

PENDERYN

PENDERYN PRESS PACK MARCH 2018

PENDERYN WHISKY: 100 YEARS IN THE MAKING

It's suggested that small stills existed in Wales in the 4th century, but the last whisky officially distilled in Wales was produced by the original, but short lived, Welsh Whisky Company at the Frongoch Distillery in Bala, North Wales, which closed over 100 years ago. Other notable characters in Wales' whisky past include David Lloyd George, the only Welsh Prime Minister of Great Britain, who introduced the '3 year 1 day' rule for whisky maturing, and Evan Williams (from Dale in Pembrokeshire) who was one of the founders of the American Bourbon industry.

Penderyn Whisky is made at the Penderyn Distillery which is located in the southern foothills of the Brecon Beacons, north east of Cardiff, and north-west of Swansea.

The idea for Penderyn was conceived by a group of friends lead by landlord Alun 'The Glan' Evans, sitting around a pub table (The Glancynon Inn in nearby Hirwaun, to be exact) who decided to re-introduce the lost art of whisky distilling to Wales. They sought funding and bought the Penderyn distillery site (because it sits over a substantial source of pure, underground water), and an un-commissioned whisky still designed by Dr David Faraday, a descendant of the famous Victorian scientist, Michael Faraday.

The dream was to create a world class single malt whisky. On Thursday 14 September 2000 the first distillation was carried out at Penderyn Distillery in the picturesque Brecon Beacons National Park. Penderyn was launched in the presence of HRH Prince Charles on St David's Day, 2004, and demand was so high the whisky sold out almost immediately.

The whisky is distilled in a unique specially-commissioned single column whisky still, producing a flavourful spirit at 92% abv which is married with fresh spring water drawn from directly beneath the distillery.

Penderyn is an innovative, privately owned boutique style distillery, employing around 50 dedicated craftsmen, staff and professionals and has around 60 shareholders.

Today, Penderyn is one of the most influential Welsh exports, respecting the long heritage of whisky production and combining this with an innovative approach to distilling, marketing and branding. Wales Government First Minister Carwyn Jones described Penderyn as '*...one of the great Welsh manufacturing success stories of recent times.*'

In June 2016, it was announced that a second Penderyn Distillery was being planned for the historic Copperworks site in Swansea. A further distillery is being discussed for North Wales.

From Wales to the world...

DISTRIBUTION

Penderyn is available from multiples and fine wine and spirit merchants across the UK; and online from www.penderynstore.com, and other major online retailers. Half bottles, miniatures, gift packs and accessories are also available.

Penderyn is also widely distributed in across the globe, including new markets in Canada, USA, Japan, Russia, Australia and China.



HOW PENDERYN IS MADE

SPIRIT

Penderyn whisky is distilled from a high quality malted barley wash which we produce on site. The new whisky spirit is produced from this barley wash on a specially commissioned unique whisky still. This unique still produces a high quality and flavourful whisky spirit at up to 92% alcohol by volume. As of 2014 we have two such stills, and a pair of lantern stills.

WATER

The whisky spirit is married with spring water drawn from directly beneath the distillery and rainwater from the Brecon Beacons. The distillery lies within the bounds of the Fforest Fawr National Geopark, one of only 53 Geoparks across the globe - areas designated by UNESCO as exhibiting, 'geological heritage of great significance'.

AGEING

Initial ageing is in ex-bourbon oak casks, sourced from the best Tennessee and Kentucky distilleries. Most casks come from Buffalo Trace, widely recognised as one of the finest bourbons in the world and respected for using some of the best casks in the industry.

Our distilling team (made up of three women) noses and scores each individual cask over many years. At precisely the right time, the whisky is disgorged and re-casked into ex-Madeira barriques. Penderyn has a special relationship with one of the finest cooperages, which only supplies the very best Madeira houses. We also use Peated, Sherrywood, Red Wine and Portwood casks.

Slowly, the spirit will leach the Madeira from the oak, gaining increased subtlety and complexity. It is only when this process is complete that our distillers allow the spirit to be bottled.

BRANDING

The design of the bottles and the company's branding is given precise attention. Penderyn Director Glenn Tutssel, an eminent alcohol branding designer heads up the design team. Our 46% abv 'Gold' range incorporates the Welsh Gold theme in its new bespoke bottles.

In 2015 we launched a new range of 41% abv single malts – the 'Dragon' range – featuring a specially commissioned new illustration of the classic Welsh dragon. This nod towards a classic Welsh icon was in response to some of our international trade partners who were aware of Wales' theatrical national flag.

PENDERYN MADEIRA FINISH – OUR 'HOUSE' STYLE

'The original Penderyn has been aged in ex-bourbon barrels and finished in ex-Madeira wine casks to bring out its full golden character. At a generous 46% ABV, it has a classic freshness with aromas of cream toffee, rich fruit and raisins. The palate is crisp and finely rounded, with the sweetness to balance an appetising dryness. Notes of tropical fruit, raisins and vanilla persist in the finish. The unique distillation process produces a single malt whisky that is supremely smooth, light in character, softly golden in colour and does not require chill filtering.'

Dr Jim Swan

'A dark, baritone undercurrent to this one: the mushy fruit occasionally flies off on a high one but elsewhere there is more persistent deep murmur of beautifully fused grape and cocoa. Exactly the same on delivery: not often outside fresh oloroso that the evident fruit offers such deep base; the odd sparkier high notes carrying both grape and vanilla with aplomb. The middle ground fills in beautifully, shaped by soft oils and embracing the lightest of praline chocolate wafers; no high notes at all here: a long, persistent rumble of fruit and praline with a spot-on degree of sweetness.

A creaseless experience, a gentle massaging of the taste buds... The light cocoa infusion just tops this off perfectly. A truly classic Penderyn; more charm than Tom Jones, hitting just as many pure notes... and just a fraction of his age.'

Jim Murray's Whisky Bible (Madeira Finish: various expressions)

A selection of Penderyn percentages from Jim Murray's Whisky Bible

2018 Edition

Bryn Terfel 96.5

Celt 95

Legend 94.5

Madeira 96

Peated 94

PT9 96

2017 Edition

Port Wood Single Cask 96.5

Single Cask PT9

Bourbon Matured Single Cask 96

Myth 95

Madeira 95

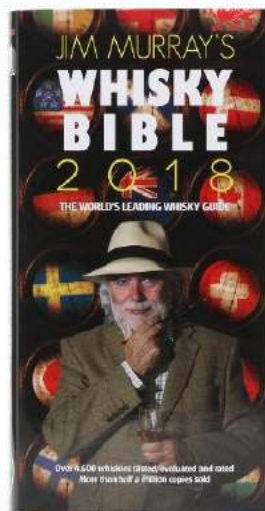
2016 Edition

Swansea City Edition 96.5

Portwood 95.5

Sherrywood Limited Edition 95

Peated 95





**A selection of quotes from Jim Murray of Whisky Bible fame
(Jim pictured on the right, with HRH Prince Charles & Dr Jim Swan at the
Distillery).**

'One of the world's great whiskies.'

'If all the world's whiskies were this good I'd never be able to get even close to finishing the Bible'

'Absolutely staggering arrival on the palate'

'Stunning absolutely world-class malt'

'Almost the stuff of erotic dreams'

'This is so good it's frightening'

'Perfectly, wonderfully and uniquely Welsh'

'I doubt if any smoked whisky bottled anywhere in the world is as delicate as this...'

'A clarity to the palate rare in any whisky in the world.'

'A whisky that flows effortlessly from start to finish'

'This really is the blood of life... Amazing!'

Port Wood Single Cask in 2016's edition –

'If I find a better single cask than this for the 2016 Bible, it will be of the proportions of a Cecil B DeMille epic.'

Bryn Terfel Icons of Wales edition, named as the Whisky Bible's European Whisky of The Year 2017 –

'It is choreographed genius in a glass...'

