



International Youth
Film Festival 2025

16 – 18
OCTOBER
2025

WWT 25



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Welc Croeso come Cr



A very warm Welsh welcome to our 9th Wicked Wales International Youth Film Festival!

This festival opening marks the first full-year anniversary in our Stiwdios home. It has been an amazing year—everything we wanted it to be—especially in starting to bring the local creative community together to support and create with one another.

We're delighted this year to welcome films from 22 countries, including Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, UK, Wales, USA, IYMS Nepal/USA, and Iran. These 22 nations are sharing their stories with us, bringing their young voices to Wales, and we deeply appreciate it.

There are many divisions, sadness, and suffering in the world today. We can only hope that by coming together to share the stories of young filmmakers from across the globe, this festival can be an influence for good, giving young people a stronger voice

and an opportunity to shape their future. We all need to listen carefully to the stories they share with us.

The success of what we do is only made possible by the trust and support given to us by a great many people, organizations, and funders. Some appear in this brochure as an illustration of what can be achieved when working together.

Our thanks go to our many funders, including Children In Need, North Hoyle, DVSC, Key Fund, Moondance Foundation, North Wales Police and the Commissioners Office, Lottery Community Fund, Community Foundation Wales, Keep Wales Tidy, Willow Collective, Gwynt Y Mor, and many more who have helped in diverse ways.

Next year will be our 10th anniversary, a year of celebrations both locally and internationally, when we hope to bring many festival partners back to Wales.

Programme/ Rhaglen

THURSDAY 16TH OCTOBER

Open Day at the Studios

Pop in anytime to watch our international programme of films

10:00 – 12:00

School and Community free screenings of short international films and filmmaking activities (primary)

13:00 – 15:00

School and Community free screenings of short international films and filmmaking activities (secondary)

Have your say and join our conversation podcasts throughout the day hosted by young Wicked volunteers

18:30 – 20:30

Reception and Opening of the WW25 International Youth Film Festival with special guests Carole Green correspondent ITV Cymru Wales who will be officially opening the Festival and Kateryna Gorodnycha critic and journalist representing Kids Movie Fest in Ukraine



Programme/ Rhaglen

FRIDAY 17TH OCTOBER

Industry Day

Meet The Industry and work with professional crews, have the experience of acting and filming on a film set

9.30 – 15.30

Out for a Film Media and Mountain Top Media will work together with students from the development of an idea to a script ready to shoot and make a film

18.30– 19.00

Network Launch Event 'CONNECT' bringing local creatives together

19.00 – 21.00

Family Feature Film How to train your dragon (Live action)

SATURDAY 18TH OCTOBER

Open Day at the Studios

Pop In anytime and join the activities

10:00 – 12:00

Short film package of international films

Have your say and join our conversation podcasts throughout the day hosted by young Wicked volunteers

13.00–15.00

Gaming Event on the big screen

16:00 – 18:00

Family Feature film (Minecraft Movie)

19:00 – 21.00

Reception followed by Awards Ceremony

21.00 – 21.30

Closing ceremony

OFF SITE Activities

CINE BACH

Short international film screenings on screens in various locations around Rhyl.

For more information visit: wickedwales.com/festival-programme

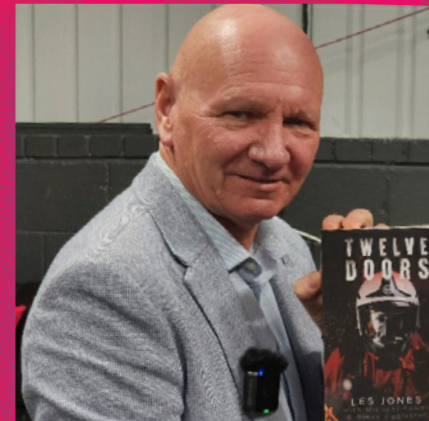
the Wicked team

The team is growing!

Having opened our Studios in 2024, our organisation is changing but in a great way, more activities, more opportunities and of course more work.

In last year's brochure we said 'Over the next twelve months our new Studios will be creating an exciting new creative community in Rhyl' and this is certainly happening.

Fortunately we are creating a new and larger team of local talented people committed to making this happen for Rhyl and North Wales.



New Partners

As our Wicked family grows, so that we can respond to the increasing activities developing at the Studios one important aim of the Studios was to develop more training and work opportunities in the local area, we could not do this alone.

We are really pleased to be working with two local production companies led by young people Tom, Addie and Adam who share the similar aims of making activities affordable and accessible.



Tom and Addie - Out For a Film Media

Out for a Film Media offer high quality filmmaking workshops for young people, schools and other education settings. Most importantly of all is that our prices represent the North Wales area. Out For a Film Media is a partnership created by two local filmmakers – Thomas Ellis and Addie Davies. Our mission statement is to make film more accessible to the community of North Wales by making our services available at prices more reflective of our area.

