

# Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales

Annual Review 2020/2021



national  
museum  
wales  
amgueddfa  
cymru

ysbrydoli pobl  
newid bywydau  
inspiring people  
changing lives



# Introduction

**David Anderson**  
*Director General, Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales*

Every year, Amgueddfa Cymru publishes an annual review as a summary of our achievements over the past year.

In recent years, we have been able to highlight record-breaking visitor figures, award-winning museums, increases in self-generated income, inspiring exhibitions, events and programmes, and partnership working to deliver our vision – Inspiring People, Changing Lives.

But the past year has been without precedent in our history. Like every other organization in Wales, we faced unimagined challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. On 17 March 2020, we closed the doors to all of Wales’s national museums, and they have mostly had to remain closed. Overnight, we lost personal contact with visitors, staff, volunteers, partners and stakeholders.

We also had to face some difficult and important truths in response to the Black Lives Matter movement, and reflect on our role in fighting racism. As a result we have developed a better understanding of the role that Amgueddfa Cymru can play in achieving race equality in Wales. Together with our community partners and young people, we have been diversifying our collections, increasing representation and contributing to conversations that highlight decolonization, inequality and racism. We have a long way to go.

Today, Amgueddfa Cymru is here to help people and communities in Wales have a better and culturally richer life, to protect our natural environment, to support people in learning from childhood to old age and to sustain and build our connections with people in Europe and across the world. We are ensuring that digital services are central to our work and through these, aim to connect with communities in new and exciting ways. As a charity, we need our supporters more than ever. We are also grateful for the continued support of our partners and stakeholders, which enables us to support the people of Wales and care for the national collections at this time.

Throughout the year, our paramount responsibility has been the safety of staff and the public, as well as the protection and care of the national collections and buildings. This has been illustrated in so many ways, and we would like to mark this extraordinary year by sharing some of these achievements, reflections and highlights with you.



I would like to personally thank our staff for their wonderful response to the challenges we have faced this year. They have successfully adapted to new ways of working and have kept the national museums safe and functioning. Whether they cared for the museums and national collections, enabled us to work remotely and thrive digitally, ensured the well-being of colleagues at a time of adversity or made sure we can continue to operate effectively, against all the odds, every single colleague has played a vital part in ensuring Amgueddfa Cymru can continue to succeed, now and in the future.

Our museums and collections will be an important resource for the nation’s healing and recovery, in 2021 and beyond. This year will also see the launch of our new brand and 10-Year Strategy, as we look ahead to how we can make Wales a better place in which to grow up, to live and to work. Everyone in Wales has a fundamental human right to participate in the cultural life of the nation, and we look forward to working with you as we make Amgueddfa Cymru more accessible, both physically and digitally.

While there is much that we all want to forget from the past year, there are also many things we have learnt through the challenges we have faced, and will apply as we go forward to the future. While we may not have broken any records for visitor numbers, we have undoubtedly succeeded in supporting many thousands of people in communities across Wales to engage with the national museums and national collections. I am eternally grateful to everyone – staff, volunteers, supporters and community partners – who made this possible.

# Collecting Covid

In May 2020 we launched **Collecting Covid**, a public appeal and mass digital observation project to collect the experiences of people living in Wales during the pandemic.

We have since created an important national memory and record of the pandemic, with the support of our supporters and staff.

Amgueddfa Cymru has an established history of recording the national memory of Wales, recognising that the life of every person matters. As part of Collecting Covid, we launched a mass questionnaire, inviting responses from a range of individuals, communities and organizations across Wales to record their experiences, with related objects, of the year of the pandemic. This is a story of now, recorded as the lived experiences of everyone in Wales, but also a record with testimonies that will be preserved for the generations to come.

We received deeply moving accounts of loss and trauma, anxiety and loneliness, alongside stories of community resilience and kindness, and we are grateful to everyone who took the time to share their stories.

*'I think we have gotten to know our neighbours during this time, helping others, giving others your time to listen to their fears, knowing this won't last forever, & hopefully being better people in the long run.'*

**Dette, Caerphilly**



*'There is a sadness throughout all of this. Most days I cry whether it is the news, TV programme, seeing images of lots of people at restaurants or pubs... Sometimes I think maybe some good will come out if it. There are more birds singing, the sky is clear of planes, the air is fresher. Maybe school classes being smaller is no bad thing. But then you remember the death toll. Remember when we could touch and embrace others? It seems like an age ago.'*

**Maria, Cardiff**

*'My neighbours are mostly widows like myself and they are only a phone call away. It's been nice to see and wave at everyone on the Thursday evening clap for the NHS. Other neighbouring families have offered help with shopping etc. Everyone has been kind.'*

**Margaret, Denbighshire**

# Responding to the Black Lives Matter Movement, and Re-framing Picton



Picton is a controversial figure, previously hailed as a public hero but now equally notorious for his cruel treatment of Black enslaved and free people and for sanctioning torture during his governance of Trinidad.

Responding to the Black Lives Matter emergency has also been an important part of our collecting activity. Staff attended Black Lives Matter rallies and marches in 2020, and collected placards and banners. Some of these will be incorporated into the Re-framing Picton exhibition.