Awards

2018 Jim Murray's Whisky Bible	Bryn Terfel - Best European Whisky (Multiple)	
2017 World Whisky Masters	European Single Malt – Myth	Gold
2017 World Whisky Masters	European Single Malt – Sherrywood	Gold
2017 World Whisky Masters	European Single Malt – Rich Oak	Gold
2017 ISW International Spirits Competition	Premium - Sherrywood	Gold
2017 ISW International Spirits Competition	Super Premium - Rich Oak	Gold
2016 World Whisky Masters	European Single Malt – Celt	Gold
2016 World Whisky Masters	European Single Premium – Portwood	Gold
2016 IWS Competition	Worldwide Whisky <i>No Age Statement</i> - Celt	Silver
2015 Spirits Business Whisky Masters	European Single Malt Premium - Myth	Gold
2015 Spirits Business Whisky Masters	European Single Malt Premium - Legend	Gold
2015 Ultimate Spirits Challenge Whisky World	Chairman's Trophy	95/100
2014 IWS Competition	Best Cask Finished Whisky	Gold
2014 San Francisco World Spirits Competition	Single Malt Whisky	Silver
2014 The Whiskies of the World Masters	European Single Malt Premium	Silver
2014 IWS Competition Worldwide Whisky	No Age Statement	Silver
2013 IWS Competition	Worldwide Whisky <i>No Age Statement</i>	Silver
2013 International Spirits Challenge	World Whiskies	Silver
2013 International Whisky Competition	Best World Whisky	Gold
2013 San Francisco World Spirits Competition	Other Whisky	Silver
2013 Ultimate Spirits Challenge Whisky World	Very Good/Strong Recommendation	85/100
2012 IWS Competition	World Whisky	Silver
2012 International Whisky Competition	Best World Whisky	Gold

Awards pre-2012 not included



NEW BOTTLE

On Sept 24th 2018 we launched our bespoke new bottle at Whisky Live in Paris. It was designed by Penderyn Director Glenn Tutssel, whose design credits include Peroni and Johnny Walker. To see a video of Glenn (pictured below) explaining his design, please search, 'Youtube Penderyn Bottle'.

Gold Range



THE DRAGON RANGE

PENDERYN LEGEND

Legend is a Madeira-finish single malt whisky, bottled at 41% abv.



04/17

Tasting Notes

Nose: Aromas of fresh apples and citrus fruits intermingle with cream fudge and sultana raisins to create a complex yet fresh, clean and well-balanced whisky.

Palate: Incredibly smooth and both fresh and rich dried fruits abound. Delicate and sweet on the palate with just a hint of bitterness to remain refreshing.

Finish: A long aftertaste of Madeira cake and sultanas.

The Red Dragon is the national flag of Wales and the Royal Welsh badge bears the motto, 'Y ddraig goch ddyry cychwyn', which translates as 'The red dragon inspires action.' It features in ancient Welsh tales and was the battle standard of legendary Welsh princes. Welshman Henry Tudor took the flag to Bosworth, where, in 1485, he became the last king of England to be crowned on the battlefield.

2015 Global World Whisky Masters – Gold

PENDERYN MYTH

Myth is a single malt whisky matured in a range of specially selected ex-red wine and ex-bourbon casks, bottled at 41% abv.



04/17

Tasting Notes

Nose: Fresh and lively, Myth has mixed citrus fruits mingling with apple, pear drops and the merest hint of tropical fruits.

Palate: Sweetness dominates then moves over to allow some refreshing bitterness to emerge while the mixed fruits continue to dominate the flavour.

Finish: Gradually all the flavours ebb away to leave memories of a lively and light style of whisky that is easy to drink.

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2017 Spirits Business World Whisky Masters – Gold

2015 Global World Whisky Masters – Gold

PENDERYN CELT

Celt is a single malt whisky finished in ex-peated quarter casks, bottled at 41% abv.



04/17

Tasting Notes

Nose: Mild aromas of peat smoke, early morning at the rocky seaside and warm marmalade on toast all compete for our attention.

Palate: It begins with great sweetness before the smoky, slightly medicinal flavours descend.

Finish: Slight bitterness follows that leaves a long and lingering freshness in the mouth.

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2016 Whisky Masters 'Europe Single Malt Premium Whiskies' – Gold

THE GOLD RANGE

PENDERYN MADEIRA

This whisky is the original Penderyn 'house style', aged in ex-bourbon barrels and finished in ex-Madeira wine casks to bring out its golden character. It is bottled at 46% abv.



12/17

Tasting Notes

Nose: A classic freshness with aromas of cream toffee, rich fruit and raisins.

Palate: Crisp and finely rounded, with the sweetness to balance an appetising dryness.

Finish: Notes of tropical fruit, raisins and vanilla persist.

Welsh Gold is extremely rare, pure and precious and was worn by legendary Welsh princes. Our Gold Collection reflects those qualities.

2017 Spirits Business World Whisky Masters – Gold

2015 Ultimate Spirits Challenge Whisky World 95/100 Chairman's Trophy

PENDERYN PORTWOOD

This Portwood-finish single malt whisky is a firm favourite and full of flavour. It is bottled at 46% abv.



12/17

Tasting Notes

Nose: Aromas of rich dried and cranberries; a hint of baked nutty dryness.

Palate: A creamy richness spiced notes emerging.

Finish: Smooth with a soft lingering gently on the tongue.

Welsh Gold is extremely rare, pure and precious and was worn by legendary Welsh princes. Our Gold Collection reflects those qualities.

2016 World Whisky Masters 'Europe Single Malt Premium' – Gold

PENDERYN SHERRYWOOD

This whisky has the classic Penderyn style enhanced by rich tones of dry Oloroso sherry casks. It is bottled at 46% abv.



12/17

Tasting Notes

Nose: Dark fruit and caramel intermingling with green apples, hazelnuts and hints of sugared almonds.

Palate: The sweetness persists leading to a refreshing dryness.

Finish: Caramels and sultanas persist into a long finish.

Welsh Gold is extremely rare, pure and precious and was worn by legendary Welsh princes. Our Gold Collection reflects those qualities.

2017 Spirits Business World Whisky Masters – Gold

2017 ISW International Spirits Awards – Gold

PENDERYN PEATED

This whisky has a delicate spirit with a medium peaty character and a light golden tone. It is bottled at 46% abv.



12/17

Tasting Notes

Nose: It introduces itself with sweet, aromatic smoke. Under this, there are signature notes of vanilla, green apple and refreshing citrus.

Palate: An array of gentle flavours tempts even the most sophisticated palate.

Finish: Smoke and vanilla linger on the attractive medium-length finish.

Welsh Gold is extremely rare, pure and precious and was worn by legendary Welsh princes. Our Gold Collection reflects those qualities.

ICONS OF WALES

PENDERYN ICONS OF WALES

The Icons of Wales series consists of special bottlings - each one celebrating a person, milestone or event from Welsh history with international significance. The distillery plans to release 50 such editions in total, each one limited in number and containing Penderyn's award-winning Welsh whisky.



04/17

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The series seeks to celebrate the finest moments from Welsh history which showcase independence, innovation and individuality, raising the profile of these moments both in Wales and abroad.

To date there have been four editions: Independence, Red Flag, That Try and Dylan Thomas, in celebration of the centenary of Wales' best known writer.

The Penderyn Sherrywood Dylan Thomas edition has been aged in Oloroso Sherry casks and combined with whisky matured in American bourbon barrels to bring out its rich fruity flavour. It begins with the aroma of sugar bonbons rich with the smell of creamy toffee and vanilla. Soon Penderyn's own fresh green apples and boiled berry fruits join in. In the mouth cream sherry flavours, obvious but not overt, mingle with delicate fruits reminiscent of white currants and honeydew melon.



03/17

PENDERYN THAT TRY

The 4th in our Icons Of Wales Special Editions is a Peated finish 41% whisky. That Try celebrates Gareth Edwards' famous score for the Barbarian rugby team against the All Blacks in 1973.



01/15

Tasting Notes

Mild aromas of peat smoke, early morning at a rocky seaside and marmalade-on-toast all compete for our attention. A very fresh and clean whisky, beautifully distilled gives pleasure from the very first sip. In the mouth it begins with great sweetness before the smoky, slightly medicinal flavours descend. Slight bitterness follows that leaves a long lingering fresh taste in the mouth.

PENDERYN BRYN TERFEL

A bourbon cask whisky at 41% abv, and the fifth in our Icons Of Wales series, was launched on the 29th of November 2016 and celebrates Welsh opera singer Bryn Terfel and, more specifically, his favourite role, Falstaff. The whisky is well-rounded, spicy and sumptuous and we have brought a theatrical element to the design, all of which reflect the character of Falstaff.



04/17

Tasting Notes

Nose: Smooth and creamy. There are notes of honey, vanilla ice-cream and a hint of banana chips.

Palate: The experience is well rounded and rich, full of fruits, sweet apples, vanilla and a tone conjuring up nostalgic memories for a banana split.

Finish: Contains which is followed another evocative to cream soda - along with late arrival of a lin woody spice.

2017 IWSC - Silver

SINGLE CASKS & LIMITED EDITIONS

PENDERYN SINGLE CASK



Our distillers, Laura and Aista (who both trained under the expert direction of Dr Jim Swan) will occasionally select one or two of the very best Penderyn single cask whiskies as outstanding examples of our world class single malt whisky.

Our single cask whiskies are normally presented in handmade wooden boxes and can be individually numbered and/or signed by a senior member of the Penderyn team.

