



BRITISH ASSOCIATION OF BARBERSHOP SINGERS
GUILD OF JUDGES

JUDGES REFERENCE BOOK
OCTOBER 2009

From the Barbershop Harmony Society Contest & Judging Handbook version 5.5, May 2009

BABS JUDGING REFERENCE BOOK

INTRODUCTION

This manual contains BABS judging reference materials which become effective from the BABS contest cycle beginning with Preliminary Contests 2009.

It is BABS Guild of Judges' policy to use and judge from the same reference materials as our judging colleagues in the Barbershop Harmony Society (BHS), except where this would conflict with our own administrative system. Consequently, the reference materials which follow this introduction have been extracted unchanged from the BHS Contest and Judging Manual (version 5.5 May 2009) omitting only the Contest Rules and administrative details specific to BHS.

Where sections of the resulting document contain references to other BHS documentation, the corresponding references to BABS documentation are detailed below.

Where reference is made below to BABS Contest Rules, the reference applies to Version 8, August 2008.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BHS AND BABS

Contest Administration Category

There is no separate Contest Administration Category Description. The Contest Administration Category is responsible for all aspects of contest except judging a competitor's performance - including preparation, the smooth running of the contest itself (in accordance with the Contest Rules) and any post-contest duties. Members of the Category must exhibit a good judging image so as to command respect and attention; they must be humble and work unobtrusively; they must be able to keep information confidential. Many of the Category's responsibilities are discharged through the use of administrative systems, and through delegation, for example to the club hosting a contest.

Music Category

Paragraph IV.C.2: BABS uses its own forms in place of forms CJ-26 and CJ-23.

Table 1: BHS – BABS Contest Rules cross references

Paragraph	BHS reference	BABS reference
IV.E	Article IX	Article 10
IV.E.1	Article IX.A	Article 10(a)
IV.E.3	Article IX.A.2	Article 10(a)
IV.E.4	Article IX.A.3	Article 10(b)

Presentation Category

Paragraph III.C.3 BABS uses its own forms in place of forms CJ-27 and CJ-24.

Table 2: BHS – BABS Contest Rules cross references

Paragraph	BHS reference	BABS reference
III.E.2	Article IX	Article 10

Paragraph	BHS reference	BABS reference
III.E.3	Article IX.A	Article 10(a)
III.E.4.a	Article X.B	Article 13(a)
III.E.4.b	Article XI.A.1	Article 6(g) Note: BABS requires ALL performers on stage to be BABS members including female chorus directors.
III.E.4.c	Article XI.A.2	Article 10(a)
III.E.4.d	Article XII	Article 15

Singing Category

Paragraph III.C.6: BABS uses its own forms in place of forms CJ-28 and CJ-25.

There are no references to Contest Rules in the Singing Category Description.

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DEFINITION OF THE BARBERSHOP STYLE

Barbershop harmony is a style of unaccompanied vocal music characterized by consonant four-part chords for every melody note in a predominantly homophonic texture. The melody is consistently sung by the lead, with the tenor harmonizing above the melody, the bass singing the lowest harmonizing notes, and the baritone completing the chord. Occasional brief passages may be sung by fewer than four voice parts.

Barbershop music features songs with understandable lyrics and easily singable melodies, whose tones clearly define a tonal center and imply major and minor chords and barbershop (dominant and secondary dominant) seventh chords that often resolve around the circle of fifths, while also making use of other resolutions. Barbershop music also features a balanced and symmetrical form, and a standard meter. The basic song and its harmonization are embellished by the arranger to provide appropriate support of the song's theme and to close the song effectively.

Barbershop singers adjust pitches to achieve perfectly tuned chords in just intonation while remaining true to the established tonal center. Artistic singing in the barbershop style exhibits a fullness or expansion of sound, precise intonation, a high degree of vocal skill, and a high level of unity and consistency within the ensemble. Ideally, these elements are natural, unmanufactured, and free from apparent effort.

The presentation of barbershop music uses appropriate musical and visual methods to convey the theme of the song and provide the audience with an emotionally satisfying and entertaining experience. The musical and visual delivery is from the heart, believable, and sensitive to the song and its arrangement throughout. The most stylistic presentation artistically melds together the musical and visual aspects to create and sustain the illusions suggested by the music.

Policy adopted by the Society Board (at its July 1, 2008 meeting): The Society Contest & Judging Committee shall follow and establish processes and procedures, including statements of policy and category descriptions that are entirely consistent with the definition of the barbershop style as approved by the Society Board. Any change in the definition of the barbershop style, whether proposed from within or without the Society Contest and Judging Committee, will not be considered by the Society Board without prior consultation with the Society Contest and Judging Committee. Any proposal must be presented at a board meeting, then published in at least one issue of *The Harmonizer* and otherwise broadly advertised by the then available means of communication to the Society membership to advise them of the possible change to the definition, before action may be taken at a subsequent meeting. Changes in judging procedures and/or category descriptions or policy that may be at variance with the Board-approved definition of the barbershop style require prior approval by the Society Board.

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I. DEFINITION OF THE BARBERSHOP STYLE

The barbershop style can be viewed as having two major components: technical and artistic. The technical aspects of the style relate to those elements that define the style regardless of how well it's performed. The artistic aspects relate to those performance aspects that are equally essential to the style's preservation.

A. Technical (Structural) Aspects

1. Barbershop harmony is a style of unaccompanied vocal music characterized by consonant four-part chords for every melody note in a predominantly homophonic texture. The melody is consistently sung by the lead, with the tenor harmonizing above the melody, the bass singing the lowest harmonizing notes, and the baritone completing the chord. Occasional brief passages may be sung by fewer than four voice parts.

2. Barbershop music features songs with understandable lyrics with melodies that clearly define a tonal center and imply major and minor chords and barbershop (dominant and secondary dominant) seventh chords that often resolve around the circle of fifths, while also making use of other resolutions. The chords are almost always in root position or second inversion, with a predominance of barbershop sevenths and major triads.

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B. Artistic (Performance) Aspects

1. Barbershop singers adjust pitches to strive for perfectly tuned chords in just intonation, while remaining true to the established tonal center. When chords are sung in tune with matched and resonant sounds, a “lock and ring” results. Locking, ringing chords are the hallmark of the barbershop style.
2. The use of similar word sounds sung in good quality and with precise synchronization, as well as optimal volume relationships of the voice parts, creates a unity that helps produce the most desirable barbershop sound.
3. The barbershop style is typified by natural, resonant, full-voiced singing, though tenors may not be singing in full voice.
4. Performers have the freedom to bring a variety of styles, interpretations, and performance preferences to the stage.
5. Performers should strive to present the song to the audience in an authentic, sincere, and heartfelt manner.
6. The music and the presentation of the music must reflect the fact that barbershop music features relatively straightforward, ingenuous songs, sung from the heart, that are easily understandable to the audience. The delivery should be believable and sensitive to the song and arrangement throughout.
7. Barbershop music typically has a balanced and symmetrical form and a standard meter. As long as these are recognizable, the performer is free to be creative within the forward motion of the music.
8. Arrangements in the barbershop style use various embellishments. The devices chosen, as well as their performance, should support and enhance the song.
9. The presentation of barbershop music features appropriate musical and visual methods to enhance and support the song and provide the audience with an emotionally satisfying, entertaining experience.
10. Barbershop groups are free to employ a wide variety of dramatic staging plans, interpretive or staging devices, postures, motions, props or standing formations, as long as these do not detract from the barbershop sound and are appropriate to the song.
11. A song may have a simple or complex setting and still be in the barbershop style. Performers are encouraged to choose music that they enjoy singing and that features the strengths and minimizes the weaknesses of the ensemble.

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II. SCORING CATEGORIES

The performance of each song is judged by three categories: Music, Presentation and Singing. Each category judge will determine a single quality rating or score, on a scale of 1 to 100. The judge will determine whether the level of the performance is excellent (A-level, from 81-100), good (B-level, from 61- 80), fair (C-level, from 41-60), or poor (D-level, from 1-40), and award an exact score based upon an evaluation of all the elements in the performance that have an impact on his category. If no quality rating is appropriate, owing to an unequivocal and definite violation of the rules, the judge will forfeit his score by awarding a zero.

There is no appropriate formula for weighting the various elements in a category; rather, it is up to the judge to view the total performance from his particular orientation, and evaluate the elements of the performance on a song-by-song basis. Elements that are particularly crucial in one song performance may be less important in another song performance. The judge will evaluate the overall effect or value of the performance.

The major responsibilities of each judging category are as follows:

A. Music

1. *Music* is defined as the song and arrangement as performed. The Music judge evaluates the suitability of the song and arrangement to the barbershop style and the performer's musicianship in bringing the song and arrangement to life.
2. Major elements in the category are: consonance; theme; delivery and musicality; execution; and embellishment.

B. Presentation

1. *Presentation* is defined as the net impact of the performance upon the audience. The Presentation judge evaluates to what degree the audience is entertained through the performer's communication of the story/message/theme in its musical and visual setting.
2. Major elements in the category are: entertainment value; "from the heart" delivery; audience rapport; artistry and expressiveness; and unity between the presentation's vocal and visual elements.

C. Singing

1. *Singing* is defined as quality, in-tune vocalization accomplished with a high degree of unity, ensemble consistency and artistry. The Singing judge evaluates the degree to which the performer achieves artistic singing in the barbershop style.
2. Major elements in the category are: intonation; vocal quality; unity of word sounds, flow, diction and synchronization; expansion and "ring"; and artistry.

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III. STYLE ELEMENTS SHARED BY ALL CATEGORIES

An audience member experiences the art form of barbershop music as a whole. Thus, even while evaluating a performance from a particular perspective, an audience member will experience the total performance. Each of the three categories – Music, Presentation, and Singing – should be a particular orientation or perspective from which a judge views the total performance, rather than a blinder that restricts his focus to a certain domain. Accordingly, all judges judge the total performance and, to some extent, certain elements of a barbershop performance will be evaluated by judges in two, or even all three, categories. Those artistic aspects of a barbershop performance that are evaluated by judges in all three categories are: ringing, in-tune singing; vocal quality; the suitability of the song to the performer; self-expressiveness and heartfelt performance.

A. Preservation of the Barbershop Style

Judges in the Music category are responsible for preserving the technical (structural) barbershop style and adjudicating the elements described in I.A.1 and 2 above. The degree to which each category is affected by the artistic elements of the style varies, as described in the each of the Category Descriptions (Chapters 5-7, below) and the Description of Category Overlap (Chapter 10, below).

B. In-tune Singing

Barbershop harmony is a style of vocal music characterized by consonant four-part chords for every melody note. The harmony parts are enharmonically adjusted in pitch in order to produce an optimum consonant sound. Hence in-tune singing is a concern of every judge.

C. Vocal Quality and Matched Word Sounds

1. The use of similar word sounds sung in good quality helps to produce the unique full or expanded sound of barbershop harmony.
2. Performances should be characterized by a natural, resonant, full-voiced presentation, though tenors may not be singing full voice.

D. Suitability of the Music to the Performer

1. All judges will evaluate the suitability of the music – the song and the arrangement as performed – to the performer, though the orientation of judges will differ from category to category.
2. Performers are encouraged to choose music that they enjoy singing, and that features the strengths and minimizes the weaknesses of the ensemble. It may be risky for performers to choose a particular piece of music because another ensemble has achieved success with that music. Judges evaluate the performance of the music rather than any inherent advantages or disadvantages in the elements of the music. Moreover, there are no benefits in choosing difficult or easy music – only in choosing music that your ensemble can perform well.

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E. Self-Expressiveness and Heartfelt Performance

1. Within the parameters of the judging system there is sufficient freedom to bring a multitude of individual styles and performance preferences to the contest stage. Judges will adjudicate each performance on the basis of an individual lifetime of listening and viewing experience, and evaluate the particular performance as much as possible without regard to prior performances of the music and without preconceived ideas of how the music “should” be performed.
2. Performers should strive to commit themselves to contribute something to the audience in an authentic, sincere, and heartfelt manner.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. The Music Category

Music is defined as the song and arrangement, as performed. The Music Category judges the suitability of the material to the barbershop style and the performer's musicianship in bringing the song and arrangement to life. The Music judge is responsible for adjudicating the musical elements in the performance. He judges the extent to which the musical performance displays the

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hallmarks of the barbershop style and the degree to which the musical performance demonstrates an artistic sensitivity to the music's primary theme.

The primary hallmark of barbershop music is its consonant harmony. Thus, the quality of any barbershop performance depends largely on the presence, accurate execution, and artistic delivery of the consonant harmony traditionally identified with the barbershop style.

Indirectly, the Music judge evaluates the work of the composer and arranger. A basic prerequisite for a successful barbershop performance is that the song be appropriate to the barbershop style. The song is defined by the melody, lyrics, rhythm, and implied harmony. Performers should choose songs that adapt readily to the melodic and harmonic style guidelines set forth in the Music Category Description. Beyond this, the various musical elements should work together to establish a theme.

The sensitive handling of musical elements, such as melody, harmony, and embellishments, demonstrates musicality in a performance. A strong musical performance is one in which everything provided by the composer and arranger is skillfully delivered and effectively integrated in support of the musical theme. This requires that the music be suited to the performer and that the performer understand the music. Since songs can permit different themes, the music judge is prepared to accept any treatment that is musically plausible. The theme may also change from one part of the song to another. Often, the theme will be the song's lyrics, while at other times the theme may be one of the musical elements themselves, such as rhythm. Whatever the theme, the Music judge evaluates how the musical elements of the song and arrangement support the theme.

B. Relationship with other categories

The current BHS Contest and Judging System features categories designed to overlap with each other. Each category views the entire performance from its own unique perspective, and the same performance factors often influence more than one category's scoring.

The Singing category evaluates the technical and qualitative aspects of the performer's sound. Since these factors affect consonant harmony, they will also affect the Music judge, who evaluates the level of consonance in the performance. Singing that suffers from poor synchronization, intonation, or vocal quality will also negatively impact such Music areas as delivery and execution.

