



Irish Association of Youth Orchestras

Ceolfhoirne na nÓg

newsnotes

December 2013

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Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí



19th Festival of Youth Orchestras

Preparations are well under way for the 19th Festival of youth Orchestras at the National Concert Hall in Dublin on Saturday 8th February 2014. As always, young people from around the country will converge on Dublin for a day of musical performances and celebration of the achievements of youth orchestras in Ireland. This year, participants will be travelling from Limerick, Galway, Wexford, Donegal and Tipperary as well as players from around the country that take part in the Ceol na Mara Orchestra, hosted by the Irish Chamber Orchestra. We have the welcome return of the County Wexford Youth Orchestra, Donegal Youth Orchestra, The Tipperary Millennium Orchestra and The Music Matters Orchestra from Galway. We also welcome the return of the Young European Strings Chamber Orchestra who will perform the full *Simple Symphony* by Benjamin Britten (often dubbed the Not-so-Simple Symphony). St Agnes / Scoil Colm Primary School Orchestra return this year in a collaboration with St Ultan's Primary School and we have a cross-country collaboration in the East Meets West Orchestra, the combination of Kilbride & Lakeside Music in Wicklow and Headford Youth Music from County Galway.



Tickets for the Festival are now on sale from the National Concert Hall on 01 417 0000 or online at www.nch.ie. Tickets are priced from €7.50 for children to €15 full price with group and family discounts.

Youth Orchestra Achievement Awards

The annual IAYO Youth Orchestra Achievement Awards are now open for applications from member organisations. Two awards will be presented at the 19th Festival of Youth Orchestras for projects completed or ongoing during 2013. You can download the application details at www.iayo.ie/awards

Agnes O'Kane Award

The Agnes O'Kane Award, recognising the vital contribution that volunteers make to youth orchestras is open for nominations. If you would like to nominate a person for the award, please send a description of their activities in the area of youth orchestras, outlining why you think their work has been exceptional. Nominations should be two or three A4 pages and can be submitted by post or email to the IAYO office by Friday 10th January for the 2014 Festival. Read more about the award and previous participants at www.iayo.ie/volunteeraward

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Michael Cummins conducts the County Cork Youth Orchestra at the 18th Festival

Welcome members and friends to the December issue of Newsnotes. I would like to start this month by welcoming our new President and Vice-President to IAYO although, in truth, both of them have been involved in IAYO from the beginning and in youth orchestras for many years longer. Joanna Crooks now sits as President of the organisation she took a part in founding almost twenty years ago. Adrian Petcu, our new Vice-President was also present at the founding of IAYO in 1994 and has been involved in many ways ever since as a conductor, organiser and advisor. We would also like to welcome our newest board member, Paolo Cordone. Paolo joins us from the Young European Strings School of Music in Dublin and we are very much looking forward to working with him in the future.

It has been a busy and successful year for IAYO, beginning with our involvement with the celebrations of the Irish Presidency of the EU and taking in a ConCorda 20 year reunion along the way in addition to our annual programme of activities. I would like to express my thanks to Carol Daly who has, this year, stepped down as Artistic Director of the IAYO Chamber Music Workshops after seven successful years that have brought great joy to young players, introduced them to chamber music and helped their orchestral playing along enormously.

And now we are heading for the 19th Festival of Youth Orchestras and planning ahead to the 20th anniversary of IAYO and the celebratory 20th Festival and it seems that things have come a long way in the last 20 years for youth orchestras in Ireland, indeed they have come a long way in the last ten years and there is lots of energy and enthusiasm for more in the the future.

Wishing you all the very best for the Christmas and New Year,

Allin Gray, Director.

