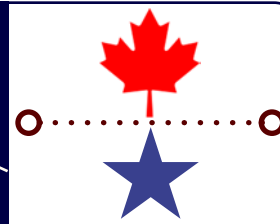




# THE BRASS BAND BRIDGE



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MAY, 2006

## UNDER THE BRIDGE



Douglas Yeo

Editor

While crossing a bridge—large or small—we are captivated by the view, entranced by its architecture, and transported from one location to another. Yet there is more. Viewed from below, one can see important elements of the bridge's structure. The mighty pylons, capstones that support arches and the supporting structure can only be seen from under the bridge. For all the majesty of a bridge, it is the often inelegant underside that supports its beauty and function.

*The Brass Band Bridge* is the primary vehicle by which the North American Brass Band Association communicates to its members. *The Bridge* brings us together across North America and spreads our message around the world. When NABBA President Anita Cocker Hunt asked if I would be willing to accept the position as Bridge editor, I did so aware of the long line of editors in whose footsteps I would walk including, most recently, Eric Aho and Colin Holman. I have learned this if nothing else: reading a copy of *The Bridge* is one thing but working under the bridge to build it and deliver it to our members is quite another.

With a new editor comes a new format, a new means of distribution and a new look. As NABBA has grown over the last 24 years, our world has changed around us. Having served its members for decades as a print publication, *The Bridge* recently moved to be an electronic publication as well. This transition from print to electronic publication is completed with this issue. Beginning with Issue 99, *The Bridge* will be available only as a downloadable pdf file.

The reason for this decision is many fold. First, fewer than 20% of NABBA's members have elected to receive a printed copy of the Bridge. Unfortunately, the cost of producing and printing the Bridge to be delivered to those members greatly exceeds the added fee those members pay to receive a print copy. In addition a print publication, by its very nature, takes a great deal of time to bring from desktop to mailbox. With this issue *The Bridge* embarks on a new era that will see the following benefits to NABBA members:

- *The Bridge* will be published more frequently and be able to meet deadlines more easily.
- *The Bridge* will contain timely information that can be distributed quickly to the membership.
- *The Bridge* will be published in full color.
- *The Bridge* will be published in low and high resolution versions, allowing it to be easily downloaded, viewed and printed.
- *The Bridge* will have a web based component including a high-resolution user controlled slide show.
- *The Bridge* will contain web links and take full advantage of PDF technology.
- NABBA will save a tremendous amount of money which can be used to provide other benefits to the membership.

The new *Bridge*, in tandem with *The Bridge* website at [www.nabbabridge.org](http://www.nabbabridge.org), will deliver news, information, photographs, advertisements and much more to NABBA members in an attractive, comprehensive and timely manner. We who labor under *The Bridge* so our membership can enjoy the view atop *The Bridge* look forward to receiving your news, articles and photos as we work together to build bridges between NABBA members and bands. 🌟

*Douglas Yeo*

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## ATOP THE BRIDGE



Anita Cocker Hunt

NABBA President

Dear NABBA Members,

As we look back on our 24th competition, I'm sure that all of us are reflecting on what worked and what needs to be improved. I have already started a list with my own impressions, your comments, and Board member's recommendations. NABBA has an active Board and the members are always thinking about what can be done differently, better, or "Yes, that works!"

This was the second year of NABBA running the competition without a host band. Having said that, NABBA does not do this alone. There were many people and organizations in Louisville and Indiana University Southeast that put in countless hours to ensure the contest's success. Dr. Joanna Goldstein (who brought the competition to IUS, arranged local volunteers, picked up judges at the airport, made signs, secured equipment from local schools, and supervised logistics of rooms and traffic flow—who knows what else she did with seeming super-human strength?), Susan Reigler and members of the Commonwealth and Derby City Brass Bands, friends and family members all pitched in to make it happen. The Chancellor of Indiana University Southeast, Sandra Patterson-Randles, made the campus available to us which made this contest a possibility. Sandra came to part of the competition on Saturday and attended the Gala Concert and we are deeply grateful for her support. We thank Philip Thomas and Aaron Lambert of the New Albany-Floyd County Schools in Indiana, and Pam Fleitz, Nan Moore, and Ashley Forrest of Jefferson County Public Schools in Louisville, for their generosity in lending music stands and percussion equipment. We could not have done this without their help. Spalding University offered free parking for the Gala Concert, and Dale Royer, Executive Director of Memorial Auditorium, was extremely helpful. Tom Scheibner, Contest Controller, and John de Salme, Associate Controller, deserve our thanks for a very well-run competition.

Jim Grate also helped Tom with scheduling solos, ensembles and the bands.

The venues for the solo/ensemble day were great performance areas with the exception of the low brass room which proved to be too small and became quite crowded. We are already working on changing that for next year. I'm sure that you were pleased to find excellent pianos for accompanists in every room.

Many of you made it known that you missed the Reading Band session. For schedule, personnel, and logistic reasons, it did not happen this year but we are planning on bringing it back for 2007.

We are thinking about scheduling your band rehearsals at local schools rather than at the hotel, thus eliminating hours of manpower, costs of rental trucks, reserving rooms at the hotel, etc. Rehearsals at local HS/MS band rooms would seem to be better than hotel meeting rooms. Many things would have to be worked out with local schools and band directors. This may or may not happen, but I would like to

pleased with the location and flow of traffic. We would like to see more exhibits next year for your benefit and for NABBA's.

You can feel the excitement and anticipation before the Awards Ceremony and Gala Concert. It is something that I always look forward to. Your enthusiasm is infectious!

We have certainly had a variety of styles and programming for the Gala Concerts over the years and this was no exception. Simone Rebello was thrilling to watch (love those outfits!) and to listen to. Allen Vizzutti was just awesome (how does he do those things?!). More thanks go to the Yamaha Corporation for lending the percussion equipment for Simone to perform on and for helping with an additional donation to help cover our costs. Scott Slocum from Yamaha put in many hours, making sure that the percussion equipment was assembled and in good working order, and then disassembled after the concert to ship to the buyers. Thank you, Scott. The Lexington Brass Band, conducted by Dr. Ronald Holz, delighted us with a variety of styles and wonderful music, and just the right length concert after a long day of competition.

Those are a few of my reflections from the contest weekend. We will keep adjusting and fine tuning in preparation for future competitions.

With the new format of *The Brass Band Bridge*, I will be writing to the members more frequently and will be asking for your thoughts and recommendations. What would you like to see happen at the competitions? We also need to create a volunteer list from the NABBA membership who would be willing to help during the competition weekend.

For those of you in NABBA who are unable to attend the competition: how can NABBA better serve you? Perhaps helping set up a brass band festival in your area or possibly sending one of the judges to your band for a rehearsal or concert prior to or after the competition. Logistics, scheduling, and finances would have to be worked out but these are possibilities, and NABBA has a bright and active future ahead.

I'm sure that you are aware that NABBA Board members serve on the Board because of their interest in NABBA and their passion for brass banding. Their names and contact information can be found on the NABBA website at [www.nabba.org](http://www.nabba.org). They volunteer their time and



### What's in a Name?

No matter how you say it, Louisville never sounded better than when brass bands converged there for the NABBA XXIV Championship this Spring.

know your thoughts on this! Would that work better for your band?

The exhibit area was one of the most spacious and accessible ever. The vendors seemed very

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first concert in April, 1998. In 2000, they were invited to become an Ensemble-in-Residence at the University of Akron. Their performance of the test piece was yet another outstanding example of the high standards among the seven groups competing. As the afternoon wore on, it occurred to me how difficult it would be for the judges to pick the best performance of the test piece. Their chosen piece for the competition was Peter Graham's, *Journey to the Center of the Earth*. Based on the book by Jules Verne, this programmatic piece had long lyrical sections which showcased individual virtuosity.

