

GYPSY, ROMA & TRAVELLER  
ARTS & CULTURE 2017  
NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM



ROMANI  
CULTURAL & ARTS COMPANY

DELEGATE GUIDE

FRIDAY 20 JANUARY 2017 – TALIESIN ARTS CENTRE  
SWANSEA UNIVERSITY, SINGLETON PARK, SWANSEA SA2 8PZ

Dear Delegate,

The Romani Cultural & Arts Company is proud to welcome you to the Gypsy, Roma & Traveller Arts & Culture National Symposium 2017. The event is hosted by Taliesin Arts Centre and features artists Artur Conka and Billy Kerry, together with distinguished guests including Rosamaria E. Kostic Cisneros from the Centre for Dance Research, Coventry University, Franziska Sauerbrey, co-Project Initiator and co-Director of RomArchive – Digital Archive of the Roma, and Rhodri Talfan Davies, Director of BBC Cymru. The symposium will be chaired by the RCAC's Arts Developer, Dr Daniel Baker. This varied range of speakers with their diverse areas of expertise aim to stimulate conversation with the audience regarding changing views of GRT arts and their wider implications for society within the contemporary climate.

This exciting event takes place in the context of the Gypsy Maker 2 project; a unique RCAC venture that facilitates the development of innovative works by established and emerging Gypsy, Roma and Traveller artists. From its outset the project has stimulated dialogue across communities about the ways in which art continues to inform the lives of individuals and communities today. Today's symposium continues this aim.

For this second phase of the project the RCAC has commissioned new bodies of work by Artur Conka, Roma, and Billy Kerry, Romani. We are pleased to be able to present both artists' work in Taliesin's Oriel Ceri Richards Gallery space during the symposium.



***Isaac Blake, Director, Romani Cultural & Arts Company  
(as a child on the Shirenewton site, Cardiff)***



# General Information

## How to Get Here by Car

The routes to Swansea are very straightforward. You can get directions from: [www.maps.google.co.uk](http://www.maps.google.co.uk). The postcode for Taliesin Arts Centre, Swansea University is SA2 8PZ.

## Parking

We regret that we are only able to offer Monday-Friday daytime parking for Blue Badge holders. Nearby public parking is available at Brynmill Recreation Ground and the Pub on the Pond. Outside of office hours, visitors are welcome to park in any of the campus car parks. Please see map for details.

## Visit us by bike

There are cycle racks outside of Taliesin located next to both the Digital Technium and the Egypt Centre.

## Visit us by bus

Bus numbers 2A, 3A, 4, 4A, 8, 14, 41 and 42 serve the university from the city centre Quadrant bus station. In addition, bus numbers 2, 2B and 3 stop on the Mumbles Road near to the University. For further information on the local bus services, see <http://www.firstgroup.com/ukbus/wales/swwales/home/index.php>

**Visit us by train** [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk) Swansea railway station is 45 minutes' walk from Taliesin

**Air** Cardiff International Airport is 45 minutes by road from Taliesin. There are regular train and bus links from Bristol, Heathrow, Gatwick and other major UK airports.

**Assistance and medical help:** If you have any concerns during the day either speak to one of the stewards or someone in the registration area and you will be directed to the relevant staff. First Aid assistance will be available throughout the day.

**Security:** There are no cloakroom and storage facility available for delegates.

**Mobile Phones:** As a courtesy to speakers and other delegates, please ensure that all personal mobile devices are 'on silence' or are switched off during the events.

**Evaluation Form:** For quality assurance purposes and in order to improve our services, please complete the attached Evaluation Form and place in the relevant box at the registration desk at any point during the day.

