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Elite artists named at tenth year of prestigious awards

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PROLIFIC stage performer and director Ian Wilson scooped two awards at a prestigious ceremony recognising the district's highest-achieving artists.

Ian, from Leek, was named Co-operative Group voluntary arts individual of the year and landed the Alan Hurst special achievement accolade at the Staffordshire Moorlands District Council arts awards.

Arts Awards 2008 Picture Gallery

The awards, now in its tenth year, was staged in front of around 200 civic dignitaries and invited guests at Alton Towers. The ceremony recognises creative achievement over the last 12 months across seven categories, and follows a rigorous nomination and judging process.

Ian was recognised for a string of achievements over the last year which has seen him direct, design the set and play Scrooge in the Centre Stage Theatre Company production of 'A Christmas Carol'. He is involved in planning and rehearsals for the company's production of 'The Fifteen Streets'. He directed All Saints Operatic Society's production of 'Children of Eden' last April and the society's Christmas concert and is also involved in planning and rehearsals for 'The Sound of Music'. He is working on a production of '**Les Miserables**' by **Stoke Youth** and is planning a production of 'Chess' by Ruislip Operatic Society, London. He is also planning and rehearsing 'James and the Giant Peach' at Westwood First School. His acting talents included playing Corin in Shakespeare's 'As You Like It' for the open air Trentham Theatre Company at Trentham Gardens last July, and performing in the North Staffordshire Operatic Society's production of 'Deck the Halls' at the Victoria Hall, Hanley last November.

Councillor Deaville said: "These awards prove yet again the outstanding wealth of artistic and creative talents that we are blessed with in the Moorlands. The achievements of the individuals and groups that have been nominated are staggering and awe-inspiring.

"This is the tenth year, and 11th arts award ceremony run by the district council and the event has become a firm calendar favourite. The ceremony follows a district-wide nomination process which started last year and culminated in winners being picked by a panel of judges. The winners this year have set a very high benchmark for others to follow and I am looking forward to sharing in their continued successes and seeing lots more achievers making a name for themselves over the next 12 months."

Lafarge Cement's Cauldon Works manager Nicolas Maes said: "As part of our commitment to supporting the communities around our operations, we are very pleased to have been able to sponsor these awards for the past 10 years. The event enables us to celebrate the work of local artists and help spur them on to even greater success. We wish all the award entrants and winners the best of luck with their artistic careers."

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council news.