Our mission

To provide the local community and wider audiences with access to the best modern and contemporary visual art from Wales and the wider world. We are committed to encouraging enjoyment, understanding, learning and participation in the visual arts and undertake this through our exhibitions and education programmes, projects and activities.
Oriel Davies is the most important visual art gallery for the Welsh Borders region. We are a key art gallery in Wales and enjoy a reputation for excellence throughout the UK and internationally. In 2008 we received an Arts Council of Wales Beacon Company Award for excellence and innovation.

Who we are

Oriel Davies is based in Newtown, Montgomeryshire, in rural mid Wales. This is the largest town in Powys and is situated in the beautiful Severn Valley. The Gallery is excellently placed in the centre of the town and overlooks the town park to the south and the main car park and coach station to the north. We are open Monday – Saturday, 10-5pm, including Bank Holidays, with free admission and excellent disabled access. We serve the people of mid Wales, the Border counties of Shropshire and Herefordshire, and visitors to the region.

The Gallery was founded in 1982 under the name of Oriel 31. Our premises – originally the Davies Memorial Gallery – were built in 1967 with a legacy from Gwendoline and Margaret Davies of Montgomeryshire, well-known benefactors of the arts in Wales. Amongst their many achievements, the Davies sisters amassed Wales’ greatest art collection, which they bequeathed to Amgueddfa Cymru-National Museum Wales. The Gwendoline and Margaret Davies Charity also made significant contribution to the Gallery’s refurbishment, and in 2003, Oriel 31 and the Davies Memorial Gallery became Oriel Davies Gallery.
What we do

The Gallery’s central aim is to increase access to the visual arts and to support artists from Wales and elsewhere to show their work.

- We organise and present a year-round programme of innovative visual art and craft exhibitions.
- We run an extensive art education programme for people from the community.
- We run the only Young Curators programme in Wales.
- We tour our exhibitions throughout the UK.
- We work in partnership with other galleries and arts organisations nationally and internationally.
- We publish high quality catalogues and books.

Comfort Zones, watching Jennie Savage’s ‘Out in the World’.
Exhibitions

Oriel Davies originates and presents around six exhibitions a year, showing the very best modern and contemporary visual art and craft from Wales and beyond. Our exhibitions range from major shows selected from national collections through to exciting new work by young and emerging artists.

Bringing national collections to Newtown...

**Radical Visions: British modern art from the Davies sisters’ Collection** (2006). Co-curated by Oriel Davies in partnership with Amgueddfa Cymru-National Museum Wales. **Radical Visions** attracted audiences of over 17,000 and showcased works by over 40 major British artists, including Augustus John, Gwen John, Eric Gill, Duncan Grant, Paul Nash, Henry Moore, Graham Sutherland and Ivon Hitchens.

**Becoming Modern** (2008) Our second partnership with Amgueddfa Cymru-National Museum Wales brought major Impressionist and Post Impressionist works from the Davies Collection to Oriel Davies. Art by Monet, Degas, Pissarro, Cézanne & Berthe Morisot showed alongside new paintings commissioned from international artists duo, Grennan & Sperandio. The exhibition focused on the Davies sisters’ trip through Italy in 1909 and received record visits of over 18,000.

“Amazing to stroll in from the car park and see a couple of Monets, a Pissarro and a Cézanne!”

“Brilliant exhibition. Exceptional to get so close to great work.”

“As good as any exhibition we’ve seen in London.”

Becoming Modern, Claude Monet’s ‘San Giorgio Maggiore by Twilight’ in background.
Hosting Wales at Venice...
Since 2003 Wales has taken part in the Venice Biennale of Art – the world’s most important international art exhibition. Oriel Davies has hosted two of the exhibitions featuring the artists who represented Wales at the Venice Biennale.


And so it goes was curated by Hannah Firth for the 2007 Venice Biennale showing works by Richard Deacon, Heather and Ivan Morison and Merlin James. And so it goes toured to Oriel Davies in winter 2007.

"What an inspiration."
"Went to Venice to see this and it was closed! Well worth the wait though!"
Touring work nationally...

Oriel Davies often tours its exhibitions to other galleries throughout the UK, where they are seen by thousands of people across the UK. We are continuously developing new exhibitions to tour into 2010 and beyond.

**Comfort Zones** (2007) showed national and international artists and focused on domesticity and the home. After showing at Oriel Davies, **Comfort Zones** travelled to Carlisle, Farnham, the Isle of Wight and Bury St Edmunds.