Just as you relaxed, the band entered into a section of conversation. Literally! Members of the band were chanting in Latin to instrumental accompaniment, creating an eerie effect. I'm sure no other piece played would have anything as unusual as this. Another excellent performance by a championship caliber band.

The next band to perform was the **Fountain City Brass Band** from the greater Kansas City area. The group was founded in 2002 and is a welcome addition to NABBA. Conductor Dr.

Jason Rinehart chose *Blitz* by Derek Bourgeois to open their portion of the competition. As the band made their way on stage, one band member mentioned to me that this piece should be subtitled "Controlled Chaos." I soon knew what he meant. The band performed the frenzied sections with a brilliant display of technique. The explosive beginning gave way to a very lyrical section with a dialogue passing around the brass. *Of Men and Mountains* was played nearly flawlessly with one of the strongest performances of the day.



**Championship Section:**  
Brass Band of Columbus, First Place.

Anita Cocker Hunt with Lisa Galvin, BBC principal horn and chairperson (above).

The Brass Band of Columbus outside the Library, Indiana University Southeast (left).

Their interpretation and artistry were evident in both pieces. Kudos to Fountain City!

It seems 2002 was a very good year for the birth of brass bands. Looking through the NABBA program, you can find several bands that trace their origin to 2002. The same is true of the **Chicago Brass Band** under the direction of Dr. Colin Holman. This is the band that had the distinction of representing NABBA in July 2005 at the first World Brass Band Championships in Kerkarde, Holland. Their first work was the test piece, *Of Men and Mountains*. Having heard it for the sixth time on competition day, I was amazed how fresh it sounded. The band is barely four years old yet displayed an amazing maturity in their balance, blend, technique, and interpretation. Their choice piece was Philip Wiley's, *Masquerade*.

This piece was a showcase for the virtuosity of this excellent band. Individual solos sections were highlighted by the extreme leaps in the solo euphonium and the beautiful theme and cadenza in the cornet section.

The final band in the Championship division was the **Atlantic Brass Band**. The band is celebrating its twenty-second anniversary and is Ensemble-in-Residence at Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey. Their conductor is Salvatore A. Scarpa, a graduate of the Eastman School of Music and Rowan University. Coupled with the required work, the band chose *Pageantry* by Herbert Howells. Much has been written about the different bands' performances of *Of Men and Mountains*, but Mr. Scarpa's had to be one of the strongest of the day. Their interpretation of this work was

outstanding with great attention to balance, blend, and intonation. Their chosen work, *Pageantry*, required a mature ensemble to successfully pull off this difficult work. ABB was certainly up to the task today. All in all, it was a great day of listening to the finest British Brass Bands on this side of the big pond.

**CHAMPIONSHIP SECTION RESULTS:**  
1st – Brass Band of Columbus (281.0 points), 2nd – James Madison University Brass Band (280.8 points), 3rd – Fountain City Brass Band (280.6 points), 4th – Brass Band of the Western Reserve (277.8 points), 5th – Atlantic Brass Band (275.4 points), 6th – Chicago Brass Band (270.0 points), 7th – Illinois Brass Band (269.8 points). ★

## ACROSS THE BRIDGE

## JUNE 3, 2006

Ashland Brass Band Festival—Ashland, Kentucky. Featured bands include Commonwealth Brass Band, Jericho Brass, Central Ohio Brass Band and Brass Band of the Tri-State.

## JUNE 9, 2006

The Great American Brass Band Festival History Conference—Centre College, Danville, Kentucky. "The March and the World of Brass" featuring presentations and performances by James Curnow, Gary Hill, Robert Garofalo, Patrick Warfield, Jens Lindemann, Boston, Brass, Millennium Brass and others. [www.gabbbf.com](http://www.gabbbf.com)

## JUNE 10–11, 2006

The Great American Brass Band Festival – Centre College, Danville, Kentucky. Featured bands include NABBA representative James Madison University Brass Band (Kevin Stees, conductor), London Citadel Brass Band, Lexington Brass Band, Saxton's Cornet Band, Advocate Brass Band, Rhythm & Brass and others. [www.gabbbf.com](http://www.gabbbf.com)

## JUNE 24–27, 2006

International Women's Brass Conference—Illinois State University, Normal, Illinois. Featured ensembles include the Athena Brass Band (Anita Cocker Hunt, conductor). [www.iwbc2006.com](http://www.iwbc2006.com)

## APRIL 13–14, 2007

NABBA XXV Championship—Indiana University Southeast/Louisville, Kentucky. Band entries must be submitted by January 19, 2007. For further information, visit [www.nabba.org](http://www.nabba.org) and click on "Contest Info 2007."

## BANDS: HONORS SECTION

By Russell Morris

The 24th edition of the NABBA Championship, Honors Section, took place in the Robinson Theater of Indiana University Southeast. Let me first say what wonderful hosts everyone connected with IUS were, especially Dr. Joanna Goldstein. The contest ran very smoothly for the first year at this venue and I anticipate that it will be even better next year.

This year's Honors Section had quite a different look from previous years. Out of the four bands competing, two were newcomers to the section and one of those was participating in their first NABBA Championship. Last year's Honors Section Champions, James Madison University, moved up to the Championship Section to compete. The New England Brass Band moved up to the Honors Section after having won the Challenge Section in the 2004 Championship held in Charleston, West Virginia. The Princeton Brass Band made their NABBA debut this year.

The test piece for the Honors Section was Gilbert Vinter's *Spectrum*. Written in 1968 one year before his death, *Spectrum* was considered to be ultra-modern for its time and as a result initially was not well received. It is probably Vinter's most advanced composition and it soon became a standard in the brass band repertoire. In this work, Vinter attempts to paint a sound picture of the colors of the spectrum. In the score, the colors are identified as red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and purple. It requires skillful interpretation by the conductor and great agility and the ability to articulate well as an ensemble.

The first band to take the competition stage was the **Princeton Brass Band** out of Princeton, New Jersey. This year was the PBB's initial foray into the NABBA contest and they finished in fourth place. The band is under the direction of Dr. Stephen Arthur Allen. In addition to *Spectrum*, the band's choice piece was *Variations for Brass Band* by Ralph Vaughan Williams.

Dr. Allen conducted both numbers without the assistance of a score, quite a daunting task in and of itself. Dr. Allen was very animated in his conducting style and for this listener, made it rather difficult to focus on the band and the

music. Of course, the adjudicators could not see the band so this was not a factor in scoring. The band performed both numbers with a great deal of confidence which is a reflection of their conductor. The band played with a nice rich sound but at times seemed to be somewhat lethargic in their approach. For its first year at the NABBA Championship the band performed quite admirably.

The second band to perform was the **Central Ohio Brass Band** under the direction of Jessica Sneeringer. Mrs. Sneeringer is in her second year as Artistic Director of COBB. The program for COBB consisted of *Festival March – Celebration* by Leslie Condon, *Spectrum*, and Peter Graham's *Gaelforce*. The band responded well to Mrs. Sneeringer as it opened with an energetic performance of *Celebration*. The band had a nice tight sound and it was obvious that both the band and conductor were having a good time with this number. Mrs. Sneeringer communicates well to the band while on the podium. In the test piece the band didn't seem to have the same confidence as in its opening number. Some precision concerns and at times a let down in the level of intensity might have cost the band some valuable points. COBB's closing number, *Gaelforce*, started with a nice brisk tempo that the band handled very well. With the cornets providing a strong feeling of being in "one" and the euphoniums answering with a nice counter melody, the band seemed to be back in its element. The middle section was highlighted by the beautiful flugelhorn playing of Andrew Seymour. Very warm and rich, this section was the highpoint of this work. The band lacked a bit of clarity in the third section and lost a bit of its precision as well, but nonetheless provided the audience with a very exciting finish to its program, which saw the band take third place.

