

What is an Eisteddfod?

Video transcript – History of the Eisteddfod

Derec: Gorsedd literally means throne, but what we have here is a gathering of bards – people who belong to the Gorsedd.

The Gorsedd was created in the 18th century by a man called Iolo Morgannwg.

He was one of the men of the Enlightenment in 18th century Wales. But he was also a forger.

And one of the things he created in a country without a capital, without a university, was the Gorsedd of the Bards as a defender of things cultural and Welsh.

In 1818, the Gorsedd marched in Carmarthen, where an eisteddfod was held, and that was the first place where the Gorsedd and the eisteddfod became together.

Sian: The Queen was accepted to the Gorsedd...

Derec: The Queen, she is Elisabeth o Windsor.

Sian: Elizabeth of Windsor.

Derec: Elizabeth of Windsor. Her husband, one of his titles is not only the Duke of Edinburgh, but the Earl of Meirioneth. So he's called Philip Merionydd in the Gorsedd. But they haven't been for quite a while!

Sian: There is a lot of ceremony attached to it, so we're going to see a sword in the ceremony and a proclamation from everybody here of peace.

Derec: The sword is the sword of war, but it's sheathed in the Gorsedd ceremony and you will see the taking out of the sword partly from the sheath.

And the Archdruid will ask everybody here "Is there peace?" - A oes heddwch?

And everybody, I presume, will say "Peace!" - Heddwch!

I think it is something that tells the people of the world, "We, the Welsh, want civilisation to be calm."