04/17

PENDERYN LIMITED EDITIONS

We sometimes run limited editions. Rich Oak is a rare small batch boiling combining three of our finest rich oak casks specially selected by our distillers. It is a big, robust yet remarkably smooth whisky and the first to be released from the distillery's own barrels.



Tasting Notes

Nose: Penderyn's unique green apple, banana and tropical fruits share the limelight with crème brûlée and apparent fortified wine.

Taste: Intensely sweet to begin, then rich fruity and vanilla flavours emerge.

Finish: A melange of flavours gradually fades into a long finish with a creamy, vanilla-like aftertaste.

2017 Spirits Business World Whisky Masters – Gold

2017 IWS International Spirits Awards – Gold

04/17

THE DISTILLING TEAM

The distilling team at Penderyn is led by Laura Davies and Aista Jukneviute who trained under the expert direction of master blender Dr Jim Swan (from L to R: Aista, Jim and Laura below). Dr Swan was involved with Penderyn Distillery since its inception and was charged with creating the unique style of Penderyn single malt. Jim was a consultant to the worldwide drinks industry and assisted in the quality aims of blue chip brewers, winemakers, distillers and cooperages as well as several small producers in five continents.

Sadly, Dr Jim Swan died on the 14th February 2017.



SPIRITS RANGE

BRECON GIN

This is a fine quality distilled gin using botanicals from the four corners of the world and bottled at Penderyn Distillery using mineral water from the Brecon Beacons National Park.



04/17

Tasting Notes

Taken neat, Brecon Gin is a big traditional juniper, laced with coriander and revealing hints of spicy cinnamon. Add a mixer and the citrus freshness of oranges and lemons appear with nutmeg, liquorice and angelica in a supporting role.

The characteristic flavours go well with tonic, ice and lemon on a warm summer's day but Brecon's traditional heritage is equally at home besides a roaring fire on a cold night and will bring back memories of long hot summers past.

2017 Spirits Business Global Gin Masters – Gold

2016 International Wine & Spirits Awards – Silver

BRECON BOTANICALS GIN

Made from our own recipe, combining a specially selected range of botanicals and the best pure grain spirit, this super-premium gin is produced in small batches using only the finest ingredients.



04/17

Tasting Notes

The nose is a rich complex of fresh juniper, followed quickly by coriander and a complexity of gin flavours. Hints of citrus mingle with oriental spices. On adding a mixer, the citrus, lemon, orange – and even bergamot – open out, as do hints of cinnamon, cloves and even saffron. A medium-length finish leaves you ready for the next mouthful.

Serving Suggestion: Try this gin with fresh mint and cucumber ice cubes for a sublime and premium experience.

2014 International Spirits Challenge Gin Trophy – Winner

2014 and 2015 Gin Masters – Gold

FIVE VODKA



04/17

FIVE is a premium 43% abv vodka made with pure clean water from its own glacier-bred, rock-filtered source in the wild Brecon Beacons mountain range. It is distilled five times for maximum purity. Vodka may be charcoal filtered but FIVE is so pure it doesn't need any further filtration.

Tasting Notes

FIVE gains a smooth fruit twist when we add a hint of barley spirit from our unique Penderyn still.

2017 International Spirits Challenge – Gold

MERLYN

Merlyn is a magical creation of the purest spirit and the finest cream from the land of legends.



04/17

Tasting Notes

Nose: Rich, warming creamy texture and fudge toffee is overlaid with the tingling aroma of fresh clean spirit. Vanilla, hints of banana and exotic fruits – and even rose petals – all linger gently in the background.

Palate: In the mouth the fruits are more intense and intermingle with the vanilla.

Finish: The combination of fresh cream and complex spirit produces a mysterious depth which is difficult to describe but encourages the next mouthful.

2016 International Wine & Spirits Awards – Silver

VISITOR CENTRE

Penderyn Distillery opened its doors in June 2008 with the launch of a purpose-built Visitor Centre. The distillery is located in the spectacular Brecon Beacons National Park. Guests can take a journey through the history of single malt whisky making in Wales, see Penderyn distilled before their eyes and enjoy a selection of Penderyn products in our well-stocked bar.

Open all year round, the award-winning Visitor Centre is one of South Wales's top attractions, visited by over 42,000 people in 2017. It has won a Trip Advisor Certificate of Excellence and in 2015 beat the BBC's *Dr Who Experience* in Cardiff to one of Wales' top tourism awards.

Penderyn also offers expert-led Masterclasses, where small groups are guided through an unforgettable whisky experience which includes a tour of the facilities, an interactive explanation of whisky production and, of course, an in-depth tasting session.

For more information, go to: www.penderyn.wales/visit/





KEY WELSH WHISKY DATES

4th century

Archaeology suggests there were small stills throughout Wales

1705

Evan Williams' family has a distillery in Dale, Pembrokeshire. They immigrated to the New World and Evan Williams was a founding father of the Kentucky Bourbon Whiskey Company

1889

Distillery opens in Frongoch, Bala

1903

Frongoch distillery closes down

1916

Welsh-born Prime Minister David Lloyd-George brings in legislation dictating that whisky must be stored in a barrel for 3 years and a day.

1st March 2004

Penderyn Single Malt Whisky launched by His Royal Highness Prince Charles, The Prince of Wales, on 1st March 2004

1st March 2005

Penderyn is launched in London

9th November 2005

Penderyn is released in the US in New York

1st October 2007

Launch of Merlyn, Brecon Five Vodka, Brecon Special Reserve Gin

June 2008

The Penderyn Distillery opens to the public

March 2013

The new stills arrive

7th April 2015

The inaugural Penderyn Music Book Prize winner announced: www.penderynprize.com

June 2016

Announcement of a planned 2nd Penderyn Distillery at the historic Copper Quarter in Swansea. Investigations also begin into building a 3rd distillery in Llandudno, North Wales—

September 2017

New Penderyn bottle launched at Whisky Live Paris

25th December 2017

Penderyn named as the UK Prime Minister's favourite Christmas drink

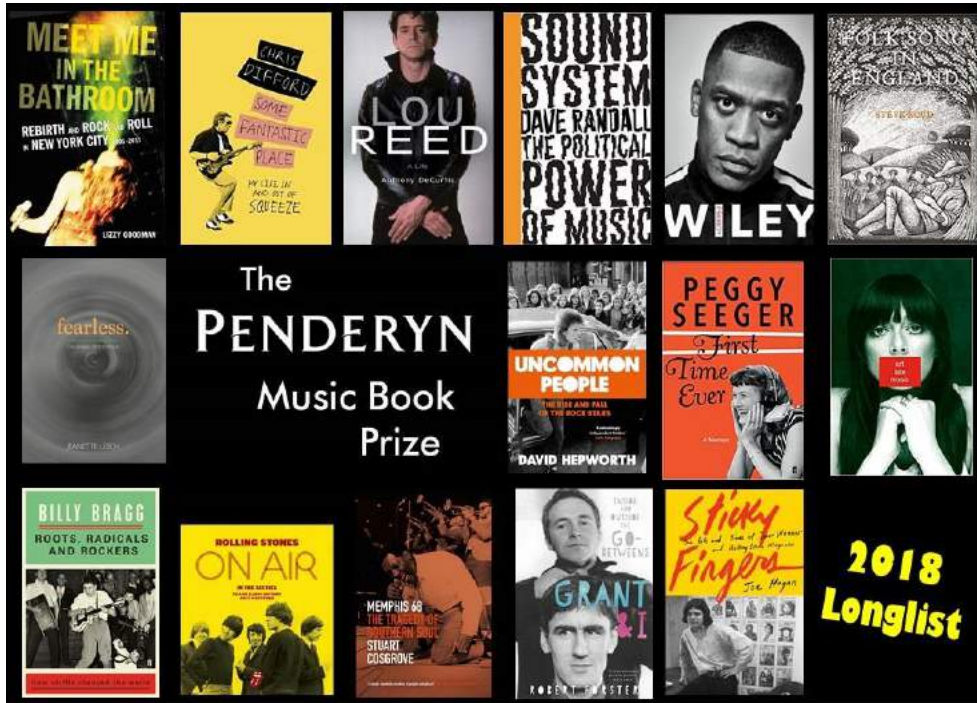
December 2017

A record year for sales



The Penderyn Music Book Prize

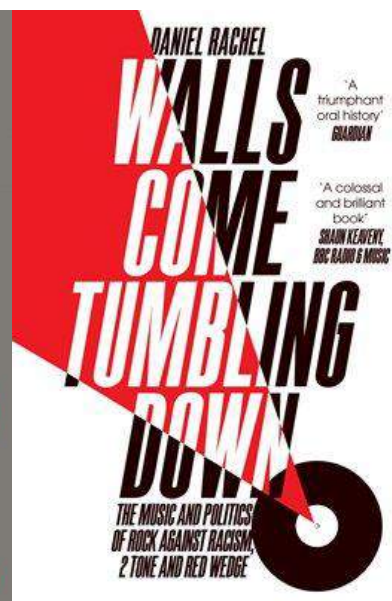
Longlist for 2018



Winner 2015

Winner 2016

Winner 2017



For more info go to www.penderynprize.com

SOCIAL MEDIA

We are active on social media and news and updates are posted on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter regularly.