**Culture should be accessible and relevant to everybody.**

Working with communities across Wales, we have an important role to play in achieving this goal and have joined **Zero Racism Wales** and others to publicly commit to standing up against racism in all its forms.

As part of this commitment, working with the **Sub-Sahara Advisory Panel** Youth Leadership Network, we invited artists to help us reframe the colonial narrative around the portrait of Lieutenant-General Thomas Picton, currently on display at National Museum Cardiff.



# Safeguarding our Natural Environment

In 2019 we joined others in declaring a global climate and ecological emergency. We are committed to safeguarding our natural environment, embedding sustainability in all that we do and protecting nature for future generations.

Amgueddfa Cymru's **Natural Sciences** collections, containing **over 3 million** specimens, are a valuable resource for understanding the science of **environmental change**.

We have launched an accredited **training course** for staff to learn about **carbon literacy** and how we can all play a part in **safeguarding our environment**.



Our shops **support local producers** and are developing **sustainable ways** of working to **minimise waste**, including reducing printing and packaging and increasing the use of **sustainable materials** in our products.

In 2020, **7,299 school scientists** and **342 teachers** from across the UK participated in the **Spring Bulbs for Schools** climate change investigation with **18,000 bulbs planted**.



In October 2020 the National Waterfront Museum joined St Fagans National Museum of History and the National Wool Museum in achieving the prestigious **Green Flag Community Award**, designed to help promote quality green spaces that are accessible to all. The Award recognises our dedicated volunteer involvement and high environmental standards. It also highlights the work we do in using the Museum's garden to grow produce that is donated to charities who support people in need across the city. We look forward to many more years of growing and developing our green space.

We are proud to have joined with other world institutions in an international campaign to raise awareness of the need to protect biodiversity. The global coalition **United for Biodiversity** was launched in March 2020 on World Wildlife Day by EU Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, Virginijus Sinkevičius. The coalition is calling on botanic gardens, zoos, aquariums, research centres, national parks and natural history museums to raise their voices about the crisis in nature. By signing the coalition pledge, we are proud to become only the second official member from the UK, following Bristol Museum in November 2020.

In 2020 we celebrated the success of our project **Brought to the Surface**, focused on identifying the freshwater snails of Britain and Ireland. Thanks to funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, our curators led a team of partners and volunteers in creating a new identification guide for fifty wild snail species that live in our rivers, ponds and estuaries. Using our outstanding shell collections, our curators studied and showcased this surprisingly dynamic and often threatened part of the UK's natural heritage. Over two years, Amgueddfa Cymru Project Officer Harry Powell



has helped engage over 2,000 people around Wales, deliver five public hands-on identification days, create a new display at National Museum Cardiff and devise the innovative game Guess Whorl with schoolchildren at St Fagans National Museum of History. We have since photographed and DNA-barcoded specimens from around the UK and hunted snails from Pontcysyllte to Pontypridd.

In July 2020 we hosted the **Digital Festival of Archaeology**, which included a host of talks by Amgueddfa Cymru archaeologists, exploring the theme of climate change in Wales over the past 15,000 years.

In January 2021 we hosted **Olion – Footprints**, a digital festival looking at climate action and the changes we can make as individuals and as a society to fight climate change. Over three evenings we hosted a series of talks looking at issues such as sustainable building and creating a sustainable home, moving on from fast fashion and what a sustainable food future really looks like.

In early 2021 four-year-old Lily Wilder and her family discovered a well-preserved **dinosaur footprint** on a beach near Barry, which can help scientists establish more about how dinosaurs walked. Lily was the first to spot the new footprint on a loose block near the sea at Bendricks Bay, a beach well-known for dinosaur footprints preserved for 220 million years in desert muds. The footprint is just over 10cm long and is likely to have been made by a dinosaur that stood about 75cm tall and 2.5m long. During the pandemic our scientists have been highlighting the importance of nature on people's doorsteps and the footprint is a perfect example of this.

In 2020, we were awarded a significant grant of £895,000 from UK Research and Innovation. The submission was collated by Amgueddfa Cymru's Head of Mineralogy & Petrology, Dr Jana Horak, as part of the Arts and Humanities Research Council 'Capability for Collections' fund. The grant enables us to purchase equipment for Amgueddfa Cymru laboratories, to support research and the improvement of facilities. We also hope the equipment can be used for community research.

# Exhibition of Hope

In April 2020 the National Wool Museum launched the project **Exhibition of Hope**.