Next to take the stage was the **New England Brass Band** under the direction of Douglas Yeo. The NEBB was competing in the Honors Division for the first time. The last time they Section the NABBA Championship saw the band taking first place in the Challenge Section in the 2004 contest held in Charleston, West Virginia. Beginning with a unique warm-up with first a quintet and then the full band playing, the NEBB launched into *Spectrum*. No doubt that the work of Douglas Yeo in compiling the enormous errata for the test piece proved beneficial as the band had the best grasp of the tempos, articulations,



and dynamics. While not perfect, the band conveyed a sense of excitement and intensity that enabled the listener to visualize the colors of the spectrum.

Philip Sparke's *The Year of the Dragon* was the choice piece for NEBB. A very challenging selection for even the top level bands, Mr. Yeo had his band in top form. Without a doubt for this listener the highlight was the second movement and the stunning trombone work of Don Lucas. With a strong upper register and lyrical playing that very few trombonists can match, Mr. Lucas is to be commended. It was

very evident, at the end of the frenzied third movement, that this was a performance that would be difficult to top. And indeed, the New England Brass Band took home the first place honors. One other item of note: the band's percussion section should be given medals for their work, especially on *The Year of the Dragon*. It was also amazing to see all of the percussion parts in *Spectrum* covered by just two players. Congratulations

The final band of the day in the Honors section, finishing in second place, was the **Cincinnati Brass Band** under the direction of Anita

Cocker Hunt. The CBB opened their performance with *Spectrum*. The CBB demonstrated a very good understanding of the intricacies although at times it seemed that conductor Hunt wanted the band to play at a faster pace. The band did, however, perform with a great deal of excitement and intensity and made the fourth listening this day of *Spectrum* an enjoyable one.

The band's choice piece was Philip Sparke's *Music for a Festival* which was the test piece for last year's Challenge Section. The opening fanfare section was nicely done with crisp articulations and a very evident enthusiasm. The middle



#### Honors Section:

New England Brass Band, First Place.

Anita Cocker Hunt with Douglas Yeo, NEBB Music Director (above).

The New England Brass Band in performance, Robinson Theatre, Indiana University Southeast (left).

section featured a quartet of solo cornet, flugelhorn, tenor horn, and euphonium. The four voices blended very well with each other and performed in a very expressive style. The accompaniment did a nice job of supporting but not getting in the way. The final section began with a bang with the percussion section setting the band off on its finale. The band attacked this section with a great deal of aggressiveness and at times was not entirely together. Although this was not the most difficult choice item in this section it was a very convincing performance that showcased many of the band's strengths.

It was a very exciting day for the Honors Section. The level of the bands and their conductors continues to rise. It was exciting to see the

New England Brass Band capture the top spot in their first appearance in the section. It was exciting to see the Cincinnati Brass Band year in and year out be one of the most consistent bands in NABBA. It was exciting to see the Central Ohio Brass Band and their young conductor play at a high level and enjoy the moment as they did. And finally, it was exciting to see the Princeton Brass Band for the first time at the NABBC. These bands will certainly continue to improve and that should make for an even better contest setting next year. Mark your calendars now to be in Louisville on April 13-14, of 2007!

**HONORS SECTION RESULTS:** 1st – New England Brass Band (272.4 points), 2nd – Cincinnati Brass Band (265.0 points), 3rd – Central Ohio Brass Band (251.4 points), 4th – Princeton Brass Band (240.4 points). ★

## BANDS: CHALLENGE SECTION

By Terry Everson (TE), Anita Cocker Hunt (ACH) and Douglas Yeo (DY)

**R**oman Festival Brass Band, from Rome, Georgia, was the first band to take the Robinson Theater stage and gave no hint in their performance at being perturbed by their early morning slot. Conductor Jerry Pollard and his forces provided an energetic beginning to the competition, opening with the Challenge test piece, William Himes' *Aspects of Praise*. From the start, the band exhibited a lush middle and low sound, with good lyrical line and solid rhythmic sense. The third movement featured particularly powerful playing, though a few pitch issues were in evidence toward the end. The treacherous opening of Stephen Bulla's *Images for Brass* was negotiated well with only minor intonation discrepancies. The "Approach By Sea" movement proved rather tricky in rhythm and technique, but was followed by a ravishing cup muted cornet sound in the "Chorale Prayer". Compliments are due to a strong soprano performance throughout. Roman Festival has established a benchmark for itself at the NABBA Championship, and it is to be hoped that its members will bring home memories of their first experience that will reap rewards in future visits. (TE)

The Brass Band of Central Illinois was conducted by Michael Forbes, whom I may credit for having the most expressive conducting technique I observed during the morning, with fabulous left hand gestures. The band responded with great gusto in the test piece, taking many chances which led both to exciting playing and intonation problems. Edward Gregson's *Variations on 'Laudate Dominum'* completed their program, and led off with a big rich sound. There were some unstable rhythmic moments here and there, and even though shaky intonation occasionally reared its head, there was a particular bright spot in the cup muted cornet section. The bass section acquitted itself well in beginning the fugue near the end, and the band brought their offering to a rousing conclusion. If this band can tighten up the technical end of its performance, its exciting musical style will certainly make a mark in competition down the line. (TE)

The Spires Brass Band is no stranger to the NABBA contest Challenge Section, competing for its sixth consecutive year and having won

## COMPLETE CONTEST RESULTS AND REPERTOIRE PLAYED FOR ALL NABBA BAND CHAMPIONSHIPS AND SOLO/ENSEMBLE CONTESTS FROM 1983– 2006 MAY BE FOUND AT [WWW.NABBAMUSIC.ORG](http://WWW.NABBAMUSIC.ORG)

in three of five previous visits. John Slezak led the band through a taxing program, surrounding the Himes test piece with two compositions by Stephen Bulla (who was playing second trombone on this occasion!). Montclair Citadel provided a sprightly take on *Onward, Christian Soldiers*. *Aspects of Praise* afforded Spires an opportunity to show fine intonation in passages

with extended harmonies, and a solid rhythmic sense; the last movement evoked a joyous atmosphere. Bulla's *Images for Brass* rounded out the program and perhaps a little fatigue began to show with a few ragged entrances early on and some pitch problems in the "Chorale Prayer"; nonetheless, both the "Approach By Sea" and "Engagement" featured nimble playing, with the latter showing great work on the menacing homophonic triplet section. The band had requested the audience withhold applause until the end due to time constraints; when it came, the response from the listeners was enthusiastic. (TE)

For its debut performance at the NABBA Championship, the **Derby City Brass Band** (John R. Jones, Jr., conductor) chose James Curnow's *Variations on Terra Beata* to precede the test piece. Curnow's work allowed the band to exhibit its solo players throughout the ensemble to good effect. The band worked through some rhythmic issues in the middle and finished the piece with solid sound, blend and pitch. The rhythmic aspects of Himes' selection were extremely well handled; each section showed well in the fugal section of the third movement, particularly the back row cor-

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nets, though the soft ending of that movement suggested a bit of fatigue creeping in. The solo cornet and euphonium contributed wonderful dancing solos in the finale, which was received warmly by the audience. This reviewer hopes that the Derby City band will make the trip across the river again next year, as the potential for growth after their first NABBC experience is great. (TE)

The **Massanutten Brass Band** (Kevin Stees, conductor), a newcomer to this competition, began with the test piece, *Aspects of Praise*. It had a bit of a shaky start, I thought, but it quickly fell into place. The first movement displayed a nice playing of the line of music and nice clean tonguing in the horn and tuba sections. The brass did not always seem together with the percussion and there were occasional pitch problems but they were minimal. In the second movement the euphonium player had a beautiful sound and there was a nice duet between the euphonium and first baritone player. Entrances could have been more secure during the start of the cascading part, but that settled in later to a beautiful flow and interpretation of the music. The third movement saw a few pitch problems and some ensemble issues in the low register of the cornets along with a bit of ensemble untidiness between percussion and

low brass and some shaky entrances. But what a nice tuba solo!

