

The first Hampstead & Highgate Festival

With over twenty years as a music critic with *The Times* and more recently also as review editor for the *BBC Music Magazine*, few can be better placed than Barry Millington to know what's what on the British music scene. Some Suburb residents will remember the old Camden Festival which held concerts and events all over the Borough, many in Hampstead. After a long and exciting run it eventually had its financial plug pulled, and since then there has been nothing to match it. Until now perhaps. As Mr. Millington explained: "I have never been so aware of the diversity of styles and tastes as in the run up to the new millennium. Both Hampstead and Highgate boast a large proportion of artistic and cultured residents and that was one of the strongest reasons for its location".

In June, Hampstead Garden Suburb resident Barry Millington, unveils the brand new Hampstead & Highgate Festival.

From Saturday June 19, in a week of concerts, recitals, guided walks and illustrated lectures throughout Hampstead, Highgate and Hampstead Garden Suburb, the Festival, supported by the venerable Hampstead and Highgate Express, intends to make quite an impact.



The Chilingirian Quartet appear in the Hampstead & Highgate Festival at St Jude's on Tuesday June 22

Millington has given this inaugural festival an international twist as a celebration of Finnish culture. It offers a major retrospective of the music of Einojuhani Rautavaara, the Finnish Romantic mystic composer who has shot to international success in recent years. His works will be featured in conjunction with those of Sibelius and Copeland (two formative influences), as well as Schubert, Bach, Rachmaninov, Walton and many others. The festival has a policy of featuring outstandingly talented rising stars in addition to established artists of international standing. Representing the youth and talent aspects are three Hampstead Garden Suburb residents, trumpet-playing Deborah Calland, cellist Robert Max and pianist Zoë Solomon - and all three can be heard in concerts at St. Michael's in Highgate on June 23.

St Jude's in Central Square has become a Suburb focal point for world-class performances. This year, no sooner will the Proms at St Jude's close the doors on their own programme of concerts, than the new Hampstead & Highgate Festival opens them again. Here, on June 22, the Chilingirian String Quartet, and cellist Stephen Orton introduce a Rautavaara String Quintet to British audiences for the first time, and complete the programme with that most popular of desert-island choices, the Schubert Quintet in C.

Musical highlights of the week also include Joanna MacGregor in a characteristically imaginative piano recital programme at The Orangery, June 25 at Kenwood and the crack Finnish ensemble and Virtuosi di Kuhmo at Highgate School on June 19. Hampstead resident Anthony Rolfe Johnson directs an all-Baroque programme at the Hampstead Parish Church and among other treats that the festival has in store are two concerts at All Hallows, Gospel Oak, the first by the Royal Academy of Music Symphony Orchestra under the baton of the

outstanding Finnish conductor Osmo Vänskä on June 24 and, in a grand finale, on June 26, the Highgate Choral Society with its Musical Director Ronald Corp and the New London Orchestra and New London Children's Choir.

The Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents Association is organising guided walking tours and exclusive visits to outstanding private gardens. These gardens, well worth visiting, include the beautifully tended 10 Wildwood Road with arguably the finest herbaceous borders in London, and 3 Wellgarth Road where the abundance of heathers, roses, lavenders and uncommon plants procured the 1996 All London Championship award. For the curious there is a stroll through the Suburb to see the artisans cottages, winding up with a home-made tea at one of the gardens.

Culture vultures will enjoy the talk on musicians in Hampstead planned for Burgh House. There is also a guided tour of Fenton House in Hampstead, an illustrated lecture at Kenwood House, and a private view of the Goldfinger House. For the energetic, there is the famous uphill climb at Highgate Cemetery. The newly renovated Pullman Everyman cinema joins with a season of cult films by the Finnish director, Aki Kaurismaaki.

The Hampstead and Highgate Festival, Principal Sponsor Ivory Gate Ltd, is on from June 19 to June 26 1999.

Credit card bookings from May 4 on 0171 435 9910. Free copies of the Guide to Events are available at the Garden Suburb Gallery.



The owner in her garden, in Wellgarth Road, open to the public during the Hampstead & Highgate Festival on Saturday June 19 from 12.30pm to 6pm.

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