



The Eisteddfod: The Essential Guide to the National Festival of Wales (Welsh Studies Series)

Cath Filmer-Davies

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This volume recounts the fascinating history and thrilling contemporary celebrations of one of the most well-known aspects of Welsh cultural life: the Eisteddfod (eye-steth-vod). This festival of literature, music, and performance—in celebration of Welsh language and culture—dates back to the earliest history of the Celtic bards. Deteriorating to a tavern festival that cleverly punned on the meaning of the word (*Eistedd*, “to sit”) in medieval and Renaissance times, the Eisteddfod became fully reinvigorated in the years it spent under the imaginative and creative hands of the Welsh Romantic visionary Iolo Morganwg, as well as his later supporters and devotees. *The Eisteddfod* traces the evolution of this ebullient festival from the nineteenth century to the present—providing a virtual tour of the sites and various features of the festival, as well as the fascinating journey the celebration has taken from Wales to global sites as farflung as Patagonia, Australia, Washington, D.C., and Malad City, Idaho. Competitions in poetry and prose translation, song and dance, photography, and video, as well as more traditional performing arts and acting events, make the Eisteddfod a fascinating index of the Welsh diaspora—and *The Eisteddfod* captures this jubilant folk festival in all its remarkable incantations, histories, and thrilling traditions.

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