

Full Biography

Welsh harpist Gwenllian Llyr is quickly gaining international recognition for her charismatic and engaging performances. In July 2013, Gwenllian was a prize-winner at the USA International Harp Competition in Bloomington where she was highly praised for her musicianship and her ability to connect with audiences. She has also won many prizes more locally, including the First Prize of the UK Camac Harp Competition in 2010, the Nansi Richards Scholarship and the Blue Ribbon at the Eisteddfod Genedlaethol in Wales in 2012.

Gwenllian's career has taken her across the globe with performances in prestigious venues alongside renowned artists, including Rebecca Evans, Imogen Cooper, Al Jarreau, Matthew Rees and Bryn Terfel. She is becoming increasingly in demand as a soloist with orchestras, enabling her to demonstrate the wide-range of harp music to more audiences. Gwenllian was invited to be guest soloist with Cŵrddydd as they took to the stage of Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall, and she relished the opportunity to share the music of Welsh composers in this prestigious venue. She has also recently performed the fiery and percussive Concerto by Ginastera with the Milton Keynes Sinfonia, the elegant and much-loved flute and harp Concerto by Mozart alongside Shirley Barningham with the Hallgate Chamber Orchestra, as well as the colourful and contrasting Danses by Debussy with the Orchestra of St. John's.

Gwenllian has had the pleasure of studying with wonderful teachers in some of the best institutions across the world, with degrees from the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, The Juilliard School and the Royal Academy of Music. In addition to substantial financial support from scholarships and grants, Gwenllian also received many accolades during her studies, including the William Schuman prize for outstanding achievement and leadership in music from The Juilliard School. Her studies afforded her with fantastic opportunities to work with other musicians and artists, to develop her love of chamber music as well as expanding the harp repertoire. An avid proponent of new music, Gwenllian has worked with many composers over the past decade, helping musicians and audiences to understand the versatility of the harp and culminating in many world premieres. During her final year at The Juilliard School, Gwenllian worked with composer Sayo Kosugi and dancer and choreographer Eve Jacobs in the performance of Nebula, Blooming for harp and dance. She has also worked on new chamber music with composition students at Cardiff University, first with flautist Lisa Nelsen in the project 'Music is Fragile?', culminating in a premier at the National Museum in Cardiff amidst the ceramic pieces which inspired the compositions, and then with soprano Sarah Dacey in the project 'Coma Notes', with a premiere in Cardiff University alongside poet James Nash.

Gwenllian's love of the harp extends beyond the stage, both as a teacher and as a composer. Alongside her busy performing career, Gwenllian teaches privately, on music courses, and at the Latymer Saturday Music Centre and King's College London. In addition, she has recently joined the charity Live Music Now, founded by Yehudi Menuhin, which works with a diverse range of people who rarely have access to live music. For further information about recent and upcoming projects, please visit her website: www.GwenllianLlyr.com.