





























Conwy and Denbighshire Autism Project Fund

















Contents

Croeso! 1/2

2024 Programme 3/4

The Wicked Team 5/6

The **Jury** 7/8/9/10

Youth Cinema Network 11/12

Looking Back 13/14/15/16/17/18/19/20

WW Stiwdios 21/22

Last Year's Winners 23

2024 Shortlisted Films 24

Notes 25/26

Diolch! 27

Croeso!

A huge welcome to the 9th Wicked Wales International Youth Film Festival! It's been an incredible year of change for us. Since our last festival—and after 28 years of offering free creative activities to young people and hosting 26 youth arts and film festivals—Wicked Wales Film has become its own thing, a new Community Interest Company (CIC), with our very own space at last!

Two of our directors, Andrew and James, have been part of Wicked for the last six years. They started as volunteers at 16 and 18, and now they've stepped into major roles. Andrew, who's been our technical wizard, is now Head of Wicked Wales Studios. James, a qualified visual effects and graphic designer, is the creative mind behind all our amazing brochures.

In February 2024, after three years of searching, we finally got the keys to our own space in Rhyl. Over the past few months, we've transformed this business unit into what we believe is Wales' (and maybe even the UK's) only film studio and creative hub run by young people, for young people, and local creatives. We're especially proud to be offering these opportunities to the talented young people in Rhyl, a community that faces more than its share of challenges.

This year of change wouldn't have been possible without the support of our amazing funders, who believed in our ambitious plans and backed us when we needed it most. And we're so grateful to Betty at Good News in the Community for providing us with office space and endless support!

We also owe a massive thank you to the volunteers who've stepped up this year, giving their time so generously. Shout out to Brighter Futures for coming to our rescue when we needed a hand, helping us cross the finish line!

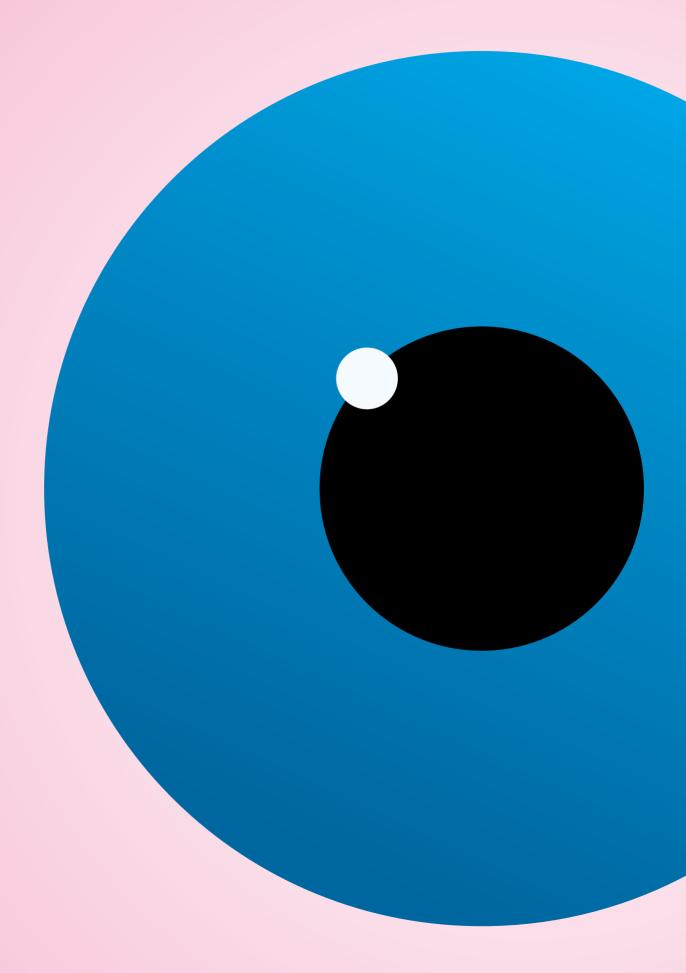
With so much going on, our international work has been virtual this year, but our ties with the Youth Cinema Network (YCN) remain strong. We're grateful to our friends from around the world and the 17 countries that sent us over 100 award-winning films for the festival. We're looking forward to seeing everyone in Sweden in 2025!