A Celebration of Benjamin Britten

Carlow Cathedral Sunday 29th December @ 8pm

Aspiro's youth choirs and guests celebrate the centenary of the birth of composer Benjamin Britten with some of his finest music written for community choirs and orchestras of all ages. Included in the programme will be music from *Ceremony of Carols* accompanied by harp and Britten's well know orchestral and choral arrangement of Psalm 150. There will be a very special tribute to our new Bishop Denis Nulty with a performance of *Nicolas Comes To Myra and is chosen Bishop* with Bishop Denis singing the part of 'Nicolas'. Aspiro will be joined on the night by Carlow Youth Orchestra under the direction of Majella Swan, and professional chamber ensemble Córmosa under the direction of Marian Gaynor including Maeve Lyons and Gillian Daly on piano organist Conor Maguire, harpist Andreja Malir, and soloist Karen Kelly. Joining at the end of the night for Handel's 'Hallelujah Chorus' will be the newly formed 'Aspiro Inspired', local choirs and many Aspiro Alumni home with family for Christmas.

Welcome to New Members

We would like to say a big 'Welcome' to our most recent members - Philipstown Youth Ensemble, Kiltrá School of Music Orchestra, Enniscorthy Vocational College Orchestra, Kilbride & Lakeside Music Committee, and Churchtown School of Music who have all joined us in the last year.



Maggie O'Shea, Kevin Jansson, and Kevin Ryan in *Inspirit*

Youth Orchestras .tv

Not an actual website or tv channel as such but there is increasingly more high-quality watching available online of and for youth orchestras. A selection of what is out recently:

- The four-part TV documentary Music Changes Lives following the students of St Agnes in Crumlin and St Ultan's in Cherry Orchard is now available to watch on YouTube.
- The video of Young Dublin Symphonia and their Danish and Norwegian friends can now be seen on the IAYO website. Just click on Newsnotes and scroll down until you find it.
- Sam Perkin and friends videod the first performance of *Inspirit* at ConCorda in Kilkenny this year. You can see and hear the enjoyment of the young people involved.

And you can also get a flavour of what happens in the background to many bigger orchestras. Try searching on YouTube for the European Union Youth Orchestra or check out the channel from our own National Youth Orchestra of Ireland.

Aksel Forberg, Freja Dyrbye and Tara Shahin at the 18th Festival



Irish Association of
Youth Orchestras

Conducting Workshops

Directed by Robert Houlihan

at the Royal Irish Academy of Music
from Monday 07 - Friday 11 July 2014



To take part, contact IAYO

021 421 5185 info@iayo.ie www.iayo.ie



Leading on . .



David Tobin, ex-Leader of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland, writes of his time with the orchestra.

I joined the NYOI when I was 13 years old and a shy little boy. I remember being very nervous on the first day getting on the bus to go to our campus in Waterford. Five-and-a-half years later at the age of 18, after leading the orchestra playing Sibelius Symphony No.2 in the National Concert Hall, it was all over. A few tears started to flow (I'm not one who cries very much!) because of the occasion that was in it. We

had just finished a great performance of a huge symphony under a world-class Venezuelan conductor and got a standing ovation in the best concert hall in the country. That sentence pretty much sums up the National Youth Orchestra.

Being in the orchestra was one of the best things that I ever experienced in my life. It's not only the musical experience I have accumulated over the years (the symphonies, conductors, soloists, tutors, concert halls, trips abroad), but the many great friends I've made, the confidence I've gathered and the great laughs that I've had with all these amazing people during the courses and concert tours.

On my first course with the orchestra in Winter 2008 I was the leader of the 2nd Violins. We played live music to the *Peter and the Wolf* film. It was a challenging experience but one that I learned so much from. We played in a near-full Helix concert hall under a great conductor in Gearóid Grant. That was just a hint of what was to come. Over the years I've played some of the best symphonies ever written (Tchaikovsky No.5, Mahler No.1 and Shostakovich No.10 to name a few favourites), played under internationally-acclaimed conductors (Garry Walker, Alan Buribayev, Rafael Payare), and played in the best concert halls in the country such as the Helix, City Hall in Cork, and, of course, the National Concert Hall, Dublin. (Not to mention our trip to the United Arab Emirates in the Spring of 2011 which was unbelievable!) Also, the experience of leading my country's youth orchestra for 2 years was one that I will never forget and will always be immensely proud of.