The Presentation Category evaluates how well the performer brings the song and arrangement to life through the interaction of both visual and vocal aspects of the presentation. In addition to assessing the performers' artistry and believability, Presentation judges adjudicate entertainment value and emotional impact, vocally and visually, within the context of the chosen entertainment theme. The factors creating these results will often affect the Music Category since there is a strong correlation between the musicianship with which music is rendered as evaluated by Music judges and the generation of mood and believability as evaluated by Presentation judges.

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Both judges are listening for a clearly defined theme or themes, and the Music judge evaluates how well the group uses its own unique musical abilities to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the arrangement in light of the musical theme(s) chosen.

II. MUSICAL ELEMENTS

A. Melody

1. The melody should be present and distinguishable. However, brief passages having ambiguous or non-existent melody are sometimes permitted in introductions, tags, bell chords, stylized segments during repeats, or improvisational-type passages of a song. The balance among voice parts should be such that the melody always predominates.
2. Voicings that place the melody above the tenor, or below the bass, for an occasional chord or short passage are allowed only when necessary to produce good voice leading. On occasion, the melody may be carried by some part other than the lead, as specified below:
 - a. When the melody is transferred to a part other than the lead, that part should predominate and should be sung with melodic quality.
 - b. Tenor melody may be used briefly. It is acceptable in tags or when some appropriate embellishing effect can be created.
 - c. When the melody lies too low for the lead singer to project adequately, it may be transferred to the bass. Whereas limited use of bass melody for the sake of contrast is permissible, the Music judge's score will reflect any lessening of barbershop sound that may result.
3. The melody should clearly define a tonal center, and its tones should define implied harmonies that employ the characteristic harmonic patterns and chord vocabulary of the barbershop style. (See sections II.C and V. of this chapter, below.)
4. The melody should allow opportunities for embellishments in the arrangement.
5. Melodies that are easily sung by the performer are recommended over those that are extremely disjunctive or rangy, as the latter may lead to performance difficulties.
6. The arranger is expected to use the composer's melody as the basis for his harmonization and embellishment. Melodic alterations might be distracting, especially when the melody is well known. Alterations that are made for the purpose of satisfying the standards of acceptable harmonic progressions and harmonic rhythm stated in II.C.6 are not permitted. Alterations are acceptable in the following circumstances:
 - a. Minor melodic alterations may be made to enhance the potential for increased consonance and singability, as long as the notes that are changed are not essential to defining the character or shape of the melody.
 - b. When an alteration of the melody is commonly known and accepted.

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c. When, in a repeated section (verse or chorus) of a song, the arrangement alters or stylizes the melody. Stylized segments may occur during repeats of a song section as long as the stylization results in a passage suggestive of the original.

Alterations beyond these parameters will result in a lower Music score.

B. Lyrics

1. The song should be predominantly homophonic; that is, all voices should sing the same words simultaneously. This does not preclude the appropriate use of non-homophonic devices such as patter, backtime, echoes, and bell chords.
2. Lyrics should be sung by all four parts through nearly all of the song's duration. Lengthy non-lyrical passages such as those employing neutral or nonsense syllables, humming, or instrumental imitation, may reduce the potential for lock and ring. Passages of this type should be occasional, brief, and musically appropriate. The use of non-lyric sounds by all four parts, such as when imitating musical instruments, is also permitted with moderate frequency. The use of nonsense syllables as rhythmic propellants, especially in the bass part, is also permitted with moderate frequency. The Music judge evaluates the extent to which such devices support the theme.
3. The Music judge notes the musical value of the lyrics. Effective song lyrics possess artistic and poetic qualities not found in ordinary prose. Amateurish lyrics often lack such qualities, being unpoetic or inelegant. The Music judge expects to hear rhyming lyrics in all sections of a song. The absence of rhyme, when it is distracting, lowers the score.
4. In good music, the marriage of lyrics with other musical elements is natural and elegant. Lyrics should support the melody and be well tailored to the rhythm/meter.
5. The Music judge adjudicates the musicality displayed in the phrasing and delivery of the lyrics, especially in songs in which the lyrics are central to the theme.
6. Alteration of the composer's lyrics might be distracting, especially when the lyrics are well known. Alterations are acceptable, for example, when the original lyrics would not be clearly understood by today's audiences.

C. Harmony

1. Consonant harmony is the most characteristic element of the barbershop style. The Music judge's evaluation is based in large part on the amount of consonance in the performance. A high score requires a predominance of major triads and dominant seventh chords in strong voicings, as well as in well-tuned, well-balanced, and synchronized chords.
2. The music must use only chords in the barbershop chord vocabulary. Most characteristic is the major-minor seventh or dominant seventh chord, more often called the barbershop seventh. It and the major triad are the most featured chords in barbershop harmony. In

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addition, barbershop harmony uses the following chords: minor triads, incomplete dominant ninths, minor sevenths, minor sixths, half-diminished sevenths, diminished sevenths, major sevenths, major sixths, major chords with added ninth, augmented triads, augmented dominant sevenths, diminished triads, and dominant sevenths with flatted fifth. (See section V of this chapter, below.)

3. The extent to which the various chords in the vocabulary contribute to a quality barbershop sound depends on their frequency and duration.

a. Other than the major triad, the most prominent chord should be the barbershop seventh chord. Barbershop seventh chords should represent at least one-third of the song's duration. Songs that favor the use of any other chords over the use of dominant seventh chords and major triads may result in a lower Music score, even forfeiture in extreme cases.

b. Songs that feature the minor seventh frequently and prominently are discouraged.

c. Songs that require prominent major seventh chords may result in a lower score, depending on their prominence, duration, and frequency of occurrence.

d. Songs that require excessive use of added sixth (with or without the fifth) chords or the frequent use of added ninth or augmented chords may result in a lower score, depending on their prominence, duration, and frequency of these chords.

4. The appropriate choice of voicings is essential for the creation of barbershop sound.

a. Barbershop harmony entails a predominance of strong voicings. The predominance of such voicings does not rule out the occasional use of divorced voicings or voicings that place the third or the seventh in the bass, if there is a valid musical reason for doing so.

b. Voicings that require delicate balance, such as a high seventh in the lead or baritone, or a divorced bass, should be sung with appropriate sensitivity.

c. Except for uses of the dominant ninth chord, the voicings should nearly always create complete chords. Exceptions are permitted for devices that involve fewer than four parts and, occasionally, where an incomplete chord is created by an echo, lead-in, or rhythmic device in the bass.

d. Dissonant non-chord tones should not be used, with the exception of the traditional appearance in the bass of brief scale-type passages.

e. The score is lowered when wrong notes are sung, thereby creating incomplete, inappropriate, or unacceptable chords. The same applies to dissonances caused by a pick-up being sung against a chord that is held over.

5. The Music judge evaluates the effectiveness and musicality of the performance of chords and voicings that are designed to highlight a word or phrase or generate a certain mood.

6. Chord progressions in the barbershop style are based on the harmonic practice of dominant seventh (and ninth) chords that often resolve around the circle of fifths, while also making use of other resolutions.

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- a. The melody should easily accommodate the harmonization, and the harmonization should support the melody. Distortions of implied harmony or harmonic rhythm should be avoided and are subject to penalty. When the implied harmony is ambiguous, the arrangement may employ any harmonic progressions that are appropriate to the melody and that support the theme of the song. It is not necessary to adhere to the harmony found in the published sheet music.
- b. The song's harmony must feature the natural occurrence of a variety of dominant seventh and ninth chords in circle-of-fifths progressions.
- c. The harmony of a song/arrangement must include at least one featured occurrence of a dominant seventh (or ninth) chord built on II or VI, which then resolves through the circle of fifths (with or without additional deceptive resolutions) to the tonic chord.

7. Even though there may be deficiencies in one of the harmonic areas described above, songs/arrangements may still be considered stylistic when this is offset by strong qualities in other musical areas.

8. All songs must be sung without musical accompaniment or instrumental introductions, interludes, or conclusions. This does not preclude the use of a sound-making device for a special effect, as long as such cannot be construed as instrumental accompaniment. Hand-clapping and finger-snapping are permitted.

D. Range

The range of the parts should be such that all singers can produce good quality and good barbershop sound. What constitutes an acceptable vocal range will depend on the abilities of each performer. The voicing should not be so high or so low as to preclude the full-voiced, resonant sound that is characteristic of the barbershop style.

E. Rhythm and Meter

1. The song's rhythmic patterns should allow room for swipes and echoes.
2. Extremely complicated rhythms are not characteristic of the barbershop style and will result in a lower Music score. Beyond that, any rhythm that the performer can sing while maintaining quality barbershop sound is acceptable.
3. The song should use only standard meters such as 2/4, 4/4, 3/4, and 6/8. Performances should demonstrate a clear underlying meter unless altered for comedic purposes.
4. When rubato and ad lib are used, the performance should still impart a sense of the song's meter.

F. Construction and Form

1. Construction and form refer to the horizontal (melodic) structure of the music, as opposed to its vertical (harmonic) structure. Construction and form should provide both unity and

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contrast in satisfying proportions. Too much or too little repetition of a musical phrase or section may result in a lower Music score.

2. The Music judge evaluates the performer's understanding and use of the song's construction.

- a. The performer should shape the various phrases and sections of the song (such as introduction, verse, and tag) to deliver the song's theme successfully.
- b. The Music judge evaluates the artistry with which forward motion is maintained and the degree to which the horizontal flow supports the song's theme.
- c. When a medley is sung, the Music judge will evaluate it as a whole, as he does a single song. An effective medley will display coordinated sections, logically organized, integrated through a central musical theme or lyrical idea, and have musical balance and symmetry. The medley should leave the listener with no doubt as to why the songs were put together, and the theme should be apparent throughout the medley.

3. Songs used in contest should have phrases that consist of an even number of measures. These phrases should be discernible even when the music is being sung ad lib or rubato. The presence of phrases of indiscernible length or an odd number of measures will lead to a lower Music score, unless those distractions are caused by an intentional distortion of form or grand pause to create some special effect that supports the song. Lengthy non-singing sections within a song are not acceptable.

G. Embellishment

1. One of the hallmarks of the barbershop style is the use of embellishments of many kinds, such as swipes, echoes, key changes, bell chords, patter effects, and backtime. The Music judge's score is to some degree an evaluation of the arranger's skill in choosing and placing embellishments where they best support the theme of the song.

2. Embellishments in which all four parts are not singing the same words at the same time must not be of such duration and prominence that the performance is no longer predominantly homophonic.

- a. Solo or duet passages may be used only if they are brief and obviously musically appropriate. Solo with neutral syllable background may be used if brief and musically appropriate.

3. The Music judge evaluates the balance between unifying thematic elements and contrasting material. Generally, thematic song material should be the basis of added material. The level of embellishment should be sufficient to propel the song and sustain musical interest, supporting the theme and providing a satisfying proportion of unity and contrast.

- a. Songs that are over-, under-, or inappropriately embellished will result in lower Music scores.

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b. Tags are an integral part of the barbershop style and should be adjudicated for how effectively they complete the song's theme. Multiple tags, or the absence of a tag, may result in a lower Music score.

4. Overly sophisticated and complex arrangements are incongruous with a relatively simple song performed in the barbershop style. When the level of embellishment is such that the performance is no longer predominantly homophonic, or if the integrity of the song itself is obscured, the Music score will be lowered commensurately. (See also Position Paper I, Chapter 9 of the *Contest and Judging Handbook*.)

III. PERFORMANCE ELEMENTS

The Music Category judges the performance of the song and arrangement and the performer's musicianship in bringing them to life. The Music Category also evaluates the suitability of the music to the performer. As stated in III.D of The Judging System (Chapter 4 of the *Contest and Judging Handbook*), performers are encouraged to choose music that they enjoy singing, and that features the strengths and minimizes the weaknesses of the ensemble. It may be risky for performers to choose a particular piece of music because another ensemble has achieved success with that music. Moreover, there are no benefits in choosing difficult or easy music, only in choosing music that your ensemble can perform well.

A. Consonance

1. The primary hallmark of barbershop music is its consonant harmony. Consonance is the degree to which an ensemble produces a good quality, locked, ringing unit sound. The level of consonance achieved in a performance derives from two factors: the inherent consonant potential of chords chosen by the arranger, and the good vocal quality, precise synchronization, matching word sounds, appropriate balance, and accurate tuning of the chord sequence as performed by the ensemble.

a. A high Music score requires the predominance of barbershop sevenths and major triads in a predominantly homophonic texture.

b. The Music score should be reduced if barbershop seventh chords are not perceived to occupy at least one-third of the song's duration in performance. The placement and prominence of the barbershop seventh chords may affect a judge's view as to whether this guideline has been met.

c. The consonance level is partially dependent on both the number and prominence of strong voicings (root position and second inversion) of consonant chords.

d. A high consonance level depends upon both good vocal quality and locked, ringing sound. Performances should be characterized by a natural, resonant, full-voiced presentation, though tenors may not be singing full voice.

e. The consonance level is diminished by the performance of chords outside the barbershop vocabulary, incomplete chords, or non-chords.

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f. The consonance level is also diminished by the sustained use of non-homophonic devices.

B. Theme

1. The theme is the principal musical statement of the song. It may be based on the song's lyrics, rhythm, melody, or harmony, or a combination of these elements. The theme may vary from one part of the song to another, and there may be more than one theme present simultaneously. The theme may also be a parody of one or more of the song elements.

2. When visual comedy is the primary performance theme, the Music judge will still evaluate the use of musical elements.

3. The Music judge evaluates the performer's choices of appropriate voicings and embellishments when used to enhance the song's theme and delivery.

a. If lyrics are the theme, the Music judge evaluates how well the arranger and performer enhances the message by highlighting the lyric's critical words and phrases.

b. When rhythm is the theme, the successful performance features precision, clear articulation, appropriately chosen and well-defined tempos and tempo changes, and accurate execution of rhythms.

c. Melody can be the musical theme when its shape and contour are of such beauty and dimension that it becomes more dominant than the lyrics and other musical elements that support it. The Music judge evaluates how well the performer features this element through the use of melodic shape and contour, volume levels, word color, vocal quality, inflection and pace.

d. Harmony can be the musical theme in those rare cases where it is more important than lyric, rhythmic or melodic elements. This is usually when the melodic construction and harmonic rhythm allow substantial opportunities for harmonic embellishment. When harmony is the theme, the performance should demonstrate a high level of in-tune, locked and ringing sound.

