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Youth Music Centre of Hampstead Garden Suburb about to give one of their prize winning performances. Picture courtesy North London Festival.

Scintillating Festival of Music

By Betti Blatman

Young musical talent was on show at the North London Festival of Music, Drama and Dance. During April and May, competitions were held for piano, singing, instrumental, speech and drama culminating in the Prizewinners' Concert on 20 May at the United Reformed Church in Muswell Hill.

The Festival is well known for its high standards. One contestant, Lisa Akhmetova, 12, came all the way from Barcelona "as it had been highly recommended".

This is the third Festival I have attended and once again I was delighted by the performances of the Nakata sisters, Makoto, 13, on violin and Asagi, 12, on piano.

The winners of certain

classes during the course of the Festival are recommended to compete for the President's Prize. Adjudicators Hilary Stuart and Timothy Barratt were highly impressed with the splendid pieces of music. They presented first prize to Joo Yeon Sir, playing Waxman's *Carmen Fantasie* on violin and commented that, although a difficult piece, every musical detail was beautifully played.

Second prize went to Asagi Nakata playing JS Bach's *Sarabande (French Suite)* and Chabrier's *Danse Villageoise* on piano. Her playing was described as sounding like an orchestra.

Additional prizes went to Nathalie Chalkley, soprano, and Alan Chu, piano.

Lynne Featherstone, MP for Hornsey and Wood Green, presented the awards. She said this was her first invitation to the Festival and she was thrilled with the talent on display, which raised the profile of classical music. She praised parents' encouragement, teachers, accompanists and organisers and volunteers for making it so successful.

For further information, contact the Festival Administrator on 020 8886 7237 or visit www.northlondonfestival.org.uk

Run off with the circus

Children have a chance to unleash their inner acrobat, clown or stilt walker when a circus extravaganza comes to artsdepot in North Finchley later this month. Caught in the Act is a circus show for all the family, with daredevil artistry, comedy, acrobats, jugglers and aerial artists.

The line-up of performers includes aerialist Ilona Jantti, who trained in Sweden and Finland and



Tons of money

By Daphne Chamberlain
Wife: "Who do we owe money to?" Husband: "Everyone we've ever dealt with."

Wife's response to this is to fake husband's death, bringing him back as a long-lost relative who would inherit the money that has just been left to them, but without any obligation to pay off debtors.

Naturally, as this all happens at the beginning of *Tons of Money*, the Guild Players' most recent production, we know there are more complications ahead. Two other men claim to be the long-lost relative, and his real widow "recognises" the impostors but humours the genuine one as a harmless lunatic.

This 1920s Aldwych farce, revised by Alan Ayckbourn for the National Theatre, demands that the audience suspend all disbelief. Even when one character after another seems, in the words of one of them, to have "the brain of a very, very small potted shrimp".

Some of the biggest laughs came from the out-and-out slapstick scenes. The acting was excellent but perhaps the play could have been taken at a slightly faster pace.

The Guild Players vary productions to suit all tastes, and welcome feedback from their audiences. They perform in Finchley Methodist Church Hall, Ballards Lane, N3.

For more information, visit www.guildplayers.org.uk or call 020 8346 6337.

What's On...

E-mail your listings to: the-archer@lineone.net

Sunday 8 July
Big Fun Run for children aged 5-15 in aid of the Bobath Centre for children with cerebral palsy, Cherry Tree Wood.

Sunday 9 July