I met the majority of my best friends in the NYOI. The great thing about these people is that they have the same interests as you. You can both enjoy the music you're playing, talk about other amazing music you have both heard, as well being able to go outside to the Astro Pitch in Kilkenny College and play a game of football together. Musicians are some of the funniest and friendliest people in the world! I have absolutely loved every NYOI course and I've done 11!

The last movement of the Sibelius Symphony No.2 in July, 2013 in the NCH was one of the most emotional experiences of my life. Many of my best friends were also playing their last few minutes with this orchestra which had played a major role in their teenage life. It was an amazing concert and finished a three day tour of the country following concerts in Waterford and Limerick. The standing ovation just topped it off!

I am now going to embark on a career in music. I hope to start my degree in Germany next year and look forward to making more music and friends. The experience of the NYOI played a huge role in my love for music and my decision to become a musician.

I would recommend every single young musician in the country to apply for the National Youth Orchestra. I would advise parents in the strongest way possible to encourage their children to audition. It is an experience of a lifetime!



National Youth
Orchestra of Ireland
Ceolfhoireann Náisiúnta
Óige na hÉireann



National Youth Orchestra of Ireland New Year Gala

Saturday 4th January, 3.00pm
National Concert Hall, Dublin

Gearóid Grant, conductor

Niall O'Sullivan, trumpet

Beethoven Egmont Overture

Haydn Trumpet Concerto

Selections from **Anderson's Irish Suite**, and
Bizet's Carmen Suites Nos. 1 & 2

Prices: €18 (Concessions: €13)

Children under 18: €9

Group discounts available

Box office: 01 4170000 www.nch.ie



OURchestra

The OURchestra Summer Camp will take place in Esker Youth Village, Athenry, County Galway from August 11th-15th 2014.

This residential Camp is open for orchestral string and wind players aged 12-18, around grade 3-7 standard.

The cost is €220 all inclusive; Dormitory style accommodation, home cooking with parent volunteers.

Orchestra, Chamber Music, Move and Play, Juggling, Campfires, public final concert and more.

Course Directors: Katharine Mannion (Athenry Music School) and Katharina Baker (Coole Music).

Contact Katharina Baker (info@coole-music.com) or Katharine Mannion (athenrymusicsschool@gmail.com)



Coole Music's String Teacher Workshop

Coole Music's 7th Annual String Teacher Workshop on Sunday September 29th welcomed Maeve Broderick, one of Ireland's most outstanding violin teachers, as this year's lecturer. Her workshop was entitled 'The dynamics of balance and freedom in violin playing' - a subject that we explored together with a group of 12 string teachers who had traveled from Dublin, Sligo, Killaloe, Limerick, Ennis and Galway.



Maeve highlighted the importance of perseverance when helping the students in their technical set-up and movements from the start. In a time and society where children are often used to solving problems with the click of a button, learning to play a string instrument well demands a different kind of patience which can prove a

challenge for both teachers and students.

Maeve demonstrated among other things exercises to help the students to find the balance in their left-hand position, to even out the stronger and weaker fingers. Maeve also worked with two of Coole Music's young students, adjusting fine details in their technique and letting them feel the difference.

At the end of the workshop day, the participants had a whole menu of exercises, tips and observations to take home with them and into their teaching life. Thank you to Maeve for her generous sharing!

To get on the mailing list for future String Teacher Workshops with Coole Music, send an email with your details to info@coole-music.com.

IAYO National Chamber Music Workshops

The annual IAYO Chamber Music Workshops moved west this year after two years in County Laois to be hosted by Galway Youth Orchestras at St Mary's College in Galway City. Fifty-six young players took part in a course that was held in association with the Galway Ensemble-in-residence, the ConTempo Quartet.