4. While embellishment may not be the theme, it can become a featured musical device for portions of a song. Examples include, but are not limited to, patter, bell-chords, backtime, and call-and-echo. The Music judge evaluates the effectiveness of these embellishments in developing the theme and in creating unity and contrast.

5. Parodies of Musical Elements

a. In lyric parodies, the Music judge evaluates the effectiveness of the new lyrics and how other musical elements of the performance contribute to the lyric parody.

b. Alterations of form, rhythm, harmony and meter can also provide for effective comedic performances. The Music judge evaluates how well the performer shows an understanding of the underlying song element in the delivery of the altered song element.

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C. Embellishment

1. The music judge evaluates the performer's accuracy and musicality in executing embellishments to support the theme of the song.
2. The Music judge evaluates the effectiveness with which the performer uses embellishments for their intended purpose, such as the use of rhythmic propellants to create forward motion or key lifts to heighten the level of intensity. The performers' ability to execute the embellishments may influence the Music judge's perception of the degree to which a particular song may be under- or over-embellished. Some embellishments, such as patter and bell chords, require precise synchronization to be effective. Embellishments in which all four parts are not singing the same words at the same time, such as backtime and patter, should be executed in such a way that the primary lyrics are heard and understood.

Occasionally, the music creates special opportunities for visual devices. Effectively performed, such occurrences may be rewarded by the Music judge.

D. Delivery

1. Delivery refers to the musicality with which the elements of the song and arrangement are rendered. Good delivery reflects the singers' understanding of melody, lyrics, harmony, rhythm and meter, tempos, construction and form, vocal color, dynamics, forward motion, and their relative importance. The Music judge evaluates the musical artistry with which the performer integrates the song elements and employs embellishments and other appropriate means to allow the song to come to life.
2. The Music judge evaluates the degree of musicality displayed in the phrasing and delivery of the lyrics, especially in songs where the lyrics are central to the theme. The Music judge also evaluates how the momentum, flow, and contour of phrases support and define the lyric's climactic moments.
3. The Music judge evaluates the degree of musicality displayed in the performance of rubato and ad lib passages. Such performances should still fit comfortably within the song's meter. Distortion of form due to excessive rubato and ad lib may result in a lower Music score.
4. The Music judge evaluates the musicality of the performance of chords and voicings designed to highlight certain words and phrases. He also evaluates the use of dynamic levels and vocal color to support the development of the song's theme.
5. The Music judge evaluates the musicality displayed in the execution of tempos and rhythms. Tempos that are too fast or too slow for artistic execution, or are not evenly kept, or the use of rhythms that are otherwise inappropriate to the song, may result in a reduced Music score.
6. The Music judge evaluates the skill with which the performer uses the music's rhythmic devices, such as bass propellants, echoes, patter, backtime, push beats, and syncopations, to

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establish and propel the tempo. When these devices are well executed, the tempo and rhythm become extremely well defined and satisfying. When these devices are poorly executed, they can obscure the rhythm or impede the tempo.

7. Performers should strive to communicate the song itself in an authentic, sincere, heartfelt manner (see III.E. of The Judging System (Chapter 4 of the *Contest and Judging Handbook*)).

E. Execution

1. Execution refers to the extent to which the ensemble performs accurately as a unit.
2. Well-executed music has accurate harmony and rhythm, steady tempos, clean synchronization, matched word sounds, and clear articulation. The Music judge evaluates the degree to which good execution is achieved in the performance.

IV. SCORING

A. Scoring Methodology

1. The Music judge's evaluation is based on the appropriateness of the music to the barbershop style and the musicality of the performance. The Music judge will adjudicate each performance based on a lifetime of listening experience and evaluate the particular performance as much as possible without regard to prior performances and without preconceived ideas of how the music should be performed. No reward is given for degree of difficulty; thus, when performers select a difficult arrangement, they do so at their own risk.
2. The Music judge's guardianship of the barbershop style serves as a screen or filter through which the music must pass. If the music is deficient in one or more of the basic criteria that characterize the barbershop style as defined herein and in I.A and B of The Judging System (Chapter 4 of the *Contest and Judging Handbook*), or if it contains serious deviations from the style, the Music score is lowered commensurately. Based on criteria stated in the Music Category Description, it is still possible for Music judges to disagree when performances are "on the edge" stylistically.
3. The Music judge's evaluation of musicality is based upon the performer's sensitivity in delivering the theme of the song and his accuracy in executing its musical elements. Early in the performance he establishes an approximate score based on the general level of musicality. As the song unfolds, this score is continually adjusted to reflect the performers' consistency, their understanding of the various musical elements, the delivery and execution of the song's critical moments, the suitability of the music to the performers, and its adherence to the barbershop style. At the end of the song, he assigns a numerical score from 1 to 100.

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B. Scoring Levels

1. The A level

- a. A-level scores (81 to 100) are given to excellent performances that feature the hallmarks of the barbershop style and display the most consistent musicality. There are very few distractions.
- b. A performance earning a mid-range A score (around 90 points) features an outstanding mastery of the musical elements, resulting in an excellent performance. The harmony is wonderfully consonant, ringing, and pleasing, reflecting excellent intonation and proper balance. The embellishments artistically support the song's theme. The delivery is marked by superb musicality. The musical elements are executed with great accuracy. The song is sung from the heart and its theme is communicated throughout, resulting in the listener's total involvement. There are almost no distractions. The music is extremely well suited to the performers.
- c. The rare and significant artistic performance at the upper range of A displays consistently artistic embellishments in support of a continuous theme presented with the highest degree of musicality.
- d. In a performance at the low end of the A range, occasional distractions can occur. The performers' technique may be somewhat distracting and the display of musicality somewhat inconsistent.
- e. Distinguishing differences between A and B levels often have to do with consistency and sensitivity of performance.

2. The B level

- a. B-level scores (61 to 80) are for performances that frequently demonstrate a good mastery of the musical elements. The music is generally well suited to the performers. The theme of the song is well communicated, but there may be moments where technique becomes apparent.
- b. In a performance in the mid-range of B (around 70 points), the harmony is generally consonant, with chords clearly distinguishable, and the embellishments tastefully support the song. The performance generally reflects understanding of, and sensitivity to, the music, with high musicality in its best moments. The musical elements are generally executed accurately.
- c. The upper range of B scores is for performances that have only minor distractions. Part of the performance may be at the A level, but the performers do not achieve the high level of consistency required for an A score.
- d. In the lower range of B performances, the performance is still good, but there may be several distractions and occasional examples of C-level performance. Part of the performance may also be of A-level quality.
- e. The difference between B and C levels is often a matter of consistency.

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3. The C level

- a. C-level scores (41 to 60) are for performances that reflect an ordinary command of the musical elements, with flaws appearing often in the performance. The general level of accuracy is adequate, not offensive; most musical elements are definable, although some serious performance errors may occur. The song's theme is inconsistently supported by the performance. Distractions occur at many points in the performance. Some musical inconsistencies may result from an imperfect fit of the music to the performers.
- b. In a performance at the middle of the range (around 50), the degree of consonance may suffer rather frequently but most chords are distinguishable. The embellishments tend to support the song, although several may not. The delivery of musical elements may be mundane or mechanical, lacking sensitivity. Musicality is not demonstrated.
- c. At the top of the range, some elements of the performance may be at the B level, but other elements display inconsistency and an inability to sustain musical delivery.
- d. At the bottom of the range, a performance reflects the lack of a clear theme, consistently mechanical delivery or significant flaws in execution.
- e. The difference between C and D levels is often that the C-level performance has acceptable delivery and execution and significantly more consonant sound.

4. The D level

- a. D-level scores (1 to 40) are for performances that suffer from poor command of the musical elements with fundamental problems throughout the performance. There are constant distractions. The music may be poorly suited to the performer.
- b. In a performance at the middle of the range (around 20), the singing may have little consonance and, at times, be so out of tune that the intended harmony is unintelligible. The embellishments may often detract from the song, owing either to design or performance. The delivery may be incongruous with the music, reflecting a lack of understanding of its elements. Often, the musical elements are poorly executed, reflecting lack of preparation, ignorance, or extreme nervousness. The theme may be ambiguous; at worst, not discernible.
- c. Performances in this range normally occur because of a lack of skill, preparation, or understanding of the musical elements.

C. Use of the Score Sheet

1. The Music judge will determine a scoring range early in the performance and track the fluctuation of the score as the performance continues. On the score sheet, he notes the strengths and weaknesses that affect his score as the music progresses. Reference to the list of song and style elements may also be used. The judge's main suggestions for improvement may be summarized in the space for evaluation comments.
2. The final score is first written in the box on the scoring form (CJ-26) and then copied onto the judging form (CJ-23) in the box in the lower right corner.

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D. Differences between Quartet and Chorus

1. Since barbershop is a quartet style, all of its musical elements should be characteristic of a quartet performance. Therefore, in adjudicating a chorus performance, the Music judge discourages elements that could not be performed by a quartet, such as chords containing more than four notes (produced either intentionally or by wrong notes being sung), devices or tags with extreme range requirements, or the extended use of staggered breathing that draws attention to the device itself.
2. Choral singing presents greater potential for inaccuracy in the delivery of musical elements, especially certain rhythmic devices, key changes, and special voicings. For a chorus's performance to exemplify the barbershop style, each part should be sung with unity, without individual voices straying out of tune or synchronization.

E. Penalties Up To and Including Forfeiture

1. The Music judge declares forfeiture by awarding a score of zero. Forfeiture results when one or more elements of the performance violate the contest rules and/or render the performance so unsuitable to the barbershop style that drastic action is required. If some action, but not drastic action, is appropriate, the judge may apply a smaller scoring reduction. Any forfeiture by a Music judge would be as a result of a violation of Article IX of the contest rules. He is responsible for all parts of Article IX.A discussed below, except those specifically the responsibility of the Presentation category (E.5 below). When a penalty or forfeiture of score has been applied, the judge should note the reason for such on the judging form on the line, "Scoring Reduction: _____ Reason: _____" and on the appropriate line(s) of the reduction grid on the scoring form.
2. As specified in Article IX of the contest rules, "All songs performed in contest must be arranged in the barbershop style." When the music is poorly representative of the barbershop style, the Music score will be lowered in a manner commensurate with the degree of stylistic weakness noted, up to, and including, forfeiture. Scoring reductions (up to and including forfeiture) by the Music judge may be appropriate as a result of one or more of the following:
 - a. The use of instrumental accompaniment.
 - b. The lack of consonant four-part chords.
 - c. The lack of a predominantly homophonic texture. This restriction is not meant to prohibit the use of a patter chorus or other relatively short segment of the song that is not homophonic.
 - d. A performance in which the melody is not primarily sung by the lead.
 - e. Excessive use of passages sung by fewer than four voice parts.
 - f. Use of a substantial part of one song in performance of another song.
 - g. Melody and/or harmony inconsistent with the barbershop style. Inconsistencies may occur in melodic alterations, lyrics, harmonic structure, rhythms, construction & form, and embellishment as discussed in section II, Musical Elements, above.

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3. As specified in Article IX.A.2 of the contest rules, songs must be sung "without instrumental introduction, interlude, or conclusion." An instrumental interlude between the two songs of a contest performance may result in forfeiture of both songs.
4. The Music judges also adjudicates Article IX.A.3 of the contest rules, which states that "In chorus contest performances, selected use of a soloist, duet, trio or quartet is acceptable as long as it is brief and appropriate. At no time should the musical texture exceed four parts."
5. Music judges are not responsible for adjudicating whether a performance is in good taste or is primarily patriotic or religious. Such judgments are strictly the domain of Presentation judges.
6. Scoring reduction levels should be applied per the following guidelines:
 - a. None - Yes, it goes against something in the Category Description, but there are other wonderful musical things that make up for it. Or, yes, there was a blemish or two but it was unobtrusive.
 - b. 1 - Small but obtrusive blemish on an otherwise fine arrangement
 - c. 1-3 - Several obtrusive blemishes on an otherwise fine arrangement
 - d. 1-4 - An arrangement that doesn't meet "enough" minimum expectations, but the audience thinks it is barbershop
 - e. 3-7 - Enough that a barbershop audience member may question parts of it, but the piece has barbershop character.
 - f. 5-9 - It makes a barbershop audience and a MUS judge uncomfortable. This may be due to either one or two overriding issues or a lot of minutia.
 - g. 10+ - Significant barbershop deficiencies according the rules and Category Description, but there is still barbershop texture to the arrangement.
 - h. Forfeiture - Nothing redeeming about this performance as it relates to contestable music and/or the hallmarks of the barbershop style. As described in The Judging System, Section II, there is "an unequivocal and definite violation of the rules" resulting in no quality rating being appropriate.

V. USAGE OF CHORDS AND VOICINGS IN THE BARBERSHOP STYLE

Barbershop music uses a chord vocabulary, as defined in the Music Category Description, Section II.C.2:

"The music must use only chords in the barbershop chord vocabulary. Most characteristic is the major-minor seventh or dominant seventh chord ... In addition, barbershop harmony uses the following chords: minor triads, incomplete dominant ninths, minor sevenths, minor sixths, half-diminished sevenths, diminished sevenths, major sevenths, major sixths, major

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chords with added ninth, augmented triads, augmented dominant sevenths, diminished triads, and dominant sevenths with flatted fifth.”