The final movement had good tempi, nice dynamic changes, and good clean runs in the cornets. There were minimal ensemble issues

and the movement was for the most part technically clean and musically well done.

Their choice piece was *A London Overture* by Philip Sparke. This was the test piece for the Honors Section in 2001. The opening did not feel together but this quickly settled in and I just sat back and enjoyed listening. In some of the difficult solo passages, it sounded like nerves were a slight problem, but generally well executed. At times, some sections sounded a bit rushed but overall a secure and pleasant performance. Overall this was an enjoyable listening experience for me and a great performance. Congratulations! (ACH)

The **Commonwealth Brass Band** began with what I think of as a risky piece, Elgar Howarth's arrangement of the *Agincourt Song*. It is an antiphonal piece with bells pointing out toward the audience and sections of the band spaced far apart across the stage. But they pulled it off! There were some pitch and ensemble problems but generally nice rhythmic clarity and a good low brass entrance.

Their second choice item was *Festival Overture on the National Air* arranged by the conductor, Jerome Amend. This was an interesting piece, based on *The Star Spangled Banner*. The tone of the horns at times sounded a bit forced but there was sensitive playing from the percussion section. There are some difficult technical passages and delicate entrances which were, for

## BUILDING BRIDGES

- ★ *NABBA President Anita Cocker Hunt will be the guest conductor for the International Music Camp in Minot, North Dakota from July 29–August 1, 2006.*
- ★ *The New England Brass Band (Douglas Yeo, music director) has begun work on its fifth CD release, an album of American music, with a recording session in Boston's Symphony Hall this month. Release is set for late 2007. [www.newenglandbrassband.org](http://www.newenglandbrassband.org)*
- ★ *A comprehensive preview and review of the NABBA XXIV Championship may be found at [www.4barsrest.com/results/nabba.asp](http://www.4barsrest.com/results/nabba.asp)*



**Challenge Section:**

Georgia Brass Band, First Place. Anita Cocker Hunt with Joe Johnson, Georgia BB Director



the most part, nicely done. I heard some very convincing dynamic changes and a solid musical performance.

The final piece was the test piece. The first movement had a secure introduction but the melodic line, I felt, needed a little more of a supportive sound. The band sported great dynamic changes but at times the sound was spread at the ends of crescendos. The second movement had some insecure spots, but nothing to interfere with the flow of the music. A few balance problems surfaced in the cascading section and the ending of this movement a bit shaky. The third movement had a nice, rich, full sound. There was great soprano playing in delicate spots and very good solo passages throughout the band. The fourth movement was exciting. The Commonwealth Brass Band presented one of the best performances I have heard from this band at competition. Congratulations! (ACH)

The **Natural State Brass Band**, under the direction of Russell Morris, continues to impress after being formed only three years ago. Their program began ambitiously with Eric Ball's *The Kingdom Triumphant*. The band showed excellent control from soft to loud dynamics and had a nice blend. During the "O Come Emmanuel" section there were a few miscues in the minefield of delicate entrances but there was some excellent cornet section playing during "Lo, He Comes on Clouds Descending". A soaring soprano cornet near the end along with a well-controlled and triumphant "Dresden Amen" added measurably to the performance. The section test piece, William Himes' *Aspects of Praise* showed some nice horn articulation in the opening which was forceful and dramatic. The thematic material was always evident during the loud tuttis and some rhythmic instability now and then did nothing to spoil the impression of a mostly secure, confident performance. (DY)

Making their first appearance at the NABBA contest, the **Georgia Brass Band** (conducted by Joe Johnson) roared into Robinson Theater with an outstanding and commanding performance. Gregson's *Prelude for An Occasion* began beautifully with a warm bottom to the band, some superb cornet playing and sparkling ensemble. The last chord was hair-raising. *Aspects of Praise* saw more of same. The horn/bass chorale was extremely sensitive with excellent dynamic shading. The second movement fea-

tured a beautiful euphonium solo with a truly special cascading effect through the band led by the sensitive glock player. There was also some first class unison trombone playing, excellent solos by the soprano cornetist and a superb ending to the piece. The opening unison cornets in Leslie Condon's *The Call of the Righteous* were spot on, but they were only one aspect of this band that has the complete package. Kudos to Georgia for their triumphant entry to the NABBA competition, establishing itself right away as a major force in the North American brass banding world. (DY)

#### CHALLENGE SECTION RESULTS:

1st – Georgia Brass Band (278.2 points),  
2nd – Spires Brass Band (252.8 points),  
3rd – Massanutten Brass Band (250.4 points),  
4th – Natural State Brass Band (250.0 points),  
5th – Derby City Brass Band (248.0 points),  
6th – Commonwealth Brass Band (245.2 points),  
7th – Roman Festival Brass Band (240.6 points),  
8th place – Brass Band of Central Illinois (223.2 points). ☺

## Don't miss the 17th annual



**June 10-11, 2006 - Danville, Kentucky**

*Bands and ensembles include:*

Jens Lindemann (Trumpet Soloist), Boston Brass Quintet,  
Rhythm & Brass, Millenium Brass Quintet,  
James Madison University Brass Band, London Citadel Brass Band,  
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## BANDS: EXPLORER SECTION

*By Douglas Yeo*

Both bands in the Explorer Section dropped down from Challenge where they had most recently competed. Doing so allowed both groups to give strong performances of repertoire that suited their current abilities.

**All-Star Brass and Percussion** conducted by Eric Aho returned to the NABBA contest for the first time since 2003. The band has a mix of mostly high school students and a few adults. Their opening piece, Curnow's *Fanfare and Flourishes* showed nice articulation in a mostly tutti style. The test piece, Peter Graham's *Dimensions*, had a bit of rhythmic uneasiness but the warm blend in tutti sections was impressive. Particularly outstanding was the work of the trombone and bass sections. Kenneth Downie's *Purcell Variations* may have been a bit of a stretch for this band but

the cornet work on the opening theme was outstanding. The first slow variation is full of treacherous pitfalls which were negotiated with mixed success and technical demands near the end got ahead of the band at times. That said, the fugue had a great jazz style and the band had every reason to be very proud of their performance.

**The Brass Band of the Tri-State** also returned to the NABBC for the first time since 2003, having been co-host of the contest in 2004. It is a small band in a rebuilding period and conductor Gary Clarke brought out a expressive sound. There was real warmth in the middle of the band in Jacob de Haan's *Ross Roy* and *Dimensions* had an excellent opening and a fine euphonium solo. There was some rhythmic unsteadiness but other moments showed excellent ensemble playing, especially from the trombone section. Goff Richards' *Royal Duchy* featured a fine solo from the third chair cornet player. The band's final piece, Rodney Newton's *Helden und Krieger* was full of echoes of Wagner (Siegfried) and Mahler (Symphony 6). While lacking real power and punch, the band equipped themselves very well technically and offered a very satisfying performance.

