japan based Kenjin-kai Social Welfare Foundation are coming together as creative collaborators for the first time to co-create a bilingual dementia comic with people living with dementia, families, and care workers from both countries. Published in Welsh, Japanese, and English, the comic will be widely distributed in comic shops, dementia care services, cultural spaces, and among policymakers.



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PLAS GLYN Y WEDDW X JUNKO MORI & JOHN EGAN

Coed/Coexist Wales Japan Residency Programme

With Mt Fuji Wood Culture Society

Oishi, Fujikawaguchiko-machi • Llanbedrog

November- December 2025

www.oriel.org.uk | www.junkomori.com | insta: @plasglynwyeddw | @junkomori44 | @making_little

fb: @orielplasglynwyeddw | @JunkoMoriMetalwork

www.mtfuji-wcs.org/ | insta @mtfujiwcs

Coed/Coexist, a project initiated by Pen Llŷn based artists Junko Mori & John Egan in partnership with Plas Glyn-y-Weddw gallery that draws our attention to trees and woodland, seeking out wider connections, desires and reliance on these ecosystems while connecting community, creativity and environmental stewardship. It includes a reciprocal month long residency exchange for selected Welsh woodworker, Rae Morris, at Mt Fuji Wood Culture Society in Japan and for Japanese artist in the Llŷn Peninsula.

CARDIFF ANIMATION FESTIVAL X NEW CHITOSE INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION FESTIVAL

Hokkaido • 21-25 November 2025 | Online • 01-08 December 2025

www.cardiffanimation.com | insta: @cardiffanimfest | fb: @CardiffAnimationFestival

www.airport-anifes.jp | @airportanifes

New Chitose Airport International Animation Festival and Cardiff Animation Festival bring together two countries with rich animation histories and vibrant storytelling from Japan and Wales. The two festivals will engage in cultural exchange in the Japanese north island of Hokkaido during the New Chitose International Animation Festival, with opportunities for workshops, professional development for young filmmakers, a residency for two animators / creative practitioners and for audiences to experience Welsh animation.



Credit: Junko Mori/John Egan

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RHODRI DAVIES: TOUR OF JAPAN

Tokyo • Kyoto • Oita • Osaka • Hokkaido | 12-24 December 2025

www.rhodridavies.com | insta: @rhodrijd | fb: @rhodritelyn

Acclaimed Welsh experimental harpist Rhodri Davies' tour of Japan will include 5 concerts and 1 recording session. Davies has collaborated with Japanese musicians working in the free improvisation and experimental music fields for over two decades including Fumi Endo, Kanon Aonami, Suzueri and Tetuzi Akiyama.

PYS MELYN: TOUR OF JAPAN

December 2025

www.linktr.ee/pysmelyn | insta: @pysmelyn | fb: @pysmelyn

The first tour of Japan for Pys Melyn, taking their Welsh Language pysho-pop and indie music to audiences in Tokyo and Osaka.

AMGUEDDFA CYMRU & OITA PREFECTURE ART MUSEUM ARTIST EXCHANGE

With OPAM

Oita | 16-30 November

www.amgueddfa.cymru / www.museum.wales | insta: @museumwales | fb: @amgueddfacymru (OPAM)

A new phase of the longstanding partnership between Amgueddfa Cymru Museums Wales and OPAM (Oita Prefecture Art Museum) will develop an artist exchange focussing on sustainable textiles and bamboo. A bamboo artist from Oita will undertake a residency at the National Wool Museum and Welsh textile artist, Llio James, will travel to Oita to collaborate with bamboo artisans, facilitate workshops and exhibit at OPAM.



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PROJECTS THAT HAVE ALREADY TAKEN PLACE INCLUDE:

FREYA DOOLEY & CLARE CHARLES: ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE, AIRK KOBE

Kobe • Osaka | 01-15 September 2025

Insta: @freya_dooley | @clare_charles_
www.airk.haaymm.org | insta: @airk.kobe

Building on networks and research established during a residency with Beppu Projects, Oita in 2020, Wales based artists Freya Dooley and Clare Charles travelled to Kobe for a special two-week residency at AiRK Kobe, where they developed new sound works and an online radio broadcast with a focus on social and collective listening practices.

HEATHER PARNELL & SUE HUNT MEETING, MAKING, CONNECTING – ARTS AND HEALTH

With Art Spot Korin, University of Kindai & Mimihara Hospital

Osaka • Kyoto | 03 - 31 August 2025

www.heatherparnell.wordpress.com | suehunt.co.uk | insta: @heatherwinterparnell
@sue_hunt_paintings | @masa_kawanaka | @askyori

During their month-long residency focussing on paper, packaging and the art of gifting, at Art Spot Korin, Kyoto, Visual artist, Heather Parnell, and fine artist, Sue Hunt held workshops and professional development exchanges focussing on Arts, Health and Wellbeing in Osaka with the University of Kindai and Mimihara Hospital.

TESSA GRAY & COLLABORATORS - CHOCI LONI MEETS TOBIUME

Cardiff | 25 August – 03 September

tessgray185.wixsite.com | insta: @tessgrayart

Taking its name from the influential Welsh post-punk band The Young Marble Giants' song Choci Loni and Susumu Yokota's track Tobiume, this is a meeting of minds, sentimentalities, identities, tunings, phrases and universal rhythms and of Wales and Japan. Six artist (three from Japan) created experimental music, movement, visual journeys and pockets of restful magic. Reina Kimura (dancer/choreographer), Ichi (musician/performance) and Reiko Aoyagi (multimedia visual) joined three Welsh artists Anushiye Yarnell (9dancer/performance/ visual), Ya Yonder (musician/performance) and Tess Gray (visual/performance).

ABERYSTWYTH INTERNATIONAL CERAMICS FESTIVAL

With Euan Craig & Iku Nishikawa

Aberystwyth • 27-29 June 2025

internationalceramicsfestival.org | insta: @icfaberystwyth fb: @ICFAberystwyth

Two leading Japanese ceramic artists, Euan Craig and Iku Nishikawa, whose practices focus on sustainability showcased at the acclaimed International Ceramics Festival 2025 in Aberystwyth, Wales. Craig, a disciple of a National Living Treasure, demonstrates traditional pottery techniques and builds an Eco kiln, while Nishikawa leads contemporary workshops on kintsugi, the Japanese art of repairing ceramics with gold.

Arts Council of Wales: @celfcymruarts | www.arts.wales

WAI: @waicymruwales | www.wai.org.uk

British Council: @britishcouncilwales | @jpbritish
www.wales.britishcouncil.org | www.britishcouncil.org.jp

Welsh Government: @walesdotcom | @walesjapan | www.wales.com

Wales Japan Eki Stamp created by
Jonathan Edwards, commissioned for
Welsh Government's Year of Wales and Japan 2025
Jonathan-e.com | @jontofski

