

Young Musician Competition Syllabus

Please address any queries to the convenor: Cathy Edkins - cathy.edkins@btinternet.com/07962 270557

Date: Saturday 21st February 2026

The winner will be presented with the Young Musician of the Year trophy and will also receive a cheque for £250.

There are no extra fees to pay for this section. Up to ten young musicians (pianists, vocalists and instrumentalists) aged 12-18 yrs will be selected to take part in this competition.

Competitors will be chosen on the basis of their performance during the festival. There are no specific qualifying classes, but competitors will be required to perform a recital of up to ten minutes.

Entering recital classes in the main festival will provide a good showcase for a competitor's selection. Competitors will be allowed to play/ sing items which they have already performed elsewhere in the festival.

Adjudicator

James Kirby

GRSM, ARAM

James studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London and the Moscow Conservatoire. Following his student years in Moscow he undertook regular solo and chamber music tours of the former Soviet Union. James now appears regularly as a recitalist and concerto soloist throughout the UK and Europe. Highlights include performances at London's Wigmore Hall and the Edinburgh and Aldeburgh Festivals.

He has appeared as concerto soloist with the English, Scottish and Belarusian Chamber Orchestras, the Moscow, Kazakh, Astana and Penang Symphony Orchestras, the Arad and Oradea Philharmonic Orchestras (Romania), in venues including the Royal Albert Hall and Royal Opera House in London, Symphony Hall, Birmingham, the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatoire and Astana Opera House. He has performed both Brahms Concertos in Russia and Romania.

James is a member of the Barbican Piano Trio, whose highlights include many cycles of Beethoven's complete Piano Trios including the Master Concert Series at Wigmore Hall. He also enjoyed a long collaboration with the celebrated Russian violinist Lydia Mordkovitch, amongst many others.

James is a dedicated teacher and holds posts at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Royal Holloway, University of London, and Eton College. He is a regular jury member of

international piano competitions and is much in demand for masterclasses and as an adjudicator.