The following describes the characteristic use of several of these chords:

1. The dominant ninth chord is used primarily when it is implied by the melody and the melody lies on the ninth. Occasionally, the ninth may appear in another voice to create a pleasing duet or to create natural voice leading. Only the root or fifth may be omitted, usually the root. The fifth may be omitted when there is a valid musical reason for doing so. If the root is present, it must be voiced more than an octave below the ninth.
2. The major seventh chord is acceptable only when it is implied by the melody and the melody lies on the seventh, or, rarely, when sung by another voice in an echo that clearly has a melodic part of secondary importance.
3. The major sixth chord, with or without the fifth, is used when it is implied by the melody and the melody lies on the sixth. In this context, the sixth is called the melodic sixth. Generally, the fifth is omitted, except to avoid awkward voice leading. The major sixth chord with the sixth sung by a harmony part, the harmonic sixth, is also used occasionally, such as in passing to or from the seventh of a dominant seventh chord. Use of the sixth with the fifth present should always be unobtrusive.
4. The major triad with the added ninth is used only when it is implied by the melody and the melody lies on the ninth. The root of the chord is usually voiced more than an octave below the ninth.
5. The augmented triad is used when it is implied by the melody and the melody lies on the augmented fifth. Occasionally the augmented fifth may appear in another voice to create a pleasing duet.
6. The diminished triad, dominant seventh chord with flatted fifth and dominant seventh chord with augmented fifth are used infrequently.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The goal of any art form is communication. In a barbershop performance “Presentation” is communication via the transformation of a barbershop song into an entertaining experience for an audience. The words, notes, and other symbols on the printed page are the composer's and arranger's gifts to the performer. The presentation of the song is the performer's gift to the audience, whose experiences, memories, and imagination translate that gift into an emotional experience.

The performer’s goal, then, is to create a high level of entertainment through the performance of a barbershop song. The means to that end are as varied as the creative skills and abilities of the performer will allow.

The Presentation judge evaluates how effectively a performer brings the song and arrangement to life -- that is, to what degree the audience is entertained by the performer’s communication of an emotional experience in its musical and visual setting. Each vocal and visual event that occurs in the presentation will be evaluated for its contribution to the overall effect of the performance. The Presentation judge will principally evaluate the interaction of the vocal and visual aspects as they work together to create the image of the song.

In short, the Presentation judge evaluates everything about the performance that contributes to or detracts from the entertainment of the audience and determines a single score to reflect the quality and appropriateness of that overall effect.

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II. PRESENTATION ELEMENTS

A. Characteristics of the Barbershop Presentation

1. Entertainment Value

a. The Presentation judge is principally responsible for evaluating the entertainment value in a barbershop performance. Entertainment can be defined as a desired emotional experience on the part of the audience. This can appear in many forms, from the simplest and gentlest of feelings, such as pathos, tenderness, or cuteness, to the most dramatic feelings, such as deep sorrow, exhilaration, or hilarity. Regarding the nature of barbershop entertainment, it is important to note that barbershop is a *musical* art form, and therefore the type of entertainment with which we are concerned must principally be a form of music supported by artistic delivery and not simply a musical accompaniment of another form of art, such as drama, dance, or comedy. That is, in a true barbershop presentation, the barbershop style of music remains a key feature of the performance.

b. Creativity is an important ingredient in designing an entertaining presentation. While wide latitude is afforded barbershop performers in terms of creativity, it is also desirable for barbershop presentations to maintain contemporary standards of good taste.

c. The full scoring potential of any song is realized by excellence in performance through quality singing and quality visual portrayals appropriate to the presentation. The strength of emotional content of a song is not the main determinant of a score. A song with simple, light-hearted emotions presented within a totally believable vocal and visual setting can score at the top of the scale, as can a song with great emotional content. The important performance concept to be maintained is faithfulness to the true emotions of the song.

2. Audience Rapport

a. The degree to which the audience will allow themselves to be entertained is somewhat dependent upon the degree to which the audience is receptive to the performer and the performance. Part of the performer's responsibility is to create this receptivity, or rapport, with the audience. Simply put, the performer must get the audience to "like" them.

b. Audience rapport may be affected by past events of which the audience is aware, such as a finals set built upon an idea developed in an earlier round. The Presentation judge scores only the current performance but may recognize that the effectiveness of certain elements of the presentation are built upon this awareness.

c. There is significant freedom for the performer to explore an individualistic style of the performing unit, provided this individualistic style does not override the bounds of good taste. Every performer is gifted with individuality. At the same time, our intent is that individuals combine into performing groups within the barbershop musical style. Within these bounds, great freedom is permitted for the individual, for the performing group, and for the fundamental style of music that is being performed. There is no "one way" to sing in general, or to sing barbershop in particular, just as there is no "one way" to stage a

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song in the barbershop style. Each performing group must find its own style and sell that style to the audience.

3. Artistry and Expressiveness

a. Visual and vocal expressiveness serve to communicate the emotional content of the song and to engage the audience in the performance. The success a performer achieves is measured by the Presentation judge's sense of the degree to which the audience is being entertained.

b. Believability is one of the strongest and most important tools in creating a performance's entertainment value. The believability of the delivery is what facilitates the emotional "buy in" of the audience, which enhances the entertainment value. In certain types of performance, however (notably some forms of comedy and fantasy), believability must be suspended for maximum effectiveness. For example, many forms of comedy would be offensive to an audience unless it is fully understood that what is being presented is unreal and is not to be taken at face value. Since much of comedy comes at the expense of the dignity and perhaps even the physical well-being of another, the suspension of believability may at times be required to ensure the audience is not made to feel uncomfortable.

c. Although barbershop vocal and visual interpretations allow considerable artistic freedom, they are subject to the condition that they should be clear enough to be understood by the listener/viewer in one performance. Presentations where the meaning is unclear, by virtue of obscure lyrics, or abstruse visual or interpretive planning, are less effective. (See Position Papers, Chapter 9 of the *Contest and Judging Handbook*.)

4. Vocal/Visual Agreement

a. In an internally consistent performance, there should be a strong sense of agreement between the vocal and visual elements, appropriately balanced to the song's purpose, message, theme and style. The appropriate and congruent usage of each dimension will lead to a more believable and effective performance.

b. Artificial distortion of the appropriate balance between vocal and visual aspects may confuse the audience and decrease the effectiveness of the presentation, except when incongruence is used for comedic purposes. For example, a tender love song may not tolerate a dancing act. A visual/slapstick element may not support extensive vocal styling unless it supports a comedic presentation.

5. From the Heart/Believability

a. Performances that are delivered "from the heart" are perceived by the audience to be more believable and are more entertaining, because the audience is moved to emotionally "buy in" to what the performer is communicating to them. These performances are characterized by effective mood creation through the performers' sincere and genuine visual involvement and vocal expressiveness. The ebb and flow of moods throughout a

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song will normally result in a build to a climax, which should be supported both vocally and visually to result in an emotionally satisfying experience for the audience.

b. Artificial musical or visual devices, such as crescendos ranging from pianissimo to fortissimo in the space of one or two notes or overly obvious staged motions, could be considered contrived and detract from the believability of the performance.

c. Songs or arrangements that are especially suitable to the performer can add to the believability of the presentation, whereas unsuitable material may distract from the presentation's effectiveness.

6. Integration with Other Categories

The effectiveness of any presentation will be affected by the performers' skills and abilities in all aspects of barbershop performance, many of which are also evaluated by the Music and Singing Categories. The Presentation judge must recognize when the performance impact is being affected positively or negatively by an element primarily judged in another Category and must make note of that element's impact from the Presentation Category perspective.

B. Themes of Song Presentations

In any given performance a performer can emphasize many different thematic aspects to effectively communicate a message to an audience. The performer might choose to emphasize the lyrical content of a song. The performer might choose to emphasize a musical element, such as a tempo or rhythm treatment, the rich texture of chords or chord progressions, or the beauty of a well-crafted or memorable melody. The performer may choose to feature the skills and abilities of the performer(s) themselves, or the complexity of an arrangement, or the portrayal and development of characters, or the creation of a visual setting and interpretation of a song. Any of these themes, and many more, alone or in combination, can be developed by a performer to create a desired effect upon an audience. The Presentation judge must be open to identifying and experiencing the theme of the performance as presented and analyzing its impact and effect on the audience.

C. Presentation Techniques

1. The ability to effectively communicate the emotional content of a song requires the intelligent selection of suitable songs for the performer and the audience as well as the use of good vocal expression and visual staging. The vocal and visual interpretations should be in proper balance to effectively portray the emotions of the song. The performer must communicate his understanding of the song, from his point of view, so that each audience member can experience the song from his or her individual perspective. The ability to effectively communicate the emotional content of a song is the talent of an artist.

2. Emotional development in music usually proceeds from one level to another, typically in the direction of stronger and stronger feelings. There is usually a fair degree of ebb and flow of emotional level before reaching the peak, somewhere at or near the end of the song. Performers may employ a vast array of vocal and visual techniques to support these emotional peaks, but care must be taken not to "overload" the presentation. If too much

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intensity appears before the actual climax occurs, it can desensitize the audience and thus take away much of the impact of the climax. Likewise, a failure to recognize and properly treat the climax will leave the performance without an objective and the audience without a means to resolve the emotions contained within the song. In short, failure to utilize the tools of the expression is just as bad as an excess of artificial devices.

3. Vocal expressiveness is used to define and maintain the performer's chosen theme for the song and includes the use of musical tools, elements and descriptors, such as forward motion (tempo, pace, flow, rhythm and their variations), attention to meter, dynamics (volume, fullness, vitality, tone color, inflection, rhythmic emphasis), and style descriptors such as legato, staccato, marcato, and rubato. Often, one of the musical elements will predominate, depending on the theme of the song. These devices are not meant to be mandatory or visible tools that become the main functions of performing music. In an ideal performance the presence of these tools is barely apparent but their effect is profound. Additional factors that can either enhance or detract from vocal expressiveness are the groups' ability to sing with synchronization and to lock and ring chords. The Presentation judge evaluates the quality of the performer's vocal expression as it relates to its overall effect on the presentation.

4. Visual expressiveness is communicated by the physical presentation of the story or theme of the song and may use devices in a manner similar to that of the vocal elements. For this expressiveness to be believable and natural, the audience must believe the emotions that the performers are conveying are in the context of the song's story line or theme. The believability can be created, supported, and enhanced through appropriate attire and staging, together with a continuity of understandable facial expressions, visual focal points, body energy and movements and gestures that are performed from the heart. The use of any props or other mechanical devices should support, rather than detract, from the presentation of the song. The Presentation judge evaluates the quality of the performer's visual expressiveness in terms of appropriateness, timing, precision (where appropriate), unity, naturalness, and believability as it contributes to the overall effect of the presentation. The audience should also be able to perceive that there is an agreement of purpose among each member of the performing group. This agreement may be communicated in part through the internal rapport and interaction within the group.

5. During a performance, the audience and the Presentation judge interpret the presentation through their eyes and ears simultaneously. To optimize the effectiveness of the presentation, the performers must unify the vocal and visual aspects to create an integrated performance. For a given song, either aspect of the presentation - vocal or visual - may predominate. As a result, the judge takes into account the appropriate balance between vocal and visual elements. An excess or deficiency of either element may reduce the effectiveness of the overall presentation.

6. The performer's ease and comfort on stage, including the artistic integration of entrances, exits, and taking pitches, as well as the group's look, costuming, make-up, confidence, poise, joy of performing, sincerity, and humility are all elements that can act to build rapport with the audience and increase the effectiveness of the presentation. Also, the ability of the

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performer to “read the audience” in terms of its expectations and knowledge of the barbershop art form, and to play to that audience, are characteristics of an artistic performer.

7. Comedic presentations require the recognition of what is funny in terms of overall concept, as well as the preparation of the audience for the delivery of that humor through the creation of believable (or sometimes unbelievable) characters or another method. Comedic presentations, like non-comedy, may span a wide range of emotions: from subtle humor intended only to gently tickle the audiences’ funny bone to wildly hilarious acts intended to produce nonstop belly laughs. The timing of actions and reactions and visual or vocal punch lines used to accomplish the comedic effects are judged by the Presentation judge as to how they contribute to the overall effectiveness of the comedic presentation.

III. SCORING

A. Scoring Methodology

1. The scoring methodology is uncomplicated: those performances that convey the most entertainment value with the highest degree of artistry should receive the highest rewards. The use of the defined Scoring Levels is a guide for the assignment of scores. The judge takes clinical notes during the performance to provide helpful information for the evaluation sessions with the contestants.

a. The Presentation judge must simultaneously experience the performance and analyze it. Through training and experience, the judge learns to position himself mentally and emotionally so that the two thought processes occur in parallel. The judge virtually functions as two persons: one, the surrogate audience, and the other, the analyst.

b. The Presentation judge measures the overall emotional effect of the performance with a focus on entertainment value, and a score is awarded based on the degree of entertainment value achieved. Events that affect the entertainment value, either positively or negatively, are noted for communication with the performer at the evaluation.

c. The Presentation judge identifies visual and vocal interferences and distractions that might prevent the group from realizing its maximum potential. Since the performance is looked at from an overall perspective, performance errors must be placed in their proper perspective. Minor performance errors may or may not be relevant. The Presentation judge determines, from an overall perspective, those performance events that, if changed, would result in a measurable improvement in the overall effect of the performance.

d. When the attention of the listener is drawn to a technique in use, there may arise a question of believability within the presentation. The judge evaluates the overall emotional effect of the performance with an ear and eye toward appropriateness. The judge will be aware that when his attention is focused on an obviously featured technique, the true emotions of the song presentation may have been given secondary consideration

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2. Balancing the visual and vocal components

The concept of the Presentation category includes an appropriate balance of the contribution of all dimensions of the musical performance. That contribution may vary from largely vocally-oriented to largely visually-oriented with all variations in between.

3. Rewarding performances that are representative of the barbershop style

a. It is important for the Presentation judge to evaluate all performances within the context of contemporary standards of the barbershop style. It is recognized, however, that barbershop is an evolving style of music within an ever-changing cultural context. Therefore, the judge uses his awareness of societal and musical influences on the barbershop style as a backdrop against which to evaluate performances.

b. Performances that strongly appeal to the audience's sense of barbershop entertainment are to be rewarded. Performances that are less entertaining due to a weak connection with the audience's sense of barbershop entertainment, such as the use of excessive theatrics and contrived musical devices are not in keeping with the style and are assigned lower scores. For example, crescendos ranging from pianissimo to fortissimo in the space of one or two notes or beats could appear to be artificially contrived. Similarly, extremes of vocal dramatics or staged motions could be considered unnecessarily flamboyant and outside stylistic limits.