The imposing looking building that is St Mary's immediately becomes Hogwarts to all those that go and stay there although thankfully there were no headless ghosts or fire-throwing wizards in evidence on the weekend at the beginning of October. The college proved to be an ideal venue in many ways, having lots of rooms for playing chamber music alongside plenty of accommodation to host the young people staying over. It is presently home to Galway Youth Orchestras, Maoin Cheoil na Gaillimhe, The Galway Music Residency and Music for Galway so it is no stranger to music taking part within its walls.

This was course Director, Carol Daly's final year with the course, having first directed the IAYO Chamber Music in Wexford in 2007 and subsequently in Cork, Kilkenny, Laois and finally this year in Galway. We had a final showing also from the Marble City Strings Quartet from Kilkenny who have been with us for five years and are now, we are told, 'moving on to ConCorda'.

On the first day of the course, the ConTempo worked with four of the older groups including, for the first time, a chamber group with piano (thanks to the generosity of Maoin Cheoil na Gaillimhe in sharing their instruments). On the second day, these four groups combined to form a chamber orchestra under the direction of Adrian Petcu. The traditional performance to finish the weekend showed how much the standard of playing on the course has grown over the years, especially as it is aimed at very young players with little or no experience of playing chamber music. We are delighted to announce that the Chamber Music Workshops will go ahead again next year in association with the Galway Ensemble-in-residence and that the ConTempo Quartet will be working with the young players for the full weekend. Applications will open on iayo.ie in the new year.

St Canice's Senior Orchestra Collaborate with RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra

The young players of St Canice's Senior Orchestra have been given a wonderful opportunity to perform a showcase of their work with acclaimed violinist Tasmin Little and the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra in December as part of a unique youth orchestra education programme. The RTÉ NSO will be performing in concert in the august surroundings of St Canice's Cathedral Kilkenny on Friday 6 December. Conducted by Fergus Sheil, the concert will feature internationally acclaimed violinist Tasmin Little, who will perform Bruch's violin concerto. In the weeks leading up to the concert, members of the National Symphony Orchestra and conductor Fergus Sheil will visit St Canice's Senior Orchestra for a special mentoring programme. The education programme with local youth orchestras accompanies this concert tour. The children have already had a special coaching session with some experienced RTÉ NSO musicians, where they received mentoring in strings, percussion, brass and wind. They will also have two additional sessions with conductor Fergus Sheil.

St Canice's Senior Orchestra is currently preparing a range of repertoire for the concert, including some related to the NSO's concert programme. The project, in cooperation with Kilkenny County Council Arts Office, will culminate with a showcase performance in the Watergate Theatre by St Canice's Senior Orchestra with Tasmin Little ahead of the main RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra concert. This is a unique opportunity for the children to both receive tuition from some of the country's most experienced musicians and to also perform on stage with professional musicians. The tour has been developed by Wide Open Music in conjunction with the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra. Tickets for the RTÉ NSO Concert may be purchased from the Watergate Theatre, Kilkenny (056-7761674).

61st European Musicfestival for Young People



Allin Gray, IAYO Director, travelled to Belgium in May this year to attend the Europees Muziekfestival voor de Jeugd Neerpelt.

The opening of this festival has more in common with the Eurovision than any youth orchestra festival that I have been to before. With a him-and-her duo of young presenters, large concert band, light show, smoke effects and everything filmed as it happened and shown on giant screens for the 2,000 participants along with a broadcast message from Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council and short bursts of film, the event is a truly impressive show for young people at the beginning of their own music festival. The spectacle is repeated each evening for the presentations of awards to ensembles for their performances during the day. Also, on the first evening, the participants were treated to an open-air show in the centre of Neerpelt with all the best of local food and a spectacular ariel show from Theatre Tol of Ypres.

