

PRESS RELEASE (USA)

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Publication of a new chamber version of the first Welsh opera:

***Blodwen* by Joseph Parry**

Edited and published by Dulais Rhys

Musician and Joseph Parry expert, Dulais Rhys, has created a chamber version – with a small orchestra – of this historic opera which is considered a milestone in the history of Welsh music.

Until now, the only practical orchestral version of *Blodwen* was an arrangement for full orchestra of the original (but flawed) Parry score that Dulais Rhys prepared for the 1978 Menai Music Festival. That concert performance commemorated the centenary of the first performance of *Blodwen* and was broadcast live on the BBC. A recording was released by Sain records - a cd is available via: sainwales.com or other online retailers.

Producing grand opera is expensive so this new chamber version makes *Blodwen* accessible for performance in smaller theatres by amateur groups as well as professional companies.

The new score also includes a phonetic version of the Welsh words, making it possible for non-Welsh singers to perform *Blodwen* in its original language.

THE COMPOSER

Born in Wales and raised in America, Dr. Joseph Parry (1841-1903) was the first Professor of Music at the University College of Wales in Aberystwyth. Composed in that town on Welsh words by the poet 'Mynyddog' (Richard Davies of Llanbryn-mair), *Blodwen* was first performed in Aberystwyth in 1878. By the beginning of the 20th century, an estimated 500+ performances had taken place, reflecting the opera's widespread popularity.

PLOT & STYLE

Following the pattern of Romantic Italian opera, the story takes place in 14th century Wales and includes a wedding, lovers, dying heroes and a dramatic final twist.

The opera's stirring music shows Parry at his dramatic best: heroic and romantic solos, exciting ensembles, powerful choruses and of course, the famous 'Hywel a Blodwen' love duet which remains popular as a concert item and is considered one of the highlights of amateur performances of the opera.

LINKS

The new chamber version of [*Blodwen*](#)

For more information on Joseph Parry's life and music: [Joseph Parry: Pencerdd America](#)

Joseph Parry: Pencerdd America
