

*Menna Elfn at the Cambrian Hall, 215 East 17th
Monday, February 24, 2014. 6.30 for 7 pm*

We are extraordinarily fortunate to be visited by renowned Welsh poet Menna Elfn. She will be reading her own poetry in Welsh with English translations by distinguished English poets in the Red Dragon, lower Hall. Her poems have been translated into no fewer than 18 languages and have gained world wide appreciation of Welsh poetry.

Un o feirdd mwyaf llwyddiannus Cymru, a Chymraes sy'n adnabyddus ledled y byd erbyn hyn, diolch i'w theithiau tramor niferus. Mae'r bardd o Landysul, sy'n adnabyddus oherwydd iddi gyhoeddi llawer o'i cherddi'n ddwyieithog, yr un mor boblogiadd gyda darllenwyr di-Gymraeg â chyda'r Cymry Cymraeg.

(One of the most successful poets of Wales, a Welsh woman who by now is well known across the World as a consequence of her numerous foreign travels. The poet from Llandysul is well known also because she published her poetry bilingually, and she is as popular with those with no Welsh as she is with the true Welsh in Wales. (Tr. D.L.I.W.))

Menna Elfn is one of the most significant poets writing in Wales. Her conspicuous moral and political commitments, international in scope, are always underwritten by her prior commitment to language. Hers is a subtle politics of parable rather than polemic, and a style in which vulnerability is the other face of daring.

M. Wynn Thomas

She has the gift of the alchemist, a transforming eye, infusing everything she touches. Vicki Bertram

Now here is an analysis of her latest work Murmur which she will read on this occasion by Georgia Carys Williams:

The most translated of all modern Welsh-language poets, and author of over twenty books of poetry, Menna Elfn has produced yet another collection which demands respect, a bilingual Poetry Book Society Recommended Translation under the astute eyes of translators such as Gillian Clarke, Elin ap Hywel and Joseph P. Clancy. This collation appropriately opens with a quotation from Rilke's Sonnets to Orpheus:

Murmur to the quiet earth: I flow, Voice to the running water: I exist.

The softness of Rilke's words murmurs a rhythm and tone before we even become aware of the unguarded and instinctive manner through which each poem of Elfn's will meander. With the unbreakable nature of running water, this collection discerns each pulse of life from the sidelines; it is a river of work that gives way to a stream of pocketed consciousness at the same time as evolving towards a slow acceptance of its inescapable role in such a vista.

Do seize the opportunity to listen to this unique influential Welsh poet. (D.L.I.W.)