

## Young Wales 7

The Royal Cambrian Academy sounds like a bastion of conservatism. With the redoubtable Kyffin Williams as its president and more than 100 members among whose chosen subjects recognisable landscapes of moody Snowdonian skylines crop up predictably often, you would not expect to see the most challenging work on its walls. But if you think this introduction is in preparation for a sneering dismissal, you'd be wrong. This is a great institution because it fosters an openness and genuine enthusiasm for visual images and there is always the chance of a challenge along the way. Among the work by the 16 artists chosen to participate in this year's edition of the Young Wales biennale, there is some whacky stuff. The likes of sometime performance artist Megan Broadmeadow has to be worth a look, and there is energy and warmth and a desire to look beyond the safely conventional in the work of Simon MacBryde, Gemma Fairclough, Sarah Hope and Leah Jones. OK, we're not talking yaboo Saatchi or YBA, but actually, thank goodness for these others. They may not always hit the spot but let's hope the Welsh RCA continues to give people like them a chance and that this friendly, venerable institution flourishes for another 120 years.

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