

Creu Cymru Media Report 2020-2022



TV

ITV Wales News

16th March 2021

Discussing the lack of financial support schemes for theatres and the delayed reopening for theatres.

<https://www.itv.com/news/wales/2020-06-19/will-theatres-and-music-venues-be-able-to-reopen-with-social-distancing/>

BBC Wales News

31st August 2021

Talking about reopening of theatres.

RADIO

BBC Radio Wales 31st August 2021 Jason Mohammad discussing the reopening of theatres.

[Jason Mohammad - 31/08/2021 - BBC Sounds](#) (from 1:40 in).

BBC Radio Wales Arts Show on Friday 28th January 2022 (from 8.55) discussing the impact of theatres closing again because of the Omicron variant.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m0013q1g>

BBC Radio Wales Breakfast Saturday 29th January 2022 (from 1:14.20) discussing the impact of theatres closing again because of the Omicron variant.

[Radio Wales Breakfast with Oliver Hides - 29/01/2022 - BBC Sounds](#)

BBC Radio Wales Drivetime 6th October 2022 discussing the overall impact of Covid and the cost of living crisis on the arts sector.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m001cq6f>

ONLINE

[https://www.walesartsreview.org/welsh-theatres-lead-the-way-in-community-support/Letters from Cardiff in lockdown: Louise Miles-Payne | We Are Cardiff](https://www.walesartsreview.org/welsh-theatres-lead-the-way-in-community-support/Letters%20from%20Cardiff%20in%20lockdown%3A%20Louise%20Miles-Payne%20-%20We%20Are%20Cardiff)

[Covid restrictions 'unfair' on theatres, sector says - BBC News](#)

[Covid: Theatres wary despite first capacity audience since pandemic - BBC News](#)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-wales-58400706>

[Creu Cymru warning on future of theatres in Wales - Art Scene in Wales \(asiw.co.uk\)](#)

[‘We’re up for the challenge’ – How Welsh theatres are reopening \(thestage.co.uk\)](#)

[Louise Miles-Payne: Bruised but unbowed, Welsh theatres are ready to restart \(thestage.co.uk\)](#)

[Welsh Theatres Relieved As Covid Restrictions Lift But £10m Losses Resulting from Christmas Closures Will Hamper Recovery - Get The Chance](#)

[Drakeford shutdown costs Welsh arts companies £10m - Art Scene in Wales \(asiw.co.uk\)](#)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-63161364>

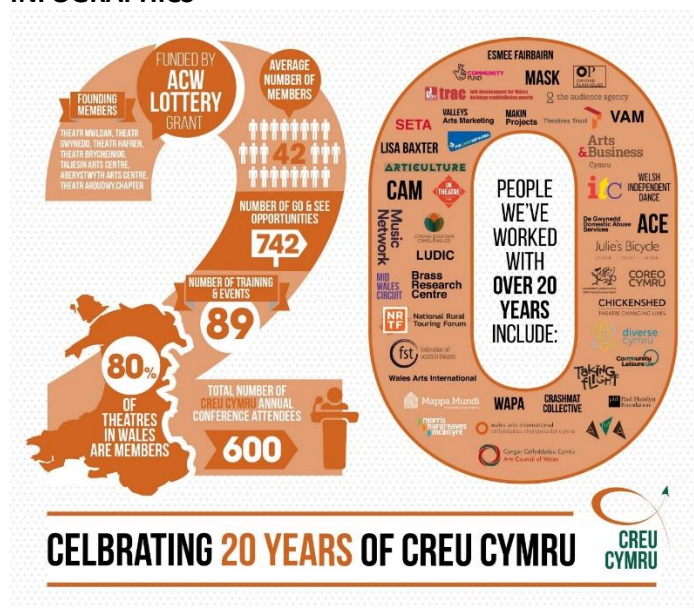
It also featured in Golwg.

Conversation with Phil George and Nick Capaldi from Arts Council of Wales.