A big thank you to Patrick at Postcode Lottery, Meleri at Children in Need, Clare and Janet at Key Fund, Sam at DVSC, Eirian at the TNL Community Fund, Millennium Stadium Trust, Margaret at Rhyl Community Partnership, Alice at Community Foundation Wales, and all the other amazing people and partners who've helped us on this journey. And of course, a huge thank you to the Wicked team, which keeps growing as we build our new home.

We're beyond excited to welcome you to this year's festival and to the new Wicked Wales Stiwdios!

Let's celebrate!

Rhiannon and Andrew Festival Directors



WW 2024 programme OTA

Thursday 17th October

Open day at the studios - Come and see us any time to visit the new Wicked Wales Stiwdios and learn about our plans for the future!

10:00 - 11:00

Screening of short international films.

11:00 - 12:00

Join the conversation podcast - Join our young volunteers as we discuss the barriers to success within the creative industries for young people today.

15:30 - 18:30

Workshop with Mike Griffiths from ITV - Mike is a reporter and presenter for ITV Wales. He's a regular face on Wales' flagship news programme 'Wales at Six' and other shows!

Shooting and editing a rich variety of stories, he's particularly enthusiastic about the way technology is changing the way journalists do their jobs.

Mike was an early adopter of mobile journalism and works as a trainer and mentor across the country.

18:45 - 20:15

Reception and Official Opening of the WW24, our annual youth film festival.

Friday 18th October

09:30 - 11:00

School and Community free film screenings
- International short film programme

11:15 - 14:00

Workshop with Mike Griffiths from ITV

13:00 - 13:30

Join the Conversation podcast - Join our young volunteers as we discuss the barriers success facing young musicians today.

14:00 - 14:30

Premiere of'Tir Morfa: A Very Special tale'

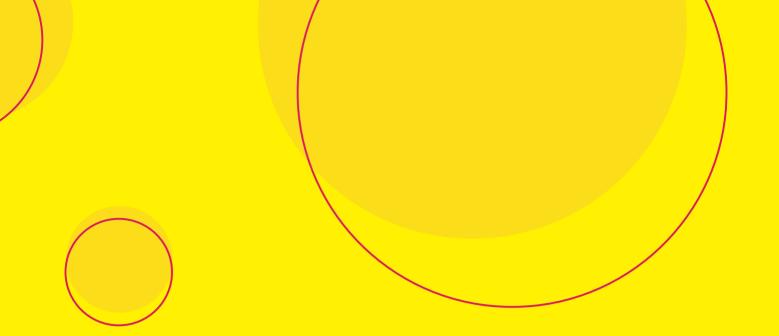
14:30 - 16:00

Q&A hosted by Carole Green ITV correspondent.

17:00 - 18:30

Shorts programme followed by a feature film TRC





Saturday 19th October

Open day at the Studios

10:30 - 13:00

Gaming event - Gaming on the big screen with XBOXs with access to over 100 games

14:00 - 17:30

Out for a Film shorts package followed by a feature film

18:30 - 20:30

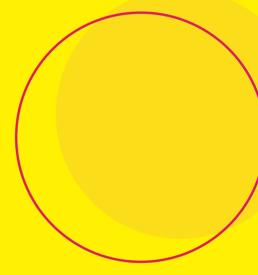
Reception followed by awards ceremony – Join us from 18:30 for a reception followed by a screening of international award winning films from the YCN (Youth Cinema Network)

Ending the night, we will reveal the category wining films for WW24

20:30 - 21:00

Join us as we officially close the Wicked Wales Festival 2024

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







The Wicked Team

Looking back, it's hard to believe how much we've accomplished with such a small team. Then we remember all the amazing people and volunteers who believed in what we're doing and gave us a helping hand. It's because of them that we've come this far. In fact, every single member of the current Wicked team started as a volunteer, and they're still putting in countless hours of volunteer work.

Over the next 12 months, our new studios will be creating an exciting new creative community in Rhyl. We're going to connect young people, freelancers, and professionals from the TV and film industries, providing space, equipment, and expertise to help make their projects happen. The creative industries are heading to Rhyl, and we want our studios to be the first step in building a thriving Creative Quarter near the town centre.

Our new C.I.C., Wicked Wales Film, has been set up with a clear mission: to create equal opportunities for all young people in the creative industries, especially in communities and areas that need it most.