Over the last year we have had the privilege to work alongside Wicked Wales and develop monthly workshops as well as other projects. Wicked Wales really is helping to ensure film and filmmaking can be a skill open to all. www.outforafilm.co.uk

Wicked were delighted to support Tom and Addie to represent Wales attending the Four River Festival this year in Croatia.

Adam Dawson - Mountain Top Media

Adam is a local cinematographer and filmmaker. His filmmaking journey started 10 years ago at the Prestatyn Youth Arts Festival, where he spent two years learning the basics of filmmaking, storytelling and video production. With the opportunity to enter film festival, travel up and down Wales attending networking events, youth arts sessions and exciting film premieres, his passion for filmmaking followed him through his higher education, where he eventually went on to freelance for local and national production companies as a camera operator and editor. After a successful 5 years freelancing, Adam directed his energy to launch Mountain Top Media – a fast growing and dynamic Video production company, with the goal of bringing more creative and professional opportunities to other filmmakers and creatives in North Wales. Over the past 12 months, Mountain Top Media has helped a variety of businesses and charities grow through video production, brought together local freelancers to collaborate on national video projects, brought opportunities to young creatives with the production of its first welsh Language Film 'Yma O Hyd' and set foundations for creative practical lead video workshops for North Wales 'next generation of filmmakers.

www.mountaintopmedia.co.uk



Ukraine - 'Kids Movie Fest'

As we develop new links with production companies we are delighted to make the connection with Kids Movie Fest from Kyiv, a festival which shares the core values of Wicked. Both are community organisations and focus on compassion, inclusivity, social engagement, freedom and internationalism. Svitlana President of the Festival says "Since 2017 Kids Movie Fest has inspired children and teenagers (11-20) in Ukraine and worldwide to discover the art of schools, camps, and workshops, young creators learn to tell their own stories, develop their voices and grow as individuals. The festival embraces inclusivity, with special projects for deaf teenagers, and every year gathers young filmmakers in Kyiv to share films, ideas and dreams. In times of war, our mission is even more vital: to give young people hope, help displaced children adapt abroad and proudly represent Ukrainian culture to the world." Svitlana Ukrainian Filmmaker and President of the NGO "International children's Film Festival" Kids Movie Fest.

Svitlana Pohasiy has sent a number of Ukrainian films to the Wicked festival this year and Kateryna Gorodnycha will be a special guest at our Festival opening ceremony which will be live streamed with a world audience. We look forward to developing more projects with them next year.



The Jury

This year, I've had the pleasure of working with a brilliant group of young people on our International Youth Film Jury. The jury brings together 35 young people from across the UK and beyond, each contributing unique insight and experience. It is always a joy to engage with their passion for film, while also giving them the opportunity to meet new people and build valuable industry connections. Throughout the festival, the jury has played a vital role by offering fresh perspectives on the wide range of films submitted. Their passion and knowledge have driven thoughtful conversations about storytelling, cinematography, and artistic direction, adding real depth to the festival experience for both filmmakers and audiences. Collaborating with such a talented and dedicated group has been inspiring. Their creativity, ideas, and generosity of spirit have left a lasting impression on this year's festival, and I am excited to see how they continue to grow and shape the future of film. - **Phoebe**



Phoebe



Bambi



Jonty



Max



Maisie



Tom



Charlotte



Harry



Marie



Alex

Bambi Harlow

Bambi Harlow is a freelance film programmer, writer and curator. She is a graduate of Central Saint Martins, where she completed her degree in Fashion Histories and Theories, and is currently Curatorial Assistant and Coordinator for the Fashion in Film Festival. Focusing primarily on silent and Pre-Code cinema, her research is concerned with the role of clothing as a narrative device and explores the intersection of costume design, spectatorship and ideological frameworks. Bambi has written extensively on the construction of star personas and screen archetypes in early Hollywood and takes particular interest in the recurring themes of typology, cultural hegemony, and Orientalism.

Jonty Ross

Jonty Ross is an award-winning Irish filmmaker based in Limerick. As a writer, he has written several short films and won the 'best pitch award' for a feature. His films have been shown at the likes of Fresh International Film Festival, Happenstance Horror Awards and Chicago Filmmaker Awards. Outside of Film, he enjoys the theatre and writing short stories.

Max King

I'm a film graduate based in Manchester. My most enjoyable experience so far has been working in a cinema; as a former projectionist, I have a passion for exhibition and curation. My favourite film is Phantom Thread!

Maisie Kelly

My name is Maisie, I'm from London and I just graduated from Goldsmiths University. I have a deep passion for cinema and film programming and have been a film selector for a few small festivals. My favourite films of all time are Chungking Express and Lego Batman. I am very grateful to Wicked Wales for this amazing opportunity.

Tom White Purcell

I'm 18 and I want to be screenwriter. I made my first proper my first amateur short film at 16 and made my first proper one at BIFE whilst called PACT. I'm a member of the National Youth Film Council and I hope to continue my studies at DFEI.