We recorded a Q&A with Phil George and Nick Capaldi from Arts Council of Wales. I interviewed them and put forward questions from our members. The video can be seen here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rzqoca-yeSE>

INFOGRAPHICS



Creu Cymru 2020/21



Yn ystod y flwyddyn
ddiwethaf, rydym wedi:



Datblygu pecynnau cymorth ar gyfer ailgwrthoddi a gall lleoliadau eu defnyddio, gan gynnwys asesiadau risg a themplodi eraill a cynnig ymweliadau safle i weithwyr proffesiynol i roi cynngor ar weithio'n ddiogel o ran Covid.

Bod yn rhan o Gyngrair Mynediad i Gynulleidfaoedd ledled y Deyrnas Unedig, gan wneud yn siŵr bod mynediad wrth galon y cynlluniau ailgwrthoddi.



Rhedeg cynhadledd ar-lein lwyddiannus ar gyfer dros 120 o bobl ar-lein, gydag Alan Lane (Slung Low), Alun Saunders (Actor / Awdur / Perfformwr Drag), Bryan Joseph Lee (Public Theater NYC / Back 2 Culture), Daniel Evans (Chichester Festival Theatre), Kate Fox (MIF), Lianne Weaver (Beam Training), Lisbeth McLean (Menter Merthyr Tudful), Sita Thomas (Common Wealth Theatre) a Steffan Donnelly (Actor / Awdur / Tasglu Llawrydd Cymru) gyda chynnwys ychwanegol ar gael ar-lein ar ôl y digwyddiad.

Creu Cymru 2020/21



We have spent the last year
advocating on behalf of the
theatre sector in Wales.
We have....



Developed reopening toolkits that can be used by venues including risk assessments and other templates and have offered site visits to professionals to advise on Covid-safe working.

Been part of the UK wide Audience Access Alliance, making sure that access is at the heart of reopening plans.



Ran a successful online conference featuring Alan Lane (Slung Low), Alun Saunders (Actor / Writer / Drag performer), Bryan Joseph Lee (Public Theater NYC / Back 2 Culture), Daniel Evans (Chichester Festival Theatre), Kate Fox (MIF), Lianne Weaver (Beam Training), Lisbeth McLean (Menter Merthyr Tudful), Sita Thomas (Common Wealth Theatre) and Steffan Donnelly (Actor / Writer / Wales Freelancers Taskforce) attended by over 120 online with additional On-Demand content available post-event.

40 aelod (Cadwyd 100% o'r flwyddyn flaenorol ac ychwanegwyd un aelod newydd)



40 members (100% retention from previous year plus one new member)



Mae 240 o bobl (a mwy i ddod) wedi bod mewn o leiaf un o 20 sesiwn hyfforddi

80 awr (o leiaf) yn lobio Llywodraeth Cymru

Mae 15 o weithwyr llawrydd wedi cael eu cyflogi

240 people have attended 20 training events

80+ hours lobbying Welsh Government

15 freelancers have been employed



Rydym wedi ymgysylltu â Chyfarwyddwyr Artistig, Prif Weithredwyr, Technegwyr, Rhaglenwyr, Gweithwyr Marchnata, Blaen Tŷ, Rheolwyr Gweithrediadau, Glanhawyr a Staff Swyddfeydd Tocynnau



We have engaged with Artistic Directors, Chief Execs, Technicians, Programmers, Marketers, FOH, Operations Managers, Cleaners and Box Office Staff

Prior to starting her role, our Director Louise was featured in the Western Mail (April 2020)



We were featured in an article about how the arts are coping during this time in the Western Mail Weekend magazine (16th January 2021):



"Furthermore, the potential of the disease to attack the respiratory system is also a source of great concern, as the careers of those singers and wind-players could be jeopardised, should they contract the disease."

Miles-Payne adds that Covid-19 poses significant mental health challenges for people in the sector after many theatres went down to skeleton staff, with others either furloughed or redeployed to other areas to help fight the pandemic.