We're here to help raise aspirations, improve mental health, and reduce isolation for young people. By partnering with others, we're working to develop the studios into a year-round hub for creative activities, offering training, job pathways, and new volunteer opportunities.

It's going to be another busy year, and we can't wait to get started!



















The Jury

This year, we've had the pleasure of bringing together another incredible group of young people to form our International Youth Film Jury.

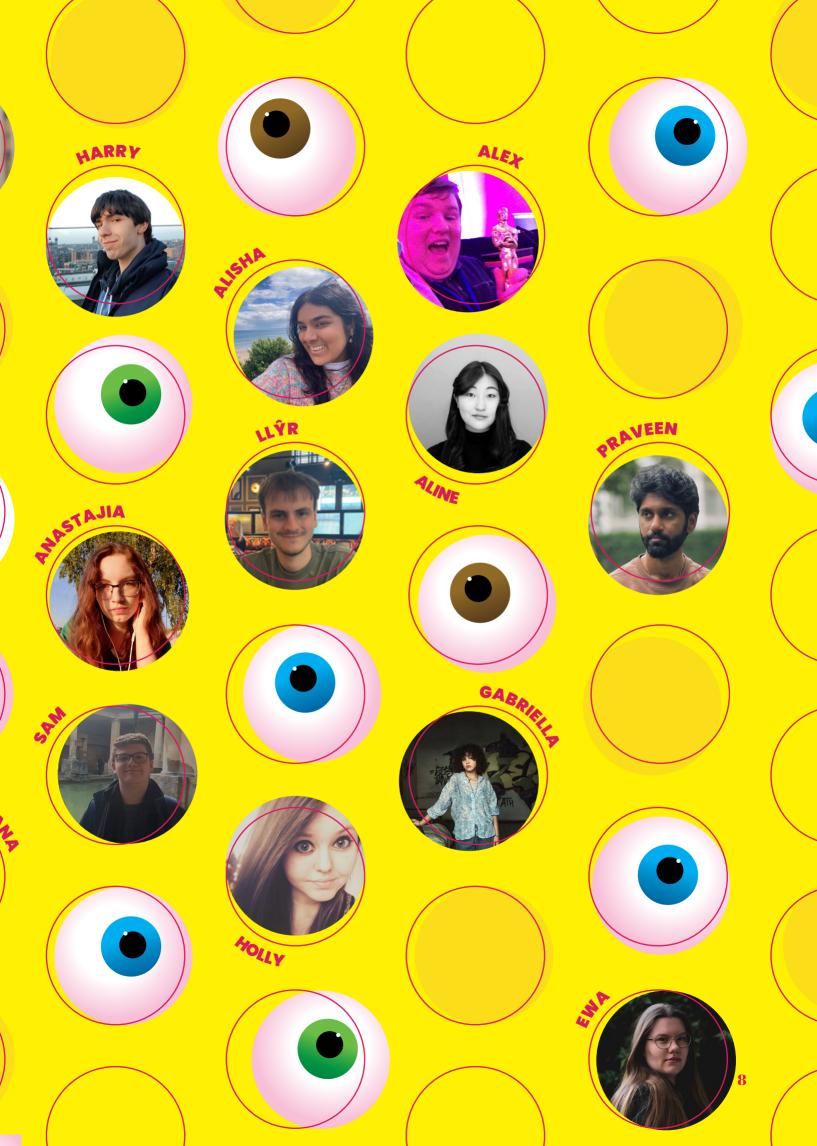
In celebration of the launch of Wicked Wales Studios as part of the festival, we invited some of our previous jury members to return and help judge this year's films. The jury consists of 15 young people from 6 different countries, each with unique experiences, all united by their shared passion for film.

Throughout the festival, the jury has played a crucial role in bringing fresh, nuanced perspectives to the diverse range of films submitted. They applied their knowledge and enthusiasm to thoughtful discussions on storytelling, cinematography, and artistic direction, enriching the festival experience for everyone involved.

It's been a true privilege to work with such a talented and passionate group. Their insightful perspectives, creativity, and professionalism have been a highlight of the festival, reminding us how vital it is to amplify young voices in the world of cinema. We look forward to seeing what they continue to achieve, both within the festival and beyond.