4. The Presentation judge awards his score for a song or medley on a scale of 1-100 points. The quality of the total emotional effect upon the audience and the entertainment value of the performance are weighed against a concept of "total perfection" and a point value is awarded.

a. Each performance is judged on its own merits. The Presentation judge will consider neither personal preferences and expectations nor comparisons with other performances (by the same performer or anyone else) when evaluating a performance.

b. The score represents the evaluation of the overall effect achieved. There may be a substantial difference in quality between the vocal and visual components. Therefore, the Presentation judge derives the score only from the overall effect, while properly evaluating the contribution of each component.

c. Since the Presentation judge is evaluating the overall effect of a performance, which may be most deeply understood near the climax of the song, the judge may not be able to fairly assess the total impact level early in the performance. It must be recognized that the skilled performer attempts to take the audience on a dynamic journey toward an emotionally satisfying conclusion. While the Presentation judge will make note of events and degrees of impact along the way, he must be sure to remain open to the ebb and flow of entertainment value and emotional impact throughout a song and award an appropriate score at the conclusion of the performance that reflects the impact of the entire performance.

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B. Scoring Levels

1. The A Level

a. A-level scores (81 to 100) reflect outstanding levels of entertainment resulting in totally appropriate and believable emotional effects. Emotions are presented believably, and the audience has totally bought into the emotional impact of the performance. There are no significant traces of artificial or unnecessary embellishments.

b. To achieve an A score, only the total effect must be judged as A. The vocal and visual components may or may not both be of A quality depending on their relative importance to the overall effect.

c. The upper range of A scores is assigned to very exceptional achievements. There are no discernible flaws and the applicable adjectives are all superlatives: superb, exquisite, breathless, captivating, hilarious, overwhelming, deeply moving, etc.

d. The mid-range A score is given for presentations that exhibit unyielding excellence. The listener is normally unaware of the vocal and visual techniques employed; he or she is caught up in the artistic effect of the total presentation. The presence of “star quality” is unmistakable.

e. At the lower end of the A range, the feeling of excellence is definitely present, but some minor interruptions are felt.

f. Traits that distinguish between A and B levels of Presentation relate to the presence of subtlety and artistry. The A score implies an extremely high level of consistency in the generation of emotional impact – there are almost no distractions. In summary, the A score denotes excellence as opposed to competence.

2. The B Level

a. B-level scores (61 to 80) are indicative of performances that deliver frequently appropriate and believable emotional or entertainment content. Such presentations are frequently of high quality. They will usually exhibit good musicianship, rapport with the audience and good performance skills.

b. The upper range of B scores indicates increasing levels of excellence in the presentation. Such performances keep the audience almost totally involved, moved emotionally, or entertained, as appropriate. Some instances of A-quality performance are common.

c. In the mid-B range, the judge may find that all achieved effects are appropriate and properly presented. These performances are quite enjoyable.

d. At the lower range of B scoring, nominal consistency is demonstrated but distractions may occur. The result is usually a competent but undistinguished presentation.

e. Traits that distinguish between B and C levels of Presentation relate to the presence of skill mastery and competence. In a B performance, there is an obvious grasp and use of barbershop performance techniques throughout most or all of the presentation. In

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summary, the B score denotes competence and consistency in the use of performance skills

3. The C Level

a. C-level scores (41 to 60) are given to performances that have an adequate emotional effect but are generally marked by occasional severe interruptions in the generation of emotional impact. The interest of the listener is frequently lost due to lack of consistency, poor execution, stage intimidation, or, frequently, poor understanding of good presentation approaches.

b. At the upper end of the C range, some consistency is displayed. These are fairly entertaining performances despite some occasional significant interruptions.

c. Performances in the mid-C range are marginally acceptable for public performance. A mid-C performance is recognized as adequate barbershop but will likely be characterized as a basic rendition of the song without exhibiting skills that add a significant level of interest or entertainment value.

d. At the lower end of the C range, the limited vocal and/or visual presentation skills being exhibited produce presentations that are fairly poor in overall effect.

4. The D Level

a. D-level scores (1 to 40) are assigned to presentations that are poor in execution, plan and/or skill. The performer may totally disregard, or be unaware of, proper approaches to presentation of a barbershop performance. Little or no entertainment value or conveyance of the song's emotional potential is evident in either the musical or visual components.

b. The upper half of the D-level is for performances where performance skills are severely lacking or absent but most of the notes and words are being sung. The lower half of the D-level is for performances where not only are the performance skills lacking, but also many notes and/or words are being missed.

C. Use of the Score Sheet

1. The judging form for the Presentation category is laid out in a manner intended to allow great facility in judging the performance.

2. Main working areas and tools

a. There is an overall grade level scale at the top of the form, and a horizontal bar calibrated from 1 to 100, to assist the judge in arriving at the final overall score. Key elements within that scale are Entertainment, Audience Rapport, Expressiveness, Vocal/Visual Unity, and Believability.

b. The qualitative scoring guides serve as a reminder of the distinguishing characteristics of the A, B, C and D levels as described above. The five key elements listed are not all-

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inclusive, but they assist the judge determining a score for the performance. The degree of Entertainment, Audience Rapport, Expressiveness, Vocal/Visual Unity and Believability are references to the total performance quality, both in scoring and in relating evaluation comments.

c. The main body of the sheet is left open and unformatted, allowing the judge to adopt his own preferred note taking style and to record data for evaluation counseling. The suggested approach is to proceed down the page chronologically as the song unfolds. A description of the various performance events, lyric line references, emotions, moods, audience impacts and net effects become useful aids in determining the score and relating the progress of these factors throughout the course of the song.

d. The list of key concepts and performance elements on the left margin helps the judge focus upon vocal and visual attributes of the performance that make positive or negative contributions to the overall effect achieved.

e. Other spaces are provided that relate to Attire, Entrance, Pitchpipe Technique, Break, Acceptance and Exit. Spaces are provided to make reference to General Strengths, Areas for Improvement, Reason for any penalty or forfeiture of score (if applicable) and the judge's score for the performance.

f. The judge strives to document two to three main performance areas with which to help the performers improve their presentation.

3. The final score is first written in the box on the scoring form (CJ-27) and then copied onto the judging form (CJ-24) in the box in the lower right corner.

D. Differences between Quartets and Choruses

1. The basis of barbershop music is the quartet. Although larger ensembles have the ability to use a greater dynamic range in vocal or visual performance elements than a quartet can use, the ensemble must be careful to adhere to the principles of genuine, heartfelt performance and not draw undue attention to the devices or the techniques used in the performance.

2. An ensemble larger than a quartet typically has a director. The director should be integrated into the performance in such a way as to support and enhance the presentation and not become a distraction to the audience, unless this is intended for comedic or other purposes.

a. As with quartets, the larger ensemble performs for the benefit of the audience, and the director is an integral part of the ensemble. That is, the believability and emotional content displayed by the ensemble should reach past the director to the audience in order for the performance to be received as truly effective.

b. The role of the director in a performance may vary from featured to virtually unnoticed but will be judged as part of the effectiveness of the integrated whole.

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E. Penalties Up To and Including Forfeiture

1. Penalties and forfeitures are reductions in score for performances wherein the contestant has violated one or more of the BHS Contest Rules. Forfeiture is indicated by awarding a score of zero. A penalty is a lesser reduction in score that yields a net positive score for the performance. When a penalty or forfeiture of score has been applied, judges should note the reason for such on the judging form on the line, “Reason for penalty or forfeiture: _____” and on the appropriate line(s) of the reduction grid on the scoring form.

2. Article IX of the contest rules specifies, “All songs performed in contest must be arranged in the barbershop style...” Although the Music Category is the category primarily responsible for adjudicating “style” issues, Presentation judges also have a responsibility to preserve the style through particular attention to the artistic aspects of the style noted in paragraphs I.B.4, 5, 6, 9, 10 and 11 of The Judging System (Chapter 4 of the *Contest and Judging Handbook*). These aspects are adjudicated in terms of the quality of the presentation but are not subject to penalty or forfeiture.

3. As specified in Article IX.A of the contest rules, songs must “be neither primarily patriotic nor primarily religious in intent...” Anthems and hymns are examples of clear violations. Songs that merely make reference to national pride or a deity are acceptable. Judgment calls are made for songs that fall in between these extremes. (See Position Paper V, Chapter 9 of the *Contest and Judging Handbook*.) Violations of Article IX.A may result in penalties up to and including forfeiture.

4. Presentation judges are solely responsible for adjudicating Articles X, XI, and XII of the contest rules. (For further information, see Position Papers, Chapter 9 of the *Contest and Judging Handbook*.)

a. Article X.B prohibits contestants from using their own electronic amplification, but does permit limited, brief, and relevant sound effects or electronic means of pitch taking. Violation of Article X.B may result in penalties up to and including forfeiture.

b. Article XI.A.1 prohibits persons who are not members of the competing chorus or quartet from appearing on stage during the performance. An exception to this rule permits non-member chorus directors, who may appear with their chorus provided their appearance and performance is in conjunction with their role as a director. Notwithstanding the previous sentence, non-member directors may not sing with their chorus.

c. Article XI.A.2 states “Actions by any contestant that are deemed suggestive, vulgar or otherwise not in good taste will not be allowed.” Staging is defined as the use of props or sets, the handling of props, the use of physical actions, or a combination of these. Unacceptable staging is staging that is suggestive, vulgar or otherwise not in good taste. Violations of Article XI may result in penalties up to and including forfeiture. (See Position Paper III, Chapter 9 of the *Contest and Judging Handbook*.) The use of “black face” is prohibited and must result in forfeiture by the Presentation judge as a violation of Article XI.A.2 as action not in good taste.

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d. Article XII states, in part, “Non-singing dialogue is generally not a part of a contest performance...” Spoken words may be used by an ensemble before, during, between or after songs to help enhance the entertainment value of the performance. However, any spoken words must be directly related to the performance and must be brief enough that they are perceived to be part of the musical performance and not an end in themselves. Violations of Article XII may result in penalties up to and including forfeiture.

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I. INTRODUCTION

One ingredient that clearly identifies barbershop music is its unique sound. It is the sound of barbershop that allows the transforming of a song into an emotional experience for the performer and audience. The best barbershop singing combines elements of technique and emotion to create an artistic result.

Barbershop singing shares elements of good singing with other forms of ensemble vocal music. Primarily, the listener expects to hear the pleasing effect of in-tune singing from voices that are free and resonant and that exhibit no signs of difficulties. The listener expects to hear the ensemble as a unit, free from distractions by individual differences of quality or delivery. The style of barbershop singing adds a distinctive element to these basics. Enhanced by the choice of harmonies, voicings, and voice relationships characteristic to barbershop, the ensemble sound can achieve a sound that feels greater than the sum of the parts. This reinforced sound has been described as "lock and ring" or the feeling of "expanded sound."

The "ring" of a barbershop chord will always be the hallmark of the style. Any listener to a barbershop performance expects to be thrilled by the sound of a ringing climax or awed by the purity and beauty of a soft and elegant expression of a song. Great opera singing is achieved by magnificent vocal technique used to create musical artistry. In the same sense great barbershop singing demands mastery of vocal and ensemble skills to create the breathtaking effects of barbershop musical artistry.

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The Singing judge evaluates the degree to which the performer achieves artistic singing in the barbershop style. This is accomplished through precise intonation, a high degree of vocal skill, and a high level of unity and consistency within the ensemble. Mastering these elements also creates a feeling of fullness, ring, and expansion of sound throughout the performance. When artistry is present, these elements are natural, unmanufactured, and free from apparent effort, allowing the performer to fully communicate and express the theme of the song.

II. SINGING ELEMENTS

A. Intonation

1. Barbershop singers strive for more precise tuning than is possible with the fixed 12-tones-per-octave of the equally tempered scale of fixed-pitched instruments, such as the piano. Barbershop singers adjust pitches to achieve perfectly tuned chords, and yet sing a melodic line that remains true to the tonal center. Essentially, we use just intonation for harmonic tuning while remaining true to the established tonal center.
2. Melodic intonation refers to the system by which pitches are chosen for the melody of the song. The notes chosen by the melody singer may be at variance with the notes of any known scale. In actual practice, barbershop melody singers tend to use notes that preserve the tonal center while simultaneously serving the requirements of both melody and harmony. For unaccompanied solo melodies, musicians often choose Pythagorean scale tones, possibly because of the lift achieved from the very high third, sharpened fourth, sixth, and seventh degrees of the scale. However, when melodies are imbedded within the context of unaccompanied harmony, melody tones are adjusted to be compatible with the requirements for harmonic intonation.
3. Harmonic intonation refers to the pitches chosen by the non-melody singers. Good ear singers will naturally tune a harmonic interval to be free of beats — that is, in just intonation. Just intonation reinforces those harmonics (overtones) that are common between any two pitches, and creates combination tones (sum and difference tones) between any two pitches or harmonics. These added tones are the physical cause of barbershop chord “lock” and the expansion of sound. How well a chord “locks” is directly related to the accuracy of harmonic intonation.
4. Tonal center refers to the key feeling, or tonic, of the song. This key feeling should remain constant, clearly re-established through any modulation, for the duration of the song.
5. Maintaining precise harmonic intonation and melodic tonal center is the responsibility of all the singers in the ensemble. They all sense the forward progression of the harmony in addition to maintaining the tonal center. All singers, including the melody singer, tune to an anticipated melodic line that would maintain the tonal center. Singers of roots and fifths of chords own the greater responsibility to be in tune, both with the anticipated melody and the tonal center. Singers of thirds and sevenths of chords who are not on the melody will adjust their pitches to achieve justly in-tune chords.