"This has meant that the staff left holding the fort have had increased workload and a strain on their mental health and wellbeing," she says.

It's not just the people within the sector who are struggling: the loss of live arts events also has an impact on many who drew support from these activities.

Stephanie Cross is project manager for the VC Gallery in Haverfordwest, which

have allowed artists to make very... on crucial areas of need given the sharp prong... the Arts programme, in partnership with the Welsh Government, has been delivering online support to inventive learning in schools across Wales. While its Arts in Health programme, in partnership with Wales' seven health boards and with the committed support of the Welsh NHS Confederation, has been having a positive impact on the mental health of young people, dementia sufferers and NHS workers.

The VC Gallery also has a focus on mental health. Working with artist Anus Waters, it runs a weekly art club that sees a messenger group of 15 supporting each other around their art but also emotionally. They also get together once a week to work on their art practice, to learn from each other and be guided by a professional artist and writer who have entered art competitions and started their own art business.

"Artist Nina Campin, who moved from journalism with impressive results, has been a real success story. She was able to come back to us and deliver two weekly online workshops and then makes a YouTube video of the demonstrations," adds Cross.

"Over 400 people have now taken part in the workshops, creating beautiful artworks with materials often provided by the charity. They have brought focus, distraction, reassurance and hope to many and allowed them to express mental health issues in a safe way."

A similar commitment to promoting mental health has been seen across the sector.

"The mental health support of vulnerable groups has been a priority for many, with projects ranging from Theatre Cymru's online Dance for Parkinson's workshops to regular online groups with high-risk or self-isolating groups," says Miles-Payne.

"Engaging people in the arts digitally has provided a lifeline to many isolated communities," she adds. "Caerphilly's Blackwood Players Institute have showcased local artists and bands with online digital performances shared on Facebook. The Sherman Theatre in Cardiff

CONTINUES ON PAGE 8 >>>

Saturday, January 16, 2021 **WEEK END 7**

WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

While the response of the creative sector has been inspirational, it's clear that for its long-term survival, some form of normality needs to resume as soon as possible once the virus is under control. Creu Cymru has been working with Welsh Government ministers and officials to create a roadmap for recovery and officials to create a clear path forward when the time is right.

"We have supported our members throughout the pandemic with information-sharing and online networking opportunities," says Miles-Payne. "We have also been working with theatres to use training courses to get staff ready for reopening and members and anyone within the arts community who would benefit from access to both resources we are creating."

Creu Cymru's new project *Llwyd/Hand* places an emphasis on developing capacity and audience development in membership organisations and audiences. "This might be a venue with limited staff, time or budget capacity," says Miles-Payne. "Each space and audience development project is unique, but with an emphasis on what they need support with."

"We were extremely grateful to receive Cultural Recovery funds from the Arts Council of Wales, which has allowed us to increase the support for our members and wider arts community. Our *Help Out* one that encouraged people back to pubs and restaurants using tickets for future Government subsidised events, with the aim of when it is safe to do so," she adds.

ACW remains committed to being responsive in its support for the sector as the events of 2021 unfold. A Key Aim, says George, is to provide continuously, development and change through its support of the arts this year and see how we can be supported by the Government to maintain the same level of grant-in-aid funding for the next financial year," he says.

"That will enable us to be agile and flexible, responding to the green shoots of opportunity as they emerge from the spring onwards in addition to discussions with government. We will continue to work with the Cultural Recovery Fund Phase Two. We want to return to the old normal in our sector, enjoying the freedoms in our

A RETURN TO NORMALITY?

There is still considerable uncertainty about when live arts activities will be possible, and this is inevitably causing frustration in the sector. However, much has been achieved online. "Nothing quite like the old normal in our

meanwhile, produced to digital experiences including work by the acclaimed playwright Gary Owen and featuring performances by top actors including Iwan Hantler, Michael Sheen and Rakie Ayola.

"Both Aberdare's RCT Theatres and Hintshire's Theatre Cymru have used artistic resources to deliver programmes to marginalised groups including work with refugees and at-risk young people."

