

Full Biography

Welsh harpist **Gwenllian Llŷr** is quickly gaining international recognition for her charismatic and engaging performances. In 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 Len Lickorish Memorial Prize for a String Player of Promise at the Royal Over-Seas League AMC 2018, as well as becoming an Artist with City Music Foundation in 2017.

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 toured the UK alongside the release of her debut album with Sain, 'Dusk to Dawn', and her playing was praised for its rare "liquid legato" and "compelling mellowness". Gwenllian is becoming increasingly in demand as a soloist with orchestras and choirs, enabling her to demonstrate the wide-range of harp music to more audiences. She was invited to be guest soloist with Côrddydd 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. Gwenllian 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, as a teacher, composer/arranger, and as a workshop leader, sharing advice for both performing and writing for the harp. In addition, she is an artist for the charity Live Music Now, founded by Yehudi Menuhin, which works with a diverse range of people who rarely have access to live music. Gwenllian is involved in many exciting projects, including preparing for the release of her next CD and publishing more harp music. For further information, please visit her website: www.GwenllianLlŷr.com.