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# THE ARCHER



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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

## What happened to our festival?

By Daphne Chamberlain

Children and disabled people in two performance groups were disappointed after they were left off the East Finchley Community Festival programme this year amid confusion over bookings.

Several readers contacted *THE ARCHER* saying they too were sorry to see that the Happy Go Lucky Dance Group and the North London Performing Arts Company were given no place on either of the festival's two stages, despite regular appearances in previous years. One reader said it contributed to a feeling that the festival, in Cherry Tree Wood, had become more 'commercial' and less 'community'. See *Letters on page 11*.

Carolyn Pickles, who lives in East Finchley, claimed the

Happy Go Lucky Dance Group for disabled people had worked for months on their routine for the 2006 performance, only to find themselves abruptly cut out of the programme. "This was a huge disruption, let alone disappointment," she wrote.

This year, as an experiment, the second stage was handed over to two East Finchley residents who ran a successful festival last year in Leeds, called the Masterpeace Festival. Organisers said the reasoning behind this was to improve the artistic quality of



Best foot forward: Another overlooked dance group, North London Performing Arts at a previous year's festival. Photo by Alison Roberts

the entertainment, and to see if working with Masterpeace would enhance the Festival.

### Spirit of the festival

Rossana Christianson, Administrator of Community Focus, who has organised Happy Go Lucky's perform-

ance at the festival for the last four years, told us the group was devastated by not appearing.

"They want to show their work to the community, and as a disabled group they don't have many opportunities to do this. Cherry Tree Wood is

a great place for wheelchair dancers to perform. It's lovely to have other members of the community around, especially the children, making their contributions to the spirit of the festival," she said.

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## Controversial Cannes winner at the Phoenix

By Luisa Cotardo

International award-winning director Ken Loach made a personal appearance at the Phoenix Cinema on 11 July to introduce his latest film, "The Wind That Shakes The Barley", winner of the coveted Palme D'Or at this year's 59th Cannes Film Festival.

The film tells the story of two brothers in the IRA (Irish Republican Army) fighting for independence from British colonial authorities during the Irish Civil War of 1922-23.

This powerful Irish Republican drama takes place in a village near Cork. The beautiful green landscape often provides some respite for the audience who look on, ashamed by the cruelty of the English. The film is like an earthquake which shakes the souls and consciences of viewers.

"This is a story that's well known in Ireland," said Loach,

"but not in England. I don't know why!" A hearty laugh from the audience followed this wry comment.

The film received a hostile reaction from some political commentators in British newspapers, being called a "portrayal of the British as sadists and the Irish as romantic fighters".

Whichever way you view history, this was a great opportunity for East Finchley, and the Phoenix, to welcome this special guest.

People who were truly moved by the film were ready with several questions to ask

Loach after the screening. Many comparisons to our current situation in Iraq were made, referring to occupation forces, brutal treatment, and acts of terrorism. Loach spoke about the enormous damage done by "imperialist powers".

Before he left the Phoenix, Loach gave us a hint about the next film he is going to direct. It will be set in Ireland again and will begin shooting in October, but that's all he would reveal.

### Inside...

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• I remember playing on Stanley Field. Page 4

• Free family films at the Phoenix. What's On, Page 10

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