She also notes that many arts organisations have supported the NHS directly. Venue Cymru in Swansea Grand Theatre, Port Talbot's Princess Royal Theatre and Theatr Cymru have all become blood donation centres to support Welsh Blood Services. Milford Haven's Torry Blood and Ceredigion's Theatr Ffeinfach have both made face visors for key support workers and carers.

The list goes on. Theatr Ffeinfach in Ceredigion has supported families dealing with school closures by making creative activities that have been shared widely throughout their community, while in Newtown, Theatr Hafren's singing and rhythm classes have been met with overwhelmingly positive feedback and have seen families incorporate classes into home schooling.

As well as being a major Blood Donation Centre for the NHS, Theatr Cymru has worked with social toy boxes to deliver food parcels, creative packs and services to those families most in need.

"We've delivered online creative sessions to over 1,000 people every week in music, drama and dance," says Evans-Jord.

"We've supported our most vulnerable with regular visits or phone calls. We've honoured all our freelance contracts and alongside a new work to freelance artists during a year when we've been able to open properly. Our starting point is digital as this new strand of work to

Western Mail Magazine 28th August 2021

Challenging times ahead for theatres

WELSH Government regulations now allow venues to reopen at full capacity, but the reality is not that simple, according to Creu Cymru, Wales' performing arts sector alliance.

The organisation has highlighted the issues faced by Welsh theatres as they try to juggle the financial pressures to reopen along with programming, staffing, health and safety issues and the need to build audience confidence.

Louise Miles-Payne, Creu Cymru's director, explains: "While most theatres across Wales are delighted to be preparing for their long-awaited reopening, our recent poll showed that venues of all scales unanimously reported their concerns around the competing financial pressures to reopen at full capacity as regulations allow, while many feel continuing with social distancing and therefore lower audience numbers is likely to remain the only viable route to achieving vital audience confidence."

With this in mind, Creu Cymru is encouraging customers to make use of the free lateral flow tests that

Welsh theatres face huge programming challenges as they prepare to reopen in an uncertain new climate, writes Jenny White

can be sent to their homes.

"Knowing that you are safe before you go to a performance helps protect those around you and will keep the magic of theatre alive," says Louise.

"We will be promoting this message through our Testing, Testing 123 campaign launching August 31."

However, historic commercial arrangements with promoters often put venues in a difficult position.

Angela Gould, programme and audience development manager at RCT Theatres, explains: "Trying to reschedule previously cancelled shows that had sold out at full capacity is difficult as many venues may still feel a way off

fully reopening their spaces. They need to honour contractual agreements while doing what they feel is best for their audiences while still making the show financially viable."

Adapting to the need for fluid planning is problematic because theatres have to continually anticipate various different scenarios.

The marketing of performances is a particular challenge as many Creu Cymru members reported that shows keep cancelling for various reasons.