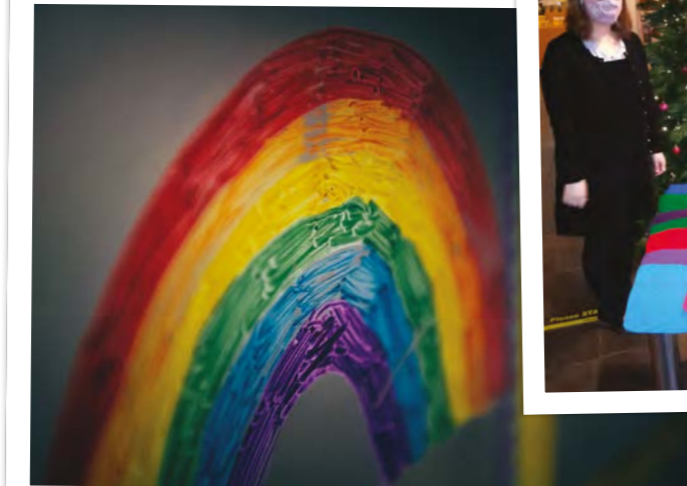
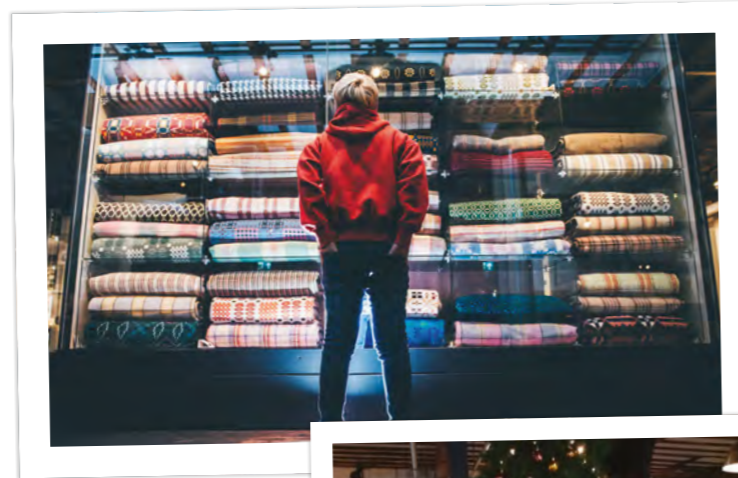
People all over Wales were asked to knit, crochet, felt, weave or sew 20cm (8") rainbow-coloured squares, which will be joined together by volunteers to create a giant rainbow blanket.

The blanket will be displayed at the National Wool Museum and then at the National Waterfront Museum. After the exhibition the blanket will be turned into smaller blankets, which will be donated to various charities.

Public response to the project has been fantastic, and to date we have received over 1,226 squares from people up and down the country. Our most prolific contributor so far is Aeres Ingram, who has knitted seventy squares!

*'Knitting the squares for the rainbow blanket helped me a lot during lockdown and it gave me a sense of belonging and achievement, knowing I was involved with something important and also helping those in need. I look forward to seeing the pieces sewn together and the finished piece.'*

**Aeres Ingram**



# Working with the NHS

Throughout the pandemic staff have volunteered to make face masks, scrubs and bags to **support key workers**.

Staff at the National Slate Museum donated gloves to Gwynedd Council and made hearts for local NHS charity Awyr Las. The hearts were part of the #RedHeartAppeal by Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board's Palliative Care team, who wanted to do something for relatives unable to visit their friends and families in hospital, sometimes not having the chance to say their final goodbyes. Staff at Big Pit National Coal Museum supported the clap for carers campaign by displaying a special rainbow banner on the Museum's Headgear.

As the pandemic worsened, we launched **Art in Hospitals - NHS Decides**, where we invited hospital staff to choose pieces from the national art collection to provide inspiration and solace for staff and patients. Overwhelmingly, the favourite theme was nature, and a selection of paintings was made that would bring the magic of the outdoors into hospital spaces, with high-quality, large-scale reproductions that stretched from floor to ceiling. We continue to hold conversations with Health Boards across Wales, finding new approaches to ensure that the national art collection can be used by NHS teams and patients in a way that works for them, both online and in the workplace.

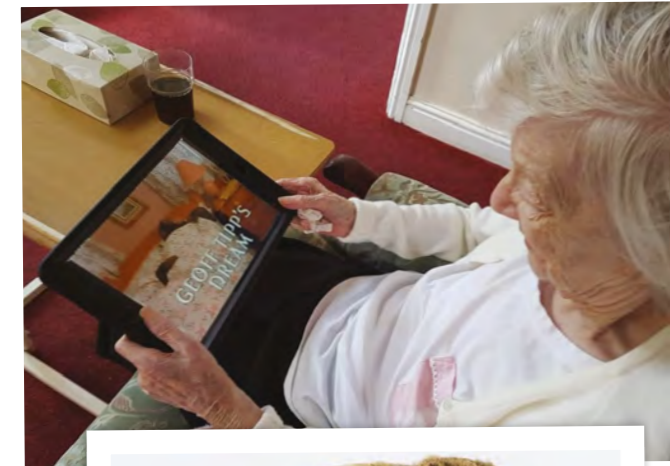


*'We feel like art has been incredibly important... to help people with their physical, mental and spiritual rehabilitation. Having these paintings on the wall really does make a difference, not only for the patients but the staff love them too and it really makes us feel good when we're walking around. My hope is in the future that we design hospitals to sit within art galleries rather than add art to hospitals.'*

**Dr Liza, Medical Lead at Ysbyty'r Seren, Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board's Field Hospital**

# Objects of Comfort

The project **Objects of Comfort** was developed in partnership with the Older Person's Commissioner, the Alzheimer's Society, Innovate Trust and the Greater Gwent Health, Social Care and Well-being Partnership.



