



NCBF West Midlands Regional Festival

Sunday 30th November 2025

**Haberdashers' Abraham Darby Academy
Ironbridge Road
Telford
TF7 5HX**

It's with excitement that we welcome you to the 2025 West Midlands Regional Festival of the National Concert Band Festival here at Haberdashers' Abraham Darby Academy.

Today's bands are performing their programmes for our two adjudicators who will measure what is seen and heard with a particular level of musical achievement as per the NCBF Criteria.

Those bands receiving a Platinum award (and maybe some Golds) will be invited to perform at the NCBF National Festival to be held at the RNCM Manchester on Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th April 2026.

Our thanks to the Abraham Darby Music Dept. for hosting today's festival.

We hope you enjoy the day – you have a vital role to play in creating the atmosphere.

Have a go yourself at seeing how the bands performance meets the criteria at the end of this programme.

***Please remember that there is Food and Drinks
available in the refreshments area.***



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Adjudicators: Simone Rebellon and Ian Johnson

Compere: Barrie Johnson

Today's Programme

1030 Telford Concert Band (CWB)

Conductor: Ivor Evans

Mt Everest

The Sun will Rise Again

Blue Rock

Rossano Galante

Philip Sparke

Philip Sparke

1100 Co-operative Community Band (CWB)

Conductor: Emma Clark

Into the Clouds

Appalachian Morning

Carnival

Thunderscape

Richard L Saucedo

Robert Sheldon

Peter Meechan

Erik Morales

1130 Haberdashers' Abraham Darby Junior Jazz Band (JBB)

Director: Chris Ruston

Burritos to Go

C-Jam Blues

Send in the Clowns

Little Sunflower

Victor Lopez

Duke Ellington arr. Stitzel

Stephen Sondheim arr. Lowden

Freddie Hubbard arr. Story

1200 Warwick University Big Band (OBB)

Director: Freddie Audley

Catch As Catch Can

Dream of the Return

Alianza

Lennie Niehaus

Pat Metheny arr. Curnow

Erik Morales



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1230 Chiltern Music Academy Concert Band (YWB)

Conductor: Andy Rogers

Fate of the Gods

Steven Reineke

Prelude from *49th Parallel*

Ralph Vaughan Williams

Japanese Tune

Soichi Konagaya

1305 Presentation of Awards

1355 Wrekin College Jazz Band (SBB)

Director: Simon Platford

Beg Borrow and Steal

George Shutack

727 South Broad Street

Lars Halle

Backjump

Andrews/Ballard arr. Wasson

The Flik Machine

Newman arr. Murtha

1425 Haberdashers' Abraham Darby Jazz Band (SBB)

Director: Tom Gledhill

Cool

arr. Taylor

Gospel John

arr. Clark

Li'l Darlin

Neal Hefti

Feather Report

Kris Berg

1455 Nantwich Concert Band (CWB)

Conductor: Nick Birch

Concert Prelude

Philip Sparke

Whispers from Beyond

Rossano Galante

Country Gardens

Percy Grainger arr. Rodgers

March from *Moorside Suite*

Gustav Holst arr. Brand



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1525 Wrekin College Concert Band (SWB)

Conductor: Simon Platford

Encanto

Robert W Smith

Dance of the Whales

Philip Sparke

When Spirit Soars

Brian Balmages

1555 Haberdashers' Abraham Darby Showband (SWB)

Conductor: Rachel Morton

A Monmouth Overture

Philip Sparke

And Still, the Spirit (*Spirit of the Sequoia*)

Philip Sparke

Secret Valley

Michael Sweeney

1630 Presentation of Awards



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Today's Adjudicators:-



SIMONE REBELLO – Simone graduated with Distinction from the Royal Northern College of Music to embark on a career as a solo percussionist that has seen her recording several CDs (the latest with the BBC Singers), touring and broadcasting extensively nationally and internationally and winning a collection of awards and prizes including Cosmopolitan Woman of the Year in the Performing Arts. She works frequently as a concerto soloist with wind orchestras and brass bands around the world and as a solo recitalist.

Simone is a founder member of BackBeat Percussion Quartet who have won a number of chamber music competitions in the UK, Japan and USA and who continue to tour, record and present concerts globally.

Simone appears regularly as a guest performer with a number of ensembles including The Equivox Trio, Ex Cathedra, The Young Voices Band and in a duo with outstanding jazz pianist Jason Rebello. She has worked with artists including Beverley Knight, Alexandra Burke, Tony Hadley and Mika.

In September 2010 Simone was appointed as Director of Percussion at The Royal Northern College of Music, and is also Head of School of Wind, Brass and Percussion.

In addition to performing Simone is an experienced adjudicator of percussion events, wind and brass contests and general music competitions and has judged for such prestigious events as BBC Young Musician of the Year, National Brass Band Championships for New Zealand, Australia, USA, Europe and Switzerland and for the National Concert Band Festivals in UK and Norway.

