



ATRIUM



STOP

# Creative Industries

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## Iconic Cymru

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The UK has a strong international reputation in the creative industries with growth over the last eight years running at double the pace of the economy as a whole. Almost £15 billion of exports are generated from this sector. Britain is creative and Wales plays a significant part in that success and is a vibrant breeding ground for creativity.

Creative industries are a broad range of disciplines including advertising, architecture, design, designer fashion, music, software, computer games, publishing, film, TV and radio, performing arts, art and crafts. These disciplines do not exist in isolation, and increasingly academic institutions are breaking down the silos of single-subject faculties into conglomerates.

The University of Glamorgan has forged the Cardiff School of Creative & Cultural Industries bringing together the creative disciplines of Art & Design, Media & Communication and Drama & Music.

This is not just a re-branding exercise lumping faculties together. This is a challenge and a call to ever greater creativity through collaboration across fields and an interdisciplinary ethos that is central to securing a sound appreciation for how the variety of different areas

come together in the real world.

Can creativity be taught? Professor Peter Robertson, Dean of Faculty at the Cardiff School, said "This is the big question. Edward de Bono wrote about young children aged two to five being at the height of their creativity but by the time they come to college most of that has been lost through the stimulus and need to conform and pass exams. At Atrium we collapse the barriers to create an environment in which people will try things out and have fun."

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Encouraging people to be creative is a key challenge but equally important is to combine that flair with employability.

"Each year in the UK 46,000 students graduate in media related subjects but only 5% move directly into media industry jobs. There's a gap between the graduates and the needs of the employers and one of those gaps which we are seeking to fix is the ability for people to work across disciplines and in teams."

Wales is an inherently creative country with a language that sings to you and scenery to inspire. It's a place of little inhibition where it is cool to be in the choir and write poetry, in part fostered by the Eisteddfod tradition. Wales has a strong reputation for excellence not only in music but also in fashion, animation and screenwriting. Relative to the size of population there is an especially high proportion of people graduating in the creative industries.

Combined with other attributes such as relatively low cost housing, high quality of life and easy access to commercial centres Wales is an attractive place for the creative industry.

The Cardiff School of Creative & Cultural Industries aims to be the shop





window into the creativity of the country and the new ATRiuM campus building encompasses that spirit. The building in central Cardiff is one of those unforgettable designs likened to an Apple Mac. By coincidence the school and the building is also home to the Apple Academy for Wales.

Part of the iconic building has been converted for things such as editing suites. This specially-designed building contains cutting edge technology and industry-standard studios, as well as state-of-the-art teaching and learning spaces and facilities. As you walk past you can look through the glass walls and see people being creative, there is no option of being a shy and retiring student here.

Some academic subjects lend themselves to huge classes in large lecture theatres and lots of time in the library. But this is not the case at the ATRiuM. “We provide a practice oriented environment a bit like a teaching hospital. This is not a mass market where a hundred students of fashion hang on the words of a lecturer and spend fifteen minutes a week with a tutor. We need to provide a very individual and interactive service” said Peter Roberston.

The world is constantly changing with technology breaking down barriers and creating all sorts of opportunities. “A former music technology student has applied his knowledge and skill to set up a thriving business developing mobile ring tones to suit the specific requirements of the Asian market. Ten years ago that sort of business would have been inconceivable” said Professor Peter Robertson. “Who knows what will be round the corner?”



## *Boyes Rees Architects Wins Commercial Architecture Award 2007*

Meryl Cubley



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Boyes Rees Architects is the recipient of a CAA award for the design of the new Optometry & Vision Sciences building at Cardiff University. The project was completed in March 2007, and represents the largest investment ever made by Cardiff University with a project value of £20 million, housing all research and teaching facilities for what is recognised as the foremost facility in Europe and also includes a self-contained, practicing optometrists facility open to the public.

The design includes 'stepping' to reduce the impact on the surrounding environment, and has additional features that reduce impact on the surrounding area by creating a visual synchronisation include the use of terracotta (the area is red-brick residential) on the external walls and vertical sheets of glazing 'reaching up' towards the sky. The structure also makes use of an energy-saving ground source heating system; an innovative piping

system lying over 100 metres below ground, using the Earth's latent heat for temperature control.

A recent move to offices covering the entire fourth floor of Greyfriars House was to accommodate client demand and increased business, and further plans for expansion. With a projected turnover of over £4m this year and a balanced client base spanning the public and private sector, the firm has worked on a comprehensive portfolio of award-winning, innovative design projects, consistently making a positive contribution to the built environment both locally and nationally.

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The Technium for Sustainable Technologies, at Baglan Energy Park, Port Talbot (completed in 2005, project value £6m) accommodates businesses active in innovation, research and development in sustainable technologies, and occupies a two acre lakeside site, highly visible from the M4. As home to sustainable technology research and commerce, the design of the impressive building incorporates sustainable design features, such as a water metre that has been installed to all supplies within the building, and proximity detection shut-off provided to water supply in toilet areas. The design aim is to achieve a predicted water consumption of 9.5m<sup>3</sup> per person per year. Over 50% of windows to offices can be opened, facilitating an even distribution of fresh air in the office areas. Due to the depth of the building, a secondary atrium is incorporated to promote 'stack effect' ventilation.

The energy strategy for the building has been designed to achieve CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions between 49-40kg/m<sup>2</sup>/yv and at least 80% of roof specification achieves an 'A' overall



rating set-out in the Green Guide to specification. Structural timber comes from sustainable managed sources and at least 80% of roof specification achieves an 'A' overall rating set-out in the Green Guide. Whilst externally, the innovative design of the building reflects the sustainable technology it houses; the powerful curved glazed wall making a dramatic visual statement, with the contrasting solid cladding façade and the simple, sail-like, standing seam profile roof give the building a sense of lightness.

Completed in December of 2005 with a project value of £10m, the Children's Hospital for Wales in Cardiff is the first hospital to be designed and built for children in Wales. The first phase of this unique building was opened in 2005 and includes two 25 bed medical wards and one 16 bed paediatric cancer ward. There are treatment rooms; an oncology outpatients unit; play and education rooms and parent's accommodation and a dedicated 'family room' allowing parents and one other child to 'live in' to reduce stress and aid recovery. A suite of six double rooms for parents is provided on the top floor.

The focus for the design was on the overall experience of the children, aiming to create an inviting, warm and stimulating environment for children in which healthcare happens to occur. Subsequently the use of colour and art has been applied to the building's external design and features and as a central focus within the interior. The structure contains a number of unique features such as low level viewing panels in all doors, a water feature in the main entrance and Noah's Ark 'themed' artwork on each floor.

Other recent projects include:

- Technium for Digital Media, Swansea
- Holiday Inn Express, Cardiff International Airport
- Refurbishment of DVLA, Swansea
- Celtic Springs Business Park, Newport
- Series of mixed-use developments in Swansea, Bristol and Leamington Spa.



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