The small Flanders town of Neerpelt in the north of Belgium is home to around 16,000 inhabitants but in the first weekend of May each year, it plays host to between 3,500 and 4,500 young people as part of the Muziekfestival voor de jeugd. The festival has been happening for over sixty years and changes from year to year, being a choral festival in even-numbered years and an instrumental festival in odd-numbered years. It presently takes place in nine venues in and around Neerpelt with 'fraternisation' concerts in another five or six venues in neighbouring towns.

The 2013 Festival was host to more than 100 instrumental ensembles including 3,500 participants from twenty-one countries, mostly from Europe but also with groups from as far away as China and Hong Kong. Ensembles came in many shapes and types with sections in the Festival for symphonic bands and brass bands; jazz ensembles and big bands; percussion ensembles; traditional instrumental and vocal ensembles; string and symphony orchestras; ancient music ensembles and 'free instrumentation' ensembles. Around half of the participants stayed for the full duration of the Festival (either two or three days depending on what day of the week the 1st May falls) while participants from nearby came for only one day.

Each day consisted of 'jury performances' during the daytime with 'fraternisation' concerts and 'laureate' concerts during the evenings after the day's awards. The fraternisation concerts are performances in local venues and in nearby towns where



Up to two-thousand people are present for the 'kick-off' show and the presentations shows each evening with performances by local young musicians and dancers.

a number of the visiting groups will gather together to perform for each other and a local audience. The laureate concerts present a selection of the best performances from each day in the central theatre and produces some truly riveting concerts of exceptional standard.

Although the festival is not a competition, there is an international panel of jurists that listen to 'jury performances' by all participants and award prizes and certificates for taking part in the festival. Many of the jurists return to the festival year after year and have built up extensive international networks during their time spent at the festival, often arranging tours and exchanges for their own ensembles, picking up work and opportunities and, most importantly, meeting old friends and making new ones.

For those international groups travelling to the festival, accommodation and meals are provided as part of the participation fee, a fee that is very reasonable for what is provided. Options for accommodation include holiday village, youth hostels and homestays. Transport to the event and travel during the festival is at the cost of the participants.

The festival is run with a permanent secretariat of two half-time positions for administration along with up to 400 volunteers for the festival, taking in all aspects of the organisation and the nightly productions.

To find out more about the festival in Neerpelt, visit www.emj.be - if you arrive at the Dutch language site, click EN for the English site. You can get a full guide to the festival events and also watch video footage to see and hear what to expect.



Young German musicians parading through the town of Neerpelt



The spectacular sky-high antics of the Theatre Tol ariel show!

Audacity Free Audio Editing Software

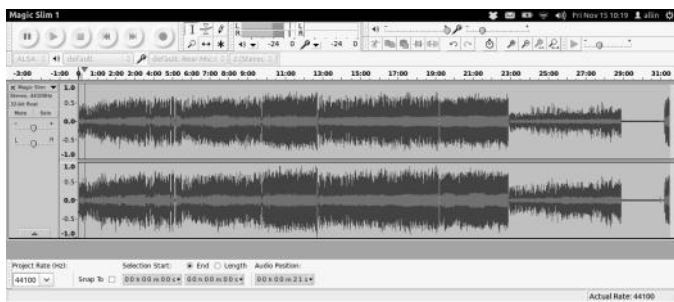
Following on from Jon Pearsons review of the free typesetting programme MuseScore in the May issue of Newsnotes, we take a look at the free audio editing software, Audacity.

Audacity is what is called 'Free and Open Source Software' meaning not only is it free to download, use and distribute but the code is also published so that anyone who wants can alter it or make new editions. While this might not be of much interest to the end-user, it does mean that Audacity and Muscore are part of a set of tools that can replace almost all paid-for software.

Audacity is an easy-to-use, multi-track audio editor and recorder for Windows, Mac OS X, Linux and other operating systems. You can use Audacity to:

- Record live audio.
- Record computer playback on any Windows Vista or later machine.
- Convert tapes and records into digital recordings or CDs.
- Edit WAV, AIFF, FLAC, MP2, MP3 or Ogg Vorbis sound files.
- Cut, copy, splice or mix sounds together.
- Change the speed or pitch of a recording.
- And more!