Oriel Davies toured **Folk Art and Fairy Tales** to eight venues throughout England and Wales, including Durham, Stroud, East Anglia, Bracknell, Rhyl, Scunthorpe, Nottinghamshire and Birmingham.

Past touring exhibitions have included **David Nash, Fred Langford Edwards, Patricia MacKinnon-Day, Insiders: Art and the Box, Brendan Stuart Burns, Roland Hicks and Philippa Lawrence**

Showing quality craft...

**Folk Art and Fairy Tales** (2006) An enchanting and very well received craft exhibition featuring artists and makers of national acclaim: Su Blackwell, Lucy Casson, Lowri Davies, Julie Arkell, Jennifer Collier, Rachael Howard, Carys Anne Hughes, Cathy Miles, Jayne Lennard and Samantha Bryan.
Developing international collaborations...

Oriel Davies is developing its international work, creating opportunities for artists from Wales to show abroad and bringing international artists to Newtown.

Things which are... New art from Poland (2007) brought exciting new work from five leading Polish artists to Wales. The exhibition was organised as an exchange project with Otwarta Pracownia, an artists group based in Krakow. Things which are... showed alongside an exhibition by Wales-based artist, Andrew Smith, which was first exhibited in Krakow in 2006.

Oriel Davies organised Poland in the Park - a one-day celebration of Polish culture, music and food. The event attracted over 500 people from the region, many from the local Polish community.

Providing a platform for artists from Wales and the Borders...

The In Focus programme runs alongside our main exhibitions and is curated by an Intern (student trainee) working with the Gallery Curator.

The space is dedicated to showcasing new and experimental work by emerging artists from Wales and the Borders, and provides great opportunities for artists to experiment with new approaches and materials. In Focus also provides excellent training and work experience for Interns.

Artists who have been shown as part of the In Focus programme include Gaia Persico, Lee Lewis, Akiyo Yamamoto, Matthew Wood, Sue Challis, David Eyres and Melissa Hinkin.
Oriel Davies’ Education Programmes receive national acclaim for excellence. The programmes and facilities are used by people throughout Powys, Shropshire and beyond, and are designed for nursery, primary, secondary schools & colleges; adults and children with special needs; individuals of all ages and special interest and local community groups.

Our education offer includes skills-based workshops, artists’ residencies and workshops, talks by artists and curators, events and activities, outreach projects and art history lectures. In 2007/08 over 3000 children, young people and adults took part in our art education programmes.
Disabled and deaf people engaging with galleries: The Explore Project

Oriel Davies has been part of the Wales Cluster for Explore – a national project focusing on disabled and deaf people as audiences, participants and artists. Artists Tanya Raabe, Chris Oakley and Morag Colquhoun worked with young people with special needs from Ysgol Cedewain, adults with learning difficulties from local day care centres, and individuals with disabilities. Participants worked in film, animation, photography and mixed media to explore the gallery and the artwork, and create their own video portraits.

We regularly invite artists to lead education projects for schools & colleges. Artists who have led our workshops over the past 3 years include Jennifer Collier, Emma Posey, Catrin Webster, David Miles, Tim Pugh, Lucy Casson, Morag Colquhoun, Helen Kennedy, Meri Wells, Becky Knight, Cathy Miles, Chris Oakley, Tanya Raabe, Simon Woolham, Catrin Williams and Ruth Jen Evans.

Schools and colleges who have worked with Oriel Davies during 2007/08:

For the **Art Outdoors** Project, artist Morag Colquhoun worked for 5 months at Maesyrhandir Primary School, Newtown as artist in residence. The project was especially designed for Foundation Phase children from nursery and reception classes (aged 4-5) to explore creative learning in the outdoors. For part of the project the children worked with Morag to create an Art Shed in their playground and also visited the Gallery.

Our outreach projects bring artists together with schools or the community, breaking down barriers and encouraging and inspiring creativity.

In 2007 artist Yvonne Buchheim worked in residence for 8 weeks with communities from Newtown and the surrounding villages, filming and recording people’s favourite songs. Her residency resulted in the major exhibition, **Song for Newtown**. Over 140 individuals took part in the project, including 2 local choirs who wrote and recorded new music. The final exhibition was seen by over 11,000 visitors.

"Wonderful – made me laugh and made me cry – what a lot of talent..."
Unwrapping Contemporary Art: Increasing access to artists

Oriel Davies brings visitors directly into contact with artists through gallery talks, lectures, visits and our Unwrapping Contemporary Art series, which brings audiences together with artists to explore the diversity and excitement of the art of today. The series involves talks, visits and hands on experience.