Phoebe Lacey-Freeman Jury co-ordinator





The Jury

Alex Gilston

Having served on the Wicked Wales Jury last year, I was delighted to be called back again for this year's edition. I am a professional writer and critic, mainly covering film festivals for Film Focus Online. Those have included LFF, TIFF, Sundance, Glasgow, and Bolton International film festival. In September last year I started the Film and Media Studies degree at Manchester Metropolitan University, to pursue my dream of working as a film programmer.

Aline Bruck

Aline Bruck has graduated from Aberystwyth University with both a BA degree in Film and Television Studies & Creative Writing, as well as an MA in Creative Writing, showcasing her passion for writing and the film and television industry. She is currently working as a production co-ordinator for Particle6 Productions and uses her free time to catch up on her long TBR/W list.

Alisha Kumar

Alisha Kumar is a freelance broadcast journalist, radio producer and entertainment reporter based in the East Midlands. She has worked and featured on local and national BBC radio shows as well as LBC News and showbiz podcasts. For the past few years, she has been a festival programmer for Women X, Derby Film Festival and Para-Cinema Festival, specialising in short-form, emerging indie filmmakers.

Ewa Palka

I'm a MA Film Screenwriting graduate who currently works as a freelance filmmaker and artist. I'm also a contributing writer for Buzz Magazine.

Anastasija Spasić

Currently I am a psychology student at university, but in high school I have studied film and media. During that time, I've made and worked on a lot of films of different genres, some of which have even received awards. Apart from being interested in film, I also love writing and am working on a project in that field

Gabriella Siamkouri

I am a Highschool student and I have been a jury member several times: Wicked Wales International Youth Festival, Olympia International Film Festival (3 times). I am interested in making films and I have participated in Cinematheia And in Chania International Film Festival. I also love photography and have participated in two exhibitions and had my own radio show in 2024 in the European School Radio.

Harry Denton

I am a film student who has directed, written and edited several shorts and plans to make many more. I'm passionate about giving my fellow filmmakers a platform for their work to reach a wider audience and get that boost in the industry.

Holly Psaliou

Holly Louise Psaliou is a writer and script supervisor based in Birmingham, UK. She obtained her MA in Creative Writing from Birmingham City University in 2020. Her animated short film You're Still You (2022) was nominated for a Royal Television Society Midlands award in the short film category. Holly worked as script supervisor on Joe Lycett's short film Linda and recently shadowed on Father Brown. She is a member of West-Midlands-based writers group Script Sirens.

Inana Cassas

Hi! I'm Inana, a 17-year-old student with a deep love for films and the arts. I am a former Junior Juror and now an ambassador at the Sharjah International Film Festival. I've met so many inspiring people during the film festival that I still love to support their work. I was honored to serve as a judge at the Wicked Wales Film Festival last year, and I'm super excited to be a part of it again. This summer, I was recently a part of a press club to learn more about media. I'm passionate about acting, and I'd love to meet more people who are passionate about films!

Jake Thompson

Currently studying for a master's in film, I'm an RTS nominated filmmaker with over one hundred short films credited to my name, although granted not all were created equally. As a filmmaker, I desire to push themes to the extreme, startle audiences, and tell challenging stories in equally challenging ways. When I'm not writing or watching stories, you'll find me procrastinating.

Liam Clements-Pope

I'm an Award-Winning Screenwriter with experience in Directing, Storyboarding and Cinematography as well. Last year, I graduated from the University of South Wales with a First Class in BA(Hons) Film. I continue to work on screenplays and film in my free time.

Liŷr Jones

My name is Llŷr 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 twice before and I am excited to take part again for a third time. I now proudly work as a Library Service Desk Assistant for Swansea University, which I started in April of this year, and continue to enjoy volunteering for my local Oxfam, which I began in 2021.

Pablo Stutt

I'm Pablo, from Galicia, a region in the northwest of Spain, and I currently work in the education sector in Wales. I am very passionate about film and aspire to be a film director. I am also a photographer and the bass player of the band Reports of Animals

Praveen Balaganesh

I'm Praveen, when I'm not working I spend most of my time reading books, manga and watching movies and MotoGP. I'm a filmmaker currently working on HETV shows as a trainee. I recently finished working on my first English language feature film. This is my second time as a jury member, last year I was a film graduate. Wicked Wales is close to my heart and has become a way for me to bookmark my career and I'm very excited to watch all the films.