While Audacity is not as comprehensive as some other software that you can buy, it is more than adequate for the amateur user and is perfectly suitable for editing recordings of your youth orchestra for publishing to the web as audio files or for making a soundtrack for your YouTube videos and for young players to make and edit their own recordings.. There is plenty of help and tutorials available online - just ask Google what it is that you are trying to do and the answers will come to you.



Translating on the Internet

Google translate

Planning on making touring abroad? It can be difficult finding the information you want on websites in other languages. Although there isn't a perfect translation tool available on

the web, Google Translate goes a good way towards it. Search Google Translate or go to translate.google.com (no wwws). You can copy and paste text into the box and select your to and from languages and presto!, you have a readable, if sometimes slightly odd, translation into English or Irish. You can also enter a web address in the left box and hit Enter and it will bring you to a translated version of the web site. If you click the links on the page to navigate around the site, each subsequent page is also translated automatically. Finally, if you use Google Chrome, you can right-click on any page and chose Translate from the menu.

St Agnes' School Violin & Orchestra Project has the largest number of secondary school students continuing to come for lessons since the start of the project. Kellie O'Neill, viola, a pupil of Nicole Hudson and Ciara Cavanagh, has got a place in the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland, a milestone event to celebrate. As always the project will welcome several transition year students doing work experience with the project in the course of the school year.

In October the combined forces of St Agnes / Scoil Colm Primary School Orchestra and St Agnes' Parents String Orchestra played in the foyer at the Dublin Convention Centre for the 2013 Ronald McDonald House Charity Gathering Ball (Our Lady's Hospital for Sick Children). The following week the secondary school students played at the opening of St Agnes' Church, Crumlin, after a major refurbishment. The same ensemble were invited to play at Dublin Castle for the 2013 Gaisce Gold Awards, attended by President Michael D. Higgins.

The Parents Orchestra gave a concert at the end of September to raise funds to send teachers out to Kolkata to the Hope Foundation Violin Project, and on Sunday 24th are giving a free Family Concert at Newgrange Hotel, Navan in conjunction with Sounds Ensemble.

In addition to open lessons for Junior & Senior Infants and 1st Class, the first week of December will see the official opening of St Agnes' Community Centre for Music & the Arts by Sabina Higgins. The Christmas Market, one of the big annual fundraisers for the project, will be launched on Saturday December 7th by Miriam O'Callaghan. St Agnes / Scoil Colm Primary School Orchestra, the Parents Orchestra, St Agnes Junior Orchestra and St Agnes Musical Society join together for the Christmas Concert conducted by Seamus Doyle and Eimear O'Grady on Thursday December 12th.

Our "Pole Star" for the year, however, is the performance at the IAYO Festival in February. St Agnes / Scoil Colm Primary School Orchestra is looking forward enormously to collaborating with St Ultan's Primary School Orchestra for the big day.



Garda Vetting for Youth Orchestras

Although delayed, the Garda Vetting Act 2012 is due to be implemented at some stage over the coming year. At that stage, it will be a legal requirement that anyone that works with young people in a paid capacity, or as a regular volunteer, will need to be Garda vetted. IAYO provides Garda Vetting for youth orchestras and ensembles through the consortium run by the National Youth Council of Ireland. Contact Bertie at the IAYO office for details on vetting staff and volunteers with your orchestra.



More news, more detail, more often www.iayo.ie/newsnotes

My name is Niamh Feeney and I am one of the five young composers involved in the Music Generation Sligo project the *Big Bang* together with Ferdia Durkin, Alice Purcell, Ciara Murphy and Matthew Rooney. The Big Bang was the culmination of a Composer-in-Residence Programme, one of the key programmes managed by Music Generation Sligo, commissioned by Sligo County Council Arts Service.

I became involved in this project last November when I saw the project advertised. It said the project was a chance to write your own composition with guidance from an established composer, Brian Irvine. Little did I know how amazing the experience would be!