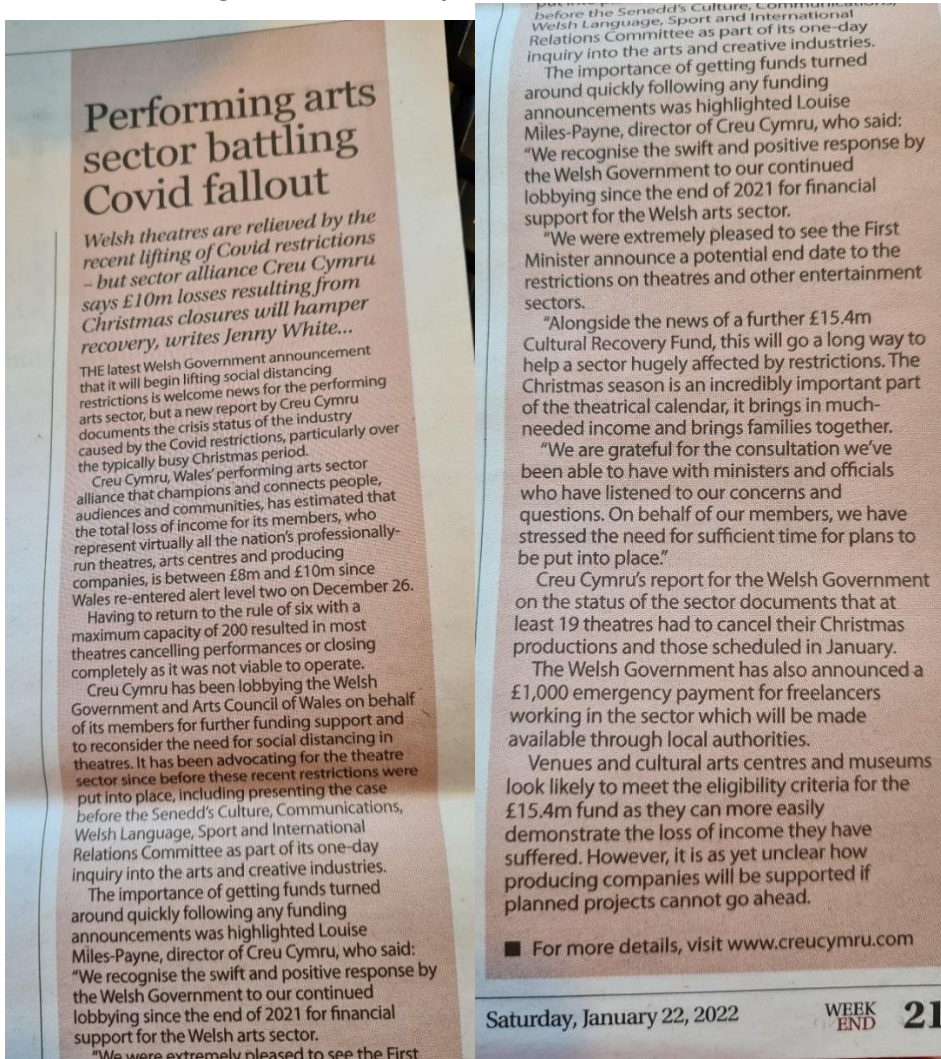
These include ticket sales not being what they should be, not enough lead time to market shows properly, and a feeling that they cannot market shows confidently because they cannot guarantee they will go ahead and are wary of losing audience trust.

Some promoters decide there is too much financial risk – and as a result there is currently doubt over whether Christmas pantomimes will go ahead.

Managing differing public opinions is a challenge reported by many theatres.



Western Mail Magazine 22nd January 2022



SOCIAL MEDIA

Twitter – 3,455 Followers

Average impressions per month 2K

Creu Cymru Conference 2022 Conference social media highlights

Creu Cymru Conference 2022 Social media campaign April 10 - May 11	
Tweets	47
Tweet Impressions	29,700
New followers	37

Social media activity promoting the **Creu Cymru Conference 2022** began one month ahead of the event on April 10. Primarily through the Twitter platform, the campaign content was shared throughout the 32 days resulting in a substantial **29.7k impressions**.

Impressions on Twitter is a total tally of all the times the Tweet has been seen. This includes not only the times it appears in a one of your followers' timeline but also the times it has appeared in search or because of someone liking the Tweet.

For the period, this equates to **929 impression per day** reflecting that the content was effective in reaching a wide number of followers across our targeted community.

Of further significance is the engagement rate which is indicative of content not only being visible, but of tangible interest to those we want to reach and influence. A benchmark good engagement rate for Twitter for small organisations is around 0.5-1%. Over this campaign period however, our Twitter campaign achieved a **strong engagement rate of 2%, reaching as high as 6.7% on the conference day itself** when updates of the different sessions were being shared. This is a great reflection of how interested our audience is in the content being shared.

*The **Engagement Rate** is calculated by dividing the number of engagements by the number of impressions. Engagement includes any way someone interacts with a Tweet, including but not limited to, Retweets, clicks and Likes.*

We achieved **90 retweets** for the period, an average of 3 per day and a total of **276 likes**.