Simone is frequently invited to present concerts and talks/lectures/workshops featuring all aspects of percussion and performance.

Simone works regularly as a presenter for events including the European Brass Band Finals, The Brass in Concert Championships from The Sage and the RNCM Festival of Brass including a concert for BBC Radio 2. She has also worked as a presenter for the National Brass Band Finals (Royal Albert Hall), The Great Northern Brass Arts Festival and European and national events for Yamaha. Simone is a solo artist and endorsee for Yamaha Music Europe, Mike Balter Mallets and Sabian Cymbals.



IAN JOHNSON : Ian was born in Bushbury, Wolverhampton. His musical journey began as a chorister in his local parish church choir and learning the piano. He attended St. Peters Collegiate School where he took up the Baritone before progressing onto the Euphonium. He performed in both the schools and towns Wind Band and also with Wolverhampton Brass Band. The highlight of his fledgling career culminated in a joint venture, organising, arranging and conducting in the school's annual concert. It was during this experience that Ian caught the conducting bug, which served as the perfect grounding for his future career as a military musician

Ian joined the Army in 1986 and enlisted into The Band of The Royal Hampshire Regiment. He was able to develop his musical skills further, performing in the wind band on Euphonium, piano in the Jazz Quartet and vocals in the 'Dance Band'. Service with the Royal Army Ordnance Corps and The Royal Logistic Corps bands followed as did a 'graduation' from brass to woodwind as he took up the Bassoon vacancy on upon joining the RAOC in 1990.

In 1998 Ian volunteered to attend selection for the coveted Student Bandmaster Course at Kneller Hall, The Royal Military School of Music. His successful application resulted in his attendance on the 3yr Bandmaster Course, culminating in the attainment of his honours degree and accelerated promotion. His first Bandmaster appointment followed with an assignment to The Waterloo Band of the Kings Division and, shortly thereafter a commission and promotion to Captain followed. He was duly appointed Director of Music (DoM) to The Clive Band of the Prince of Wales's Division, in Shropshire. Subsequent assignments, as DoM with various bands ensued, culminating with promotion to Major in 2013, and appointment as Director of Music to the iconic Band of The Scots Guards in 2017, thirty years after his initial enlistment.

Ian's musical military career has taken him all over the world and afforded him the opportunity to perform in some of the most iconic venues, from Buckingham Palace to Spruce Meadows in Canada, Westminster Abbey and Winchester and Salisbury Cathedrals. It has also afforded him the opportunity to perform at prestigious sporting events including the League Cup Final at the Millennium Stadium in 2003, England vs Wales during the 2018 6 Nations internationals at Twickenham and the 2018 Virgin London Marathon.

Having recently retired from regular service, Ian is now serving as Director of Music of the Band of the Mercian Regiment, in the Army Reserve. He is also MD for Wellington (Telford) Brass Band and regularly performs in the Shropshire area with his variety small Jazz ensembles.

Ian is passionate about the power of music and how we, as musicians engage with each other and our audiences. He believes that music is about connectivity, and that the conductors' engagement with their musicians is key to the effectiveness of each performance, which in turn, transmits to the audience.

Previously a guest performer with the Royal Armoured Corps and Scots Guards bands, Ian is now very excited to have the opportunity to support other musicians and build on his relationship with the NCBF as an Adjudicator.



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Today's Compere

Barrie Johnson – NCBF Trustee – Deputy Chair



Barrie Johnson was born in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, gaining early musical experiences through Salvation Army brass bands and choirs, his playing career included being principal euphonium with bands in Newcastle & Kettering. He has also featured on tenor horn, tuba and trombone with bands in London, Kettering and Birmingham, including City of London Brass. During this time he also took part in performance tours to Norway and Canada, featured on radio and LP recordings and performed in many major concert venues throughout the UK.

Barrie has been conducting school, youth and community groups in all musical genres for many years. As a school music teacher, he has taught in primary, middle and secondary schools, heading up very successful music and expressive arts departments for over 35 years, retiring as Director of Music at Northampton School for Boys in 2015 after 14 years in post. Directing groups, including Wind Bands and Big Bands, from 3 different schools to regular top award-winning performances at the National Concert Band Festival and the National Festival of Music for Youth, programming challenging music, was key to raising standards and student aspiration. It also allowed him to direct performances in some of the country's top performance venues including Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Royal Albert Hall and Royal Festival Hall, London, and The Sage, Gateshead. At NSB, he formed two community bands - Cripps Hall Jazz Orchestra and East Midlands Wind Orchestra - as exemplars to further raise aspirations in the school's top groups. Regular successful performance jazz tours for his Big Band and Jazz Vocal Group, to New York, Los Angeles and Florida were also organised to further raise standards by partnering with high performance American school groups and receiving coaching from such international stars as Gordon Goodwin, Eric Marienthal, Wayne Bergeron, Jeff Jarvis, Chuck Owen and Tom Brantley.