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| B. Vocal Quality

1. The three descriptors of good vocal production are: a) well supported; b) freely produced; and c) resonant. A resonant vocal tone that conveys the sensation of a single pitch, that is produced freely and without apparent stress by well-managed breath support, and that enhances (or at least does not detract from) the artistic impact of a song may be said to possess good quality.

a. Well supported: the dictionary defines support as a foundation or base for something. It also means to strengthen, reinforce, fortify, or sustain. Support may best be defined as breath management. Breath management (singing on the breath supplied by isometric involvement of the diaphragm and abdominal muscles) is prerequisite for producing a good tone.

b. Freely produced: tension or lack of free production can both be seen and heard. Tension can be caused by under- or over-support, forcing the muscles of the larynx also to undertake the task of breath management. Tension can be detected when the singer unnaturally manipulates the shoulders, jaw, tongue and laryngeal muscles to manufacture a sound. Virtually any muscle tension above the chest may interfere with the ability to resonate. Raucous, breathy, strident, nasal, husky, forced, swallowed, or other types of poor vocal qualities call attention to individual voices, rather than the ensemble.

c. Resonant: resonance is basically amplifying and reinforcing harmonics produced by the action of the vocal folds as the air from the lungs passes through the glottal opening. The singer enhances this raw sound through the use of the principal resonators, the throat and mouth. When breath is properly managed, extraneous tension eliminated, and the voice is resonant, the vocal tone will ring. Quality and quantity of ensemble ring are determined by both the quality of the ring in the individual singer's voice and its match with the other voices in the ensemble.

2. Additional Factors Affecting Vocal Quality

a. Vibrato is a normal phenomenon of proper breath management. In barbershop singing, some vibrato in the voice, especially the lead voice, can be very effective in enhancing the emotional content of the music. However, too high a vibrato rate or excessive pitch or volume variation will erode ensemble sound.

b. Tremolo is a rapid oscillation between two distinct pitches with accompanying loss of the sense of a central pitch. Lack of muscular coordination is a primary cause for tremolo. Tremolo is unacceptable in good singing.

c. Loud singing is often used in an attempt to generate a high degree of resonance and harmonic content. The ring in the sound can increase simply because the harmonics are also louder. However, achieving harmonic reinforcement should never be at the expense of vocal quality. Excessive volume introduces distortion and noise by reinforcing incompatible harmonics.

d. The potential for artistic singing is enhanced by the selection of music that reflects a quality singing range for each of the individual voices. Conversely, selecting a song that

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has a demanding tessitura, an angular melody, or difficult voice-leading can cause some, or all, of the singers to find it difficult to produce accurate tones in good vocal quality. Performers are encouraged to choose music that suits their capabilities and that features the strengths and minimizes the weaknesses of the ensemble. Since the Singing judge evaluates the overall vocal performance, there are no benefits in choosing difficult or easy music—only in choosing music that the ensemble can sing well.

C. Unity

1. Unity describes the net effect of ensemble-unifying techniques. Most a cappella vocal forms utilize some of the following; the barbershop style utilizes all of them.

2. The ingredients of ensemble unity include matched word sounds and timbre, synchronization and precision, sound flow, and diction.

a. The resonant characteristics of the vocal tract determine an individual's voice timbre. The singer can control and change the shape of the vocal tract, thereby altering its resonant characteristics. Each vowel sound requires a unique positioning and shaping of the elements that affect resonance: the throat, mouth, tongue, jaw, and lips.

b. Subtle adjustments of the vocal tract are used to achieve matched word sounds. Each vowel sound exhibits a set of formant frequencies unique to that particular vowel. The singer can develop awareness and sensitivity to these formant frequencies, to enable the word sound match between voices to be finely tuned.

c. The untrained singer may experience a natural tendency for the vocal timbre to darken at lower pitches and volumes and brighten at higher pitches and volumes. This tendency is called migration. To achieve a wider range of uniformity, the singer may modify his vowel sounds at the extremes of his range by making subtle corrections in vowel sounds (formant frequencies) to create the impression to the listener that no change in timbre occurs throughout the singer's range. This is best achieved through proper vocal technique throughout the range, rather than artificially modifying the vowel sound.

3. Synchronization and Precision

a. Each syllable has a primary vowel sound, or target vowel. Anticipatory consonants or vowels may precede the primary vowel sound, and continuant consonants, vowels, or diphthongs may follow the primary vowel sound. The primary vowel sound begins on the pulse beat for that syllable. Normally, anticipatory sounds occur before the pulse beat, during time borrowed from the previous note, or breath. Pitch changes between primary vowel sounds should be executed together in all voices.

b. Most of the singing time is spent sustaining the primary vowel sound, with the anticipatory and continuant sounds lengthened or shortened appropriately to create a natural diction. Primary vowel sound length, when compared to all other sounds, will be adjusted by the singer to effect changes of mood. These must be executed together by the ensemble.

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c. Precision inaccuracies can trigger other problems. When singers start their individual notes at different times, this can create a perceived intonation error. Lack of precision will make it virtually impossible to achieve uniformity of the pulse beat. Errors in volume relationships can become more obvious, affecting the expansion of sound.

4. Sound Flow

a. Lack of continuity of word sounds can adversely affect artistic singing. Resonance should be carried through all voiced sounds. Stopping and starting the voice increases the opportunity for precision errors and detracts from the continuous flow of the music.

b. The use of staggered breathing by a chorus to avoid breaks in the flow is not typical of the barbershop quartet style. Ideally, phrases should not be excessively longer than those that could be sung by an individual in one well-managed breath. Overlapping (parts singing through while another part breathes) is acceptable. These techniques should only be employed in such a way as to not draw attention to the technique itself.

5. Diction and Articulation

a. Diction is the choice of word sounds, or pronunciation, as well as the clarity of word sounds, or enunciation. Word sounds include primary and secondary vowel sounds, diphthongs, triphthongs, and consonants. Good articulation is appropriate execution of those sounds, usually free of regional dialects and intelligible to the listener.

b. When we sing, we think words and phrases but do not sing words per se. We sing sounds. We provide the audience with a collection of sounds that they decode into understandable words. Part of the singer's job is to determine all the sounds in a lyric line, then execute those sounds in a way that allows the audience to easily decode the lyric.

c. Good diction characteristics are clarity, accuracy, ease, uniformity, and expressiveness. Vowels make up a majority of all the sounds in vocal music; they should be true to the words being sung. Correct use of consonants is also very important to diction, as they carry the meaning of the words. They should not be overemphasized, dropped, or substituted inappropriately to attempt better sound flow. They must be sung correctly to carry the voice, focus it, enhance its loudness, and supply emotion. If the vowels are the flowing river of sound, the consonants are the banks (or, if poorly executed, the dams)

D. Expansion Quality

1. Expanded sound, sometimes called "lock and ring," creates the impression that the composite ensemble sound contains more than the total sound the individual voices produce. This effect, though occurring in other styles of music, is significantly enhanced in barbershop singing. The style provides greater opportunities for the reinforcement of consonant overtones and the production of combination tones. Several factors contribute to this reinforcement other than the fact that the melody is sung primarily within the chord rather than in the top voice. The chord must be in tune. There must be good vocal quality that which promotes resonance and "ring" in the voice. The word sounds must be sung uniformly and

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the vowels should match. There must be good precision, which increases the proportion of time during which expansion can occur. The relative loudness of the tones must be adjusted to produce optimum harmonic reinforcement. In essence, the better the quality of the vocalization, the better the expansion quality.

2. There are certain guiding principles for defining the barbershop style. In particular, songs that do not adhere to the basic tenets of the barbershop style as defined in paragraph one of *Definition of the Barbershop Style*, Chapter 2 of this handbook, will not have the characteristic barbershop sound. Songs of this nature will affect the quality and quantity of “lock and ring” and expanded sound, and the Singing judge will evaluate this affect accordingly.

3. Volume Relationships

a. Each voice produces a complex tone whose harmonics have frequencies that are whole-number multiples of a fundamental frequency. When the intervals between tones are such that their relatively low-numbered harmonics overlay or match one another, the resultant sound is consonant.

b. The most consonant intervals are between notes whose frequencies may be expressed as ratios of small whole numbers. These include the unison (1:1), octave (2:1), perfect fifth (3:2), and perfect fourth (4:3). The less-consonant intervals have frequency ratios of relatively large numbers, such as the major third (5:4) and harmonic minor seventh (7:4). Notes of intervals that are most consonant should predominate over those that are less consonant.

c. The general principle about less-consonant intervals applies to the melody singer as well as harmony singers. The melody should always be loud enough to be clearly heard. The song should not be lost in the chords, nor should it be a melody accompanied by a trio. In the special case of a lead solo, or for embellishments such as patter, the melody line should balance the harmony parts equally and as a unit.

d. Higher tones are easier to hear than lower tones. Thus, lower tones must be sung with more energy in order to be perceived as equal in volume to higher tones.

e. The basic perception of the barbershop ensemble is that of a melody singer with harmony accompaniment that is totally unified with the melody. A useful concept for harmony singers is to “sing through the lead,” with careful attention to his execution of the song.

f. Some guidelines for volume relationships are:

(i) The root and the fifth of the chord should predominate, as long as the melody line is easily distinguishable.

(ii) Thirds, sixths, sevenths, and ninths should be somewhat softer, in relation to the root and fifth.

(iii) Half-diminished chords should be balanced with the perfect interval (fourth, fifth, or octave) predominant. Some find a more consonant sound is achieved when the lowest minor third, if it exists, is emphasized.

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(iv) Tones of fully diminished and augmented chords are usually balanced with all tones equal in volume. Some find a more consonant sound is achieved when a slight emphasis is given to the second lowest note of the chord.

(v) Ninth chords, and other chords with missing notes, should be balanced with the root or fifth predominant and the other voice parts in equal balance. Some find a more consonant sound is achieved when the third of the chord is also emphasized.

E. Artistry

1. Artistry is more than a mastery of technique. Artistry may be described as a unification of technique and expression into a transparent whole.
2. As a singer's craft improves and skills are mastered, the listener may be impressed with the skills themselves. Great artistry is achieved when the unified skills blend into each other and cease to be obvious to the listener, and serve only as a means to deliver the emotional impact of the song.
3. All forms of music create opportunities for the artist to demonstrate great skills. Barbershop singing is no exception. Delivering the song's message through a well-crafted melody, achieving a perfectly tuned and balanced ringing chord, or executing an elegant pianissimo, are examples. Good artistry recognizes the difference between skill for skill's sake and skill for the music's sake.
4. Artistic barbershop singing must provide for flexibility in self-expression, to allow for a variety of vocal emotions. Choices of tone color and vocal texture are some of the singer's best tools for creating the mood of the song. The choice might be different for an exciting mood than for a melancholy mood. The lyric of a song might suggest changes in vocal texture for different phrases, even possibly changing dramatically within one phrase for special effect. Performers may choose an exaggerated color for parody or comedic results.
5. Other expressive techniques include vowel sound duration, diphthong and singable consonant timing, inflection, and enunciation. Although precise diction is necessary to enable the listener to comprehend the words, the singer should use the word sounds in such a way that the listener's attention is drawn to the lyric's meaning and not its execution.
6. In order for all these techniques to be artistic, they must effectively communicate the emotional content of the song. There is a natural correlation between the performer's command of vocal skill, their vocal expression, and the generation of emotion. Performances that are perceived by the audience to be "from the heart" come across as honest, sincere, and genuine. A lack of vocal skill or improper expression distracts the audience. Conversely, great vocal skill allows the performer to generate many subtle variations and levels of emotion, which adds to the believability.

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III. SCORING

A. Scoring Methodology

1. The Singing judge evaluates the performance of each song for the level of mastery of the singing elements. The elements are:

- Intonation
- Vocal Quality
- Unity
- Expansion
- Artistry

The judge assigns an overall rating based on an appraisal of the degree of achievement of vocal artistry in the barbershop style.

2. The Singing judge awards a score from 1-100 points per song. He weighs the performance of the particular song against his cumulative listening experience and assigns the score accordingly. The score is relative to a theoretically perfect performance. The judge strives for objectivity in his scoring, yet his assessment of artistry naturally includes a subjective point of view.

3. Each performer is compared against the judge's base of listening experience, not against other performances in the same contest. Judges will note what elements influenced their score. More importantly, they will note significant ways to improve the performance.

B. Scoring Levels

1. The A level

a. A-level scores (81 to 100) are given to performances of the most consistent artistic barbershop singing. There are very few distractions owing to lack of singing skill; rather, the focus is primarily on artistry.

b. A typical performance earning a mid-range A score (around 90 points) features few, if any, intonation errors, excellent vocal quality, consistent unity, consistent expansion of sound, and an overall perception of expression and artistry that transcends technique.

c. A performance at the upper range of A would likely be a rare and significant artistic experience for any listener, possibly transcending measurable elements to define its success. Performances in this range need not be flawless, as flawless performances can actually draw attention to the technique. Rather, there is no perception of technique, only the artistic result.

d. In a performance at the low end of the A range, an occasional technical distraction can occur. The performer may show great skill but the "technique is showing." The performer may be inconsistent, having phrases of higher A mixed with phrases of a lesser level.

e. The distinguishing difference between A and B levels is often the perception of artistry as the combination of great skills into one transparent whole.

SINGING Category Description

2. The B level

- a. B-level scores (61 to 80) are for performances that frequently show skills of artistic barbershop singing, mixed with more distractions or lack of artistic unity.
- b. A typical performance in the mid-range of B (around 70 points) is only occasionally out of tune, frequently exhibits good vocal quality, is often a unit, has infrequent interruptions in expansion of sound and has some artistry.
- c. The upper range of B scores is for performances that do not have any substantial breakdown in artistry, but minor distractions occur. Some part of the performance may be at the A level, but other parts show lack of skill or a breakdown in the overall artistry.
- d. In the lower range of B performances, skill errors may provide significant distractions in some phrases, but most of the performance is still good. The performance may have a short duration of A-level quality. Intonation and vocal quality are better than satisfactory. Expansion of sound is inconsistent.
- e. The difference between B and C levels is often a matter of consistency of skill and blending into an artistic unit.

3. The C level

- a. C-level scores (41 to 60) are for performances that demonstrate adequate skills, with some signs of artistry but with notable inconsistencies in performance.
- b. A typical performance in the mid-range of C (around 50) will have intonation problems. The vocal quality is satisfactory and not improper and could be improved by basic vocal skills. Unity is impeded by word sound mismatches, faulty chord balancing, or even choice of material, and expansion of sound occurs as often as not. Some artistic moments would be evident.
- c. The upper range of C scores is for performances that may be partly at the B level but show many distractions, inconsistencies, and inability to sustain the artistry.
- d. In the lower range of C performances, offensive intonation or vocal quality may be exhibited occasionally, and the perception of unity and expansion of sound is infrequent.
- e. The difference between C and D levels is often that the C performance has acceptable quality and few unpleasant sounds.