Sam Vaughan

I'm a 25 year-old film programmer and theatre maker based in South Wales. I have worked with Wicked Wales, WOW film festival and have been an assistant script editor on It's My Shout for the past two years. My interests are writing, acting and directing and hope to combine my passions for film and theatre moving forward in my career.



Since then the awards have been announced in:

REC, Germany (2017), Nextfilmfestival, Denmark (2018), Enimation, Slovenia / Up and Coming, Germany (2019), Camera Zizanio, Greece (2020), Nordic Youth Film Festival, Norway (2021) and Novemberfestivalen, Sweden (2022).

In 2023 the 4 YCN awards were announced at the Up and Coming festival in Germany and we are delighted that we will be screening the winning films at our festival this year.



Viktoria

Filmmaker: Aniděti, Ages 0 – 14 Ukraine, Czech Republic / animated documentary Nominated by A-FilmTeensFest, Czech Republic

Synopsis: From Eastern Ukraine to Prague. Why did Viktoria come to the Czech Republic years ago and how did she settle in the Czech Republic over the years?



As You Are

Filmmaker: Daisy Friedman, Ages 15 – 19 USA / fiction Nominated by NFFTY, USA

Synopsis: When an interabled queer couple spends the night together for the first time, they must confront their complex relationships with desire, sexuality, bodily autonomy, and what it means truly to love another person.



Wall to Wall

Filmmaker: Linda Lövgren, Ages 20 – 27 Sweden / fiction Nominated by Novemberfestivalen, Sweden

Synopsis: The film is about a mute girl named Lo, who does anything to avoid social contact. One day, she receives a package delivered to her home, which contains a microphone, the contents of which lead her to contact her strange neighbor.



Workshop Category: Our Dreams

Filmmaker: a group of authors Czech Republic / documentary Nominated by A-FilmTeensFest, Czech Republic

Synopsis: The film was created by children from the Children's Home in Duchcov as part of the documentary workshop Adonai for people, which is also sponsored by the A-FilmTeensFest festival. It offers a heartfelt look into their lives in the orphanage, highlighting their unwavering determination and remarkable talents.



share. It's a safe space to learn, make friends, laugh, and get inspired for the future.







As an organisation we wouldn't be able to, or want to function without our young volunteers. They bring their ideas, enthusiasm and energy to the table and then put their words into action and help deliver the activities.

This last year has been a great year of change and 2 volunteers in particular have been there for everything. **Dylan**, our youth co-ordinator, and **Ellie**, our environmental co-ordinator, have given over 200 hours each of volunteering and we are very grateful to them.

We wish them success in everything they do.

Our Friends from Ukraine

In early 2023, when it was announced that Liverpool, rather than Ukraine, would host the Eurovision Song Contest, Wicked Wales decided to live screen the event at Rhyl Town Hall. With the help of volunteers from the Ukrainian refugee community in Rhyl, we planned and organized the event.

At the time, we had no idea how much we would accomplish together over the next couple of years, as our Ukrainian friends faced the challenges of settling into a new country. We became close, and now, as we say goodbye to the families who have moved to different parts of Wales, we look back on that time with gratitude. Through the events and activities we organized every Friday evening, we hope we were able to provide a space where they could celebrate their culture and share moments of 'Ukrainian time.' We are especially thankful to Betty and Good News in the Community for helping make that space possible.



Reflecting on those days, we cherish many happy memories, including their participation in Prestatyn's Mayor's Civic Service, the Meliden Flower Festival, film screenings at the Wicked Wales Festival, and countless evenings spent crafting and cooking together.

These were special times and special







A huge Wicked thank you to **ITV correspondent Carole Green!** She's a proud Rhyl local who's always supported her community, giving young people here a national platform to speak about the important issues facing us all today.

Thanks to Carole, young people have had the chance to get handson experience in the TV industry, showing them that it's absolutely possible to be a part of it.

She's also introduced us to professional **cameraman Rob Sellex**, who's been working with us on our Tir Morfa documentary—an amazing learning experience for everyone involved. And we're thrilled to have ITV reporter and **presenter Mike Griffiths** joining us to lead two workshops during the festival, where he'll be sharing the latest tips and practices for preparing and presenting news stories.





Our journey into gaming kicked off at our 2023 film festival, where we hosted our first-ever gaming competition on the big screen. It all started when our youth coordinator, Dylan, appeared on an ITV news segment with other young people with disabilities, talking about how gaming provided them with a positive and accessible way to connect. We're incredibly proud of Dylan, who was chosen to support Children in Need in 2023, working with the gaming industry for the first time to raise funds.