#### EXPLORER SECTION RESULTS:

1st – Brass Band of the Tri-State (266.8 points), 2nd – All-Star Brass and Percussion (257.2 points). ★

## BANDS: YOUTH SECTION

By Douglas Yeo

System Concert Hall saw the contest start with presentations by three youth bands. Always a joy to watch, the youth bands show why they are the future of NABBA.

**Triangle Youth Brass Band** under the leadership of Tony Granados came in as a strong favorite to win the section. As first place winners in each of the three previous times they had competed at the NABBA Championship (2001, 2002, 2004), the TYBB showed once again why they are one of the country's finest youth bands. Their program began confidently with the test piece, Eric Ball's *Petite Suite de Ballet* which featured a warm sound and an excellent soft blend of the low brass. The loud playing was never harsh (remarkable with 48 players on stage!) and cornet and euphonium solos were handled sensitively. The percussion section was very well integrated with the band. The program continued with Frank Wright's tour de force arrangement of *Berlioz's Roman Carnival Overture*. The inevitable small miscues and personal fouls did nothing to mar the band's energetic take on this classic transcription. It was remarkable to think that this was the test piece from the 1966 British National contest and we now witnessed it being played

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**Explorer Section:**

Brass Band of the Tri-State, First Place. Gary Clarke, BB of the Tri-State Conductor with John de Salme.



confidently by a youth band. There was fine solo playing from horn and euphonium, and superb soprano playing allowed the band to sparkle. The tremendous final chord had vitality and led the audience to their feet.

The All-Star Junior Varsity Band followed conducted by Eric Aho. Consisting of players in grades 7-9, they cannot expect to be as accomplished as other youth bands that include high school players. However, it was inspiring to see the potential in these young players who will certainly feed into other bands in the All-Star band system. The fact that the band's instrumentation was not complete put a greater burden on some sections than others. Their performance of *Petite Suite* showed pitch and blend to be works in progress and James Curnow's *When Time Will Be No More* seemed a bit of a stretch for these young players, but passion and commitment was evident, no more so than in the determined playing of the soprano cornetist. With growth and maturity, these players will be making a difference in bands in years to come.

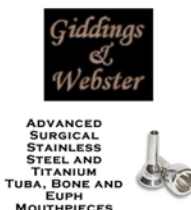


#### Youth Section:

Triangle Youth Brass Band, First Place. John de Salme with TYBB Principal Cornet Joelle Portzer, and Martin Warlick, Solo Euphonium.



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Greg Mills conducted the Cincinnati Honors Youth Band, this being their third performance at a NABBA contest. With over 40 players (including an impressive 8 trombones!) there is real talent in this band. Philip Sparke's *A Malvern Suite* featured excellent solo cornet and solo trombone playing and the cornet/euphonium duet had real personality. The rhythmic complexity of the piece made for some ensemble problems but on the whole the performance was committed and nicely done. The energetic take on *Petite Suite* was admirable but there was a cost as some players tried to play too softly which caused production miscues and pitch provided periodic challenges. But the band had a warm blend and clearly is making an impact on its hard working players.

#### YOUTH SECTION RESULTS:

1st – Triangle Youth Brass Band (271.6 points),  
2nd – Cincinnati Honors Youth Band (262.6 points),  
3rd – Junior Varsity All-Stars (236.4 points). ★

## NABBA XXIV Championship

Thomas Scheibner, Contest Controller

March 31–April 1, 2006

Explorer		Ray Farr		Ronald Waiksnoris		Lt. Colonel David Deitrick		Test	Overall
Perf		Test	Non-Test	Test	Non-Test	Test	Non-Test		
B	BB Tri-State	83	81	87	87	98	97	268	266.8
A	All-Star B&P	80	78	85	84	93	94	258	257.2

Youth		Ray Farr		Ronald Waiksnoris		Lt. Colonel David Deitrick		Test	Overall
Perf		Test	Non-Test	Test	Non-Test	Test	Non-Test		
A	Triangle Youth BB	90	80	90	88	98	94	278	271.6
C	Cincinnati Honors BB	80	79	88	90	95	93	263	262.6
B	Jr. Varsity All-Stars	76	70	84	88	78	76	238	236.4

Challenge		Kevin Norbury		James Anderson		Brian Bowen		Test	Overall
Perf		Test	Non-Test	Test	Non-Test	Test	Non-Test		
H	Georgia BB	95	93	93	92	91	92	279	278.2
C	Spires BB	86	89	84	86	80	82	250	252.8
E	Massanutten BB	87	88	79	81	80	88	246	250.4
G	Natural State BB	86	86	82	79	84	82	252	250.0
D	Derby City BB	86	87	78	80	82	84	246	248.0
F	Commonwealth BB	85	87	81	78	80	79	246	245.2
A	Roman Festival B	84	84	69	70	86	89	239	240.6
B	BB Central Illinois	81	82	69	68	74	72	224	223.2

Honors		Kevin Norbury		James Anderson		Brian Bowen		Test	Overall
Perf		Test	Non-Test	Test	Non-Test	Test	Non-Test		
C	New England BB	92	93	90	91	88	92	270	272.4
D	Cincinnati BB	91	91	91	91	83	83	265	265.0
B	Central Ohio BB	90	88	76	79	85	85	251	251.4
A	Princeton BB	86	88	73	71	81	82	240	240.4

Championship		Ray Farr		Ronald Waiksnoris		Lt. Colonel David Deitrick		Test	Overall
Perf		Test	Non-Test	Test	Non-Test	Test	Non-Test		
A	BB Columbus	90	90	93	93	98	98	281	281.0
C	James Madison University BB	91	91	93	93	96	98	280	280.8
E	Fountain City BB	90	86	92	95	99	99	281	280.6
D	BB Western Reserve	91	89	91	95	95	95	277	277.8
G	Atlantic BB	85	85	94	92	96	99	275	275.4
F	Chicago BB	83	83	89	92	96	98	268	270.0
B	Illinois BB	83	83	92	89	96	96	271	269.8

- The overall score is weighted as 60% test piece, 40% remainder of program.
- First tiebreaker: The band with the highest test piece scores wins.
- Second tiebreaker: The band rated higher on the test piece by 2 of the 3 judges wins.



## SOLO &amp; ENSEMBLE:

**Adult High Brass Technical**  
(Ronald Waiksnoris, adjudicator)

By Jay Cohen

I had the honor to serve as the announcer and timekeeper for the entire NABBA XXIV Adult High Brass Technical and a small portion of the Adult High Brass Slow Melody competition.

The competition took place in the Recital Hall at Indiana University South East. I felt that it was a wonderful venue for the performances with wood floors, an excellent and in tune piano as well as a rather intimate setting. It reminded me of the Regenstein recital hall at my school, Northwestern.

Overall, the level of performance was very impressive and everyone turned in outstanding performances. I was able to hear both 1st place winners and their interpretations were indeed beautiful.

Doug Reneau of the Fountain City Brass Band gave a flowing and lyric rendition of

**P**HOTOS OF ALL BAND  
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Movement #2, from *Sonata* by Eric Ewazen. I overheard several people comment on his wonderful flugelhorn tone. Doug conveyed a rush of emotion in his performance.