Charlotte Giles

Charlotte is a writer from Newport. Her work embraces Welsh history, language, identity, magical realism, and coming of age. Charlotte had a passion for film from an early age, and this helped develop her interest in writing. Charlotte graduated from the University of South Wales in 2019 with a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre and Drama and recently completed a Master of Arts in Drama Writing at Bristol Old Vic Theatre School in 2025.

Harry Denton

On his third year of the Wicked Wales jury, Harry is passionate about creating a platform for the boldest new voices in independent cinema.

Marie Trestrail

Marie is a recent graduate of the Edinburgh College of Art's MA Film Directing Program. She specialises in documentary filmmaking but is passionate about all art at the intersection of social justice, education, and community building. Marie was raised in Colorado but has spent time across the United States, including her undergraduate studies, where she received a B.A.C in Public Relations from the University of Alabama, and Washington D.C. where she worked for the inaugural DC/DOX Film Festival. Since graduating she was shortlisted for the Bridging the Gap program with the Scottish Documentary Institute. She is now a freelance filmmaker, producer, and continues to coordinate and programme for film festivals (DC/DOX 2023, Brooklyn Film Festival, Camden International).

Alex Gilston

Alex is a current student at Manchester Metropolitan University studying Film and Media. He is also a freelance film writer covering everything from new releases to film festival darlings. This will be his third time serving on the Wicked Wales jury!

Sam Vaughan

I'm a 26-year-old film programmer and theatre maker based in South Wales. I've developed my craft through programming roles at Wicked Wales and WOW Film Festival, working with emerging talent, and served as assistant script editor on short films for It's My Shout. Currently, I'm developing an original theatre piece that fuses my passions for writing, acting, and directing.

David J Hopkins

Hi! My name is David! I'm a Director, DOP, composer and editor based in Ireland! I'm currently studying film and television in the National Film School at IADT. I've been making films of a variety of genres for well over a decade and have taken part in countless festivals, programmes, contests and international film programmes over the years. I've been a juror for festivals before and love watching new and upcoming talent!

Jasmin Sherrett

An English graduate from Cardiff University with an overflowing love for storytelling of all media.

Amy Geldard

I am a recent Film Aesthetics graduate from the University of Oxford and have experience making and editing films, as well as analysing and critiquing them. I am particularly interested in cinema that explores the relationship and interaction between film as an art medium and other art forms such as literature, painting, and photography. I really enjoy being involved in the programming of regional independent film festivals, most recently this year's inaugural Northwest Independent Film Festival, and helping to provide a platform that champions underrepresented, local voices through short film and documentary.

Chris Kwun Shing Lau

Chris is a freelance producer currently working on a slate of short films and an upcoming feature. He holds an MPhil in Film and Screen Studies from the University of Cambridge, where his research explored the works of Ozu Yasujiro through feminist and queer theories. Last year, he served as the Co-Lead Curator of Odyssey, a film festival highlighting cinema from Greater China. Passionate about innovative storytelling, Chris is thrilled to join this year's Wicked Wales International Youth Film Festival as a jury member.

Ellie Hughes

I have been involved in Wicked Wales as a volunteer and supporter for about 7yrs. I enjoy every aspect of the work we do, from front of house, on stage and behind the scenes. I put everything I can into whatever I'm doing. I am a big fan of most movies, but horror movies in particular. I like watching independent films because it proves that you don't need millions to make interesting and entertaining movies.

Kate Russell

Kate is a filmmaker and moving image artist whose self-taught practice reflects an enduring curiosity and a commitment to creative exploration. She is drawn to works that cross genres and experiment with form, valuing bold storytelling and fresh perspectives.

Amelia Robinson

My name is Amelia, and I love films. My favourite film is Hunt for the Wilderpeople which you should all watch if you haven't already. I've volunteered with Cornwall Film Festival and Nottingham Film Festival and am enrolling to the Open University module for film analysis. I am to make films and film analysis accessible to all.

Katrina Seaton

Katrina Graduated UWTSD in 2022 with a BA in Filmmaking and now works for dragon Postproduction in Cardiff as a Restoration technician. Katrina also produces short films on a freelance basis and has worked on set in the AD department on BBC funded shorts and Netflix's Havoc (2025).

THE JURY

**Sam****David****Jasmin****Amy****Chris****Ellie****Kate****Amelia****Katrina**

THE JURY

Lonan



Inana



Bethan



Llyr



Edward



Mikey



Sophia



Max



Gabriella



Lonan Ross

I am an Irish filmmaker based in Limerick, I have written and directed several short films, that have been screened in festivals like Fresh Film, one of which winning a festival award along with seven more nominations. I have also done work as a young programmer for the Fresh Film Festival.

Inana Elqassas

Hi, I'm Inana! I fell in love with cinema at 15 when I joined the Junior Jury at the Sharjah International Film Festival. Since then, I've taken media courses and have become a SIFF ambassador, and I'm currently helping lead a youth workshop. This is my third year with Wicked Wales, and I'm proud to be part of a community that shares my love for film and celebrates young voices in cinema.