4. The D level

- a. D-level scores (1 to 40) are for performances in which the elements of good singing are rarely heard.
- b. A typical performance in the mid-range of D scores (around 20) exhibits a major lack of vocal skill. Wrong notes may be prevalent. In-tune chords are rare. Vocal quality and tone color will most likely be poor or offensive. Dissonance is the norm. Individual voices will be consistently predominant, and the ensemble rarely sings as a unit.

SINGING Category Description

- c. The upper range of D scores is for performances that have rare moments of good skills, which appear to be accidental or out of control of the performer.
- d. The lower range of D scores is almost never encountered. A significant performance error, such as poor pitch-taking or nerves, could reduce an otherwise mid-D performance to the lower end.
- e. Performances in this range usually occur because of a lack of skill, nerves, lack of knowledge, neglect, intentional focus on non-singing aspects of the performance, or significant lack of preparation.

C. Use of the Score Sheet

1. The scale and box are reminders of the judging ranges and the concept of the overall effect. Many may want to circle or flag a range on the scale, or a particularly appropriate phrase in the box, and use arrows down to a written comment below.
2. The element list is a selected list of ideas to circle or check off for later comments. Consider it to be for reference; it can serve as an abbreviation list for comments as well.
3. During the performance, the judge will identify only two or three of the most significant elements of the performance and several "fixes" for any of these elements. The judge will also point out where in the performance the best singing occurred and why, thereby giving the performer a chance to relate to the good experience firsthand.
4. The Singing judge will determine, through practice, how much detail is necessary to trigger recollection of the performance and focus on the major items. Flaws in the smallest sense are not relevant; the judge will be looking at the broader perspective. The judge will find elements of the performance that, if changed, would most significantly result in improvement.
5. The highest scores will be earned by performances solidly within the barbershop style that offer the greatest opportunity to create stylistic and artistic singing.
6. The final score is first written in the box on the scoring form (CJ-28) and then copied onto the judging form (CJ-25) in the box in the lower right corner.

D. Differences between Quartet and Chorus

1. The basic sound of barbershop is found in the quartet performance. Four voices achieving vocal artistry in the manner described above produce a sound unique to this art form. When one adds more singers to each part, a similar effect can be obtained but with significant differences. We have learned to recognize these differences and evaluate the chorus singing sound in its own unique form.
2. Choruses are more able to blend, or even hide, the differences of pitch and timbre between the singers than is possible in quartets. The net result can be less demand upon the individual singer while sustaining a unique and vital sound from the chorus. The vitality of sound still

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depends on the degree of agreement of voices within sections (parts), as well as the relationships between sections.

- a. Wrong notes and more than four parts in a chorus performance have a muddy effect on the whole ensemble, or, at its worst, depart from the barbershop style. This results in lower scores.
- b. The perception of a unit sound requires that individual voices not be heard. In a quartet, each person retains a recognizable voice of his own, whereas in a chorus, no individual tone color should be discernible.
- c. Precision of the chorus takes on a new challenge as there are more possibilities for error. The preparation of the singers, as well as the skill of the chorus director, greatly affects this aspect.
- d. Larger choruses can generate a larger quantity of sound than smaller ones, as well as a greater ability to bury the problems of any individual. However, the judging of choruses emphasizes the quartet-like cleanliness of the sound, not the volume. Volume of sound will not, in itself, have a positive impact on the Singing judge.

IV. INTEGRATION WITH OTHER CATEGORIES

The Presentation Category is principally responsible for evaluating entertainment value in a barbershop performance, which includes visual and vocal aspects. Good singing generally enhances the emotional effect of the performance. Conversely, singing that is out of tune and not of good quality usually diminishes the overall effect of the presentation. Vocal expression is important to judges in both categories as well.

While the Singing Category evaluates the technical and qualitative aspects of the performer's sound, these factors also affect the Music category in determining the level of consonance, consonant harmony being the primary hallmark of the barbershop style. Singing that suffers from poor synchronization, intonation, or vocal quality, or other sound problems, will also negatively impact such Music areas as theme, delivery and execution.

SINGING Category Description

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POSITION PAPERS

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I. MUSICAL COMPLEXITY/OVER-EMBELLISHMENT

A. Introduction

This paper aims both to clarify the position of the Music Category regarding what complexity and over-embellishment are and to provide general guidelines for how they can be recognized and adjudicated in performances of songs other than parodies.

B. Background

The Music Category respects the roots of our style in "ear" music and discourages performances that seem to be more a demonstration of arrangement devices than the presentation of a song, which is defined by the melody, lyrics, rhythm, and implied harmony. At the same time, embellishment is a fundamental characteristic of the barbershop style, and relatively wide latitude is given to arrangers to embellish with a variety of devices, which help create musical interest, as well as provide for both unifying and contrasting thematic material.

Accordingly, the Music Category wishes to allow the arranger a reasonable degree of license and creativity in writing arrangements of varying levels of complexity, with varying approaches to thematic development that are suitable for contest use, while asserting that the primary theme must be based on musical elements: lyrics, rhythm, melody, harmony, or a combination of song elements.

C. Policy

Arrangements that are overly complex or over-embellished are the result of a level of embellishment that:

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1. Obscures the song itself. A guiding principle for defining the barbershop style is that “Embellishments ... should support and enhance the song” (Section 4, The Judging System, I.B.8, of this handbook). When this principle is compromised, the Music judge may no longer be hearing the song itself but rather a catalogue of ornamental devices that do not support the basic song elements.

2. Produces a musical texture that compromises the requirement that barbershop music is “characterized by consonant four-part chords for every melody note in a predominantly homophonic texture” (The Judging System, I.A.1, of this handbook).

3. Alters the composer’s melody beyond the parameters described in the Music Category Description, II.A.6. (See Section 5 of this handbook.) In addition, performing ability is an integral part of adjudicating whether or not the arrangement is overly complex or over-embellished. The performers’ abilities influence the Music judge’s perception of the degree to which a particular song is or is not over-embellished. Given a song with a high number of embellishments, a group performing at the A level may be able to perform it in such a way that the embellishments do not overwhelm the song or performance. The same arrangement performed at the C level may create the perception that the song is over-embellished. The judging system recognizes and provides a basis for scoring these two performances differently under the Music Category Description, Section III, and Introduction. Performing ability notwithstanding, the Music score will be lowered for song performances that are inherently over-embellished and overly complex. Outside of parody performances, guiding principles for adjudicating complexity and over-embellishment are:

a. Barbershop performers may take great liberties with the rhythms of a song. However, the arrangement should not modify lyrics, melody, and implied harmony to the extent that the song itself gets lost. The guideline in II.A.6 stating that stylizations should result in “a passage suggestive of the original” may be compromised if two or more of these three elements are modified. In particular, rewriting the melody with different harmony for much of a repeated song section will likely result in a passage that is not suggestive of the original.

b. The main statement of a song is generally in the chorus of that song. Accordingly, the Music judge is prepared to accept more modification of a verse, even in the first statement, than of the chorus. Abridging a verse to make it an introduction to the chorus is acceptable as long as it is musically appropriate.

c. Extensions are acceptable at the end of a song section, provided they contain an even number of measures and are artistically appropriate.

d. The Music judge will reduce his score for distracting melody alterations in proportion to their incidence and/or impact on the overall arrangement. It is understood that the Music judge can only become distracted by altered melodies when he definitely knows the correct melody.

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e. Regarding Music Category Description, II.A.6.c, it is understood that a repeated section usually means a verse or chorus, but sometimes the last A phrase within the first statement of an AABA section may be stylized effectively.

f. The arranger is expected to use the composer's melody as the basis for his harmonization and embellishment. Melodic alterations might be distracting, especially when the melody is well known. Alterations that are made for the purpose of satisfying the standards of acceptable harmonic progressions and harmonic rhythm stated in II.C.6 are not permitted. Alterations are acceptable in the following circumstances:

- (i) Minor melodic alterations may be made to enhance the potential for increased consonance and singability, as long as the notes that are changed are not essential to defining the character or shape of the melody.
- (ii) When an alteration of the melody is commonly known and accepted.
- (iii) When, in a repeated section (verse or chorus) of a song, the arrangement alters or stylizes the melody. Stylized segments may occur during repeats of a song section as long as the stylization results in a passage suggestive of the original. Alterations beyond these parameters will result in a lower Music score.

II. FEMALE IMPERSONATION

In 1993 the Contest and Judging rules underwent significant revisions, including the elimination of a specific prohibition against female impersonation. It should be noted, however, that the elimination of this prohibition in no way was intended to imply that female impersonation is now generally acceptable as a performance option. Rather, it is a matter of taste. Under the current Contest and Judging System, the matter of taste is subjective and is adjudicated in the Presentation category. Female impersonation may be either offensive or entertaining, depending on many subjective factors.

The current contest rules recognize that it may be possible for a performance utilizing female impersonation to be staged in an inoffensive and tasteful manner. Performers should be aware, however, that our society in general, and therefore many Presentation judges, has become sensitive to performances that may be offensive to some or many women. The use of female impersonation, therefore, represents a heightened level of risk in terms of the scoring of such a presentation.

Risks are usually taken for the purpose of generating a reward. Some enhancement to the impact of a performance is possible through the clever, tasteful use of female impersonation. On the other hand, it is possible for a severe problem to occur, whereby a poor presentation could result in forfeiture of score, audience scorn, and even damage to the overall mission of promoting barbershop singing to the general public.

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III. TASTE

Songs whose lyrics or manner of presentation are in poor taste will be subject to penalties up to and including forfeiture. The test for poor taste is: Does the lyric or presentation dignify a subject that by today's standards is clearly offensive to most mature people? If "clearly" and "most" are not appropriate words, but "may be" and "many" are, then a light-to-moderate penalty should be given.

The Presentation judge is to use societal norms, as opposed to individual biases, in determining matters of taste. Recognizing that society does not always act consistently, it is possible that specific circumstances surrounding the timing and location of a particular performance may have an impact upon its perceived tastefulness.

It is not the intention of the Contest and Judging System to enforce what has come to be known as "politically correct" thinking. Overly sensitive reactions can be terribly restrictive to anything resembling entertainment. If fact, if played to its logical conclusion, it is possible to find something offensive to someone somewhere in nearly every presentation ever given. While majority thinking can be tyrannical when misguided, so also can the thoughts of a self-righteous and militant minority. A judge will apply the force of reason.

IV. OBSCURE LYRICS

The first responsibility of any art form is to communicate. The use of obscure lyrics can make it difficult to carry out that responsibility and therefore may interfere with the delivery of emotional impact to the audience. This can conceivably result in a lower Presentation score.

The audience should not have to work hard to clearly understand the message being communicated by a barbershop performance. Consider the following lyric lines: "The sky isn't blue for a red rosy hue is there in the air today" or "I was jealous and hurt, when your lips kissed a rose, or your eyes from my own chanced to stray." In isolation, with one of this type of line at a time the audience could probably glean the message and could be convinced by the surrounding material that their guess was accurate. But too much of this type of lyric would leave most barbershop audiences frustrated. An example of a song whose lyrics get in the way of communication is "Send in the Clowns." Because of this song's obscure lyrics, it requires a highly skilled performer to effectively communicate the meaning of this song to the typical audience.

The heartfelt performance is not just an attitude or emotion of a song or theme, but rather the lyrics must contribute to generating human emotions in the listener. If either the emotions or the words are unclear, obscure, or ambiguous, heartfelt delivery is affected, which will generally result in a lower-scoring performance.

Notwithstanding the above, there is nothing inherently wrong with folksy, artsy, or poetic songs. They can be magnificent, thought-provoking and emotional works of art. Many of these songs are not, however, typical of the material we have come to understand as "barbershop." The

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Contest & Judging System has a stated responsibility to preserve the barbershop style; therefore, contestants should choose material with lyrics they can effectively communicate on its first performance.

V. PATRIOTIC AND RELIGIOUS PRESENTATIONS

Any significant part of a song or medley of songs that has as its primary intent the extolment of a personal pride, the love for, or a belief in the supremacy of any national government, its emblem, motto, creed, oath, or any other officially designated symbol, shall be considered as being primarily patriotic in intent, and that song's score shall be forfeited by the Presentation judge(s).

Any significant part of a song or medley of songs that has as its primary intent the extolment of a personal or corporate belief in, or glorification of, a supreme deity, including rewards for such beliefs, shall be considered as being primarily religious in intent, and that song's score shall be forfeited by the Presentation judge(s).

Hymns, such as "How Great Thou Art" and "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," and anthems, such as "The Star Spangled Banner," "God Bless America," and "O Canada" are examples of songs which have specific goals for supporting worship and patriotism and are clearly subject to forfeiture of score.

Contestants should be aware that there are songs that are neither hymns nor anthems, but which may fall into a "gray area" where one may question the song's religious/patriotic intent. In these cases the Presentation judge will use his judgment as to whether or not to apply a light-to-moderate penalty.

VI. SCORING DIFFERENCES AMONG JUDGES

The Contest and Judging System adopted by the Society in 1993 has moved the judging of contestants toward an evaluation of the artistic impact of a performance on the audience, as opposed to an analysis of the craft of creating effects. Therefore, the judge's individual perspectives have become more relevant, since the judge not only represents, but is a part of, the audience.

The audience that the judge represents may be defined as a mature, musically astute, experienced barbershop audience, whose primary focus is being entertained in the barbershop style. Any attempt to define all of the terms in the preceding sentence would be inappropriate, as it would run contrary to the natural diversity that exists within audiences and among judges.

Whereas scoring differences in the past may have reflected differing opinions on the technical effectiveness with which a presentation was delivered, under the current judging system, differences among judges may now reflect the differing emotional impacts upon the judges that performances may have created.

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Since each judge, like each member of the audience, has different life experiences and personal backgrounds, some performances may create differing types and levels of impact upon different judges and therefore be reflected in their scoring. For example, a presentation intended to be a tribute to Jimmy Durante may not have as much impact on a thirty-year-old judge as on an older judge who can relate to having actually seen Durante's performances. Such a performance would have a similarly diverse impact on the audience, because of the age spectrum that exists. Many other examples could be given, but this same principle affects presentations that include inside jokes, period material, or any other performance that has, as part of its content, an attribute not universally understood or appreciated by the audience.