The initiative invited people to respond to items from the collections and to share their own objects – things that bring solace, evoke memories or help improve their mood or well-being during times of stress and hardship.

We also collaborated with the 3 Nations Dementia Working Group and the Alzheimer's Society to move a number of our initiatives online, in order to support individuals living with dementia during self-isolation. Initiatives included digital dementia-friendly tours and ways of collecting memories and stories around objects selected by participants. Our intergenerational group continues to meet virtually, with the young people supporting others living with dementia during this very challenging time.

Downloadable resources linked to the collections are now available for care settings, to generate conversations and stimulate happy memories for those at risk of social isolation. The resources were developed and piloted with groups and care homes in Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent and Cardiff.

*'Objects of Comfort provides a unique way to connect people living in care homes with Amgueddfa Cymru's collections. Activities in care homes are crucial in helping older people to have a good quality of life ... I would urge care homes to get involved with the campaign and utilise the excellent resources that have been developed by Amgueddfa Cymru.'*

**Heléna Herklots CBE,**  
Older People's Commissioner for Wales



# Working with Volunteers

The main goal of the **Volunteering Programme** is to engage with the diverse communities of Wales, and over the past year we have found new ways to keep our volunteers up to date and involved with our work.



We converted our Volunteers Week celebrations in June 2020 into an online programme which included quizzes, challenges, a panel discussion and light-hearted workshops. Some volunteers have been able to continue volunteering from home, including the Craft Club volunteers, who have been busy producing textile items for our exhibitions and sharing tips for making PPE. Altogether, we supported 498 volunteers, who provided 11,113 hours of volunteering in 2020/21.

As well as launching new e-volunteering roles, lockdown also gave us time to look at future volunteering projects, including introducing new volunteer ambassador and alumni roles. During the pandemic people across the UK have been supporting professional carers, and there are around 400,000 unpaid carers in Wales. We have therefore been looking into a new volunteer role to support carers in accessing and contributing to our activities.

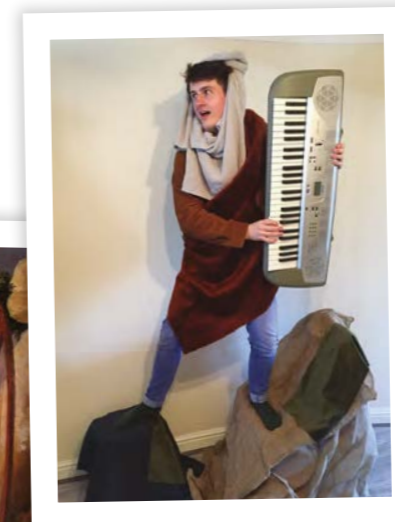
# Engaging with Young People

We have continued to engage with young people throughout the pandemic and adapted our learning programme to create innovative, blended models of working.

We introduced a **free learning programme** for schools, where our most popular workshops were adapted to provide virtual visits for pupils across Wales. In 2020/21 we engaged with 54,845 school pupils through our formal learning programmes and resources, both in person and online, and our online models have been shared with the National Library of Wales and Cadw.

In April 2020 we launched a new Twitter account, **@Amgueddfa\_Learn**. Our learning team posted daily activities encouraging families to be creative and take part in hands-on activities inspired by the collections. We have also worked with the Consortia and BBC Bitesize to support the development of resources and activities for schoolchildren. By working with schools during lockdown, we developed creative collaborations to support the new curriculum and initiatives to support young people at risk of school exclusion.

In May 2020 we launched the competition **Minecraft Your Museum**, to encourage young people to use their imagination while self-isolating. The project was run in partnership with schools and Hwb, the Welsh Government's distance learning platform. The winning video received over 3.5k views on Twitter with 1.1k viewing it in Welsh. As a result, Amgueddfa Cymru won the Kids in Museums Best Social Media Activity award ahead of 400 other entries.



Working with charities, local authorities and partners such as Torfaen Play, we produced and distributed 1,000 **learning packs** to families who are experiencing digital poverty or are unable to access online materials. We also engaged with 161,113 young people, adults, families and early years children, in person and digitally.

Amgueddfa Cymru is one of twelve UK organizations involved in the initiative Kick the Dust, supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The aim is to make heritage relevant to the lives of young people aged 11-25. During lockdown we worked with the **Amgueddfa Cymru Producers** and partners Children in Wales, Promo Cymru, Barnardo's, Llamau, Jukebox Collective and the Sub-Sahara Advisory Panel on various activities, including capturing young people's responses to the pandemic in a youth-led exhibition. We also collaborated with Llamau to support young people in danger of homelessness, challenging their clients to recreate famous works of art from the collections.