Bethan Jenkins

I'm a Television Production graduate with a passion for visual storytelling. I'm excited to have this opportunity to help spotlight fresh, creative talent.

Llyr Jones

My name is Llyr Jones and I'm from Carmarthen, Wales. I studied Film for my degree at the University of South Wales in Cardiff from 2017 until 2020. Since then, I have worked as a trainee editor, researcher, assistant programmer and made a horror short film. I've been lucky to be on the Wicked Wales jury three times before and I am excited to take part again for a fourth time. I now proudly work as a Library Service Desk Assistant for Swansea University, which I started in April 2024 and continue to enjoy volunteering for my local Oxfam, which I began in 2021.

Edward Lee

Edward is a writer, director, producer, actor and facilitator based in Cardiff, with experience in theatre, film, radio, journalism, and more. Alongside his own work in storytelling, a key part of his work is in youth arts, where he hopes to empower others to create and tell stories of their own. With his love for storytelling being born through film, Edward is very excited to be a part of Wicked Wales this year, and to support the work of young filmmakers!

Mikey Pugh

I am a filmmaker from Birmingham, producing short documentary films and community filmmaking projects across the UK. Over the past year I have been working with Film Festivals on production, events and screenings.

Sophia Rasab

Hi there, My name is Sophia Rasab, and I am a graduate of the National Film and Television School's Casting Certificate 2024-25. I have had the pleasure of attending quite a few film festivals and I am always astounded by the originality and creativity that is exhibited. I am really looking forward to watching the films that have been submitted to Wicked Wales.

Max Palmer

I have grown up in a creative environment with my passion being for all things film related. I am currently studying English Literature, film studies & psychology which sit well with my film making, screenwriting & reviewing skills. I have had an admiration for films since I got Pinocchio on DVD for my third birthday and have since grown to be a fan of anything and everything from David Lynch to Hayao Miyazaki. My film reviews are published online for 'Cinema Waves' and also a writer and editor for my College magazine. I also volunteer in running a local community cinema helping to choose relevant films for the community to watch on a monthly basis, making a diverse range of films accessible to a rural area.

Gabriella Siamkouri

My name is Gabriella Siamkouri, and I currently live in Florina, a small town on the northern borders of Greece. I am 18 years old, and I am interested in Cinematography, Photography and Arts. I have been twice member of the jury committee on behalf of the Olympia International Film Festival that takes place in Greece. I have represented my school at the students' Cinemathia movie contest three times, and I have been awarded all three times. I have also been a member of the Jury for Wicked Wales the last two years.

Clodagh Mannion

As a lifelong film lover, I am always keen to explore stories crafted by filmmakers from around the world, from various genres to challenging and innovative ideas. I take great pleasure in discussing films with others, and by being a part of this jury, I get to do just this.

Rino Lu

Rino Lu is a London-based film curator, writer, and researcher from China. He is the founder and director of Green Light Screening, a curatorial initiative dedicated to promoting Chinese-language independent cinema in the UK. His work focuses on themes of youth, resistance, identity, and transnational cultural dialogue, with a strong interest in how moving images can create space for underrepresented voices.

Rino obtained a Master of Research degree in Art: Theory and Philosophy at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London in 2025. Over the years, he has contributed writing and editorial work to several platforms including UK China Film Collab, T China, Naiguan Film, and Aside From Books. He has also served as a jury member of Critic Chart of Short Films at Cannes 2025 and Chinese screen jury at 78th Berlin International Film Festival.

Oliver Andrews

I am an avid watcher and lover of films. I have clocked around 56,000 hours watching films and I am about to start studying film production at university. I recently passed my creative media practice course at college so as well as watching films I also have experience making them. I think that I have a solid understanding of what makes a film great, and I loved using that understanding on your jury.

Harry Bayley

Harry Bayley is an artist, writer and programmer based in London. Their films explore our relationship to digital environments and the impact of the ever-increasing digital-ness of our lives. Harry's most recent paper, "In and Outside of a Moment in Time: An inquiry into audience reception and spectatorship of avant-garde machinima", won the 2024 Laura Mulvey prize. His films have been screened both domestically (UK) and internationally. Currently, Harry is a programmer for the Slow Film Festival and a preselector for ANFF. His writing can be found in No Exits, Gamescenes, and The Big Ship.

Bryony Pinate

I completed an MA in Film Curation and Exhibition last year and am eager to get involved with film festivals and keep up to date with what is being made by current filmmakers.

Darci Fretwell

Hi! My name is Darci, and I study Film Production at the University of Lincoln. My biggest passions are film and autism advocacy. It's my dream to make films all about neurodivergent people! I'm also obsessed with The Hunger Games, all kinds of music, and anything purple!

Danial Zakaria

I am a film producer and distributor who has worked on exhibition programmes for companies such as the BFI, as well as short film productions

Sasha Evans

I was born in Wales - Living near a cinema when I was little meant I developed an affinity for films quickly and the airing of more renowned classics on TV helped me to put what I enjoyed into a wider context. Currently in my David Lynch phase, otherwise doing OK.