Randall Tinnin turned in an outstanding cornet performance of *Premiere Solo* by Hue. Randall was at NABBA on his own, with no band affiliation. This is a great moment for

NABBA when the competition attracts folks from outside the usual likely suspects of band members. Randall gave a very fluid and graceful interpretation of this beautiful work.

We even had a new work by Joe Dymit of the Chicago Brass Band, *Short Circuit*, for Cornet and Concertina performed by Joe and myself. Our Adjudicator characterized it as an "enterprising choice".

All in all it was a fantastic afternoon of great playing and interesting music. We look forward to next year's competition in the same fine venue.

Adult High Brass Technical Results: 1st - Randall Tinnin, cornet (no band affiliation), 2nd - Alan Wenger, cornet (Fountain City), 3rd - Bryan Appleby-Wineberg, cornet (Atlantic) ✪

## SOLO &amp; ENSEMBLE:

**Adult High Brass Slow Melody**  
(Kevin Norbury, adjudicator)

By Thomas Scheibner

**T**welve contestants took part in NABBA's Adult High Brass Slow Melody solo competition. Adjudicator Kevin Norbury had the difficult task of sorting out the top three competitors as some fine performances were presented in this category.

In the end, the mellow sound of the flugelhorn found Kevin's favor, as two of the top three competitors in this category performed their solo on this instrument. Doug Reneau of the Fountain City Brass Band received top marks for his performance of Eric Ewazen's *Sonata for Trumpet* (2nd Movement). His full sound and excellent shaping of phrases in Ewazen's music were very apparent. Even though he didn't quite "finish" the performance (the six-minute time limit expired just before the conclusion of the work), this didn't take away from the fine overall effect of his presentation. Second place was garnered by Arthur Myers of the Atlantic Brass Band who presented a very secure and musical rendition on the Bb cornet of *Believe Me if All Those Endearing Young Charms*. This musical item won the top prize for most played on the day, as two other soloists also chose to present this piece. Apparently, Arthur's presentation was chosen to be the best on this

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popular work because of his careful use of rubato and well-shaped musical phrases. Finally, another flugelhornist, **Kevin Maloney** of the New England Brass Band, won third place in this category for his presentation of *Ballad* by Bernard Fitzgerald. His focused and unforced sound on his instrument along with a very lyrical approach on the flugel found favor with the adjudicator and audience.

Other competitors in this category also did very well, including one unfortunate competitor whose music stand collapsed in the middle of the performance, sending his music tumbling down to the platform. Unfazed, he moved over to the piano to read along with the accompanist and completed the performance. Alas, this mishap didn't earn the competitor any extra points from the adjudicator and he finished out of the running for the prizes. Unfortunately, all of the performers had to contend with the rather hot environment on the platform due to excessively hot lighting in the Recital Hall, and this needs to be sorted out before next year's event. Congratulations to all competitors in this event, as everyone acquitted themselves very well.

Adult High Brass Slow Melody Results: 1st – Doug Reneau, flugelhorn (Fountain City), 2nd – Arthur Myers, cornet (Atlantic), 3rd – Kevin Maloney, flugelhorn (New England). 🌟

## SOLO & ENSEMBLE:

### Adult Low Brass Technical

(James Anderson, adjudicator)

*By Jackson Hill*

**I**t was my honor and pleasure to assist in this event. I did not envy the judges at the solo and ensemble contests for all of the contestants I heard were extremely well prepared and were some of the finest musicians that I have heard in years.

**Thomas Gillette** (Baritone)—His tone quality was great and he expressed much feeling with his piece. While he could have been a little cleaner and smoother with the technical aspects, this was a great effort.

**Lee Harrelson** (Euphonium)—This was great pleasure to hear. There was excellent range and tone quality in all levels in this performance.

## Eric Ball's Point of View...

“One must practice listening, even as one practices performance, especially where the greatest music is concerned; and the complete bandsman is he who is excellent in both receiving (listening) and giving (performing).

Watch him in rehearsal; you can sense how he seeks to harmonize his work with the rest of the band; how his interest is unabated when some other section or person is receiving instruction; how he tunes in to the conductor's interpretation of the music.

He is disciplined; he gives; and he is mentally and spiritually enriched.

Music can be a pleasant background to our lives, or a vital experience. We live in an age of musical riches; it depends upon us how much we make our own.”

—Reprinted from “*Eric Ball: His Words and His Wisdom*” compiled by Peter Cooke. 1992, Egon Publishers. Used with permission.

He demonstrated a full understanding of the euphonium and would be real soloist for any band. An excellent performance.

**Charles Page** (Tuba)—He played very difficult piece of music that covered the full range of the tuba; there are no words to express the excellence of this performance!

**Tommy “Chip” Gue** (Euphonium)—This was a great and well prepared performance of *The Carnival of Venice*. The upper register could have used a little filling out and the flow of the piece could be a bit more forward looking, but all and all it was a pleasure to hear this interpretation of this composition.

**Jamey Mitchell** (Tuba)—I really enjoyed this performance. The musical expression was outstanding; I would buy his CD!

**Samuel Funkhouser** (Euphonium)—With excellent tone and musical expression, he made the instrument sing. This was well prepared

and had a great understanding of the piece (*Napoli*). This performer has an outstanding future.

**Brad Say** (Euphonium)—He picked a great selection (*Prescott Poem*) that showed the technical side and beauty of the instrument. There was an excellent interpretation of this beautiful piece. It flowed well and the runs were even and precise; was a pleasure to listen to.

**Rachel Hockenberry** (Tenor Horn)—There is a great future for this performer. She has excellent tone. This was an unusual piece (*The Piper O'Dundee*), but I enjoyed listening to it. It displays what this difficult instrument is capable of. A great job.

**Kevin Sanders** (Tuba)—He displayed excellent tone quality and technique in all ranges and made the instrument sing. This was the best interpretation of *Blue Bells of Scotland* that I have ever heard; his precision was excellent. I felt he was one of the best tuba players that I have heard in years and would be a great soloist



for any band.

**Ernest Lightfoot** (Trombone)—He had a fine and delicate touch and was a real pleasure to listen to. He had a sweet tone and it flowed well; a great effort.

Adult Low Brass Technical Results: 1st – Lee Harrelson, euphonium (Fountain City), 2nd – Samuel Funkhouser, euphonium (James Madison), 3rd – Brad Say, euphonium (Chicago). ☼

## SOLO & ENSEMBLE:

**Adult Low Brass Slow Melody**  
(Brian Bowen, adjudicator)

By Julie Vish

I had the distinct pleasure of listening to the low brass slow melody competition and I was indeed impressed with the quality of performances by all of the entrants. My general impressions of the section were that there were very few errors made and every participant was extremely well prepared. Listening to an

afternoon of beautiful melodies that ranged from an elegantly simplistic folk-melody to a complex second movement from a concerto for bassoon was definitely a pleasure for this cornet player to hear.

I most especially enjoyed the performances that were played with great control and consistent tone quality throughout the register of the instrument. I also appreciated the many students from James Madison who took part in the competition. Their thorough preparation and in many cases extremely mature musicianship that belies their youthfulness has done much to push the level of competition higher each year. They all have a lot to be proud of. The keys to successful performance in this section were:

- A full rich tone quality that is consistent in all registers of the instrument.
- Absolute control of the instrument at all dynamic levels.
- Effective use of vibrato.
- Creating an ebb and flow within the phrases of the music.

