

Cân y Mynyddoedd

Canción de las Montañas

Song of the Mountains

2019 has been designated the UNESCO Year of Indigenous Languages. Welsh is one of the oldest indigenous languages of Europe, and we want to celebrate her in every way we can. Colombia, too, is rich in indigenous languages, and the legacy of indigenous culture is felt throughout the country in a million ways. The way of life of the mountain campesinos on their small mixed farms is strikingly similar, too, the culture of the Gwerin in rural Wales. So – Cerrig Camu are going to Wales this October to perform, to learn, to make connections, and above all to make friends.

The aim of our initiative is to open channels of communication, develop understandings and collaboration, and create new opportunities for traditional musicians and audiences in rural Colombia and rural Wales. We'll achieve this through an active cultural collaboration between traditional musicians in the two cultures. The numbers involved in this first stage will be small, keeping our footfall – economic as well as cultural – as light as possible, and creating a series of events that small rural communities can welcome with minimum disruption. We'll be playing in a big-city folk festival, and also in mountain villages and even on farms across rural Santander.

The project is not designed to be a 'one-off' series of events creating an impact and soon forgotten. It will act as the best kind of benign cultural collision, and will engender new exciting encounters in the future.

The initiative is growing through the following stages:

- **May – October 2019.** An exchange of material and ideas between the musicians concerned, which will enable them to explore convergences and contrasts, shared themes and different approaches, between their two traditions. They will also be able to discuss and experiment on the opportunities to share and combine a performance.
- **October – November 2019.** A short tour by the three Welsh musicians named below, and their Colombian introducer/ translator, of two regions in rural Colombia, supported by the Colombian traditional musicians participating in the project. This will give an opportunity for the musicians to play together, to further develop their understandings of each other's culture, to develop working friendships and to explore the responses of the audiences they address. The performances will take place in Campesino villages, indigenous communities, universities and concert halls.

- **November 2019 – July 2020.** Informed and inspired by the experiences on tour, the two sets of musicians will work at distance again, developing and choreographing a shared performance which will showcase the two traditions to a Welsh audience, and form the basis of a CD recording.
- **July- August 2020.** A second shared tour, this time of rural communities in Wales, will be combined with recording sessions and media opportunities.

Any initiative of this kind is as strong as its partners, whose participation, support and advice will be invaluable throughout. We cannot thank **Wales Arts International** enough for their support and advice – they have made this venture possible. Others include:

- **The Arts Council of Wales**
- **Fiesta Tiple en la Noche, Bucaramanga**
- **The Autonomous Indigenous University of Colombia**
- **Simacota Annual Festival of Culture and Sport**
- **Trac**
- **Theatr Felinfach**

Colombia Tour Schedule

Date	Activity	Whereabouts	Comments	Also involved
15th – 16th October	Travel to Colombia	Birmingham - Bogota	Night bus to San Gil	
17 th	Recuperation day.	Pinchote	La Vega, Pinchote – between Bogota and Bucaramanga	
18th – 19th	Festival in Bucaramanga	Bucaramanga	Two days of gigging and jamming	Al Pie de la Cuesta & 10 other bands
20 th	Barbecue and informal concert	Pinchote	Evening gig	Al Pie de la Cuesta
21 st	Recuperation day	Pinchote	Robin's house – between Bogota and Bucaramanga	
22nd – 23rd	Independence day Festival in Simacota	Simacota (near Pinchote)	Two days of gigging and jamming	Al Pie de la Cuesta & other performers
24th – 25th	Travel back to Wales	Bus to Bogota, then Bogota – Birmingham		

Wales tour schedule (to be confirmed)

July 26th – August 9th 2020

Venues and activities to be arranged, but the tour will certainly include participation in the National Eisteddfod of Wales in Tregaron, Ceredigion.

Above all, we are determined that the initiative will not be the sort of ‘one-off’ event that flares briefly like a shooting star, creating expectations doomed to disappointment, but the beginning of a robust, sustainable and mutually respectful interaction.

The performers

1} From Wales: The Welsh performers taking part have been selected partly because of the range of their talents and their professional expertise; partly because they have travelled together before, sharing Welsh culture with audiences in the Basque Country and the islands of the west of Ireland; but above all because of their outstanding people skills and their own experiences growing up in the mountains of rural Wales. They are:

Osian Morris: Osian builds dry-stone walls in the mountains of north Wales as his day job, and has written songs since ‘before he can remember’. A blues-influenced singer-guitarist whose work has often been described as ‘magical’, he communicates the beauty and spirituality of rural Wales in songs that once heard, can never be forgotten. He writes and sings exclusively in the Welsh language. Osian has performed in the Basque Country and the west of Ireland as well as across Wales.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=7KSzTjWqCbE



Lestyn Tyne: Lestyn is an outstanding young fiddler, singer and interpreter of traditional Welsh music. Still only 21, he has already made two albums with the folk band ‘Pantrobas’, and has performed widely in Wales and across Europe. Born on Ynys Enlli (Bardsey Island) Lestyn is also a published poet, writer, and editor of the



cultural magazine 'Y Stamp'. He has won several awards already for both his music and his writing. Like Oisín, Iestyn comes from a farming background in the mountains of north Wales, and has performed in festivals and concert halls across the country. His music is at the same time deeply traditional, and innovative and eclectic.

<https://fandalism.com/iestyntyne/dPob>

<https://song.link/i/1410217093>

Gwilym Bowen Rhys: Gwilym comes from Bethesda in north Wales. He began performing as a young teenager, as lead vocalist in a well-known Welsh-language rock band, which he did for several years. Since turning to folk music, he has performed the traditional music of Wales across the world, including North America as well as Europe. He was a member of 'TOSTA BANDA' which celebrated Donostia/ San Sebastian European



Capital of Culture across Europe, and his new CD has been Wales' best-selling traditional album of 2017, and voted 'Album of the Year'. Singer, guitarist, fiddler and (occasionally) harpist, his energy and charisma enliven any performance.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=VVucKsShjlk

www.youtube.com/watch?v=04fbfomtQDs

2) From Colombia:

Camilo Hernandez: A guitar and tiple player from Bucaramanga, whose greatest strength is wide knowledge of Colombian folk idioms and rhythms. He is a cultural promoter and entrepreneur, and creator of the “Tiple at night” festival



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Carlos García Pino: Carlos, a pianist, was also born in Bucaramanga, in 1981. He worked for several cruise lines, playing jazz and blues, and then came back to Colombia, driven to learn the folk language of his country. He performed in the UIS international piano festival in 2018, and his repertoire includes classical,

jazz and folk music.

Diego Téllez: At the age of 7, he was already an accomplished guitar and tiple player, winning contests all over Colombia. During his university years, he worked with several acclaimed dancing groups, such as Macondo, GIFOS and Danzas Uis with whom he toured Colombia. He has been part of several important cultural gatherings, not only as a performer but as a judge.



Karina Archila : (Dancer and percussionist) A journalist by trade, she is head of the “Ballet Integral KT”. In 2018, she was in San Pedro En El Espinal, and was elected ‘folklore princess’ of Santander.

Sebastián Peña: A self taught musician,

Sebastian has performed in many Colombian folk music contests and festivals. A multi-instrumentalist, he excels at guitar, tiple, and bass guitar, playing Colombian, Caribbean and Andean folk music. He is a professor of the Spanish Language.