Earlier in the year, we were fortunate to receive funding from the Millennium Stadium Trust to purchase the equipment needed to grow our gaming activities. We also received support from the Conwy and Denbighshire Autism Project funds, which allowed many young people (including Veronica's additional needs family group, which she's been running as a volunteer for over nine years) to experience gaming together instead of in isolation.

A big thank you to Mike and his gaming van, which brought so much excitement, and to Good News in the Community for providing the space for our gaming and games club, where we shared tons of laughs playing Overcooked!

We're planning to host more group gaming sessions in the coming months so we can have even more fun together.

Tir morfa

We have had the privilege and joy to work with some very talented young people over the last 20 years and the school which has been with us every step of the way is **Ysgol Tir Morfa Community Special School** in Rhyl.

During our arts and film festivals they have disco danced, designed poetry book covers, made films, watched films, reviewed films, performed singing and dancing, run a talent show, made Gromits with Aardman, planned film screenings, made posters and tickets sold popcorn raising funds for their enterprise company' REactions'.

Over most of that period there has been one key element to make all this happen, a teacher who whenever we send an email asking if the children would like to be involved in an activity there is always a response and that response has always been YES. The teacher who inspires us all with her determination to give her pupils every experience and opportunity available is our dear friend Sara Griffiths.

As we move towards our 10th film festival we wanted to celebrate this collaboration and what better way than with a documentary. A chance to share some of the wonderful things and achievements which take place at the school every day. A special tale needing a special team and our thanks to Carole Green and to cameraman Rob Sellex for their professionalism and guidance in support of the Wicked team.

Our thanks also to head and deputy head Rona O'Neill and Phil Thomas and all staff and pupils for their honesty, trust and friendship shared with the film crew.

Kids Regio

We were delighted to have been invited by **Kids Regio in Germany** to be the UK organisation involved with their research project 'Keeping up with Children as an Audience' along with 11 other European Countries. The findings were presented at their Forum in Erfurt Germany earlier this year.

Kids Regio dedicates its campaigns to ensure that children in Europe have access to and a wider choice of high quality films.

Our thanks to **Ysgol Melyd** in particular and teacher Lucy who participated in the research and also helped with preparing the videos to record their views.

kids 👄 regio





STIUDIOS

In 2023, setting up our new Community Interest Company (C.I.C.) gave us the perfect chance to reflect on what we've been doing over the past few years, rethink our vision for the future, and really assess the needs of the talented young people here in North Wales.

Our vision for Wicked Wales Stiwdios is simple:

To support and encourage young people to gain the experience and knowledge they need to move forward in the creative industries. We aim to deliver accessible training in a community setting, while helping them develop their filmmaking and production skills. Alongside that, we'll offer volunteering opportunities to build both technical skills and life skills, helping them strengthen their CVs and get ready for employment.

Without these studios, local young people face huge barriers—a lack of facilities, equipment, and expertise. And when they want to access opportunities in other parts of Wales, they're hit with extra costs for transport and accommodation. We've already seen the positive impact our pop-up cinema has had on the community, offering affordable screenings for families, free training sessions, and volunteer opportunities for creative young people. But we know there's more to be done. We want to bridge the gap between learning

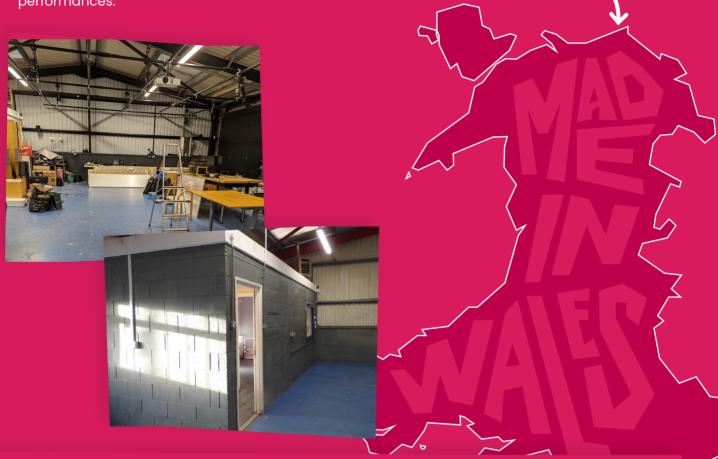
and work, share the opportunities that are out there, and help young people gain the confidence to believe they can be part of the creative industries. In Wales, this industry generates £1.7 billion, creates 35,400 jobs, and supports 3,423 businesses.