**Amgueddfa Cymru Producers** are independent young people aged 18-25 from diverse backgrounds, who act as agents of change. They have been involved in several strands of our work over the past year, ensuring that youth engagement is at the heart of everything we do. They have been involved in writing policies, have been consulted with for strategies, helped to interview for tenders and jobs and mentored senior staff. They have also taken the lead on developing new policies around the use of social media for young people, and in March 2021 launched their own Instagram account called **@Bloedd\_AC**.

A youth-led fashion photo shoot was held in the gardens of St Fagans National Museum of History. Eight young people of colour attended, and images were shared on social media as part of **Black History Month**.

A **collaborative LGBTQ+ friendly** costume-making project with the Andrew Logan Museum of Sculpture, which started before lockdown, also moved online. The conversations between young participants are increasingly focused not just on celebration, but also on activism and equalities. The project has collected stories of young trans people called *Trawsnewid*.



# Adapting our Exhibitions

When the first national lockdown was announced in March 2020, we were in the final stages of preparing **Becoming Richard Burton**, the first major exhibition anywhere about one of Wales's most iconic names and faces.

In partnership with Swansea University, where the Richard Burton Archives are held, the original exhibition gathered material from around the world to tell the story of Burton's fame, wealth, success, decline and legacy.

Because the exhibition could only be open for a few days, we developed a digital version. While this did not replicate the experience of visiting our galleries in person, we have created an interactive experience, where users can engage with the Richard Burton story as a complement to the physical exhibition. The date of the physical exhibition has been extended until October 2021, so people will still be able to enjoy it when we re-open National Museum Cardiff.

Other work that continued during lockdown was installing **Artes Mundi 9** at National Museum Cardiff, with an extended run until September 2021. The exhibition features work in a diverse range of media from the six competition finalists, including: Firelei Báez from the Dominican

Republic, Dineo Seshee Bopape from South Africa, Japanese artist Meiro Koizumi, Puerto Rican artist Beatriz Santiago Muñoz, Prabhakar Pachpute from India and Carrie Mae Weems, one of the most influential contemporary American artists working today. *Artes Mundi 9* will open when lockdown restrictions allow, and has been available to experience from home since 15 March 2021.

We are proud to have a **long-standing relationship with Japan**. In 2018 we developed the major exhibition *Kizuna: Japan, Wales, Design*, with the Japanese Government Cultural Agency, the National Museum of Japan and the National Museum of Japanese History. It was the UK's largest ever exhibition of Japanese art and design outside London, and celebrated the four-hundred-year-old relationship between Wales and Japan. Attracting nearly 60,000 visitors over a twelve-week period, the exhibition has led to further collaboration with the Embassy of Japan in London and cultural organizations in Japan.

In December 2020 the First Minister of Wales, the Rt Hon. Mark Drakeford, joined Ambassador Yasumasa Nagamine, Japan's Ambassador to the UK, for the first formal planting in Wales of the **6,500 cherry trees** gifted to public parks and schools across the UK, celebrating the enduring friendship between the UK and Japan. St Fagans National Museum of History received twenty trees, some of the first to be planted in Wales. The Sakura Cherry Trees were distributed to over sixty-five schools and colleges all over Wales and to the cities of Cardiff, Bangor, St Asaph, Swansea and Newport. The National Botanic Garden of Wales and Conwy Castle, twinned with Himeji Castle in Japan, also received trees.

At the end of 2020 artworks by Cézanne, Corot, Millet, Monet and Renoir left National Museum Cardiff on a **five-venue tour of Japan**. Our conservation team adapted the existing historic frames to reduce the risk of damage to the paintings from changing environmental conditions. These steps have been invaluable in ensuring the safety of the works, which we had to send unaccompanied. This is the latest example of how we have successfully adapted our ways of working to maintain the loans programme.

We are looking forward to hosting an exhibition in partnership with **BBC Cymru Wales**, illustrating the role the BBC has played in the everyday lives of people in Wales over the last 100 years. The exhibition will take place in Cardiff between autumn 2022 and spring 2023, coinciding with BBC centenary celebrations. It also marks 100 years of broadcasting in Wales which began on 13 February 1923 with the first public radio broadcast from Cardiff. We are currently trawling through the BBC's extensive archive and collections for images, film clips and objects, as well as asking the public to share their BBC memories.



# Developing Online Events

In September 2020 we held our first ever **Digital Food Festival**.



The multi-platform, two-day Food Festival celebrated content from hundreds of local producers, independent businesses, partner organizations and charities from all over Wales. Over 4,000 viewers enjoyed a diverse music programme, curated by our partners Tafwyl and BBC Horizons. Over a thousand participants joined the digital marketplace, and hundreds of viewers joined panel discussions on both days. Over the weekend we ran baking and yoga courses and beer tasting sessions in Welsh and English.

We have also had a fantastic response to our **Museum Sleepovers from Home**. We have held three Dino Nights since August 2020, and they continue to sell out with over 800 families taking part each time.



The event gives families an opportunity to explore National Museum Cardiff like never before, and includes activities such as den-building, baking, live shows, a Q&A session with a curator, a 360-degree tour of *The Evolution of Wales*, a quiz and a dino-yoga class. We have since developed two new themes for the virtual sleepovers, including Exploring the Natural World From Home and Outer Space From Home.

