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PRESS RELEASE

DS4 – Digital Storytelling Festival 2009
10am – 5pm, 17th June 2009

Aberystwyth Arts Centre is proud to host the fourth Digital Storytelling Festival on Wednesday 17th June. The Festival programme includes talks by international guest speakers, presentations and workshops by leading organisations in the field.

The DS4 Digital Storytelling Festival is aimed at inspiring and encouraging both individuals and groups already working in digital storytelling and those new to its exciting possibilities. People from all over the UK, and further afield, will come together to share experiences, explore new creative ideas, see the latest technological developments, and look at examples of best practise in the UK and worldwide. The Digital Storytelling movement is based on the belief that everyone has a story to tell and that new technology has opened up many opportunities to tell those stories on websites, DVD screens and terrestrial TV. Digital Storytelling has been pioneered in Wales through the BBC Capture Wales project.

This year international speakers include Bonnie Shaw and Annette Mees. Both are pioneers in the field of Digital Storytelling and their talks will offer fascinating insights into their ground breaking work. Bonnie Shaw's work - Snap-Shot-City - challenges participants to tell a story about where they live through a simultaneous, global, photographic treasure hunt. Since the event began in 2006 it has collected 1000's of photographs from hundreds of people in cities all over the world. Bonnie will highlight experiences and outcomes from this mass visual storytelling experiment and discuss emerging technologies for collecting and sharing stories in new ways. Annette will talk about the philosophy behind Coney, an organisation for adventure, immersive theatre and play. Annette's work with Coney includes the Shoreditch Ball Park project, in which participants recalled Shoreditch's past, and attempted to visualise how the Olympics will impact on the area and the community. The project brought together disparate demographics to play and to hear each others stories and predictions. Annette will consider what this project has taught her about gathering stories, and how we engage with stories.

There will also be presentations by representatives from leading organisations working in the field of digital storytelling. These presentations will explore and discuss a variety of themes and issues and offer a fascinating insight into the role digital storytelling can play in community development. Speakers will discuss the way that storytelling techniques can be utilised to inform, educate and effect change in the community. There will be sessions which consider the techniques for facilitating storytelling and fostering trust and confidence within a group through telling "real-life" stories. The varied and inspirational projects include the 'Valleys Girl Project' which recorded the

aspirations and memories of several generations of women from The Valleys. There will also be a breakout session, through the medium of Welsh, presented by Cadwyd Digital Media Company, who will discuss their projects, including their work with young disabled children and their parents to create stories together. Award-winning HyperAction will discuss their projects, including their work with primary schools across South Wales to create a d interactive DVD which tells the stories of Welsh lifeboat stations from Barry to Mumbles. This is a unique opportunity to discover the work of a huge range of organizations including The Rural Media Company, Theatre of De Light Project, Ceredigion Digital Inclusion Project and the award-winning HyperAction.

This year's sessions will reflect on the implications of the evolving digital frontier for digital storytelling. The global digital community has evolved in leaps and bounds since last year. This year's Festival provides a fantastic forum in which to discuss new creative ideas, the latest technological advances, and the challenges and opportunities these rapid developments present the storytelling community. Monmouthshire County Council will hold an open forum to discuss digital storytelling in the global digital community.

The festival also provides a unique opportunity to gain inspiration and advice from leading professionals. There will be a workshops run by Senior BBC Producer Alistair McGhee and BBC Video Producer Melaine Lindsell. There will also be numerous opportunities to experiment with a variety of recording equipment, ranging from the humble scanner to the BBC Wales Bus's Roland M400 digital mixer with Spot On digital touch screen playback, Audition and Magix editing, a wide range of microphones and satellite broadband. The BBC VideoNation breakout session will offer a fantastic opportunity to gather coaching tips as well as information about how to get involved with the BBC VideoNation Network.

DS4 2009 promises to be a highly informative and inspirational day exploring the exciting possibilities of Digital Storytelling.

Tickets for the festival are £14.50 (discount available for school groups) and can be booked by contacting the Arts Centre ticket office on 01970 62 32 32 or online at www.aber.ac.uk/artscentre The ticket price includes all events during the day, lunch and coffee.

-ENDS-

Notes to editors:

The Festival has been organised by DS Cymru - Aberystwyth Arts Centre, Canllaw, Breaking Barriers, BBC Capture Wales, Yale College Wrexham, Coleg Sir Gar, and Monmouth Council, and is presented with the support of the Arts Council of Wales.

Press tickets are available for the conference if you would like to attend.

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