

Maoin Cheoil na Gaillimhe

Newsletter March 2011 Issue 4

Time is flying by at such a pace and there is such a tremendous amount of activity going on it is easy to let things slip by. There are just 9 teaching weeks left in the current year. It seems like just yesterday when we opened our doors to the first students last September. There is quite a lot to report in this newsletter so do bear with us and try to get through it all. Also a reminder that we are available to discuss any of the issues in the newsletter in the office by appointment. Opening hours are 10 to 3, Monday to Friday.

St Patricks Day

The school will close this coming Thursday for St Patrick's Day. This is the only day on which we will be closed. Those students that are missing classes will have two opportunities to receive a make-up class. We have scheduled two teaching days at the beginning of Holy Week the 18th and 19th of April. The 19th is earmarked for making up lessons missed on St Patricks Day. There is also the option to make this class up at year's end. Please discuss these options with your teacher to see which accommodation is preferred.

Parental Supervision

It has come to our attention of late that a number of younger students are being dropped off at the school by parents and left to make their own way to lessons. We did cover this problem in previous literature and it does get a mention in the school rules and regulations. It is not advisable to pursue this policy. The secondary school is populated by 350 young men and as such is not a suitable place for children under the age of 12 to be left unsupervised. It is part of the conditions set down by St Mary's College in their lease agreement with us. Of late a number of small children have called into St Mary's office looking for directions to their music lessons. What it seems has happened is that the influx of new students into MCnG are most likely unfamiliar with the rule and we should have reiterated it sooner. So please in the interest of pupil safety and so as not to displease our hosts at St Mary's do not leave young children unattended in the building at any time.

Internet Access

A reminder for all new students that the school of music offers free access to our online music resources through the MCnG website. If you click on the online resource button it will take you to a dialogue box. At this stage enter the word 'student' as your user name and '0xf0rd_123' as your password. Both 'O's in the word oxford are in fact zero. This will allow access to both the grove and oxford dictionaries of music but also the Naxos music site with about 720,000 music tracks to listen to. These are of immense benefit to anyone interested in developing their knowledge of music, or simply their enjoyment of it

Colourstrings

Primary Colourstrings teacher Edel Coughlan is currently finishing her certification in London and she has huge plans to develop and grow the classes here. She will be writing to all parents in the classes in the coming weeks in relation to these plans. One point has to be made in relation to the current classes. In a way it is a compliment to the running of the program that parents within the classes have forged friendships. In London where there is an academy specially prepared for Colourstrings these friendships are exploited to foster a real sense of community in the group and to that end they have parent choirs and in house facilities for families to make attendance a real easy and pleasurable experience. What we lack are these facilities and that is unlikely to change in the short term which is a pity. But because of the sense of community we have a situation where parents are arriving to class and engaging with each other to the point where it is becoming a distraction. It's in everyone's interest that the classes are allowed to continue without disturbance so that the children can gain maximum benefit from them.

Bursary Winners



The awarding of two major school prizes recently took place. The AIB flute award was granted to Alana Maloney who is currently a student of Mr Robert Solyom. Alana will have use of this solid silver flute for the year to help her playing develop to the highest standards.

The double bass scholarship has been awarded to Amy Walsh of Headford. She now enjoys use of the double bass for a year and free lessons from school director Hugh Kelly.

Staff Concerts

We at the school believe passionately in the fact that performance and the engagement with audiences is central to both the development of students but also has a significant role in maintaining the skills of our teaching staff. In the current semester alone Elena Gekker will be performing in the city museum on March 20th at 8pm. Alyson Barber our theory teacher will have an original composition performed in the NCH on the 27th April. Both Robert Solyom and Marie Zichova will be performing in a charity series in St Anne's Church in Dublin in May. Hugh Kelly will be

conducting the NUIG Chamber Orchestra in a series of three concerts in Kerry and Galway at the beginning of April with Robert Solyom performing the Weber Clarinet Concerto.

These are a selection of the activities engaged in by the staff of MCnG. There will be regular updates on these and more on our facebook page and we do encourage all parents and older students that have a facebook account to add the school page to their account as it is a great way to share information regarding concerts and courses quickly.

Song for Goal

After months of preparation we are finally ready to go with this. Martina Flaherty who teaches SLS singing classes at the school is about to launch an original composition which she has written to raise funds for the charity Goal. The song is titled 'Make It Easy' and is a real group effort on the part of the school. MCnG has financed the project to help promote the really genuine talent that Martina brings to her work. Marcin Plaza who recently joined our piano department has done the arrangement and supervised the production and recording of the single, as well as playing on the track. Backing vocals include Edel Coughlan our Colourstrings teacher.

The song and other original works will be launch on Monday, 18th April in Monroes Tavern. We will be announcing the line up for the night later this month.

For a taste of what is in store listen to Feis and Blood on TG4 this Sunday the 20th March.

Martina and her daughter will perform another original piece called the Dream. It is truly beautiful.



Parental Question

A return to an earlier question has been prompted by a number of issues that arose since January. It relates to missed lessons. Once again I believe the situation has arisen because of the influx of new students and many of them might be unaware of the policy. All official material on this is available to read on the school site. Classes missed by students are at the expense of the student. This is not our policy but that of every school of music in the county. It has been mentioned that certain teachers are often willing to accommodate a re-scheduling of a lesson in special circumstances. It has been noted however that the office is receiving a large number of calls from parents who are looking to have lessons replaced. Not only is this inappropriate but in many cases the reasons for the missed

lessons are ones of lifestyle choice and not matters of great urgency. If a student wishes to miss a class to attend a concert elsewhere, or attend a celebration, or have a special grind class somewhere or any other similar excuse, then this does not constitute a reason to have the lesson made up by us, the student simply chooses to be somewhere else, and as such is an abuse of the teacher's goodwill. Where staff feel mis-treated or taken for granted the likelihood is that all make up classes will be withdrawn.