In December 2007, 60 adults and children joined Oriel Davies’ magical trip to Heather & Ivan Morison’s Arboretum, in North Wales to meet the artists and see a performance in their outdoor structure, ‘Fantasy Island’
Oriel Davies’ Young Curators Group is unique in Wales. This innovative venture helps young people aged 15 to 24 to create their own exhibitions at the Gallery. It provides tremendous value by helping with young people’s personal and professional development. Participation builds confidence, encourages team work and fosters learning and enjoyment of art.

Since 2005 our Young Curators have created three stunning exhibitions: Spoilt Rotten (2005) which was selected from the Arts Council Collection, Hayward Gallery. Surface (2006) which showed 26 contemporary artists from Wales and the Borders. ME v U (2008) which showed major works from Wolverhampton Art Gallery’s Pop and Contemporary Art collection, alongside work which the Young Curators made with the Cardiff-based artist, Rabab Ghazoul.

Young Curators Three-Year Programme. In 2007 Oriel Davies was awarded a major grant by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation to extend and develop the Young Curators Project. Each year we work with up to 20 young people to create their own major shows as part of the Gallery’s Programme. Participation is free. The project receives strong media interest throughout Wales and beyond.

Oriel Davies follows the careers of the young people beyond their time with the Young Curators, providing support and encouragement, professional advice and experience.
The Friends Association is a highly active organisation, dedicated to supporting the Gallery. The Friends organise a full programme of visits and social events annually, and support the Gallery in numerous invaluable ways. Their support includes assisting at Gallery previews and events, Reception Desk and Gallery invigilation and raising funds to help with projects. Friends trips include visits to major exhibitions, museums and galleries around the UK. The Friends have sponsored many Gallery events, including a Poland in the Park, poetry readings, special lectures and the Gallery’s extraordinary interactive donations box. Benefits for members include discount in the Gallery Shop, art events and activities and invites to all Gallery openings and previews.

Publications

Oriel Davies’ high quality catalogues and publications are beautifully designed, informative, well-written and provide a lasting record of the major exhibitions and projects we undertake. Our catalogues usually include newly commissioned essays by writers, curators and critics and are printed in runs of up to 1000. Our touring exhibitions are always accompanied by a publication.
Gallery premises and hire

Light, bright and welcoming, our galleries are amongst the most sought-after exhibition spaces in Wales. Naturally lit through the building’s unique high-level windows, the galleries provide flexible and beautiful spaces for a broad variety of changing exhibitions, accommodating painting, installation, video projection, new media, sculpture or craft. Our total exhibition space amounts to 220 sq metres.

Education Space
The Gallery’s art education space is equipped for the widest range of activity, from ceramics and printmaking through to computer-aided design and animation. Traditional practice such as life drawing also takes place in this flexible space. The education room has been designed to show art at the same standard as in the main galleries, and regularly displays exhibitions of work by education participants.

Room Hire
Our education space doubles as a lecture and meeting room which is hired out to groups from all over mid Wales and beyond, who take advantage of our unique location and the excellent refreshments provided by the Gallery Café.

Other areas of the Gallery may be available for hire at certain times and for special occasions.

“Fantastic gallery, beautiful scale ... a gem!”

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“Fantastic gallery, beautiful scale ... a gem!”
Oriel Davies Café and Shop

The Gallery Café is well-known throughout the region for its inspired menu of homemade dishes created from fresh, locally-sourced ingredients. The Gallery Shop stocks a wide range of books, design and giftware and specialises in original jewellery and other handmade crafts.

‘A wonderful friendly atmosphere’

During the summer months the Gallery Café extends onto the Gallery’s patio facing onto the town park, allowing visitors to eat al fresco in a beautiful environment. The Café has built an excellent reputation as the best eating and meeting place in Newtown and is licensed to sell wines and beers with food.

The offer of the Gallery Shop is unique to the area: to find the closest alternative source of art books, visitors would have to travel 35 miles east to Shrewsbury, or 43 miles west to Aberystwyth. All profits from the Gallery Shop go towards supporting our exhibitions programmes and the Gallery’s educational work.
How we operate

Oriel Davies is a Registered Educational Charity governed by a Board of Trustees who can number up to twelve at any one time. The Board is made up from artists and makers, curators, architects and art educators, members of the business community, accountants and solicitors, and those with a passion for art. Our Trustees are dedicated to the Gallery’s mission and aims, and give their time and expertise on a voluntary basis.