As well as school groups he has also conducted many area and county youth bands (both brass and wind), community bands and choirs, and has conducted groups, and acted as Musical Director, on a variety of residential holiday music courses.

He has also been involved with IAJE (International Association for Jazz Education), adjudicated regularly at various music festivals and, together with Keith Allen, is responsible for keeping NCBF Repertoire lists and the Criteria Sheet up-to-date and relevant.

Since retiring from full-time teaching he has continued to teach A-level, act as a freelance Music Education consultant, adjudicate, guest conduct, lead workshops/holiday courses and compose and arrange for Wind Band and Big Band.



	PLATINUM	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
tone	☐ Excellent tone quality ☐ Sound always focussed ☐ Excellent range of tone colours	☐ Good tone quality ☐ Sound generally focussed ☐ Good range of tone colours	☐ Competent tone quality ☐ Sound not always focussed ☐ Reasonable range of tone colours	☐ Tone quality is limited ☐ Sound occasionally focussed ☐ Tone colours need further exploration
Tuning	☐ A well tuned performance ☐ Intonation is generally excellent	☐ Majority of instruments well tuned ☐ Intonation is generally good	☐ Some lack of control with tuning is evident ☐ Intonation is generally competent	☐ Tuning needs attention ☐ Intonation is generally variable
BALANCE & BLEND	☐ An excellent sense of balance is demonstrated ☐ Soloists are accompanied most sympathetically ☐ Sections blend well together throughout	☐ A good sense of balance is achieved ☐ Soloists are accompanied well ☐ Sections blend well together for the majority of the performance	☐ A competent sense of balance is achieved ☐ Soloists are accompanied well in parts ☐ Sections blend well for a portion of the performance	☐ Balance is adequate some of the time ☐ Accompaniment requires a greater degree of sensitivity ☐ Sections and individuals tend to dominate
DYNAMICS	☐ Wide range of dynamic variation is evident ☐ Dynamic contrast handled most effectively	☐ Good range of dynamic variation is evident ☐ Good control of dynamic contrast	☐ Competent range of dynamic variation is shown ☐ Competent control of dynamic contrast	☐ Dynamic range tends to be limited ☐ Some control of dynamic contrast is evident
RHYTHMIC ACCURACY & ENSEMBLE	☐ Rhythmic accuracy is excellent ☐ Pulse and tempo changes very well managed ☐ Performance shows a high degree of cohesion	☐ Rhythmic accuracy is generally very good ☐ Most pulse and tempo changes are managed effectively ☐ Band and sections mostly well co-ordinated	☐ Rhythmic accuracy is mostly good ☐ Some pulse and tempo changes are managed well ☐ Band shows reasonable co-ordination	☐ Rhythmic accuracy is inconsistent ☐ Tempo and pulse changes disturb the musical flow ☐ Co-ordination is shown only in the more straightforward passages
ARTICULATION & PHRASING	☐ Articulation is excellent throughout ☐ Excellent attention to detail ☐ Phrasing shows a high degree of understanding and presentation	☐ Articulation is generally good ☐ A wide range of detail is portrayed ☐ Phrasing is good and generally precise	☐ Articulation is competent ☐ A reasonable range of detail is portrayed ☐ Phrasing is competent	☐ A reasonable level of articulation is shown ☐ Some detail is portrayed ☐ Phrasing is in need of development
STYLE & INTERPRETATION	☐ The band responds vigilantly to the conductor's directions ☐ A mastery of style is evident throughout ☐ Your interpretation produced a highly musical performance	☐ The band responds well to the conductor's directions ☐ A good range of styles is displayed ☐ Your musical interpretation enhanced a good performance	☐ The band respond to the conductor's directions most of the time ☐ Some awareness of the style of music is shown ☐ The musicality displayed some of the time lifts the performance	☐ The band only responds to the conductor's directions for some of the time ☐ The style of the music is limited in its characterisation ☐ A basic understanding of musical interpretation is shown
CHOICE / SUITABILITY OF PROGRAMME	☐ A challenging programme that really displayed the musicianship and technical skills of the performers	☐ A balanced programme that provided a good level of challenge, developing the musicianship and technical skills of the performers most of the time	☐ The programme provided a good level of challenge in parts. It could be better balanced, with the band appearing capable of tackling music of a higher technical level and/or musical challenge overall	☐ A programme that, perhaps, needs a little more thought in balance and/or technical and musical challenge for the perceived current ability of the performers
IMPROVISATION	☐ Excellent skills shown by the soloists	☐ Soloists display a good range of skills	☐ Soloists mainly use printed solos, but there is some attempt to free themselves from the copy; or display a basic range of skills	☐ Soloists only use printed solos