# Symposium Agenda



9.00 **Registration**

9.30 **Welcome & Official Opening**

Isaac Blake - Director of the Romani Cultural & Arts Company  
Sybil Crouch - Head of Cultural Services of Taliesin Arts Centre

9.40 **Key Note Opening Speech**

Rhodri Talfan Davies - Director of BBC Cymru

10.00 **Panel I: Document & Archive**

Participants: Artur Conka & Franziska Sauerbrey, Chairperson: Dr Daniel Baker

11.30 **Break and networking opportunity**

11.45 **Panel II: Expression & interpretation**

Participants: Billy Kerry & Rosamaria Kostic Cisneros, Chairperson: Dr Daniel Baker

13.15 **Event Summary & Close**

Sybil Crouch, with Isaac Blake

**The Romani Cultural & Arts Company is grateful for the support of the following:**

Arts Council of Wales  
Art Central  
BBC Cymru  
BBC Children in Need  
Cult Cymru  
g39  
Heritage Lottery Fund  
Public Health Wales NHS Trust  
The Riverfront  
Santander Foundation  
Taliesin Arts Centre  
Welsh Government

# Speaker Biographies



## **Dr Daniel Baker**

Daniel Baker is an artist, curator and theorist. A Romani Gypsy born in Kent, he holds a PhD on the subject of Gypsy aesthetics from the Royal College of Art, London. Baker acted as exhibitor and advisor to the first and second Roma Pavilions; "Paradise Lost" and "Call the Witness" at the 52<sup>nd</sup> and 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennales respectively. Baker's practice examines the role of art in the enactment of social agency. His publications include *"We Roma: A Critical Reader in Contemporary art"* (2013) and *"Ex Libris"* (2009). Baker's work is exhibited internationally. His work can be found in collections across Europe, America, and Asia. Former Chair of the Gypsy Council (2006-9), Baker currently lives and works in London, UK.

## **Isaac Blake - Director - Romani Cultural & Arts Company, Cardiff**

Born a Romani Gypsy, Isaac Blake is a professional choreographer and Artistic Director of the Romani Cultural and Arts Company, which is currently funded by the BBC Children in Need, Big Lottery, Cardiff City Council and Newport City Council. In 2000 he received a scholarship to attend a 3 year undergraduate Dance Theatre Course at Laban in London. While at LABAN, Isaac worked with numerous artists and companies including Adventures in Motions Pictures (AMP), DV8 and Rambert. Since graduating from LABAN, Isaac has furthered his studies in New York and has choreographed performances at the Wales Millennium Centre and the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. Utilising the skills as an Artistic Director Isaac Blake has raised the necessary funds to take arts development onto both Gypsy / Traveller sites and gadjo (non-Gypsy) communities across Wales. This project is close to his heart knowing how artistically barren these sites can be. But using arts Isaac has found a way to engage with children and young people.

## **Rhodri Talfan Davies - Director - BBC Cymru**

Rhodri Talfan Davies was appointed Director of BBC Cymru Wales in September 2011. In his role, he oversees all BBC programming produced for Wales, including BBC Radio Wales, BBC Radio Cymru and extensive television output for S4C, BBC One Wales and BBC Two Wales. Originally from Cardiff, and a fluent Welsh speaker, Rhodri began his career as a sub-editor with the Western Mail newspaper in Cardiff before joining the BBC as a news trainee in 1993. Over the next six years, he worked as a news reporter and producer at a number of BBC before being appointed Head of Regional and Local Programmes at BBC West in 1999. Rhodri left the BBC in 2001 to lead the development of one of the world's earliest on- demand television services, known as HomeChoice. In 2004, his team won a UK BAFTA for the service's pioneering interactive facilities. Rhodri returned home to join BBC Wales in 2006. Until his appointment as Director, he led BBC Wales' strategy and marketing teams. Rhodri is an Honorary Doctorate of the University of South Wales, Vice President of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, and Chair of Creative Skillset Cymru.