I was certainly glad that I did not have to make a decision about whom the winners should be as I was hard-pressed to pick a single winner. As an aside, *Alu*, by Peter Meecham, was commissioned for Diana Herak, the winner of the section, by her husband Pat Herak, also a member of the Brass Band of Columbus, in honor of their tenth wedding anniversary. I was present for the premiere of this piece in December 2005 and I recall thinking about how the simple, haunting melody was perfectly suited for the baritone, and especially for Diana. Her performance at the competition was nearly flawless and simply beautiful.

Adult Low Brass Slow Melody Results: 1st – Diana Herak, baritone (Columbus), 2nd – Will Hess, euphonium (Fountain City), 3rd – Mark Fabulich, e flat bass (New England). ☼

## SOLO & ENSEMBLE:

**Adult Percussion Solo, Adult Percussion Ensemble, Youth Percussion Ensemble**

(Simone Rebello, adjudicator)

By Jackson Hill

Once again, these sections showed a very high level of playing in a diverse repertoire. All of the contestants are to be commended for their preparation and performance. It was impressive to see the students from James Madison University represent their school so ably.

**Michael Overman** (Marimba)—The mood setting for his piece (*Minstrels*) was outstanding. While its length was a bit short, this was an outstanding performance.

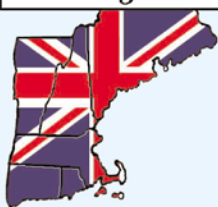
**Carolyn Towbridge** (Marimba)—The future of this performer is unlimited; she plays with soul. She is a master of this instrument and knows no bounds. This was an excellent piece (*Rumble Strips*) which is always a pleasure to hear.

**K. Michelle Lewis** (Xylophone)—This had a nice and delicate touch and was a real crowd pleaser. An outstanding piece (*Triplets*) was well presented with a full understanding of this instrument.

**Suzanne Berndt** (Marimba)—This was played with an excellent touch.. While the piece could have been a longer composition to show the

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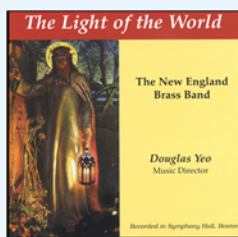
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full range of this instrument, this was a great effort.

**Dewey Dowdy** (Marimba)—The *Furioso and Valse* was an excellent selection and was the most substantial of all of those played. This showed excellent technical skills and flow and shows what this instrument is capable of. He has great talent and it was a pleasure to hear.

**Daniel Karras** (Marimba)—He had great feeling and interpretation of his excellent selection (*Hombre D'Aout*). He held the audience's attention nicely and was a great pleasure to hear.

**James Madison University Percussion Quartet** (Adult)—This group gave an outstanding performance with technical excellence. Their music was great and I could listen to them all day.

**Triangle Youth Percussionists** (Youth)—I would love to have this group in any adult band. The flow was excellent—they were a pleasure to hear. Fun!! Fun!! Fun!!!

Adult Percussion Solo Results: 1st – Carolyn Trowbridge, marimba (James Madison), 2nd – Michael Overman, marimba (James Madison), 3rd – Daniel Karras (James Madison).

Adult Percussion Ensemble Results: 1st – JMU Percussion Quartet (James Madison).

Youth Percussion Ensemble Results: 1st – Triangle Youth Percussionists (Triangle Youth). 🍀

#### SOLO & ENSEMBLE:

**Youth Solo, Youth Brass Ensemble and Adult Brass Ensemble**  
(David Deitrick and Ray Farr, adjudicators)

*By John W. de Salme*

The Youth Solo event opened with a brilliant performance by Ryan Vanaman of Goedicke's *Concert Etude*. A tough act to follow, three entries from the Triangle Youth Brass Band were well done and presented a high level of literature but were not quite as polished.

The Youth brass ensemble event consisted of a quintet and quartet from the Triangle Youth Brass Band, both very well presented with the edge going to their quintet performing

*Contrasts for Brass Quintet* by William Brusick.

The Adult Brass Ensemble event opened precariously with **Hotcha McGotcha** (Illinois Brass Band) rather haphazardly taking the stage, obviously missing a few members, but getting underway right off. Before long with all members now in the mix they continued with an entertaining rendition of *Blue Rondo*. The jazz solos were well conceived and the performance claimed second place.

**The Chicago Brass Band Players** (Chicago Brass Band) won the event with a brilliant performance of *Caravan*, exuding energy, excitement and precision with outstanding solo choruses.

Although they did not place, **Twisted Steel's** (Fountain City) rendition of *Benediction* by John Steven was the performance that remained in the audience's memory at the end of the day. It was a paragon of sensitivity, control, and intonation.

A large variety of music representing old standards from the literature as well as more contemporary compositions, including the jazz idiom, made the event a pleasure for audiences. Asked for a quote, Ray Farr said, "The high reputation that American brass playing carries is fully justified. I'm thrilled by what I hear!"

Youth Solo Results: 1st - Ryan Vanaman, cornet (Atlantic), 2nd – Terri Williams, cornet (Triangle Youth), 3rd – Ted Oliver, e flat bass (Triangle Youth).

Youth Brass Ensemble: 1st – Triangle Youth Brass Quintet (Triangle Youth), 2nd Triangle Youth Tuba Quartet (Triangle Youth).

Adult Brass Ensemble: 1st – Chicago Brass Band Players (Chicago), 2nd – Hotcha McGotcha (Illinois), 3rd – Atlantic Brass Sextet (Atlantic). 🍀



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## GALA CONCERT REVIEW

**Lexington Brass Band**, Ronald Holz, conductor, with **Allen Vizzutti** and **Simone Rebello**, soloists

By Douglas Yeo

At the end of a long day—which saw performers giving their best at the band contest and audience members rushing from concert hall to concert hall to hear and support their favorite bands—all who participated in NABBA XXIV gathered in Louisville's Memorial Auditorium for the award ceremony and gala concert. One of the most eagerly anticipated parts of the contest weekend, this year's program did not disappoint.

While some might have grown a bit restless during the lengthy award ceremony, most in the audience embraced the celebration of the bands, soloists and small ensembles who leapt from their seats to run to the stage to receive their trophy, banner or plaque from NABBA President Anita Cocker Hunt or Controller Tom Scheibner. With the results finally announced, all settled back to enjoy a concert by the Lexington Brass Band conducted by Dr. Ronald Holz.

The Lexington Brass Band is no stranger to NABBA gala concerts, having performed in 1998 (when the band hosted NABBA XVI) and in Cincinnati (NABBA XX). The band's accomplishments are legion, having made several compact discs, performed at the All England Masters Brass Band Festival in Cambridge, England, and regularly giving concerts at conventions and festivals around the United States. Ronald Holz, the LBB's conductor and professor of Music at Asbury College (Wilmore, Kentucky), is well known not only for his work as a brass band conductor and clinician but as one whose knowledge of brass bands and their repertoire is nearly unparalleled. Adding to this year's gala concert was the participation of two world-renowned soloists, Allen Vizzutti and Simone Rebello.

