



All winners: Talent show performers, clockwise from top left, singer Darcey Batchelor, guitarist Eila Zecevic, guitarist Luke Neilson, Rubik's Cube expert Alexandros Leventelis, puppeteer Jake Eiseman-Renyard, drummer Reuben Freeman, and mindreader Fable Goodall with host Pat Leacock. Photos Mike Coles

Mind-reading, manual dexterity and musical excellence

By Diana Cormack

Many of the afternoon audience at the Phoenix on Sunday 21 April were new to the cinema. They had come for the second edition of the East Finchley's Got Talent show originally staged in last year's Town Team Arts and Music event.

Master of ceremonies, East Finchley Festival's Pat "Have Mercy" Leacock opened the show with his usual infectious enthusiasm. He reminded the audience how courageous it was of the participants to perform for them which, given that their ages ranged from ten to 13, with one exception, was certainly true.

However, their age belied their talent, as judges Kate Galston, Mike Hughes and Hilary Townley were soon to discover.

The show opened with ten-year-old Alexandros Leventelis' Rubik's Cube Challenge when he had everyone holding their breath as he confidently managed to solve the puzzle in no time, breaking his own record against a previous video of his screened behind him.

Another impressive ten-year-old was Fable Goodall, whose mind-reading act bodes well for future success. A third ten-year-old, Reuben Freeman, drummed along coolly and confidently to the Guns 'n Roses hit

Sweet Child of Mine.

Cool 12-year-old guitarist Luke Neilson rivalled the dexterity of legendary artists like Chuck Berry, even playing the instrument from behind his head at times, whilst 12-year-old Darcey Batchelor was impressive singing a song from *Hamilton*.

Playing an acoustic guitar, 13-year-old Eila Zecevic's soulful rendition of a song she composed herself had the judges commenting that she would go far with the quality of her voice.

Ventriloquism meant that Jake Eiseman-Renyard had to throw his voice in order that Madge, his parrot puppet, could make comments in 'Look Who's Squawking', an amusing act about the chaos she brought

to Channel 6 TV news.

All the participants were presented with a commemorative certificate and medal, including Pat Leacock, who put so much into this exciting show taking place.

A tasty slice of the silver screen

By Ruth Anders

You had to be quick to grab a slice of one of the scrumptious cakes entered for the second East Finchley Bake-Off competition at the Phoenix Cinema on Sunday 21 April.

Twelve months ago, then 10-year-old Essie Broomhall won the first Bake-Off competition with a magnificent cake inspired by the Phoenix itself, a carrot cake with vanilla and toffee popcorn cupcakes.

This year, to accompany the East Finchley's Got Talent competition taking place at the cinema, Essie was appointed one of the judges of the 2024 Bake-Off contest, alongside Phoenix manager Ewelina Sadlowska. Judging of course involved tasting each of the entries, no hardship for champion baker Essie!

This year's theme was 'The Silver Screen', aligning neatly with the competition venue. All the delicious cakes were avail-



Table of delights: Judges tuck into the entries for the East Finchley Bake Off at the Phoenix Cinema

able to taste during the interval of the talent show.

The winning cake, whose baker asked to remain anonymous, was inspired by a recent visit to Japan and a corresponding interest in the films of legendary film-maker Akira Kurosawa. The Seven Samurai cake boasted seven layers of Japanese flavours including cherry blossom cream, paste and frosting and decorations of nerikiri (a type of Japanese confection).

Earning the prize of an attractive cake stand, its mouth-watering taste was equalled by its spectacular appearance, and at the end of the talent show's interval not a crumb remained of the delicious cakes on offer.

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