We also have a Youtube channel on which we have posted many self-generated videos.

Simply look up 'Penderyn Distillery' and your social media platform of choice.



We have many stories to tell at Penderyn Distillery. Here are the recent ones. We have a document of stories from 2015-2016. If you wish to receive a copy, please email jon@penderyn.wales



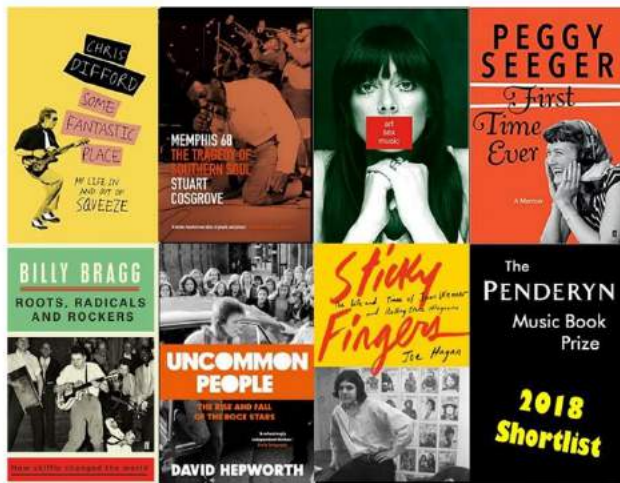
PENDERYN MUSIC BOOK PRIZE SHORTLIST – March 7th 2018

The shortlist for 2018's Penderyn Music Book Prize was announced by organiser Richard Thomas (see pic) at the Boogaloo pub in Highgate, London on Tuesday 6th March.

The shortlist is: **Roots, Radicals and Rockers: How Skiffle Changed the World** by *Billy Bragg* (Faber), **First Time Ever: A Memoir** by *Peggy Seeger* (Faber), **Art Sex Music** by *Cosey Fanni Tutti* (Faber), **Some Fantastic Place: My Life In and Out of Squeeze** by *Chris Difford* (Weidenfeld & Nicholson), **Sticky Fingers: The Life and Times of Jann Wenner and Rolling Stone Magazine** by *Joe Hagan* (Canongate), **Memphis 68: The Tragedy of Southern Soul (The Soul Trilogy)** by *Stuart Cosgrove* (Polygon) and **Uncommon People: The Rise and Fall of the Rock Stars 1955 - 1994** by *David Hepworth* (Transworld).

The prize is for any book about music, so can be history, theory, biography or autobiography. The judges for the prize are writer Laura Barton, DJ Gemma Cairney, comedian Simon Day, and musicians Jah Wobble, Jim Sclavunos (The Bad Seeds) & Jason Williamson (Sleaford Mods), and the winner will be announced at the Laugharne Weekend Festival on 8th April 2018.

Stephen Davies, Chief Exec, said, 'The prize is now in its 4th year and everyone at Penderyn is delighted that it's going from strength to strength. It's great to be associated with such an array of musical and journalistic talent, and also great to see everyone enjoying Penderyn whisky at the launch party in Highgate, London last Tuesday.'



For media information, please contact:

Jon Tregenna
Media Manager, Penderyn Distillery
jon@penderyn.wales
07702-088-298

About Penderyn:

Penderyn is the award winning single malt whisky, launched in 2004 to revive the Welsh whisky distillation tradition after an absence of more than 100 years.

Produced on the southern reaches of the Brecon Beacons, Penderyn has become one of the most recognised brands to emanate from Wales and is now sold throughout the UK and worldwide. It has gained the highest praise of the whisky industry and won numerous international awards, including honours at the prestigious International Wine and Spirit Competitions.

More details about Penderyn can be found at:
www.penderyn.wales





Gold Range in New Bespoke Bottle – March 1st 2018

March 1st is St David's Day and what better day to launch our new bottle across our Gold Single Malt Welsh Whisky Range. The bottle, which was designed by eminent designer and Penderyn Director, Glenn Tutssel, was initially launched containing our house style Madeira finish at Whisky Live in Paris in September last year. Now our Peated, Portwood and Sherrywood finishes are available in this striking new bottle.

Stephen Davies, Penderyn's Chief Exec, said, 'This is a wonderful development for our distillery. A lot of hard work has gone into creating this bespoke bottle and for that we thank Glenn and our management team. Having our own bottle gives us another point of difference, and the striking design compliments perfectly the award-winning whiskies inside the bottle.'

To see a short promotional film of Glenn talking about the new bottle, please search 'Youtube Penderyn Bottle'. For more info including Tasting Notes and 'how to buy' regarding our Gold range, please go to www.penderyn.wales/Gold.



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Rolling Stones and Wiley compete for Penderyn Prize - 20th January 2018

The Penderyn Music Book Prize 2018 has announced this year's longlist - a smorgasbord of musical genres from Billy Bragg's history of skiffle to Wiley's grime memoir; from a study of the tradition of English folk music to an exploration of the rise and fall of the Rock Star. Now in its 4th year, the prize is the only UK-based book prize specifically for music titles.

'The Mercury Prize of books' NME

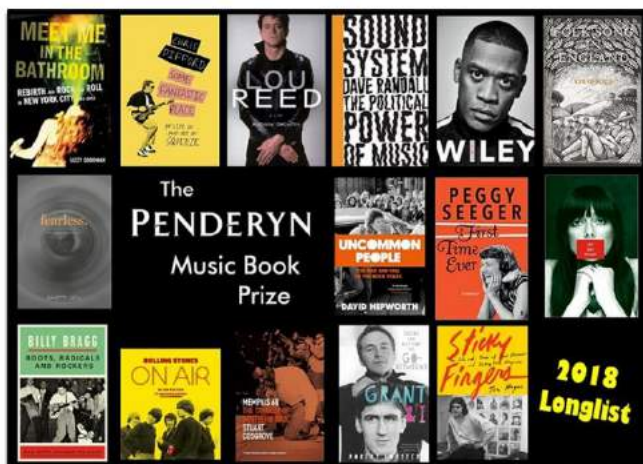
The shortlist will be revealed in early March and the winner is announced at The Laugharne Weekend festival on Sunday 8th April 2018.

The 2018 Penderyn Music Book Prize longlist:

Roots, Radicals and Rockers: How Skiffle Changed the World by Billy Bragg (Faber); **Some Fantastic Place: My Life In and Out of Squeeze** by Chris Difford (Weidenfeld & Nicholson); **First Time Ever: A Memoir** by Peggy Seeger (Faber); **Sticky Fingers: The Life and Times of Jann Wenner and Rolling Stone Magazine** by Joe Hagan (Canongate); **Fearless: The Making of Post-Rock** by Jeanette Leech (Jawbone); **Meet Me In The Bathroom: Rebirth and Rock and Roll in New York City 2001 - 2011** by Lizzy Goodman (Faber); **Memphis 68: The Tragedy of Southern Soul (The Soul Trilogy)** by Stuart Cosgrove (Polygon); **Art Sex Music** by Cosey Fanni Tutti (Faber); **Lou Reed: A Life** by Anthony DeCurtis (John Murray); **Sound System: The Political Power of Music** by Dave Randall (Pluto); **Eskiboy** by Wiley (Heinemann); **Grant & I: Inside and Outside the Go-Betweens** by Robert Forster (Omnibus); **Uncommon People: The Rise and Fall of the Rock Stars 1955 - 1994** by David Hepworth (Transworld); **The Rolling Stones: On Air in the Sixties** by Richard Havers & The Rolling Stones (Ebury); **Folk Song In England** by Steve Roud (Faber)

The judging panel for the prize comprises: bass guitarist, singer, poet and composer **Jah Wobble**, formerly of Public Image Ltd (PiL); writer and broadcaster **Laura Barton**; 'Bad Seed', percussionist and producer **James Scavunus**; broadcaster and author **Gemma Cairney**; vocalist **James Williamson**, one half of The Sleaford Mods; and comedian **Simon Day**, best known for his characters on "The Fast Show".

Stephen Davies, Chief Exec of Penderyn Distillery said, 'We are delighted to sponsor this prestigious prize. The 2018 long list has a wonderfully varied selection of books, and we look forward to the shortlist announcement in March and the prize ceremony in Laugharne.'