In the run-up to the Conference, a total of 27 largely bilingual tweets directly promoting the event were shared, each with a call to action driving audiences to sign up for the event. The links we included for delegates to register were **clicked 42 times** demonstrating their effectiveness in converting followers to take action.

Pre-event, our social media content highlighted:

- the individual panel members, the scheduled talks
- networking sessions
- the iconic venue of Cardiff's Pierhead building
- the endorsement of sponsorship and welcome presentation provided by Dawn Bowden MS, Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport.

- availability of bursaries to help members with travel costs
- the fact it was a free event
- themes of community and the long-awaited chance to reunite with colleagues across the sector in person featured heavily.

On the day of the conference, May 11, **20 pre-planned bilingual tweets were shared** reporting 'live' from the event with photos as events happened. The day's social media activity alone achieved **10K impressions** with a high average **engagement rate of 2.5%**.

Top performing tweets from the day included the first one of the morning which achieved 2476 impressions and 95 engagements:



The tweet below scored a substantial 6.7% engagement rate, with 28 total engagements broken down as follows:

- Likes - 10
- Media engagements - 7
- Profile clicks - 4
- Retweets - 3
- Detail expands - 3
- Replies – 1



Our highest scoring 'Top mention' tweet was from panellists Grand Ambition who shared this photo from the event achieving **54 likes**:

Top mention earned 143 engagements



Grand Ambition
@GrandAmbition_ · May 11

It's Grand to be here @CreuCymru
@Brycheiniog @TheWelfare1
@thomsmummy
#CreuCymruConference22
pic.twitter.com/Wj77YD3ZEL



↳ 2 ↳ 2 ♥ 54

[View Tweet](#)

Posts such as the one below scored highly with likes, confirming that photos like this conveying personality and energy are always effective – this one gained 22 likes and 5 retweets:



Creu Cymru @CreuCymru · May 11

A thoroughly engaging panel session; thanks to all speakers for sharing your expertise & insightful perspectives & chair @okaijasmine
Sesiwn banel ddifyr iawn; diolch i'r holl siaradwyr am rannu'ch arbenigedd a'ch persbectifau craff & cadeirydd Jasmine Okai
#CreuCymruConference22



James Doyle-Roberts 🇨🇪 and 4 others

Promote



↳ 5

♥ 22



Designated campaign hashtags #CreuCymruConference22 #CynhadleddCreuCymru22 were used and proved a really useful way for narrative about the event to be categorised; both for members in attendance as well as those unable to join.



Catherine Young @Cath_Dawns · May 11



Replying to @CreuCymru

Have a great day! Will be following the hashtag 😊



They also provided a great tool for following the conversation after the event with many members connecting on Twitter – another great demonstration of the Creu Cymru community.

What the sector had to say...

A selection of the fantastic, positive feedback together with an outpouring of community spirit across the sector that followed the event:

You Retweeted



Dawn Bowden @Dawn_Bowden · May 11



Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to speak to you. I hope you had a successful day.

@WG_Culture

Creu Cymru @CreuCymru · May 11

Thank you @Dawn_Bowden MS, Deputy Minister for Arts and Sports for your welcome address and enabling us to host today's event from this historic landmark #PierheadBuilding #CreuCymruConference22

[Show this thread](#)

"I'm delighted to sponsor this event, and to see Wales' performing arts sector resume face-to-face events after almost two years of the pandemic.

We all look forward to a brighter future and this event will give us the opportunity to come together to share vital support and ideas – we want to see the sector build on the innovative ways in which it adapted during the pandemic and to ensure everyone has access to the arts, no matter what their background."

Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport, Dawn Bowden



Creu Cymru Conference 2022
11/05/2022






Yesplan @yesplanapp · May 13



Last week, Patrick attended the @CreuCymru event in Wales. It was the first time he attended a conference where sections were delivered in Welsh language! 🇬🇧

The Yesplan team is glad that we were able to sponsor this valuable event for the Welsh arts community!