# Speaker Biographies



## **Rosamaria Kostic Cisnero**

Dance Historian and Critic, Roma Scholar, Flamenco Historian and Peace Activist, Rosamaria graduated from the UW-Madison Dance Program and went on to complete her Master's in Dance History and Criticism from UNM-Albuquerque. Rosamaria is a professional dancer, choreographer and qualified teacher, who has lived and danced in various parts of the world and collaborated with many Flamenco greats and other leaders in the Dance field. She has taught throughout Europe and the US at places like UW-Madison, UIUC, Boston Conservatory, Brown University and at various other places in Germany, Spain and Turkey. She is a dance writer who makes regular contributions to Bachtrack Magazine and Flamenco News while also dancing with Protein Dance Co. Rosamaria is involved in various EU funded projects which aim to make education accessible to vulnerable groups and ethnic minorities. She believes that dance and music are great equalisers and can be used to engage and change society, resulting in a more peaceful world. Rosamaria is currently engaged in research at the Centre for Dance Research at Coventry University

## **Artur Conka**

Artur Conka is a photography graduate from the University of Derby. One of the few Roma to have documented his community from behind the lens Artur's photography and film making has focused on the plight of the Roma Gypsies and Travellers in Europe. He feels that it is important to give the Roma, so long without influence or consideration by those in power, a voice. Artur came to Britain in 1998 as an 8-year-old migrant. Originally from one of the poorest Roma communities in Slovakia, Artur returned years later to record how life had changed for its inhabitants during its decline. The result was his first documentary film 'Lunik IX'. Artur's work has appeared in various international publications including Huffington Post, The Independent, Vice Magazine, Foto8 Magazine, Vas.Cas.Sk, Creative Boom, Lab Kultur TV Magazine and Derby Evening Telegraph. Artur will produce a new body of work for GM2 continuing his original and innovative approach to filmmaking and photography.

## **Sybil Crouch**

Sybil Crouch had the privilege of working in the arts in Wales for more than 30 years in a range of roles including art teacher, community arts worker, Regional Arts Association officer & now celebrating 26 years as Director of Taliesin Arts Centre at Swansea University. Sybil also chaired the Arts Council of Wales for 4 (interesting) years. Although trained in the visual arts Sybil has developed a profound interest and passion for the performing arts and in socially engaged practice. Taliesin's role has developed substantially over the years and we have taken a very active role in supporting artists through a range of local as well as national and international projects. Sybil is passionate about widening opportunities for people to experience the arts, especially young people, and in removing barriers to enjoyment and participation. Sybil is also an elected councillor for the City & County of Swansea serving a city centre ward.

# Speaker Biographies



## **Billy Kerry**

Billy Kerry is an Artist and educator from Cambridge. Billy was trained at Chelsea College of Art and Design London, where he achieved a First class Degree (BA Hons) in Fine Art. Since graduating in 2009 Billy has been inspiring others by teaching and supporting at Cambridge Regional College. Kerry's eclectic practice narrates the close interrelation between artist and material; between body and object. Through his work Kerry investigates and challenges preconceived views of ethnicity, gender roles and constructed conformity. He employs diverse conceptual elements and aesthetic motifs ranging from Victoriana to current Pop Culture in clashes which challenge established values to allow new insight into the way we live today. Kerry's new work will consist of a new installation of three floor based sculptures using mixed media including wood, metal, paint, gloss, fabric/stitch and found images. The sculptural works will be accompanied by a number of new wall based mixed media collages using found images, gloss, resin, drawing, painting and text to expand upon the themes of the wider installation.

## **Franziska Sauerbrey**

Franziska Sauerbrey, born in Munich, Germany, studied cultural studies, theatre studies, and business administration in Vienna, Paris, and Berlin. She worked at the Théâtre National de l'Odéon in Paris, with the Chelsea Group in New York, and for several German cultural institutions. In addition, she taught at the Institute for Cultural Studies of Berlin's Humboldt University. In 2007, she founded the büro für kulturelle angelegenheiten ("office for cultural affairs") in Berlin together with Isabel Raabe. They jointly designed and produced international cultural projects such as exhibitions, multimedia performances and theatre festivals.

In 2015, after a two-year preparatory research phase, Franziska Sauerbrey and Isabel Raabe initiated the project "RomArchive – Digital Archive of the Roma", which the German Federal Cultural Foundation will support until 2019.

RomArchive will subsequently be transferred to an international Roma organisation.