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Jon Tregenna
Media Manager, Penderyn Distillery
jon@penderyn.wales
07702-088-298

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British Prime Minister favours Penderyn at Christmas - 5th January 2018

As everyone was getting ready for Christmas dinner a remarkable survey appeared on the internet. Our UK political leaders were asked which was their favourite Christmas tipple. Theresa May, the British Prime Minister was quoted as saying:

'My favourite Christmas drink will be a glass of a Welsh whisky called Penderyn, which I'll enjoy on those hopefully quiet winter evenings over the holidays.'

The story was picked up by several UK media outlets including The Times, The Mirror, Wales Online and ITV.

The survey was done by the www.politico.eu website and among the responses was one from teetotal Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn who said he would be drinking apple juice 'like most days', adding, 'On Christmas Day, I make sure it's a particularly good one.' Meanwhile Liberal Democrat leader Sir Vince Cable said he would also initially be sticking to apple juice as he has his first Christmas drink with some children in care, but will later have a 'rum and coke while watching the Strictly Come Dancing Christmas Special'.

It's good to know that Penderyn is enjoyed in the very highest echelons of political power!



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PENDERYN - 'GRAND MASTER' AWARD - 20th December 2017

Penderyn Distillery has been awarded World Whisky Grand Master 2017, which is a truly significant achievement. Only four of these awards are handed out by The Spirits Business each year, and this is the first time we have been awarded top prize. The trophy was collected by our Sales Manager, Rob Weller (see pic), at an awards lunch in London recently. Rob said, 'It was a great event and to pick up this award with the whole whisky industry looking on was a great honour for Penderyn, and also a little nerve-wracking for me!'

The Spirit Masters series has fast become one of the most respected and high profile trade competitions in the industry, attracting vast amounts of entries from leading brands all over the world. Penderyn were awarded the title for the very high standards of the following award-winning Single Malt Welsh Whiskies - Legend, Celt, Myth, Madeira, Sherrywood, Rich Oak, Portwood and our Rich Oak Single Cask. The Judges were chaired by Amy Hopkins (Deputy Editor, The Spirits Business) and Melita Kiely (Senior Staff Writer, The Spirits Business) and featured writers and judges from across the industry.

2017 has been a great year for awards for Penderyn Distillery, and fills us with great optimism as we look ahead to 2018.



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Gold Medal for Brecon Botanicals Gin – 7th November 2017

It's been an autumn of medals for Penderyn Distillery and now Brecon Botanicals Gin has joined the party by winning a Gold Medal from the prestigious Spirits Selection awards by Concours Mondial de Bruxelles which took place in Brussels on the 22-24 August, where 1140 spirits competed before a selection of the world's finest tasters.

Not only that, but our Penderyn Legend, Merlyn Cream Liqueur and Brecon Special Reserve Gin also picked up Silver Medals. Stephen Davies, Penderyn's Chief Executive said, 'After Brecon Gin won Golds at both the International Spirits Awards and The Spirits Business Gin Masters, it's wonderful news that our Botanicals Gin has also impressed the judges of another renowned international award. We're also really pleased that our Merlyn Cream Liqueur has been recognised, especially in the run up to Christmas when cream liqueurs are especially popular.'



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Penderyn's Swansea Copperworks Distillery Update – 6th November 2017

Some new drawings of the planned 2nd Penderyn Distillery on the site of the old Hafod & Morfa Copperworks in Swansea (opposite the Liberty Stadium, home of Swansea City FC) have emerged. They can be seen below. The current site comprises 12 listed internationally significant industrial heritage buildings. The projected distillery will be housed mainly in and behind the old Powerhouse building (also pictured 'then and now'), which latterly became the canteen before production closed at the site in 1980. The Hafod-Morfa Copperworks was once the beating heart of the Industrial Revolution. In the late 19th century approximately 65% of the world's copper was smelted here. Although a largely barren site now, it was once entirely covered in a maze of buildings and slag heaps created as a by-product of the copper smelting process.

The transformation will be astonishing when work is complete, especially as plans have just been released of a cable car, toboggan slide and restaurant on Kilvey Hill, which overlooks both Swansea and the distillery site. Penderyn's Chief Exec, Stephen Davies, said, 'All these developments mean that the distillery plans will put us at the very heart of a site that will attract hundreds of thousands of visitors a year.'



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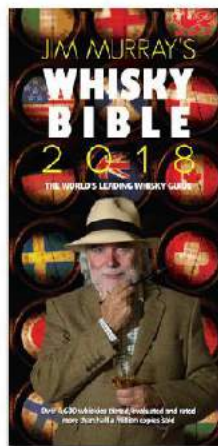


Bryn Terfel Whisky Wins Gold – October 20th 2017

After a summer of awards for our whiskies and spirits, the icing on the cake arrived in the form of legendary whisky writer Jim Murray. His 2018 Whisky Bible has our Bryn Terfel Icons Of Wales Single Malt Whisky as the best European Whisky Of The Year, in the multiple category, i.e. whiskies that are made from more than one cask. Bryn Terfel also attained a score of 96.5/100 in the Whisky Bible.

Stephen Davies, Penderyn's Chief Exec said, 'What's most pleasing about this award is that we usually win prizes for our Portwood, Sherrywood and Madeira finishes – rich fruity whiskies – however Bryn Terfel is a light and delicate single barrel maturation, and so we are particularly thrilled at this achievement.'

TASTING NOTES: The nose is smooth and creamy. There are notes of honey, vanilla ice-cream and a hint of banana chips. On the palate the experience is well rounded and rich, and full of fruits, sweet apples, vanilla and a tone conjuring up a nostalgic memory for banana splits. The finish contains honey which is followed by another evocative tone – cream soda – along with the late arrival of a lingering woody spice.



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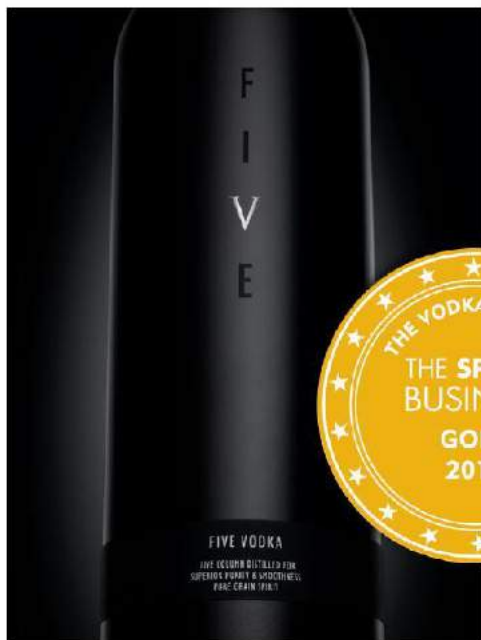


Penderyn's Brecon FIVE Vodka Wins Gold (again!) - 12 October 2017

Penderyn Distillery are delighted to announce that their Brecon FIVE Vodka has won the Gold Award at the Spirits Business 'Global Vodka Masters' 2017. This follows on from the Gold they won at the International Spirits Challenge. FIVE is a premium 43% abv vodka made with pure clean water from Penderyn's own glacier-bred, rock-filtered source situated below our distillery in the Brecon Beacons mountain range. FIVE is distilled five times for maximum purity (hence its name), and whilst vodka may be charcoal filtered, FIVE is so pure it doesn't need any further filtration. It gains a smooth fruit twist when we add a hint of barley spirit from our unique Penderyn still.

Brecon FIVE vodka now has a UK-wide listing with Tesco and in the north of England with Booths & Co. It is also available from Welsh distributors Castell Howell and Blas ar Fwyd, as well as the distillery and major online retailers.

Stephen Davies, Penderyn's Chief Exec, said, 'This is fantastic news. To win one International Gold Award is wonderful, so to win two is exceptional. This is matched by a noticeable increase in sales for our vodka, and it's great that our spirits are now getting the attention that our Single Malt Whiskies have enjoyed for some time.'



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New Penderyn Bottle Design Revealed – 3 October 2017

We are delighted to announce the new style presentation for our Madeira Finish Single Malt Whisky. This is an exclusive bespoke design bottle by Penderyn director Glenn Tutssel - a creative force for Penderyn since 2004. The design was launched at Whisky Live in Paris on Sunday 24th September 2017 and reinforces the idea of Penderyn being a new kind of 'Welsh Gold'.

This is a major new development for Penderyn and has been two years in planning. The bottles feature the AC (Aur Cymru – Welsh Gold) logo, a new version of the iconic Penderyn Gold Seam and has hallmarks on the wings of the bottle. These are of the dragon, harp and three feathers – a symbol of Wales since medieval times.



Stephen Davies, Penderyn's Chief Exec, said, 'This is a very exciting time for everyone at the distillery, and for our importers and customers around the world. The reputation of our Single Malt Welsh Whiskies is growing quickly across the globe. We had great success with our previous bottle, which was quite understated. Now we have a wonderful and dynamic new bottle to match the exciting award-winning whiskies we produce.'

