

Limassol Theatre Arts School Opens the Doors for the Talents!

The Ninth of May (Victory Day) become a triumph for the many talented children in Cyprus. Young stars performed at the Annual Open Talent Show by Limassol Theatre Arts School (LTAS). The fifth jubilee competition has been attended by the record number of participants – 81!

This year the young performers decided to declare themselves acting on a professional stage – from gymnastics to musicians, acting pieces and fantastic singers and dancers. Indian dance and performance of the break-dancers band caused a real furor in the hall.

The participants were judged by a panel of the highest level professionals. The choreographer from London's West End **Lizzi Gee** is successfully working in Musicals/ Film and Television. Popular British violinist **Joanne Davies** has played for Kanye West, Rihanna, Jay-Z, George Michael, Ellie Goulding, Jamie Cullum amongst many others. Joanne played with Muse this year to open the Brit awards. **Maria Shelop** is a professional singer originally from the Ukraine. She is now following a solo career in Ukraine and Cyprus.

As the judges noted, they were really impressed by a large number of talented children in such a small island and the high standards of their preparation. The show was traditionally held in three age categories: Juniors (4 to 9 years), Intermediates (10 to 12 years) and Seniors (13 to 18 years).

As the main trophy the winner in each group received a super prize – Professional Cover Song and Video Recording kindly sponsored by SOUNDSCAPE STUDIOS LTD ((Limassol). Another prizes included a scholarship for Pineapple Studios Musical Theatre Summer School (London) and scholarships for LTAS. The artistic director and a head of LTAS Lucy Georgiou has shared her impressions with us.

– Did you manage to discover the new talents?

– Definitely! Hopefully we'll attract those talented children to the school. This year not only the runners-up (there were three of them in each category!) but many other participants have got the scholarships from the LTAS. This gives the child an opportunity to attend vocal classes or any of the subjects taught at the school (drama, hip-hop, street-dance, tap dance and others.)

– **Now Cyprus is facing a crisis, and you are so generously giving out the scholarships...**

– When you see talented children you want to reward them. By offering them a scholarship I want to encourage them to continue and to develop their talent to become even greater than they are already. I think if we are not willing to invest time and money into children they will not develop as performers. Some of those children will stop, they will not follow this carrier. More participants, more contestants and more scholarships!

– **It is often said that a real talent will find its own way itself...**

– When a child has a talent it has to be acknowledged. Every child must believe in himself, gain support. I identify their talents and then nurture this talent. And by offering them a scholarship at least I offer them a professional training they need to become better. And whether after that they decide to continue or not – that's for them to decide. At least I will open the door. And that's my job, my role, I think, in our society now – to open doors for children and give them the opportunity they wouldn't otherwise have. And I'm happy I can do it!