The Lexington Brass Band's contribution to the gala concert fell into two discrete categories: works they performed themselves and their work accompanying the guest soloists. Their own program featured mostly short, lighter works with the exception of *Prelude to Act II and Maypole Dances from Merry Mount* by Howard Hanson in a fine, faithful arrangement

by Louis Bourgois. The band showed itself to be worthy of its reputation with a warm blend and extremely sensitive playing through the ensemble. Nowhere was this more impressive than in Erik Leidzén's beautiful arrangement of *Bach's Komm Süßer Tod*, performed in memory of loved ones who have gone on before. While some may have wished for a program with more meaty repertoire, most in attendance

And what can be said about Simone Rebello that has not been said? Has there ever been a more positive performing personality exuding from a stage, with a smile that stretched across the Atlantic Ocean from Britain to the USA and a demonstration of energy that captivated all in Memorial Auditorium? Her fantastic stick technique on xylophone (in both Goff Richards' *Zimba Zamba* and Rodney Newton's



**Dynamic Duo:**

Simone Rebello and Allen Vizzutti with the Lexington Brass Band, Ronald Holz, Music Director. These musicians brought a variety of styles to the NABBA XXIV Gala Concert, but their amazing technique and brilliant musicianship remained constant throughout.

likely had gotten their fill of such during the contest earlier in the day and, like this writer, welcomed such a varied program of lighter works.

While the Lexington Brass Band's own part of the program was exciting, poetic and diverse, the evening's two soloists brought the audience to its feet after every piece they played. Allen Vizzutti is a world-renowned trumpet soloist and certainly one of the most versatile players to have ever breathed into a cup shaped mouthpiece. His performance of Clifton Williams' *Dramatic Essay* (transcribed by Ronald Holz) was electric with both a compositional style and performance that harkened back to an earlier time in our country's then burgeoning musical life. Nobody could forget Allen's monologue about the piccolo trumpet, trumpet (the instrument, he said, that people play because they can't master the cornet) and flugelhorn, nor would anyone wish to forget his stunning performance of his own piece, *Suite: The Rising Sun*, arranged for this concert by Kevin Norbury. Evocative of images of Japan, *The Rising Sun* showed Allen at his finest, from thrilling piccolo trumpet technique to bold and brash trumpet playing to the deep warmth of the flugelhorn.

transcription of the classic *Taps in Tempo*) was nearly stupefying, but her subtle playing on marimba (of Evelyn Glennie's *A Little Prayer*) brought a hush to the audience that refused to break even after she was finished. I suspect few knew what to expect when Simone came to the front of the stage without any sticks in her hand as she announced Sheila Chandra's *Speaking in Tongues*—what followed was a transfixing exercise in vocal percussion which defies superlatives.

Allen and Simone collaborated on a duet arrangement of *My Funny Valentine* and also joined the Lexington Brass Band in a performance of *Stars and Stripes Forever*, trading fours and looking like they were having as much fun playing as the audience had listening to them. With Stephen Bradnum's arrangement of *The Irish Blessing* the gala concert drew to a satisfying close. We can all thank the Lexington Brass Band, Ronald Holz, Allen Vizzutti and Simone Rebello for an excellent concert, one which left us all anticipating returning to Louisville in April 2007 where both the new and familiar await at the twenty-fifth anniversary edition of the NABBA Championship, NABBA XXV. ★



# BRASS BAND AID

## AN INTERNATIONAL CALL FOR HELP

By Douglas Yeo

A look at the news on television can be a sobering thing. Famine, poverty, war, injustice—it is enough to make a person wonder, “What can I do?” Fortunately, into this breach has stepped a noble effort that is bringing together brass bands worldwide in order to help make poverty history.

Brass Band Aid was formed last year by members of the Stanhope Silver Band (Durham, England) including the band’s conductor, Steve Robson, their young trombonist Briony Thompson and her trombonist father, Bob. Wanting to do something about poverty worldwide, they came upon the idea of recording a charity CD with the proceeds benefiting a recognized charity devoted to helping those who are in need. Building on the success of the “Live Aid” celebrity music events that have raised millions of dollars for famine relief, these members of the Stanhope Band contacted World Vision, one of the world’s leading relief agencies, which designated a specific project in which they were involved to be funded by what came to be known as “Brass Band Aid.” The production of the charity CD, which features The Stanhope Silver Band, Broughtons Brass Band, Barnard Castle Band, Ferryhill Town band and a Celebrity Band of players from many of Britain’s finest brass bands, was entirely underwritten by sponsors who donated time, goods and services to ensure that 100% of the proceeds of the sale of the disc would benefit Brass Band Aid.

World Vision’s official Brass Band Aid project consists of the building and equipping of a new school in Adet, Ethiopia. The area surrounding Adet is home to over 350,000 people but it has only one secondary school, a crumbling concrete block structure of three classrooms which operates nobly but vainly to serve 3,500 students. A new school is desperately needed.

What began as a fund-raising CD project has turned into a way for brass bands around the world to join together to support the school building project in Adet. Sales of the CD have been very successful, but more impressive is the willingness of bands around the world to



sponsor their own events to raise money for Brass Band Aid. In its first year, Brass Band Aid raised over £20,000 (over \$35,000), all of which has now been turned over to World Vision. During a recent visit to Adet, Bob and Briony Thompson were given the honor of breaking ground for the new school, construction of which can now begin due to the generosity of brass bands worldwide.

There is much left to be done and Brass Band Aid is moving into a new phase to raise £30,000 to further equip the school and build additional classrooms, toilet blocks and sporting equipment.

The Brass Band Aid website, [www.brassbandaid.org](http://www.brassbandaid.org), tells much more about how people have embraced this effort and how others can help. While most support has come from bands in the UK, Brass Band Aid has been receiving donations and offers of help from around the world. Few bands in North America have gotten involved but that is changing. The New

England Brass Band has made a commitment to raise over \$1,500 to benefit Brass Band Aid during its 2006–07 season. In addition, my wife and I have purchased 100 of the Brass Band Aid CDs which we have donated to the NEBB to re-sell at its concerts, resulting in an additional \$2,500 donation to Brass Band Aid. I would like to encourage both bands and their members to visit the Brass Band Aid website and consider how they can take part in this world-wide effort that is bringing bands together and at the same time providing real help to people in need. ☺

## EXIT RAMP



*Douglas Yeo, Editor*

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The views expressed by writers whose work appears in *The Brass Band Bridge* are not necessarily those of the North American Brass Band Association.

*The Brass Band Bridge* welcomes news, materials for review, communications, photographs, advertising, and scholarly articles on all aspects relating to and for the benefit of North American brass bands and their members.

Materials for inclusion in *The Brass Band Bridge* must be submitted as Microsoft Word documents and photos must be submitted as JPEG files (300 ppi [pixels per inch] resolution). Materials may be edited for content. Address all materials for publication (including queries about advertising rates and sizes) to:

[bridge@yeodoug.com](mailto:bridge@yeodoug.com)

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## IN FOCUS

## THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE

Issue 99 of *The Brass Band Bridge* features the Brooklyn Bridge. Spanning the East River and connecting Manhattan and Brooklyn in New York, the Brooklyn Bridge was, in its time, the eighth wonder of the world. While talk of a bridge to connect Manhattan and Brooklyn had gone on for years, it was not until 1855 when John Roebling made the first concrete proposal for such a bridge did serious, practical discussion begin. His design for the bridge—with its two massive stone towers that for many years would dominate the New York skyline as its tallest structures—was approved in 1869 and construction began in 1870. Roebling's death in 1869 (he contracted tetanus after his foot was crushed by a ferry as he was waiting on a dock) led to his son, Washington, taking over as chief engineer. Washington Roebling was himself gravely debilitated after contracting the bends as a result of working to construct the massive underwater foundations for the bridge's towers; his wife, Emily, became intimately involved in the work and was considered by many to have been co-engineer. The Brooklyn Bridge, then the longest suspension bridge in the world with a 1,595 foot long main span, was opened on May 24, 1883 by United States President Chester Alan Arthur and New York Governor Grover Cleveland and remains not just an inspiring symbol but a testament to the indomitable "can do" spirit of the Americas. ★