I sent in my application and was delighted when I was accepted. I was very nervous before the first workshop with Brian because I had never really composed music before. I play the violin, piano and guitar, and I'm a member of an orchestra and a choir but I had never let anyone hear the music I had written. I thought that Brian would be a strict, classical composer who would teach us how to compose but I couldn't have been more wrong! Brian was bubbly, carefree and fabulously creative and he instantly set our minds whirring about composition. He made everything fun and always made sure we had a brilliant time at the workshops.

At the first workshop he told us that we would be writing a six-minute piece that would be played by a full orchestra and a choir of over a hundred people! What an amazing opportunity! I was terrified but incredibly excited and I began composing right away, trying to come up with melodies and ideas for lyrics.

At the second workshop, we all received MacBook Pro laptops and Sibelius, the music software used by composers, courtesy of Music Generation Sligo. The Sibelius software is amazing and it made it so easy to write our compositions down. Brian showed us how to use it and we began to write a piano score for our pieces. I sat down at the piano each night trying to come up with ideas and I recorded them to see what Brian thought of them. He was very enthusiastic and encouraged us to bounce around ideas during the workshops.

We decided early on in the project that the theme of our compositions would be space. We chose this theme because space is infinite. We are only a tiny part of the universe and it is a world to be explored so we could write about anything! We talked about loads of ideas about space and each of us listened to different compositions about space such as Holst's *The Planets*.

I discovered that the orchestra that would be playing my piece, called 'Ten Light Years Away', would be the Sligo Academy of Music Sinfonietta, of which I am a member. It is conducted by Niamh Crowley, the Creative Co-ordinator of *Big Bang*. It was amazing to be writing for my own orchestra and also for my own choir as Sligo Community Youth Choir, along with the Ursuline Junior Choir and Grange Choir, became involved. Usually, in orchestra rehearsals the music just arrives in front of us and nobody thinks about where it came from but this project soon

changed my understanding of composing and I now see the amount of work that goes into a composition. I had to write for every instrument which was such fun because I knew the people who would be playing each part and I tried to make my piece interesting but not too challenging so they would enjoy playing it.

Nine months later our compositions were finished and ready to hand out to the choirs and orchestra. I was extremely nervous but I was excited to hear people playing it. A huge box of sheet music arrived from Music Generation Sligo and all the different instruments were given their music. It was such a thrill to see my name on the sheet music and to see the surprise on everyone's faces! It was the most nerve-wracking music rehearsal I have ever been to. To hear my music played by an orchestra, not just on a computer, was an amazing experience and one I will never forget.

It was brilliant to be the composer of the piece because I was asked about the way I would like it played and the speed. Niamh Crowley helped me with the final adjustments for my piece and it was a surreal experience to be working with her on a piece that I had written, composer and conductor working together.

I really enjoyed all the rehearsals we had running up to the concert with the choir and the orchestra and when they came together, my piece came to life and sounded exactly like it had in my head! The dress rehearsal was stressful because I didn't know if we could get everything ready on time for the big performance. However, it all came together really well in time for the premiere on Sunday the 10th of November in the Hawkswell Theatre in Sligo.

We had two performances of the *Big Bang* on Sunday. I sang part of my piece and the choir sang with me. The orchestra played beautifully and several teachers from the Sligo Academy of Music played with them, enhancing the sound. Niamh Crowley played the violin in my piece which was such an honour and Brian Irvine conducted the orchestra and the choir. I couldn't have hoped for a more spectacular day. It was an incredible experience standing up to sing my piece and to hear it being played by over 200 people! I am so grateful to Music Generation Sligo, Brian Irvine, Niamh Crowley, Rhona Mc Grath, Sligo Academy of Music, Sligo Community Youth Choir, Grange Post Primary School Choir, Ursuline Junior Choir, Sinead Dolan and everyone else who made the *Big Bang* happen! I will treasure the experience forever.