The Jury

Clodagh



Rino



Oliver



Harry



Bryony



Darci



Danial



Sasha



The Success of the Youth Cinema Network

In 2013 we received an invitation to attend the 4 River Festival in Karlovac Croatia, this was the start of our international journey which brought many award winning international short films made by young people to Wales and provided many opportunities to introduce Wales it's culture and its films to new audiences all over the world.

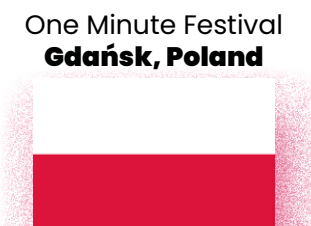
We were one of 15 festivals to sign a memorandum of understanding to work together. 12 years later the YCN covers 5 continents and has 58 members including 31 festivals, 13 organisations and 14 freelancers

In those 12 years we have supported over 100 trainers and young volunteers from Wales with an international experience and welcomed over 100 international guests, festival directors and young filmmakers to our festival in Wales.

The annual Youth Cinema Network YCN award recognizes excellent in film made by young people from all over the world, this was established in 2016 with the first award being presented in Wales at the Wicked Wales Festival at Bodelwyddan Castle.



In the last twelve years we have represented Wales at



WW Studios: Supporting Creative Talent in North Wales

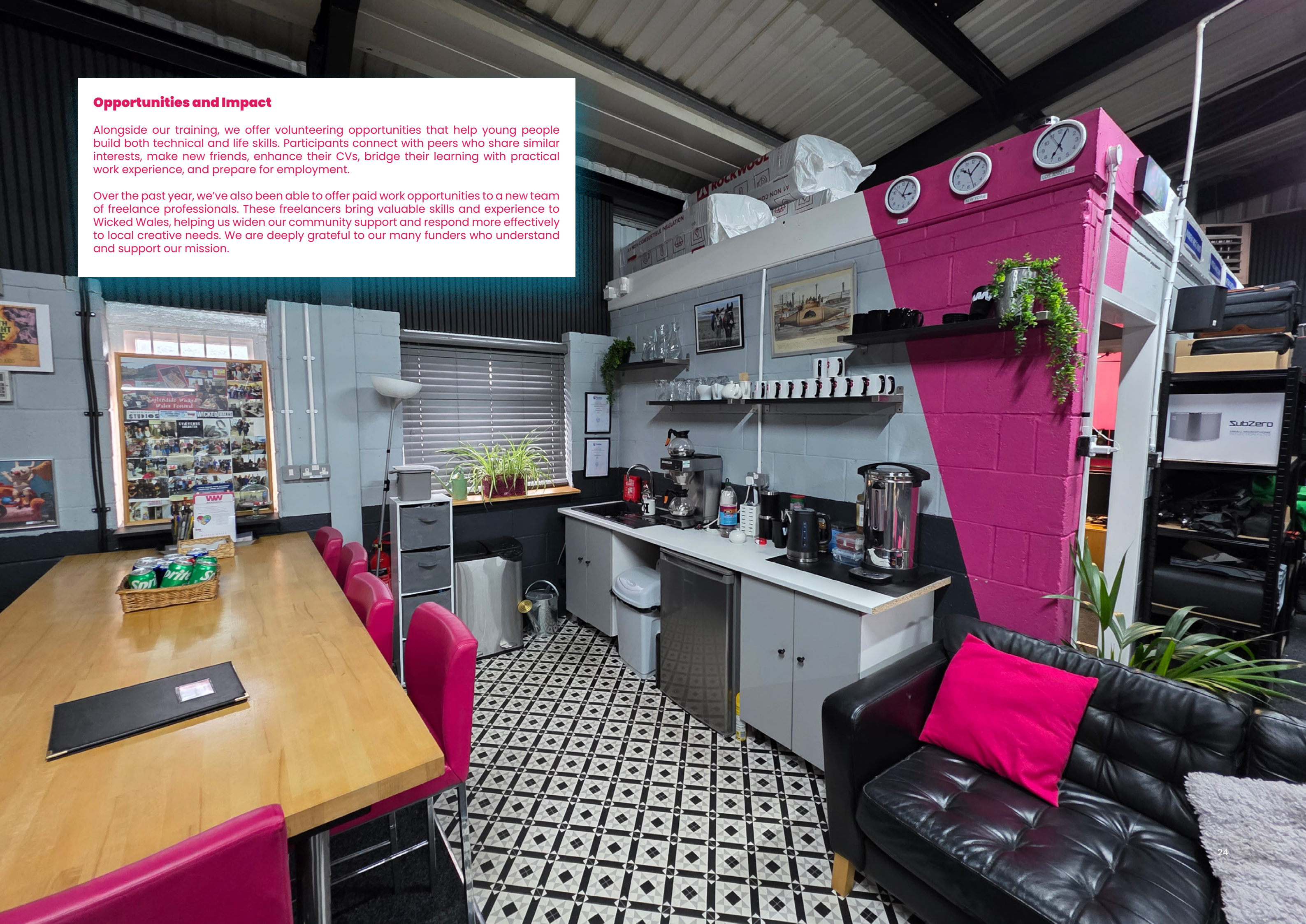
Our vision for WW Studios is to support and encourage young people in North Wales to gain the experience and knowledge necessary to advance in the creative industries. Our core aim is to deliver accessible training within a supportive community setting in this region.