Designer Glenn Tutssel (pictured below) explains the new bottle in a video, which has had more than 61,500 views. You can see the short film by visiting the Penderyn facebook page, or by searching on Youtube for 'New Penderyn Bottle'.



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Penderyn Wins Four More Golds – 1st August 2017

Our description of Penderyn as 'Welsh Gold' was never more appropriate as we have won another 4 gold awards for our Single Malt Welsh Whiskies.

The World Whisky Masters Awards organised by The Spirits Business are one of the most prestigious of the International Spirits Awards, and Penderyn picked up gold for the following whiskies: Penderyn Madeira 46%, Penderyn Myth, Penderyn Sherrywood & Penderyn Rich Oak. This means we have won a total of 8 gold awards for our whiskies and spirits in the past few weeks alone, and this is testimony to the hard work put in by all our staff, especially our distilling and sales team.

Stephen Davies, Penderyn's Chief Exec, said, 'This is excellent news for everyone at the distillery. Our whiskies are now firmly part of the international whisky conversation and we are delighted with these awards. Penderyn is going from strength to strength, exports are increasing, we've become an established brand in multiples across the UK with ever increasing listings across our range, and we also have some more very exciting news which we look forward to sharing with you towards the end of the year.'

THE SPIRITS BUSINESS

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Penderyn Triple Gold Winners – 12th July 2017

Penderyn Distillery are delighted to announce the winning of three gold awards at international spirits competitions: Brecon Special Reserve Gin won gold at the London-based Spirits Business Global Gin Masters, and two of our single malt whiskies, Sherrywood 46% and Rich Oak at 50% won gold at the Meiningers International Spirits Awards ISW in Neustadt an der Weinstraße in Germany.

Meiningers, the publishing house, was founded in 1903 by Daniel Meininger in Neustadt, Germany. With his trade magazine 'Das Weinblatt', a weekly publication dedicated to 'real viniculture and the wine trade', he started a publishing house which, now in its fourth generation, is synonymous with journalistic expertise in the fields of wine, beverages and gastronomy. Stephen Davies, Penderyn's Chief Exec, said, 'After the wonderful success of our Brecon FIVE Vodka winning gold at the International Spirits Challenge in June, it's fantastic that our gin and single malt whiskies have again been recognised as among the finest in the world.'

The 'gold seam' which features on our 46% abv whisky range bottles is becoming more and more appropriate!

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Penderyn's Brecon FIVE Vodka Wins Gold - 18 June 2017

Penderyn Distillery are delighted to announce that their Brecon FIVE Vodka has won the Gold Award at the International Spirits Challenge 2017. FIVE is a premium 43% abv vodka made with pure clean water from Penderyn's own glacier-bred, rock-filtered source situated below our distillery in the Brecon Beacons mountain range. FIVE is distilled five times for maximum purity (hence its name!), and whilst Vodka may be charcoal filtered, FIVE is so pure it doesn't need any further filtration. It gains a smooth fruit twist when we add a hint of barley spirit from our unique Penderyn still.

Brecon FIVE vodka now has a UK-wide listing with Tesco and in the north of England with Booths & Co. It is also available from Welsh distributors Castell Howell and Blas ar Fwyd, as well as the distillery and major online retailers.

Stephen Davies, Penderyn's Chief Exec, said, 'We regularly celebrate our whiskies and gins picking up international awards so are especially delighted that our vodka has won this prestigious award.' Nikayla Langley, one of the organisers of the event said, 'Winning an ISC medal is an outstanding achievement and underlines a producer's commitment to quality and innovation through the spirit.'



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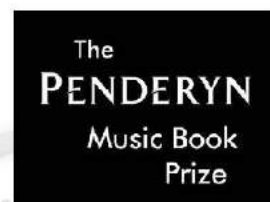


Penderyn Prize 2017 – Winner Announced – 9th April 2017

‘The Mercury Prize of Books’ – NME

The Penderyn Music Book Prize is the only UK-based book prize specifically for music titles including history, theory, biography, autobiography. The 2017 award ceremony took place at the Laugharne Weekend, on Sunday 9th April. The winner was Daniel Rachel for ‘Walls Come Tumbling Down’ (Picador) – a book that charts the pivotal period between 1976 and 1992 that saw politics and pop music come together for the first time in Britain’s musical history. Daniel is pictured below with (from left to right), Jon Tregenna (Penderyn Media Manager), Daniel Rachel (Prize Winner), Stephen Davies (Penderyn Chief Exec), Richard Thomas (Prize & Laugharne Weekend Organiser). There is a video of the event on the Penderyn Youtube Channel.

The book has been described as a ‘triumphant oral history’ by John Harris in The Guardian, and as ‘a colossal and brilliant book’ by Shaun Keaveny on BBC 6 Music. After the ceremony Daniel said, ‘I am so thrilled to receive the Penderyn Music Book Prize. The last time I won a prize was the tombola at St Christopher’s Children Home when I was 8!’ Stephen Davies, Penderyn’s Chief Executive, said, ‘I thoroughly enjoyed reading the winning book. Congratulations to Daniel on his remarkable achievement. We look forward to next year’s prize.’



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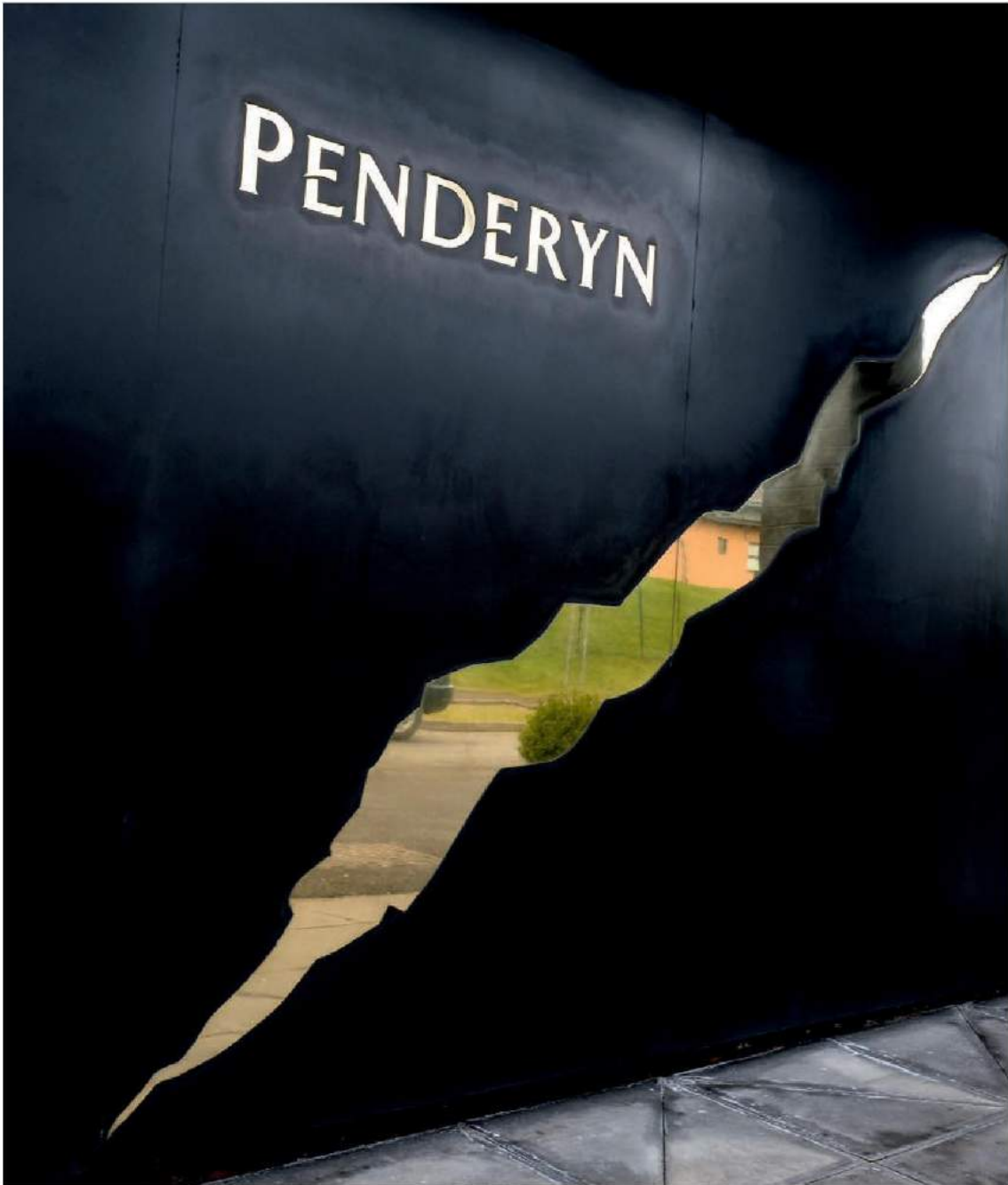
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whisky

q u a r t e r l y

Here's an article on Penderyn written by eminent Whisky writer Dave Alcock for Whisky Quarterly in 2016





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Penderyn: part of a bigger conversation

Wales' first whisky distillery
is taking a modern approach.