Staff
- Artistic Director: Amanda Farr
- Administrator: Helen Lawson
- Curator: Alex Boyd
- Education Officer (Informal Learning): Clare Martin
- Education Officer (Schools & Colleges): Helen Kozich
- Marketing & Development Officer: Matthew Richardson
- Building & Technical Manager: Neil Fowler
- Front of House & Retail Manager: Samantha Francis

Trustees & Directors 2007/08
- Chairman: Anthony P. Harvey
- Vice Chairman: Carrie White
- Treasurer: Fred Mathieu
- John Napier
- Mary Napper
- Christine Mills
- Glyn Eames Jones
- Louis Williams
- Bethan Page
- Gareth Jones
- Eleri Houghton
- Peter Stewart

Rhian Davies, Judith Papworth, Janet Farahar, Maeve Bargman, Jill Cope, Francis Corfield, volunteers, interns and people on work experience are also vital to our operations.

How we are funded

Oriel Davies is a not-for-profit organisation, an independent Trust and Company Limited by Guarantee. We are a revenue client of the Arts Council of Wales, receiving core and project funding. We also receive revenue funding and project grants from the local authority, Powys County Council. Funds are also raised from trusts and foundations, sponsorship and donations, profit from the Gallery Shop, modest charges for some education workshops, hire fees for our touring exhibitions and hiring out our premises.

We have received generous support from:
- The Arts Council of Wales
- The Baring Foundation
- Engage
- The Ernest Cook Trust
- Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
- The Friends of Oriel Davies
- The Gwendaolne & Margaret Davies Charity
- The Henry Moore Foundation
- Imprint Design & Print
- The Millennium Stadium Charitable Trust
- The Paul Hamlyn Foundation
- The Polish Cultural Institute
- Powys County Council
- Wales Arts International
- The Wales Tourist Board
- Whittingham Riddell Accountants
Our plans for the future...
We have ambitious plans to expand our audiences, participants and projects. Here are just some of the ways that we hope to achieve this.

Producing exhibitions to tour nationally and internationally
We are developing imaginative new exhibitions to tour throughout the UK and abroad. Two examples of new shows we are planning include: Beyond Pattern - artists exploring decorative pattern through two- and three-dimensional work, and Flora - the place of the flower in contemporary art. We are actively developing international partners, with a particular focus on Italy, France and Spain.

Exploring new Education Initiatives and Audience Development
We are creating new outreach projects and placing artists in schools and the community. A major cross-border project in collaboration with DASH (Disability Arts Shropshire), is being developed to raise the profile of artists with disabilities. We are also initiating a programme to place a live guide / art educator within the exhibition galleries.

Developing Off-Site projects
We want to engage with people beyond the Gallery and increase their experience of art by placing artists and artworks within the community – in shop windows, the local market, the Park, through live performance, installation and street art.

Extending the Gallery Café
Our excellent café has become so popular that it needs more space! Whilst the café extends to the patio during the summer months, we want to provide visitors with a more spacious and comfortable café all year round. An extended café would also provide a beautiful space for evening meals, corporate hospitality, seminars and poetry or musical performances.

... and how you can help us achieve them
You can support Oriel Davies through business sponsorship of our exhibitions, education programmes, events and activities and by individual giving through gifts, donations, endowments or legacies.

Benefits for Businesses
Your company credited on the Gallery’s related publicity & marketing material – our ‘What’s On’ guide, website, press releases, publications, invitations and banners.

Reaching large audiences – we average 90,000 visits to the Gallery annually and reach many thousands more through our touring exhibitions and website.

Helping to fulfil your corporate, social and community objectives.

Raising your company’s profile within the local community by supporting our education or outreach projects.

Helping to attract key workers to the area.

Special corporate & networking events in the Gallery.

Invitations to previews & special events.

Benefits for Individuals
Association and relationship with a well-respected and high-visibility organisation with a reputation for excellence throughout Wales, the Borders and beyond.

Your name included on the list of Gallery Benefactors.

Regular updates on the Gallery’s activities.

Recognition of your support on the Gallery’s information boards and related material.

Fostering civic pride through support of a major player in the cultural landscape of mid Wales and beyond.

Helping young people and disadvantaged groups in the community by supporting the Gallery’s education and other initiatives.

These are just some of the many ways in which you can support Oriel Davies Gallery. There are countless other possibilities for corporate or individual partnerships to develop. The Director is delighted to meet with prospective supporters and actively welcomes new suggestions for those interested in working in partnership with Oriel Davies.

Amanda Farr, Director  Telephone: +44 (0)1686 625041  Email: amanda@orieldavies.org