As part of our **Black History 365** events we hosted *In Conversation with David Oluogba and the Sub-Sahara Advisory Panel* online in November 2020. We have also collaborated with Artes Mundi and the Amgueddfa Cymru Producers on Lates: PITCH BLACK events, showcasing the work of four Black artists and performers in Wales.

**Pride** events across the country were also very different this year. In 2019, Glitter Cymru organized the first BAME Pride to be held in Wales and donated their banner and photographs of the event to the national collections. In 2020 they held a virtual event, and we contributed a short video thanking them for donating their banner, and took part in their #BetterAllies pledge. We also contributed to Pride Cymru's virtual event in Cardiff, held 24-30 August, which included hosting a Queer Virtual Tour of the art, history and archaeology collections. The event built on the Queer Tours we had started in March 2020.



The move to holding events online meant we had to adapt how we collected items from Pride. We have therefore been collecting digitally, and have worked with some of the organizations involved in Pride to show how Wales's LGBTQIA+ communities have responded and adapted to the COVID-19 crisis. We were delighted when Mark Etheridge, Curator (History & Archaeology), who has been developing this work, was included as a 'rising star' on the **2020 Pinc List** of the most influential LGBTQIA+ people in Wales, in recognition of his work.

In November 2020 we supported the Hindu Cultural Association Wales in **celebrating Diwali** across our social media platforms, attracting over 7,000 engagements online. We have since included some elements of the celebrations into our collections, including video content of the food, rangoli patterns and Kids' Lockdown Diaries.

In partnership with the National Centre for Learning Welsh we launched **Ar Lafar**, our Welsh learners' festival, online. We were also the first in Wales to issue guidelines on how to successfully use simultaneous translation on the virtual platform Zoom. The guidelines were noted as a form of best practice in the Welsh Language Commissioner's Advisory Note on facilitating bilingual digital meetings.



# Developing the National Collections

In October 2020 we launched **Cynfas**, our first ever digital arts magazine, to support people's health and well-being through arts and culture.

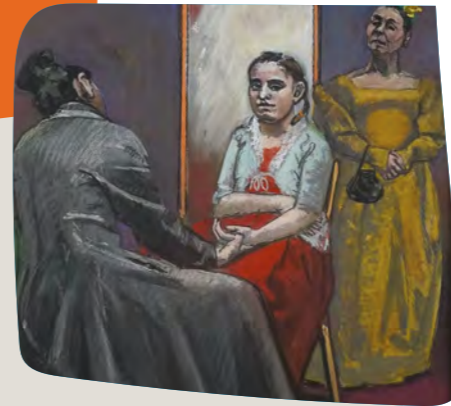
The magazine is the latest initiative, as part of the **Celf ar y Cyd** ('Art in Collaboration') project, launched in partnership with the Arts Council of Wales and the Welsh Government. Amgueddfa Cymru's art collection belongs to everyone in Wales, and this project engages a range of voices in a Wales-wide conversation about the national collection, and will strengthen a sense of shared ownership and reach out to new communities during these difficult times.

The pandemic has changed how we interact with the world, and our hope is that people of all ages will be inspired in this new, digital way of looking at the collections.

Also part of Celf ar y Cyd, the Instagram campaign **#Art100Celf** invited people to choose their favourite artworks from a curated selection of 100 pieces. The top thirty favourites will form an exhibition that will start at National Museum Cardiff and tour to other parts of Wales in 2021.

Over the past year, we received numerous **acquisitions** including an important group of **21 views of north Wales**, painted by Paul Sandby in the early 1770s. He had toured the area in 1771 in the company of the young landowner and art patron Sir Watkin Williams-Wynn of Wynnstay in Denbighshire. These views played a ground-breaking role in popularising Wales as a tourist destination, presenting it as an economically active, 'picturesque' and 'sublime' country rather than the impoverished and barbarous region of earlier prejudicial stereotypes. The acquisition was made possible by generous support from the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the Art Fund and a bequest from Mary Cashmore, a long-standing supporter of Amgueddfa Cymru.

Our long-standing partners the **Derek Williams Trust** purchased two important works by Paula Rego. The Portuguese-born artist has earned a distinguished reputation with her characteristically unsettling pictures, which suggest ambiguous relationships and uncertain narratives, told from a female perspective.



The Trust acquired two of Rego's pastels from the series *The Life Cycle of the Virgin Mary*, which she created in 2002 after being invited by the Portuguese President to make work for the chapel in the official Palace of Bélem. Rego completed twelve works, eight to be installed in the chapel and four for herself.

Two recently discovered, rare oil sketches by **Welsh artist Thomas Jones** (1742-1803) have also entered the national art collection. *Welsh Landscape with Lead Mines*, painted around 1775-6, is an important early representation of Welsh industry – a unique subject among Jones's surviving paintings. The painting hints at the impact of the dawning industrial age on the mid-Wales landscape. *View on the Wye* features a boating scene on the beautiful River Wye, once voted the 'nation's favourite river', and a Site of Special Scientific Interest. For centuries the river has attracted artists, writers and tourists, particularly as part of the fashionable picturesque tours. Both paintings were purchased for the national collection earlier this year and were kindly donated as part of a legacy gift.





