

July 2011

# ASPIRO NEWS



## SUMMER CONCERT

- June 2011

On Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> June Aspiro parents and extended families gathered in the Éire Óg Clubhouse to listen to the various ensembles – Junior, Girls, Male Voice Squad & Youth as they came together for their end of year concert. This was the first time in two years for all groups to perform together. It is always a great experience for the younger members of Aspiro to hear and sing with the older members, especially the younger boys who get to hear what their voices will sound like when they are older and develop into tenors and basses.

The concert opened to the sounds of Aspiro girls, male voice squad and youth singing **'Hozhonji Song'**, a Navajo Song, meaning 'Song of the Earth' which led beautifully into the Aspiro Junior presentation of **'Big Chief Red Feather'**.

The boys and girls looked lovely in their home made head pieces that were made with the help of their leader Imelda and their colourful outfits put together by their parents. They were accompanied on the piano by Maeve Lyons with percussion ensemble of Grace



Above: Imelda Andrews, Aspiro Junior Director leads 'Big Chief Red Feather'!  
With narration by Amy Nolan.  
Below: Maeve Lyons accompanies our ensembles



Lawler (Aspiro Junior assistant), Charlotte Cope (Aspiro Girls) and Aspiro's Artistic Director Mary.

Next up was Aspiro Girls group who sang **'The Bare Necessities'** and **'Hitori'** (a Japanese folk song) they had sung at the Aims Choral Festival in New Ross in May where they were commended by adjudicator John Buckley for their 'well-projected bright sound with strong rhythmic character, flowing style and well balanced sound when in two-parts'.

The Aspiro Male Voice Squad followed next with **'Catch A Falling Star'** and **'Pie Jesu'** which they had also sang at the Aims Choral Festival when they were commended for their 'lively bright interpretation with good attention to detail and good sense of musical style, nice fluent singing and warm tone'. For this David Jurek sang the solo part in 'Pie Jesu' much to the satisfaction and delight of the audience when David through his beautiful angelic like pure voice demonstrated his ability to sing this challenging piece with great expression and understanding. The boys were joined for this piece by the Aspiro Youth Ensemble.

The Youth Ensemble finished off the evening with John Tavener's **'The Lamb'**, an arrangement

of psalm 150 **'Salmo 150'** and Fauré's **'Cantique de Jean Racine'** before ending with a taste of **'Bohemian Rhapsody'** which they had begun to work on in the previous weeks.

The evening ended with everyone being invited to sing an arrangement of **'This Little Light of Mine'** which was appropriate for the occasion – letting their light shine – and everyone was then invited for a cup of tea downstairs.

Special thanks to our accompanist Maeve Lyons and Aspiro Junior director Imelda Andrews. Maeve has been with Aspiro since 2004 and her hard work and dedication is very much appreciated by everyone in Aspiro, members and parents alike. We are blessed to have someone so talented here in Carlow as part of the Aspiro team. Imelda joined the Aspiro team last September and has done tremendous work with the boys and girls of Aspiro Junior, they have presented many 'in-house' performances for parents during the year, thank YOU Imelda! We look forward to further developing the artistic team of Aspiro in the coming years. Thanks also to Noel Keating who took the beautiful photos.



Aspiro Junior performing 'Big Chief Red Feather'





## **Arts Council YES (Young Ensembles Scheme) Award for Aspiro**

At the beginning of July Mary received the good news from The Arts Council that Aspiro received a YES (Young Ensembles Scheme) award to work with Brian Irvine and John Mcilduff on creating a new piece of music in collaboration with the members of Aspiro Youth Ensemble.