Elise Davison she/her sign name 'ideas'



@EliseDavison

Loved yesterday! Loved spending time with the extended @takingflightco team and it was so gorgeous to see so many people I have only seen in a box for so long! Diolch @CreuCymru



Taking Flight
@takingflightco



We thoroughly enjoyed [@CreuCymru](#) [#CynhadleddCreuCymru22](#) yesterday, brilliant to be able to show our [#EarlyCareerCreatives](#) another aspect of the industry with [@MaryJayneDrama](#)

Creu Cymru @CreuCymru · May 11

Am wefr i weld cymaint o aelodau Creu Cymru yn y cnawd! Croeso i bawb i [#CynhadleddCreuCymru22](#) heddiw. Defnyddiwch ein hashnod ar gyfer y digwyddiad i bawb gael dilyn newyddion o'r diwrnod!



Grand Ambition @GrandAmbition_ · May 11



Replying to [@Lisbeth56364097](#) [@CreuCymru](#) and 3 others
It was a pleasure to meet you! x



Emma Evans @emmaelsaevans · May 11



[#creucymruconference22](#) Lovely to connect with old faces and new today
Thanks [@CreuCymru](#)



Lisbeth @Lisbeth56364097 · May 11



Replying to [@GrandAmbition_](#) [@CreuCymru](#) and 3 others
Lovely to meet you all x



Jodie Nicholson
@jodi_ann_artist

Post @CreuCymru Conference Ice cream with @OkaiJasmine Diolch! Creu Cymru for bringing us all together this afternoon for some great conversations #CreuCymruConference22



Jasmine Okai

5:16 PM · May 11, 2022 · Twitter for iPhone



Justaled.com @AledLloydRees · May 11

Fantastic day #CreuCymruConference22 Big thanks to the @CreuCymru team for a fab conference! Plus it was great meeting new and old faces, but mostly putting the zoom faces to the real life bodies :) da iawn phawb! Xx





Laura H Drane (she/her) @laurahd · May 11

Can't believe am with colleagues at the Pierhead for @CreuCymru #CreuCymruConference22 inc hearing from the wonderful @SitaThomas5 from @wearefio



1 14



Caroline Oneill @kazONarts · May 11

Energised after today and being surrounded by people and discussions after 2 years on screen! #CreuCymruConference22



The Hafren Theatre @Hafren_Newtown · May 11

At the @CreuCymru Annual conference today in the Pierhead Building in Cardiff waiting to hear from Dawn Bowden MS, Deputy Minister for Arts and sports as to what plans the @WelshGovernment have for our sector going forward. @Arts_Wales_



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Kokoro Arts Ltd @KokoroArtsLtd · May 11
Conference day @CreuCymru ! How great to see so many faces. Thank you @wearefio and @SitaThomas5 for sharing! #CreuCymruConference22



Theatrau RCT Theatres @RCTtheatres · May 11
Thanks @Dawn_Bowden @CreuCymru looking forward to the future development of a Cultural Strategy #CreuCymruConference22





Jennifer Huygen @JennHuygen · May 11

...

Lovely attending the [#CreuCymruConference22](#) today in Cardiff, hearing from [@WG_Culture](#) and inspiring arts and culture organisations across [#Wales](#). Lovely to catch up with CLOW too and discuss the future of the sector, following our landscape report. Diolch yn fawr [@CreuCymru](#)



6/photo/1

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Sarah Horner @sarhorner · May 11

...

Such a lovely day being back in the room with lovely, lovely people from across the sector for the [#CreuCymruConference22](#) lots of chats and recalibrating - total joy![@CreuCymru](#) [@SeneddWales](#)



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Cymru Equity Wales @Equity_Wales · May 11

...

Great to attend the [#CreuCymruConference22](#) today at The Pierhead. Lots of great networking and lovely to see everyone in person. [#diolch](#)