Dave Alcock uncovers
its winning formula



It is little more than a decade since the Penderyn Distillery started production in Wales. It was a landmark for the country – this was its first commercial whisky. However, Penderyn's foundation prompts the question: what connection does a distillery have with its surroundings? As a new venture in a new location in the British Isles, Penderyn comes without the "privilege of heritage" stretching back hundreds of years, the grainy black-and-white photographs adorning musty and damp rock walls, the graffiti of generations etched in the architecturally suspect nooks and crannies that seem to be epitomise many of our older distilleries.

You could be forgiven for missing Penderyn Distillery. It nestles by the side of an innocuous A-road, on a ribbon development that offers no clues to history or context. You might drive through, only glimpsing the seam of gold on the distillery facade out of the corner of your eye, and . . . gone. That would be a shame. Heading north on the A4059, take a left turn just past the distillery and you are quickly into rustic byways, slate-grey pubs and the cemetery-stone overgrowth of a different time. Get out of the car and you're walking in the footsteps of Welsh sinners wending chapel way, catching whispers of gossip in fading dialects on unalloyed Welsh air. It is peaceful, bucolic, tinged with nostalgia . . . but back to business.



I arrived at Penderyn village with five minutes to spare – five minutes in which to compose, focus, savour. I'd done no preparation. I was coming in cold, quietly confident that the conversation that was about to take place would be enjoyable, illuminative, interesting and, perhaps most importantly, underpinned with passion. I was not disappointed.

I wasn't even sure who I would be meeting other than Jon Tregenna, the Marketing Manager, who gave me a warm welcome. My brief was remarkably simple – just two words: Penderyn Distillery. After a short introduction and a skip up the stairs to the Boardroom, I met Stephen





The cultural currency of their marketing hints at a more recent past



due to shortage of stock, but also the realisation that you can make good NAS whisky. It was nice that we there early and it hopefully gives us some credibility."

I was curious to know if there were any plans for diversification into the "age statement" market. My question was met with an unequivocal and unified, "No" from Sian, Steve and Jon. Steve went on to say: "We don't plan to put an age statement on the whiskies. We might do special editions, for example Vintage 2000, but it would be wrong of us, almost dishonest, to suddenly say that age statements are important."

So first principles were established: honesty, commitment to high-quality spirit and a sense of Penderyn's place in relation to Brecon and the wider Welsh context. How to "grow the product" then? The honesty associated with their commitment to the whisky is echoed in the marketing choices that they have made. While not shunning the traditional Welsh cultural stereotypes, Penderyn's message selectively taps into icons that resonate with what one might guardedly call a more contemporary audience. There is none of the traditional Welsh folksiness that for many would have been the obvious choice for the first commercial whisky produced in Wales. There are no leaks, no Welsh ladies in tall hats spinning wool outside a *bwthyn* by a *lyn*, no daffodils. Instead there is a contemporary thread that connects to a modern Wales. The cultural currency of their marketing hints at a more recent past, such as with the sherrywood-finished Dylan (Thomas) in the Icons of Wales series. It locates itself in innovative contexts, such as Welsh Rugby with the Grand Slam and That Try expressions. It also interconnects with a variety of artistic experiences, such as the Welsh National Opera and the Penderyn Music Book Prize. Interestingly, it is only after recent discussions with their increasingly impressive European market that Penderyn has taken some more overt steps to "embrace the dragon" as it were.

"Our connections in Europe (for example, La Maison du Whis-

ky) wanted a little more Welshness connected with the brand," explains Sian. The result can be seen in the Myth expression (matured initially in ex-Buffalo Trace bourbon casks).

As someone who supports any opportunities for creativity within the whisky world and also someone who has fumbled with guitar strings for decades, I was particularly interested in the Penderyn Music Book Prize. This is the first UK prize specifically for music titles (history, theory, biography, autobiography). Any connection between literary/musical luminaries, such as prize judges John Cooper Clarke, Shane MacGowan, Beth Orton and Mark Lewisohn (in-



augural winner with his book *The Beatles – All these Years: Volume One*), and the whisky community is a certain winner for me.

So what about the future? In terms of creativity and innovation, there are exciting times ahead. The installation of Penderyn's own mash tun has enabled a more-nuanced approach to whisky production. The two pot stills and two Penderyn stills have increased opportunities to work with different styles of new-make spirit. There is also a new bespoke Penderyn bottle on the horizon which I find really exciting. The close collaboration with Dr Jim Swan, the legendary distilling consultant, is set

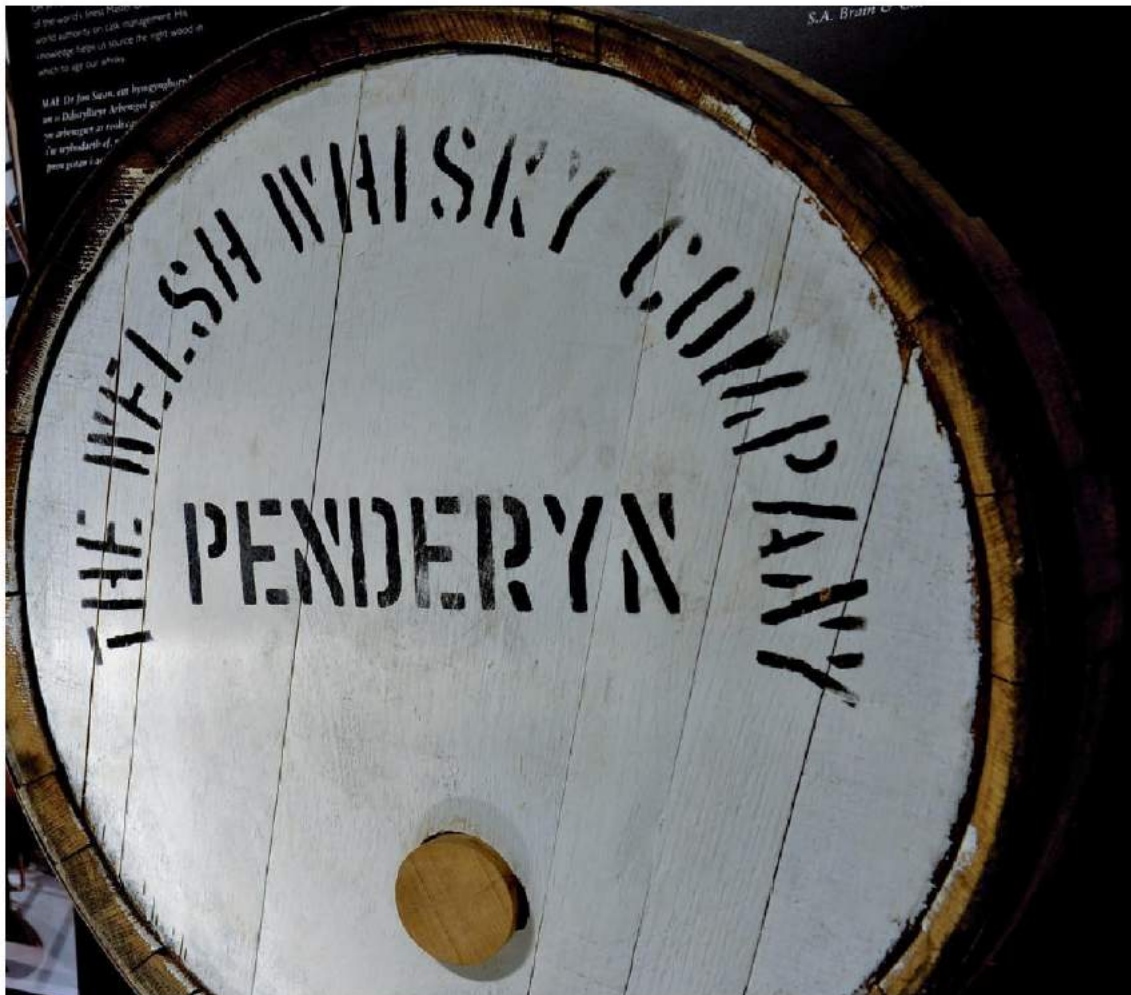
to continue. Steve referred to Jim as a tremendous force for creativity.