Wicked Wales Stiwdios, located in the West End of Rhyl, will be the only studio in Wales maybe even the UK—that's run by young people, for young people and local creatives.



Our new studios will offer industry-standard equipment, a production suite for editing, sound recording and mixing, a small community cinema with surround sound, and spaces for meetings, rehearsals, and performances.

There will also be an informal networking area with a refreshment station—a place to bring the creative community together and grow the creative industries right here in Rhyl.



We're excited to announce that **Andrew Virgo**, a Rhyl local who truly understands the challenges young people face, will be our new Head of Studios.

A huge congratulations to Andrew for being shortlisted by Denbighshire Leisure in the Inspirational Young Person category!



Last year's Winners

6-12 Animation

Boy vs Box Water-nymph - Poland When I Grow Up I Want to Be... - Spain

Commendations:

Polar Bear In Space - Belgium The Story Of Kanag - Philippines The Peace Girl - Portugal

6-12 Fiction

Vangelis and the Champion - Greece Labyrinth of Time - Ukraine Penpals - Ireland

Commendation:

Masks - Spain

6-12 Documentary

Ice-Elation! - Ireland

13-18 Animation

Celestine - Iran
The Fantastic Adventure-of the Left Sock - Poland
The Squishining - Sweden

Commendations:

Stove - Iran Past Time - Austria Grateful For - Cyprus White Book - Iran

13-18 Fiction

Safety in Similarity - Sweden Arbeit Macht Frei - Greece Supernova - Ireland

Commendations:

Killer Krush - Ireland Moon River - Sweden Shell - Ireland

13-18 Documentary

Rex Wyler – The Tao of Rex - Canada Unearth - Canada Our Dreams - Czechia

Commendations:

So What Are You? - Canada Memories of Better Days - Sweden Buzz - Ireland Eva interviews Edison - Spain

19-26 Animation

Kebab and Pain - UK The Bakedown - UK 151 - Austria

Commendation:

Bacteria - Czech Republic

19-26 Fiction

Cold - Poland Apologue 427 - Wales (Winner of the Red Dragon Award) Bloom - Wales

Commendations:

Grandma Knows Best - Wales The Corrective Home for Wayward Girls - UK Voyeuristic Tendencies - Austria

19-26 Documentary

Coming and Going - Portugal Time to Revolt - Poland Wicked and Bad - UK

27-32 Animation

The Girl Who Built a Rocket - UK

27-32 Fiction

Our Home the Sea - Wales (Jury Prize Winner) Mari Lwyd - Wales Bear With Me - Wales

27-32 Documentary

Life With Emotions - Wales

2024 Shortlisted Films

Feeling the Apocalypse

Canada

D.A.R.I.O

Czech Republic

Marcel Marceau

Czech Republic

Parabeans

Czech Republic

Ronald's Pilgrimage to the Centre of the Earth

Czech Republic

Sprout

Czech Republic

Tramp Talk

Czech Republic

Your Train Will Be Delayed

Czech Republic

The Telltale Heart

Ireland

Duckumentary

Ireland

Silly Boy

Greece

In Search of Me

Greece

BØB

Netherlands

Business as Usual

Netherlands

Rios Journey

Netherlands²

Na pomarańczowo

Poland

Marked

Spain

Being a Screenwriter is Easy

Spain

You Are Not From Here

Spain

Honestly, You Are

Spain

Feet, Fear, Freedom

Switzerland

It's All Right

Switzerland

The Man Who Made Sweden's Best Short Film

Sweden

Valleys

Sweden

Pink Ball

Sweden

The Much Needed Prevention of Utter

Chaos

Sweden

The Bronsveld

Sweden

Lemon Cake

Wales

Self Portrait Made of 1000 Kisses

Wales

Pee Fright

Wales

Nibbling of the Night

Wales

Unchangeable

Ukraine



d need to jot down some ideas for	your own fili	m! Use these p	ages for what	ever you like!

Dioleh!

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