Music Generation Sligo aims to help children and young people to access music education in their own locality. Music Generation is a national music education programme for children and young people, initiated by Music Network, funded by U2 and the Ireland Funds. Music Generation Sligo is part of the network of local music education partnerships established under this programme, funded and managed locally by Mayo Sligo Leitrim Education & Training Board, Sligo County Council, Sligo Education Centre, Sligo County Childcare Committee, Department of Environment Community & Local Government and the local music sector including Sligo Academy of Music.

The 'Big Bang' composer-in-residence project was funded by the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government and Music Generation. The project and the show was produced by Music Generation Sligo in association with Sligo Academy of Music, Loch Bo Films and Sligo International Choral Festival.



Brian Irvine conducts the orchestra and choirs. Photographer: Louise Sexton, Loch Bó Films"



Erasmus plus: is the new EU Programme for education, training, youth and sport proposed by the European Commission on 23 November 2012. It will bring together all the current EU and international schemes for education, training, youth and sport, replacing seven existing programmes with one. The aim is to increase efficiency, make it easier to apply for grants, as well as clearing duplication and fragmentation. It is due to start in 2014.

As Before plus More

What does it mean for users of the Youth-in-Action Programme? There will be a separate youth chapter in ERASMUS+, in this chapter almost all of the youth mobility activities previously supported in Youth-in-Action will remain, *plus* there will be new scope to develop cross-sectoral activity with other sections of the programme, potential to develop strategic partnerships in international work and in increased focus on linking.

Activities that could be funded include:

- Youth Mobility Activities / Youth Exchanges
- Transnational Youth Initiatives
- European Voluntary Service
- Youth Workers Mobility Projects
- Strategic Partnerships
- Training and Networking Activities
- Youth Policy Seminars

Each week if you are subscribed to the news email, you will be kept informed of details of ERASMUS Plus AS BEFORE + MORE but at this stage, this is the currently proposed timeframe:

June 2013 - The Erasmus plus programme was agreed during the Irish Presidency of the EU

November 2013 - Discussions at EU level ongoing regarding Multiannual Financial Framework, this must be agreed before the Decision for Erasmus plus in published in the Official Journal

December 2013 - Léargas “Live, Share, Inspire” event, celebration the achievements of Lifelong Learning Programme and Youth-in-Action and FAQ sessions on ERASMUS plus (10th December 2013 register here)

January 2014 – AS BEFORE+ MORE workshops and Email updates on developments in Erasmus plus

March 2014 - Deadline for mobility projects in ERASMUS + (to be confirmed)

Sign up for regular emails at www.leargas.ie/youth

IAYO Gets Social



IAYO has recently expanded our news channels to include facebook, Twitter and Google Plus and will be sending out news and links as they come into the office. Search for Irish Association of Youth Orchestras when logged into facebook or Google Plus. Our twitter name is IAYOmusic.

You can still catch up with the news regularly on our website (or by RSS if you use it) and we send a monthly email newsletter that you can sign up for at iayo.ie.

As always, our quarterly Newsnotes still comes through the post and can now also be viewed and distributed online as a .pdf file.



For the third year running Sky, in association with IdeasTap, is giving away five £30,000 bursaries and mentoring support to talented artists aged 18-30 from the UK and Ireland.

The scholarships are designed to help emerging artists from a range of different disciplines to develop their creative practice and take their work to the next level. In addition to the £30,000 bursary, winners are also paired with relevant business and creative mentors from Sky and their industry to support them along the way.

Producer Kate Whitley, one of our 2013 artists, said: “Winning has been totally transformative for my work - as well as the financial support, it has offered a wealth of knowledge and experience that I would never have come across otherwise. It has completely turned the project around and helped it grow in ways that I couldn't have even imagined!”

Find out more and apply online at <http://www.ideastap.com/>

The closing date for applications is **5pm** on Friday **6 December 2013**

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An Roinn Ealaíon, Oidhreacht agus Gaeltachta
Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