# Celebrating Milestones

In May 2020 Amgueddfa Cymru achieved the **Investors in People accreditation**, meaning that every single member of staff is involved in supporting one another and doing their best to make our work better.

We now want to make sure we can keep making changes and keep improving, as we work towards the next level of our Investors in People accreditation.

In 2020 we also celebrated **15 years since the National Waterfront Museum** in Swansea opened. To mark this we shared some of the Museum's more unexpected initiatives, from the development of the GRAFT community garden to becoming a Museum of Sanctuary. We also commissioned a poem, with the help of the people of Swansea, inviting the many communities we interact with and support to share how the Museum has played an important part in their lives.

It was also **150 years since the opening of the Gilfach Ddu** building at the National Slate Museum. Built in 1870 as the engineering workshop for Dinorwig slate quarry, the workshop catered for all the quarry's repair and maintenance work.

Today, the workshop tells a broader story of the north Wales slate industry and the communities that grew around it, which are a key part of our national story.

The National Slate Museum marked another milestone, as the **quarrymen's houses celebrated their 21st birthday**. The four houses, no's 1-4 Fron Haul, are originally from Tanygrisiau, a small village near Blaenau Ffestiniog. They are a prime example of the type of houses that quarrymen and their families lived in at the height of the industry in the 1860s. The arrival of the houses was one of the Museum's most important projects, and part of the work was made possible thanks to the National Lottery Heritage Fund. By now, over two-and-a-half million people have probably visited the houses, and they play a strategic role in interpreting the heritage and lives of the quarrying communities.

# Diversifying our Income

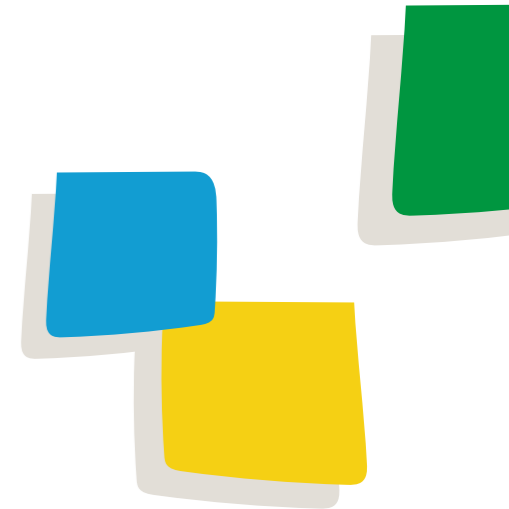
Museums all over the UK took part in the national crowdfunding appeal **#SupportOurMuseums**, to raise income lost in the wake of the pandemic.

In November 2020, as part of the crowdfunding campaign, we raised over £3,800. The money raised will be a huge support for our ongoing outreach and engagement work with communities across Wales, which has been more important than ever over the past year.

In 2020 we launched a new **Membership Scheme**. The scheme is in addition to our existing Patrons Scheme and aims to appeal to family visitors. It offers families across Wales exclusive benefits and discounts and we hope to attract a new generation of supporters. Benefits include a membership card and booklet with information about all eight Amgueddfa Cymru sites, a quarterly digital newsletter, a discount at our shops and cafes and free admission to paid-for exhibitions.

We also launched the **Business Membership Scheme**, providing an opportunity for businesses to become closely involved with our work. It includes sponsorship for exhibitions or education projects, and corporate hospitality opportunities in unique spaces including dinners, concerts, private tours and conferences. We aim to create a group of business partners who are committed to supporting our exciting learning and exhibitions programmes, by developing partnerships that are designed around the business strategies of key companies in Wales.

Our work this last year was made possible thanks to support from National Lottery Heritage Fund, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, the players of People's Postcode Lottery and the Welsh Government, as well as gifts from trusts, foundations, individuals and businesses.



# Looking to the Future

Over the course of 2020/21 we have been developing a new **10-Year Strategy and brand**, to be launched in 2021.

Between 3 August and 12 October 2020 we carried out an extensive public consultation programme, to help inform the goals of the strategy and the accompanying action plans.

The process was underpinned by our values – creativity, responsibility, integrity, inclusion and collaboration. It was the largest public consultation we have carried out. We have been bold and ambitious in its delivery, with participation at the heart of the process. We aimed for cultural democracy, developing and adapting the process to ensure that as many people as possible could contribute.

- We received 751 survey responses, from a mixture of individuals and organizations.
  - 74 participants took part in 13 focus groups, including:
    - 40 individuals from partner organizations
    - 20 volunteers
    - 14 young people.
  - We sent 850 family activity consultation packs to community organizations, and 150 were returned.
- The process received:
- 5,772 website views
  - 46,572 Twitter impressions
  - 39,610 Facebook impressions.