Opportunities and Impact

Alongside our training, we offer volunteering opportunities that help young people build both technical and life skills. Participants connect with peers who share similar interests, make new friends, enhance their CVs, bridge their learning with practical work experience, and prepare for employment.

Over the past year, we've also been able to offer paid work opportunities to a new team of freelance professionals. These freelancers bring valuable skills and experience to Wicked Wales, helping us widen our community support and respond more effectively to local creative needs. We are deeply grateful to our many funders who understand and support our mission.



Studio Provision and Community Focus

For the last 12 months, our Studios have provided a fully equipped, flexible creative space with technical support for the local community of Rhyl and creatives across North Wales. We've actively worked to remove barriers that often prevent highly talented individuals from achieving success.

To further our efforts in uniting the creative community, we will be launching our new Connect Network at the Festival. We believe that by sharing ideas and opportunities, we can all move forward together.



Economic Contribution

The creative industry in Wales is a major economic driver, generating £1.7 billion, creating 35,400 jobs, and supporting 3,423 businesses.

Even if Rhyl were just an average creative location—not the true hub of creativity it is—its proportional share of the creative industries would still equate to approximately £17 million, creating 354 jobs, and supporting 34 businesses.



Regeneration and Commitment

Our Studios represent a significant marker we've established to help bring film production to Rhyl. We are determined to play a major part in the Town's regeneration. We love Rhyl, and we love being part of the vibrant Magic Marsh Road community. **Watch this space.**



The studio garden

When we opened our new cultural centre/ film studios in Rhyl in 2024 we wanted to make a difference to the local community. As we transformed what was a garage into an exciting new media space, when we stopped for a cuppa and sat outside we were faced with an empty little area of soil, a small storage area and 4 car parking spaces.

Our aim was to make a green space with flowers and new habitats for birds, bees, bugs and other insects. A place for people to relax, for passers-by to enjoy and for dogs to have a drink.

We have evergreen perennials alongside pretty weeds, a mobile orchard, a pond and pick your own herb garden. We recycle when we can and our plant stakes include tripods and a music stand.

Thanks to WILLOW COLLECTIVE, our new neighbours across the road, Carole for her fantastic plants lovingly grown and shared with lots of advice at affordable prices and Nicky for his beautiful bird feeders, passers-by seat, bee hotel and transforming a storage space into something really lovely. BRIGHTER FUTURES Shane, Tim and Penny, Rhyl's postcode gardener, providing plants, compost and encouragement as we developed the garden And to our volunteers.

Our youngest gardener MAISIE (age 3) with her watering can, who looks after the birds and is there for whatever you need her to do. ANDREW AND KIERA who are first time gardeners and sometimes wonder about the weird things appearing in the garden.

ELLIE who will always help with the watering can, hell yes, when she comes to the studios and ELAINE who brought the snails for the pond on the train from Leeds.



before



after

Edrych yn ôl... Looking back...

It is always a pleasure and a surprise to look back and see all that has been achieved in one year. It is particularly exciting this year after opening our Studios 12 months ago.

When we opened Wicked Stuidios, our aims were to make the creative industries more accessible to the people of North Wales and to connect together the talent in this area, many of whom were working in isolation. The studios are all about providing a big flexible space for all to use as creatively as can be imagined.

Our priority this last year has been producing short films alongside training opportunities. We have also connected with authors, photographers, actors and musicians and look forward to new exciting projects next year.

During the year we have produced 11 short films, helping to give a voice to the people of Rhyl and to tell the positive stories about a

very active and caring community and some of their Community Heroes. Making films and at the same time providing experience and on the job training for our young volunteers, building up their CV's.

We have made films with Rhyl Little Theatre, Brighter Futures, Rhyl Boxing Club, Work In Progress, DCC Homeless Prevention Team - with Nichola and Nigel, Rhyl Marching Band, Rhyl Harbour Hub Café, Rhyl Raptors wheelchair sports, Rhyl Youth Voice working with Wills and DCC Youth service.

We have been delighted to work with two local production companies in our first year, both headed up by talented young people Out for a film and Mountain Top Media.

We have free regular film workshops for young people and have supported Rhyl and Prestatyn High schools, Tir Morfa and Ysgol Melyd with filmmaking activities.

Rhyl Cinema History

When we heard about the temporary closure of the Vue cinema we brought a new team together with Christy and Cameron to make a documentary on the history of Rhyl cinemas and the pioneering filmmaker Arthur Cheetham.

