

## The National Eisteddfod of Wales, Denbighshire and District, 2 August - 10 August 2013

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### 2012 Musicians Medal winner



The Musician's Medal at the Vale of Glamorgan National Eisteddfod was awarded for a sonata for harp and flute, to include at least three contrasting movements, lasting up to ten minutes.

In addition to receiving the Musician's Medal, which was given by Urdd Cerddoriaeth Cymru once again this year, the winner received a cash prize of £500, which was given by Densil and Beti Wyn Davies, Penarth and their children. Also on offer was a scholarship worth £2,000 given by the National Eisteddfod to further the winning composer's career.

7 entries were received and the works were adjudicated by Richard Elfyn Jones and Deian Rowlands, who both agree that the work of Deryn Amheuthun deserves the prize and the commendation. The winner is Gareth Hughes from Cardiff.

According to the adjudicators, Gareth Hughes' work - three movements based on John Morris Jones' famous lyrical poem, 'Cwyn y Gwynt' - was in a league of its own in this year's competition, with the composer's finger on the pulse of the latest thinking on metre (cynghanedd) and rhythm, and its working very sophisticated.



Generally, this work cannot be fully appreciated in one sitting, and the adjudicators had to study the pages carefully to appreciate and discover the technical secrets and the richness of expression. The work is current and of a high quality, which shows a composer with the ability to cope with technical chromatic obstacles, which so often face any composer writing for the harp.

Born in Cardiff in 1979, Gareth Hughes is the son of Sara Martel Hughes and the grandson of Dr John Martel Hughes, who served as the Chair of the Executive Committee when the Eisteddfod was held in Newport in both 1988 and 2004. He was educated at Ysgol Bro Eirwg and Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Glantaf, Cardiff, where he studied music with Alun Guy and Delyth Medi Jones. He began learning the piano aged nine with Timothy Lyons, and went on to study at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama with Dafydd Meurig Thomas, Haydn Morgans, Dr Keith Michael Griffiths and Professor Carole Oakes.

In 1997, he went to King's College, London, to study for a B. Mus. degree in Modern Composition under Sir Harrison Birtwistle, Robert Keely and Silvina Milstein, obtaining a first class honours degree in 2000. After completing a post graduate degree, Gareth developed a keen interest in electro-acoustic music, and in 2003, he completed an M. Phil in Electro-Acoustic Music under Professor Jonty Harrison and Dr Erik Oña.

Gareth is currently studying for his PhD in Composition with Dr Arlene Sierra at Cardiff University, and is about to start his final year. In February 2012, the BBC National Orchestra of Wales performed a movement from his symphony, 'Visions of Existence', at a workshop for young composers in Neuadd Hoddinott.

Gareth has already been successful at the National Eisteddfod: in Newport in 2004, the adjudicator, Terry James, awarded him the prize for composing an orchestral movement, and he came third in the piano solo in 2004, and second in 2010.