Jon, who is a gifted outside-the-still thinker, will continue to seek stories that are "organic and honest to the business". He goes on to say that, in relation to the context of Penderyn, "We're part of a bigger conversation". For me, it is an illuminative and telling statement. If passion was fuel, then this distillery's tanks are full.

The question, "What does Penderyn distillery mean to you?" took the trio by surprise but was answered with eloquence and honesty. Sian said: "It is part of me; it feels like my child. We get to bring the brand to

life". Steve replied with, "The first sip of Penderyn was astonishing to me. It's a very intense thing, being part of a brand." Jon, meanwhile, said, "My grandfather was from the Rhondda, just over the mountain. I've always felt a strong connection here, and Penderyn defines the spirit of Wales."

So the guardians of whisky production at Penderyn are at their posts. There appears to be an exciting creative dynamic at work that, allied with business acumen at the coal face of the whisky business, bodes well for the future of this distillery. ◆



CelticLife

INTERNATIONAL

And finally, an article on Penderyn written by Scottish
journalist Tom Langlands for Celtic Life International
in March 2018



Wales, the Welsh language, Celtic myths and Arthurian legends were all influences on the works of J.R.R. Tolkien. Perhaps for those reasons dragons and gold fascinated him also. In *The Lord of the Rings* Tolkien penned 'All that is gold does not glitter', and in *The Hobbit* the great dragon Smaug protects its gold deep under the Lonely Mountain. With these thoughts in mind I set out to discover if there is indeed a gold that does not glitter in Wales - the land of the iconic red dragon.

Wales' industrial heritage is founded on iron and coal. The town of Blaenavon in southeast Wales grew up around an eighteenth century ironworks and associated coal-mining industry. Today it is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and its coal-mining heritage is celebrated in the Big Pit National Coal Museum. During the Industrial Revolution coal was such a valuable commodity that it was known as 'black gold.'

Susan Flander-Woodhouse and her husband Gerry Woodhouse are the owners and founders of Blaenavon Cheddar Company on Blaenavon's Broad Street. Flander-Woodhouse was born in Walton on

Thames, London, to a Welsh mother and a Cornish father but has lived in Wales for over forty years. She worked in the cheese industry for twenty-three years, beginning as a development chef for a large company before starting her own family business in 2006. Blaenavon Cheddar Company specializes in making naturally-flavoured Welsh cheeses, including smoked cheeses and cheeses flavoured with mustard, ginger, leek, elderflower, white wine, and whisky. The company's list of awards includes True Taste of Wales 2007, 2009 and 2012; British Cheese Medals 2007 and 2010; Winners of the Monmouthshire Business Awards 'Excellence in Small Business Food and Drink Producers 2017', and two medals in the International Cheese Awards 2017.

Prior to the founding of Blaenavon Cheddar Company, Flander-Woodhouse realized there was an opportunity for a cheese business to tap into the history of the area in a practical way. "At the bottom of the mineshaft 300ft (90m) below Big Pit's winding wheel the 50 degrees Fahrenheit (10 degrees Celsius) ambient temperature and the dark, humid conditions are perfect for maturing cheese." She got permission from

the National Museum of Wales to mature her products in Big Pit, noting that "we now have five products that are matured underground and all of them except the newest one are international medal winners. Once every two weeks we do a cheese swap when the miners bring the cheese to the surface and then take down the next batch."

The newest cheese may not yet have won any awards, but the first batch was only brought to the surface in January of this year and it may indeed be something to sing about - its creation was the result of a suggestion by local singer-songwriter - Ragsy.

In 2013 Ragsy (Gary Ryland) - mentored by fellow Welshman Tom Jones - reached the finals of *The Voice U.K.* He hails from nearby Aberdare and is passionate about all things Welsh. As a family friend, Flander-Woodhouse would go to hear Ragsy anytime he performed locally. She recalls, "It was Ragsy who suggested that it would be good to produce a charcoal cheddar as one of the cheeses matured underground." As a proponent of heritage tourism, that suggestion got her thinking about how to produce a cheese that could reflect the heritage of an industry that was once the life-blood of a nation. The result



is Black Gold, a mature cheddar cheese that is further matured for two weeks in Big Pit. Once removed from the mine, natural charcoals derived from coconut husks are added to the cheese giving it a dark grey colour. The cheese is then handcrafted into coal-shaped lumps and finished with a thick, black wax coating. Each coal-shaped cheese is then presented in a small sack bag with a drawstring. Black Gold is dark and strong and its initial, slightly textured feel on the tongue gives way to a beautifully smooth sensation with hints of toasted flavours as it melts in the mouth.

Now, I have a penchant for single malt whisky to accompany good cheese, and being a Scot I am rather spoiled for choice.

But it was a gift of a bottle of Penderyn, Madeira-finish, single malt Welsh whisky that piqued my interest in an altogether different, but complementary, Welsh gold.

Twenty-five miles (40km) west of Blaenavon, and not far from Ragsy's hometown of Aberdare, is the village of Penderyn - its name synonymous with the Welsh miner and martyr Dic Penderyn who took part in the Merthyr Rising of 1831. That social protest saw a soldier of the Crown stabbed in the leg and Penderyn dubiously found guilty and hanged for the offence. Here, on the southern edge of the Brecon Beacons National Park, the Welsh whisky industry is being reborn; an industry that was effectively wiped out in the late nineteenth century by the temperance movement.

Penderyn Distillery was created by a group of friends who wanted to produce a whisky to stand proud alongside the spirits produced by their fellow Celts in Scotland and Ireland. The Penderyn site was chosen on account of its access to natural spring rainwater run-off from the Brecon Beacons. The distillery has its own unusual style of single copper-pot still designed by Dr David Faraday, a descendent of the eminent Victorian chemist and physicist Michael Faraday. Unlike the curvaceous copper stills of Scotland's distilleries, the Penderyn still has a more utilitarian and industrial appearance. However, the process of heating the malted barley wash and collecting the resulting vapour on a series of metal plates within the still gives rise to a faster maturation process than the double or triple distillation processes of

Scottish or Irish distilleries.

By the time the vapour has passed through the still and condensed to arrive in the spirit safe, the result is an incredibly smooth spirit at a staggering 92% alcohol by volume. This whisky spirit is then married with the Brecon Beacons spring water drawn from below the distillery.

Penderyn's Media Manager, Jon Tregenna, explains how the diluted spirit is then matured in charred oak casks from the American bourbon industry.

"Our Welsh forefathers were the pioneers of the American bourbon industry. Evan Williams - from Dale in Pembrokeshire - was one, and his bourbon is still produced today. Currently, we utilise ex-bourbon casks to create the unique flavour and complex taste to our whisky." The house-style range of Penderyn malts is then finished in former Madeira wine casks to bring out the character that exemplifies this Welsh gold. The distillery now has two Faraday stills and recently added two lantern stills. The different stills permit experimentation with other tastes and flavours.

Penderyn distillery bottled its first 'gold' whisky in 2004 in the presence of Prince Charles. It has since expanded its range to include Portwood, Peated and Sherrywood finish whiskies and the Icons of Wales range - to date, five distinct malts including Dylan Thomas and Red Flag - the latter commemorating the raising of a red flag during the protest that resulted in the execution of Dic Penderyn.

As the whisky flowed, so have the awards. However, as a fellow Celt, it was the Dragon series that caught my attention. Comprised of Legend (2015 Global World Whisky Masters - Gold), Myrh (2015 Global World Whisky Masters - Gold; 2017 Spirits Business World Whisky Masters - Gold) and Celt (2016 World Whisky Masters 'Europe Single Malt Premium Whiskies' - Gold; 2016 International Wines and Spirits Competition - Worldwide - Silver), the Dragon whiskies are all wonderfully smooth with a hint of sweetness and fruity aromas. Having sampled several excellent Penderyn whiskies, I poured a glass of Celt to accompany my Black Gold cheese. The smoky, peated flavour is evocative of Wales' mining heritage, and the accompanying hint of the sea reminds me of our shared Celtic ancestry.

Reckoning that Tolkien knew a thing or two about Wales I relaxed with my whisky and cheese to the sound of Ragsy's album Ouch. The lyrics from the track Feels Like Home rather summed up how I felt about both my new-found Welsh golds - "I'll keep on feeding off this land until my soul is satisfied..."

Both the Blaenafon Cheddar Company Limited and Penderyn Distillery distribute internationally.

www.chunkofcheese.co.uk
www.penderyn.wales
www.tomlanglandsphotography.com



For press enquiries please contact:

Jon Tregenna

Jon@penderyn.wales

07702 088 298

Also email Jon for Penderyn's Press Stories 2015-2016

www.penderyn.wales

*Thank you
Diolch yn fawr*