Christy says:

"Almost 130 years ago, one of the first ever filmmakers, Arthur Cheetham moved to Rhyl and started a history of filmmaking in the Town. Our short documentary celebrates some of the historic cinemas in Rhyl, their rise and fall, with views from local residents and takes a nostalgic look back through the decades at some classic cinema films"



Arthur Cheetham: Children Playing on Rhyl Sands (1898)

Les Jones

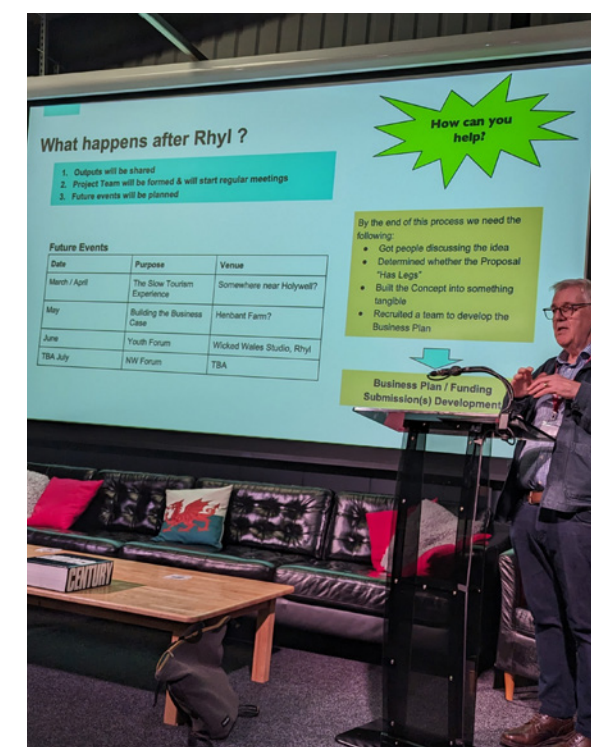
During the year we met Rhyl author Les Jones whose book 'Twelve Doors' published and available on Amazon is to be made into a short film 'White Helmet' which the studios will be producing in 2026. **More on the 'Looking Forward' page...**



Our studio space

During the year, the Studios have been used for conferences and many meetings including the Royal Society of Arts RSA, we had gaming parties and screenings with a cup of tea and biscuits, the films included such classics as Casablanca and The Wizard of Oz with 3 dogs in the audience who had come to watch Toto.

We received funding to have regular open days and introduce the new facilities to the local creative community and welcomed the ever growing 'Work In Progress' group whose singing we can enjoy while working, every Wednesday evening.



Looking back...

The Blame of the Brothers

We had the opportunity to work with a very talented young man, Connor. Connor spent 10 weeks with us and in that time, with the support of Dylan and Tom he wrote a story 'The Blame of the Brothers' by Connor Brown, then a script, put a film budget together, helped source the props and was the main actor for his film. The film was shot in a day with the help of team Wicked with Ste and Andrew and the teachers and pupils from Tir Morfa School Rhyl.



Edrych yn ôl...

As always everything achieved has only been possible with the help and support of our growing Wicked team, our partners, our funders, our volunteers and a lot of goodwill and cooperation from the community.

Let's now look forward...



Congratulations Andrew!

We were very proud when our Head of Studios Andrew Virgo received the DLL award for the most inspiring young person presented by Jason Mohammad.

Andrew started with Wicked as a volunteer at 16, his technical skills which were all self-taught and from on the job learning, promoted him to become Wicked's technical director and most recently Head up our new studios. He really is an inspiration and a fantastic role model for other young people in Rhyl. As well as being a kind and thoughtful person he is always there to give a helping hand.



Looking forward... Edrych Ymlaen...



White helmet

At the Studios we are keen to seek out the local creative talent we have in this part of Wales and to explore how we can work together and make things happen.

We were delighted when Les Jones, a local author from Rhyl, walked through the door. He had recently published his first book 'Twelve Doors' in 2023 and was looking to make a short film as the first step leading onto a feature film or series. Les, an ex firefighter and policeman, wanted to celebrate the role of the 19,000 on-call firefighters in the UK. For each call, twelve ordinary men and women, bound by duty, drop everything and risk their lives to save others. His book is dedicated to these brave men and women who are part of a special family of emergency service staff. The book was launched on Amazon and is receiving some great reviews.

Les says "The pager goes and they go in as one person and out as another, twelve brave people looking out for each other. We are very grateful for all the support and advice we have received from the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, whose help is making this film possible, we hope the film will make them proud"

The film script was developed by Robert A-Wood who is also the director of the short film. After receiving over 100 applicants for the cast and crew, roles for "The White Helmet" all positions are now filled and filled with talent from North Wales.