Our vision – **Inspiring People, Changing Lives** – will be at the heart of the new strategy and brand. The strategy will set out how we will continue to be a vital part of Wales’s cultural infrastructure, crucial for the process of national healing and renewal. We are moving away from the twentieth-century model of a museum as a holder of objects that operates only within its own walls, towards a new model that ensures that culture is accessible, relevant and engaging to communities across Wales.

We will work with people and communities across Wales, through the collections, public programmes and partnerships to:

**Make sure everyone is represented**



**Help safeguard and restore nature and our environment**



**Support well-being through inspirational spaces and experiences**

**Inspire creativity and learning for life**



**Discover and explore digitally**



**Build global connections**



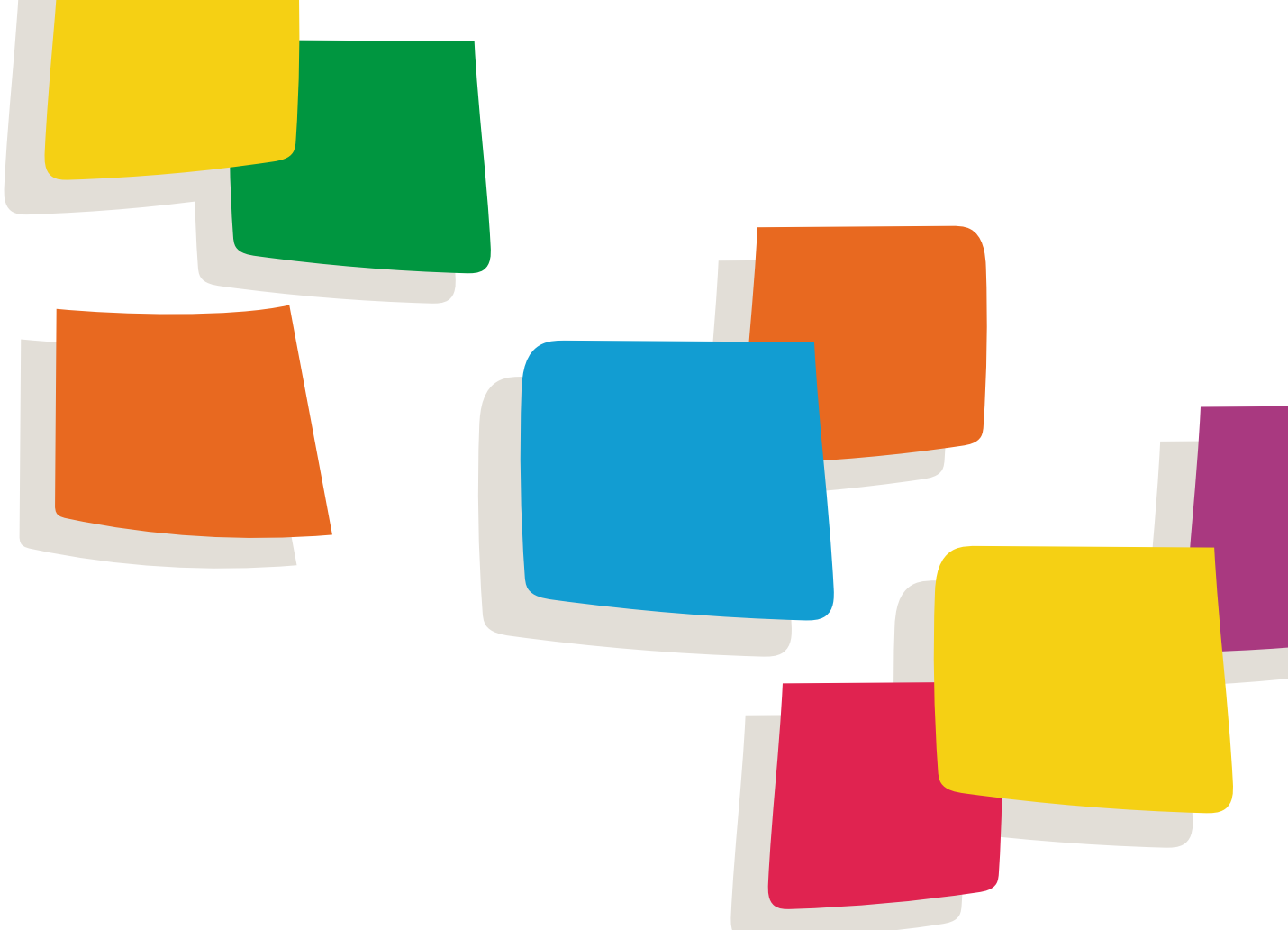


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Page 12 - *The Bard* by Harrison, J after Louthembourg, P.J.de

Page 14 - Richard's first professional photograph, 1945 Richard Burton Archives, Swansea University

Page 17 - '21 views of north Wales' by Paul Sandby

Page 18 - *Death of the Virgin (Virgin Mary Series)* 2002. Paula Rego (b. 1935)

Page 18 - *View on the Wye* Early 1770s. Purchased 2020. ©Miles Wynn Cato Gallery – Welsh Art

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