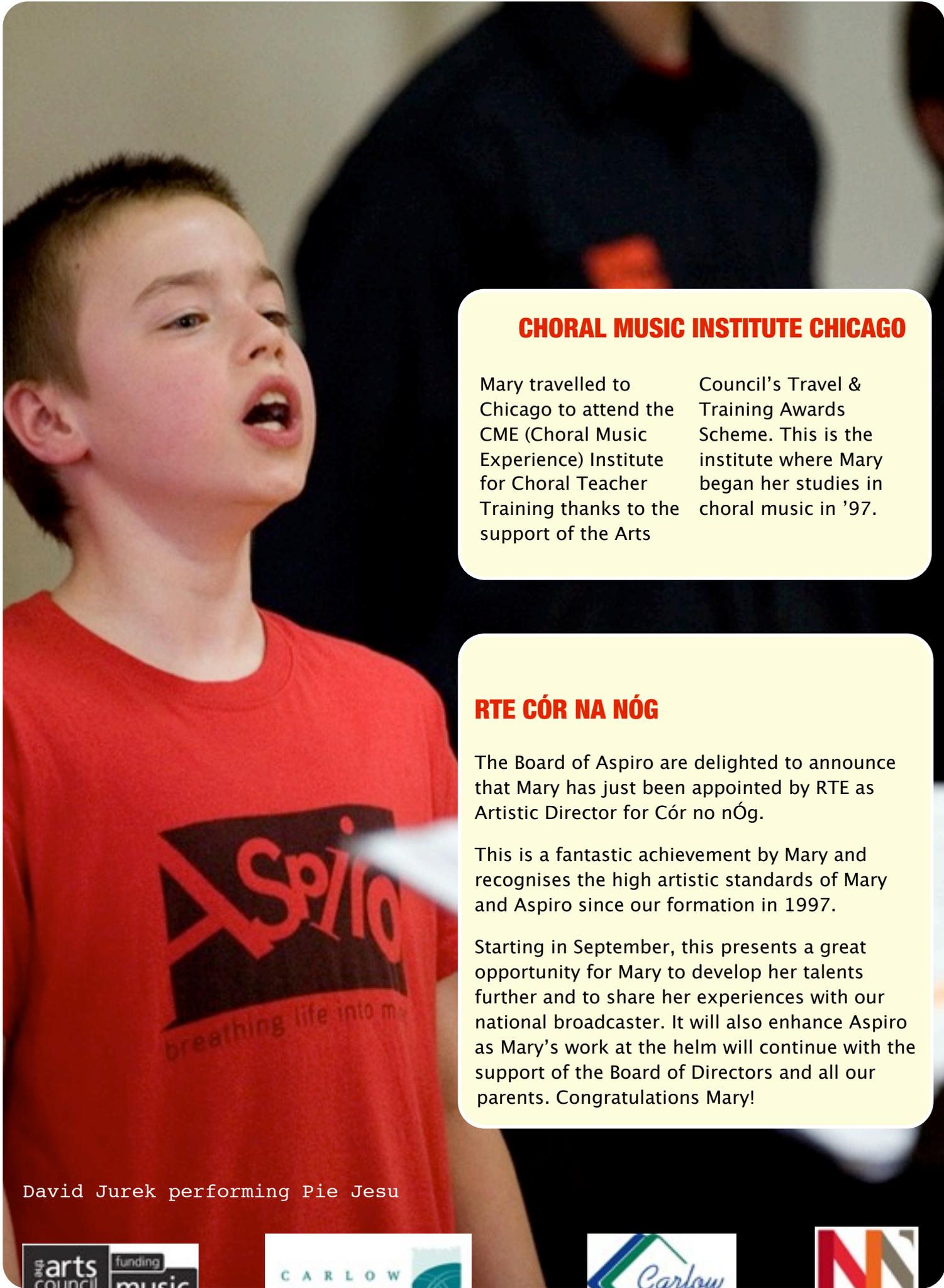
This is a huge achievement for Aspiro and acknowledges the hard work and dedication of our Artistic Director Mary since our formation in '97. This will be the fifth commission to be performed by Aspiro since 2007, three being commissioned by Aspiro in 2007 and 2009, with

one commissioned by Carlow Local Authorities which they performed as part of 'Shelter Me from the Rain' in May.

The experience working with Brian Irvine and John Mcilduff as part of the Opera was such a rewarding and enjoyable one, that Mary decided to apply for this award to work with them again.

As next year is the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Aspiro it will be lovely to have a new piece to celebrate this with.





David Jurek performing Pie Jesu

### CHORAL MUSIC INSTITUTE CHICAGO

Mary travelled to Chicago to attend the CME (Choral Music Experience) Institute for Choral Teacher Training thanks to the support of the Arts Council's Travel & Training Awards Scheme. This is the institute where Mary began her studies in choral music in '97.

### RTE CÓR NA NÓG

The Board of Aspiro are delighted to announce that Mary has just been appointed by RTE as Artistic Director for Cór na nÓg.

This is a fantastic achievement by Mary and recognises the high artistic standards of Mary and Aspiro since our formation in 1997.

Starting in September, this presents a great opportunity for Mary to develop her talents further and to share her experiences with our national broadcaster. It will also enhance Aspiro as Mary's work at the helm will continue with the support of the Board of Directors and all our parents. Congratulations Mary!