Head of Studios Andrew Virgo says "We are very proud and delighted that Les has chosen Wicked Wales Studios in Marsh Road Rhyl to produce his first film based on his book, particularly as the locations for the film will be in the West End of Rhyl and feature many streets known to the local community"



David Baker Photographer: The Reso - Through Our Eyes

David Baker is a photographer whose creative journey began after experiencing a traumatic brain injury in a cycling accident in 2016. During his rehabilitation, he was introduced to phototherapy, which provided him with a new direction in both his life and artistic development. He earned a BA (Hons) in Commercial Photography with First Class Honours, graduating in 2023, and is now studying for a Master's degree at the Arts University Bournemouth.

His interest lies in socially engaged, documentary-led projects focusing on marginalised Welsh communities. His practice is exemplified by long-term projects, such as Rhyl People, a portrait initiative that offers free printed photographs to residents of the deprived coastal town of Rhyl. (www.rhylpeople.com)

In 2026, David will collaborate with Wicked Wales Studios on a participatory photography project that gives a voice to residents, past and present, of a working-class housing estate situated close to the Studios in Rhyl, North Wales, known locally as the 'Reso'. The nickname 'Reso' derives from the term 'Reservation,' highlighting the estate's isolation, as outsiders perceive it as separate from the wider town. The project will explore what it means to live in a marginalised community.

The estate provides social housing in an area that ranks high on deprivation indexes, which measure unemployment, poverty, crime, and poor health. Despite this inequality, the 'Reso' has consistently demonstrated strength and community solidarity. This project will empower a multi-generational community, allowing them to share their stories through participatory engagement.

Through the memories of older residents, the project will explore their recollections of place and identity. Photography workshops with younger generations will allow them to document their lives and surroundings, complemented by a documentary photographer's lens as David returns to his roots.

This project aims to amplify the voices of the Reso. Ultimately, this initiative intends to reaffirm the Reso as a place of memory, identity, and resilience, creating a lasting cultural record shaped by and for its community.



Contact: info@davidbaker.photography

2024 Award Winners

6-12 Animation

1. Marcel Marceau – **Czech Republic**
2. Na pomarańczowo – **Poland**
3. Ronald's Pilgrimage to the Centre of the Earth – **Czech Republic**

6-12 Fiction

1. Honestly, You Are – **Spain**
2. You Are Not From Here – **Spain**
3. Being a Screenwriter is Easy – **Spain**

13-18 Animation

1. Sprout – **Czech Republic**
2. Lemon Cake – **Wales**
3. D.A.R.I.O. – **Czech Republic**

Commendations:

Tramp Talk – **Czech Republic**
BØB – **Netherlands**

Jury Prize
Sprouts – **Czech Republic**

Red Dragon
Lemon Cake – **Wales**

13-18 Fiction

1. Business as Usual – **Netherlands**
2. Marked – **Spain**
3. Valleys – **Sweden**

Commendations:

In search of me – **Greece**
The much needed prevention of utter chaos – **Sweden**

13-18 Documentary

1. Pink Ball – **Sweden**
2. Unchangeable – **Ukraine**
3. The bronsveld – **Sweden**

13-18 Documentary

1. Pink Ball – **Sweden**
2. Unchangeable – **Ukraine**
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19-26 Animation

1. The Tell tale Heart – **Ireland**
2. Nibbling of the Night – **Wales**

19-26 Fiction

1. The man who made Sweden's best short film – **Sweden**
2. Your Train Will Be – **Czech Republic**
3. Silly Boy – **Greece**

19-26 Documentary

1. Rios Journey – **Netherlands**
2. (JOINT) Duckumentary – **Ireland**
(JOINT) Feet, Fear, Freedom – **Switzerland**

27-32 Animation

1. Feeling the Apocalypse – **Canada**

27-32 Fiction

1. Pee Fright – **Wales**
2. Parabears – **Czech Republic**
3. It's all right – **Switzerland**

27-32 Documentary

1. Self portrait made of 1000 Kisses – **Wales**

Thanks

Diolch

Thank You

Yn ystod y blynyddoedd diwethaf rydym wedi llenwi tudalen gefn y rhaglen gyda gwrit bach mewn ymgais i ddiolch i'r holl unigolion a sefydliadau sydd wedi helpu i wneud i hyn i gyd ddigwydd. Mae gennym gymaint o bobl i ddiolch bod hon yn dasg enfawr ac mae yna bob amser siawns y byddwch chi'n colli rhywun allan, sy'n dorcalonnus.

Felly er ei fod yn dipyn o 'cliche' rydyn ni'n diolch i chi i gyd ac rydych chi i gyd yn gwybod pwy ydych chi ac yn eich adnabod chi i gyd, dwi'n gwybod nad oes angen i chi weld eich enw mewn print i deimlo ein diolchgarwch a'n gwerthfawrogiad.

Mae diolch yn fwy na rhywbeth allwn rhoi ar un tudalen. x

In the past, we've crammed the back page of the program with tiny text to thank all the incredible people and organizations who helped make this happen. But there are so many of you, and we always worry about leaving someone out, which is tough.

So, even though it might sound a bit cliché, we just want to say a huge thank you to everyone. You know who you are, and we know you don't need your name in print to feel our love and appreciation.

Our thanks are way bigger than one page could ever hold. x