Performing material or using a style of delivery that invites a mixed reaction among audience members relative to taste, empathy, comprehension, relevance, or some other facet, also invites the chance of a mixed reaction on the part of the judges. It is natural that this mixed reaction may be reflected in scoring, as it should be.

Certainly, the Presentation Category intends to reward creativity in both concepts and delivery of concepts, but that creativity must "connect" with, and be appreciated by, the audience and the judges, to have emotional impact. Obviously, those performances that are universally enjoyed by all members of the audience will also have the best chance of being uniformly appreciated by all of the judges. Such performances will lessen the chances of divergent scoring.

If divergent scoring is to be minimized, the responsibility rests both with the judges and the contestants. Judges must accept training on category standards and agree to implement that training to the best of their ability. Contestants must work their craft and artistic skills toward the goal of reaching every member of the audience to the greatest degree possible.

VII. MUSIC CATEGORY PROCESS FOR STYLE PROBLEMS

The Music category uses its email forum to discuss style issues. We have a standing rule that music judges report style problems from recent contests to the category, which then holds a discussion. Factors include the relationship between performance and current category wording, matters of degree, appropriate amount of score reduction, and any aspects of natural style evolution that may exist. The forum discussions keep Music judges current on the state of our thinking about style, and the category will continue to use this process as an integral component of our style guardianship role.

The progression typically follows this pattern:

A. Questionable material is heard in contest. In real time, Music judges decide whether the material merits a score reduction, and if so, to what extent.

B. The performance becomes the subject of discussion, initiated either by a panel judge or an outside query, and is brought to the attention of the Category Specialist.

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C. The Category Specialist initiates an internal discussion of the performance and the style issues involved. All sides of the issue are openly discussed in the Music Category forum.

D. A consensus is reached (if possible) on how this and similar material should be handled in the future.

E. Individual judges align their adjudication to the Category consensus, with the understanding that this is the expected reaction when hearing this or similar material in future contests.

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DESCRIPTIONS OF CATEGORY OVERLAP

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I. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MUSIC AND PRESENTATION

The theory of overlap among the scoring categories is that each scoring category views the same performance but from a unique perspective. Some of the performance events that are observed may be the same (or “overlapped”) but described using varying terminology because of the different perspectives at play, or at times, using similar terminology but relating it to the central role of that judge’s category. The overlap areas will not necessarily contribute equally to the score in each category.

The MUS and PRS categories are perhaps overlapped to a greater extent than any other pair of categories, due in large part to the similarities in their principal roles. The evidence for this similarity can be seen by examining the following excerpted official writings pertaining to each of these respective categories:

A. Music Category Statement

“The sensitive handling of musical elements, such as melody, harmony, and embellishments, demonstrates musicality in a performance. A strong musical performance is one in which everything provided by the composer and arranger is skillfully delivered and effectively integrated in support of the musical theme ... The Music judge evaluates how the musical elements of the song and arrangement support the theme” (from the Introduction to the MUS category description). The context is the thematically appropriate performance of the material.

B. Presentation Category Statement

“The Presentation judges evaluate how effectively a performer brings the song and arrangement to life – that is, to what degree is the audience entertained through the performer’s communication of the story/message/theme in its musical and visual setting” (from the Introduction to the PRS category description). The presentation of barbershop music uses appropriate musical and visual methods to convey the theme of the song and provide the audience with an emotionally satisfying and entertaining experience. The musical and visual delivery is from the heart, believable, and sensitive to the song and arrangement throughout (extracted from Paragraph 4 of the Definition of the Barbershop Style, assigned for adjudication to the Presentation category). The context is the entertainment value of the presentation.

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C. Similarities and Differences

The two paragraphs above illustrate the similar language that is used to describe these two categories: “Sensitive handling of musical elements” (MUS) vs. “delivery is sensitive to the song and arrangement” (PRS); “musical elements...support the theme” (MUS) vs. “musical...methods convey the theme” (PRS). Given that the MUS category adjudicates the musical elements AS PERFORMED, there is even greater similarity in the second comparison. Both categories are listening for a clearly defined theme and featured musical element, such as melody, harmony, rhythm, lyrics, or some combination of those elements. There is strong correlation in this area.

There are some areas where responsibilities are clearly separate. For example, MUS stands alone in its responsibility for chord and progression analysis that defines the barbershop style (Paragraph 2 of the Definition), while PRS is singularly responsible for analyzing a presentation’s visual interpretation. However, in the overlapping areas described in the previous paragraphs, the differences between the two roles of MUS and PRS judge are more subtle. Examples include the difference between the “musicality of the material as performed” (MUS), and the “effectiveness of the performance” (PRS). Judges from both categories may talk about “bringing a song to life” from their category perspective.

Great care must be taken by the judges in each category to experience the performance from their respective categories and then support that unique experience with appropriate language and terminology that clearly ties the judges’ observations to their respective category roles. If this is successfully accomplished, their observations to the contestant will appropriately reinforce one another.

If, however, care is not taken to describe common observations of performance events by tying them to the principal role of each respective category, the result may be confusion, and the contestant may infer that there is no unique perspective of each category. If that occurs, the integrity, objectives, and value of the three-category system may suffer.

D. Category Terminology

While a wide range of recommended corrections (“fixes”) may be well within the judge’s coaching ability, care should be taken during evaluations to relate the problem and possible solution to the principal role and perspective of his own category.

Some vocabulary is more commonly used in a particular category due to unique features of the category or to the judge’s central task in a specific category, for example, in MUS: “chord structure,” “progressions,” “melodic shape,” etc. and in PRS, “entertainment value,” “generation of mood,” “visual impact,” etc. (PRS). When used, these terms should always be framed in reference to the responsible category.

The larger body of musical vocabulary that relates to musical interpretation and musical effects, such as volume dynamics, tone color, word inflection, syncopation, accelerando, diminuendo, sforzando, etc., are terms used in common by every category and can be used to express multiple concepts. Their use is governed by context and by relating the relevance of those terms to the

Category Overlap

central task of each category. If these terms are used by a judge without describing the necessary tie to the unique perspective of that category, the contestant may not understand distinctions between categories. It is inadequate for a judge from either category to simply make a comment such as “You need more volume dynamics” without relating this “musical effect” or “interpretive tool” to the respective category’s central role.

For example, the MUS judge may find lack of volume dynamics to be a result of poor chord voicings that presented an obstacle at the lyrical climax. (This would be an example of the arrangement not supporting the theme.)

In the same instance as above the PRS judge may experience that the climax of the song had little emotional impact due to lack of volume change. (This would be an example of lack of emotional conveyance of a lyrical theme.)

The following are additional examples that illustrate how MUS and PRS might employ different vocabulary to question or express their respective category perspectives regarding various musical elements. These examples are not meant to represent the entire role of either category regarding the topic mentioned. They are only to demonstrate some of the differences in perception of the performance.

1. GENERAL

MUS - Effectiveness of the choices made by the contestant regarding the use of the musical elements of the song and arrangement.

PRS - Effectiveness of the choices made by the contestant to communicate the song’s story/message – that is, the extent to which the audience is entertained.

2. THEME

MUS - Were musical elements used appropriately to create an identifiable theme?

PRS - Did the execution of the chosen theme contribute to entertaining the audience?

3. RHYTHM

MUS - Is there agreement and good execution among the performers as to what the rhythm is?

PRS - Did I, as a member of the audience, experience the rhythm and feel like tapping my toes?

4. TEMPO

MUS - Does the tempo support the theme of the song by allowing the cleanest delivery of the theme – rhythm, lyric, harmony, etc.?

PRS - Does the tempo help to make the song more entertaining?

5. LYRICS

MUS - If the lyrics are the theme, are the lyrics supported by the melody, harmony, and performance of musical effects?

PRS - Am I, as a member of the audience, feeling the emotional message being delivered?

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6. METER

MUS - Is there a discernible underlying sense of meter? Is the meter consistent?

PRS - Is the story or entertainment value interrupted by meter errors?

7. RANGE and TESSITURA

MUS - Is this a good piece of music for these voices?

PRS - Was the entertainment value diminished by out-of-range passages?

8. CONSTRUCTION and FORM

MUS - Does the form and construction of this piece work as a musical composition?

PRS - Was entertainment value enhanced or hindered by the way the arrangement or song was constructed?

9. EMBELLISHMENTS

MUS - Were the embellishments appropriate and performed artfully and do they raise the musicality of the performance of the song?

PRS - Did the embellishments contribute to the entertainment value of the presentation?

E. Shared Elements

When any shared element influences the score of either a MUS or PRS judge, it is appropriate during the evaluation sessions to mention the favorable or unfavorable contributing impact of that element on the total score. However, if that element is the primary focus of another category, the contestant should frequently be referred to the appropriate category for “fixes.” As stated earlier, while some recommended corrections may be well within the judge’s coaching ability, care should be taken to relate the problem and possible solution to the principal role and perspective of his own category.

On the other hand, it is important to note that the shared elements are no less an integral part of each category than are its unique aspects. An effective evaluation will focus as much or as little on the shared elements as is appropriate to the performance.

“In the barbershop style?” The responsibility for adjudicating the Definition of the Barbershop Style, which is written in four distinct paragraphs (See Chapter 2 of the *Contest and Judging Handbook*), has been specifically allocated among the three scoring categories. Music judges adjudicate paragraphs 1 and 2, Singing judges adjudicate paragraph 3, and Presentation judges adjudicate paragraph 4.

“Suitable to the performer?” Each category will evaluate this element from different perspectives. MUS may view this element, among other things, with respect to the difficulty level of the arrangement or song as compared to the experience level or capabilities of the performer. PRS may view this element, among other things, with respect to its appropriateness for the performer’s physical image, name, attire, or perceived age in relation to the lyrical content.

Category Overlap

“From the heart?” This means “Performers should strive to commit themselves to contribute something to the audience in an authentic, sincere, and heartfelt manner.” This will be a primary focus of the PRS category, while ‘from the heart’ may affect the development of theme (MUS).

F. Areas of Concentration by Grade Level

The scoring and evaluation of different levels of competitors may cause both MUS and PRS judges to vary their focus considerably. As performance levels increase, some trends among performance attributes can be viewed along a few continuums.

First there is the continuum of musical “craft” skills. These are the basic skills of singers to make music. An example of overlap between MUS and PRS in this area would be how to remove unmusical choppiness in the delivery of lyrics. Second, there is the continuum of musical “artistry” skills. These are the more advanced skills exhibited by fine musicians. Certainly the scoring and evaluation of these skills will have an even larger overlap between MUS and PRS. Specific areas of overlap in this area would include natural tone-color change to support the musical theme, command of rhythmic involvement, and a natural flow in tension and release toward an emotionally satisfying conveyance of the song. Third, there is the continuum of “execution” of craft and artistry skills. This ranges anywhere from “out of control” to “complete command” of the skills. A description of the PRS/MUS overlap by scoring grade from “D” to “A” follows:

1. “D” level performances are significantly lacking in both performance and basic musicianship skills. Such performances will be characterized by lack of consistent meter, rhythmic integrity, and melodic flow problems. In the lower end of the range, it is not uncommon to find additional issues involving accurate notes and words. Although the evaluation/coaching “fixes” may be similar from both PRS and MUS judges at this level, the perspective of the PRS judge will be to remove distractions from audience enjoyment, while the MUS judge will be educating the performer on the basic elements of good music. To ensure the contestant understands the differences between the categories, this difference in perspective should be made clear to the contestant during the evaluation, since the specific areas to be addressed will be so similar.
2. “C” level performances are often characterized by inattention to, or lack of knowledge regarding, theme and theme development. At the lower end of the range, there may also be basic craft issues to address. The PRS perspective on theme and theme development will be to help the contestant discover the most entertaining aspect of the song and work to develop this to create an entertaining experience for the audience. Areas addressed will include the use of such tools as volume and volume change, tempo and tempo change, melodic flow, and key-word inflection. The MUS judge’s perspective on theme is to encourage the group to become advocates of the musical theme, and he will suggest many of these same tools mentioned above but in a skills-based approach to get the most out of the material. Since many of the same terms will be used in the evaluation to address the performance, it will be necessary for both categories to emphasize the difference in perspective (PRS – creating entertainment value; MUS – creating a higher level of musicality) to ensure the contestant understands the difference between the categories.

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3. “B” level performances begin to exhibit both enjoyable performance skills and more refined musicality through a closer attention to basic craft, or through natural musical skills, or both. The overlap between MUS and PRS will be in the area of developing the musical artistry necessary to create an emotional impact on the audience. For craft oriented groups, the PRS perspective will be to work with the performer to help them develop a more “heartfelt” approach to the presentation, while the MUS perspective will be oriented toward transcending basic craft into artistry. For performers whose strengths are their natural musical skills, both PRS and MUS will work to develop a more consistent underlying craft. To avoid confusion, it should be emphasized to the performer that the PRS perspective is to avoid distractions from the creation of a truly emotional experience for the audience, while the MUS perspective will be to raise what might be “good music” to the level of “artistic music.”

4. “A” level performances show strong command of both craft and musical skills. Overlap between PRS and MUS regarding the few technical areas that might be addressed will be very similar and difficult to distinguish even though the relative perspectives remain entertainment vs. musicality. Both category evaluations will be on a very high plane but may utilize significantly different approaches. MUS may address how the music can be raised to a transcendental plane to achieve the potential that exists within the song. PRS may discuss how the audience’s opinion of the character and image of the group may influence the approach toward the song and how to take advantage of the rapport that the performer has developed with the audience.

G. Recommendations and Summary

The MUS and PRS categories are perhaps overlapped to a greater extent than any other pair of categories. The MUS category’s charge to adjudicate the “sensitive handling of musical elements” is very similar to the PRS category’s charge to ensure the “delivery is sensitive to the song and arrangement.” Further, the MUS category description’s language regarding the need to ensure the “musical elements...support the theme” is very similar to the PRS category description’s language regarding ensuring the “musical...methods convey the theme.”

Because of the extensiveness of the overlap and subtle distinctions between MUS and PRS, it is recommended that specific training at Category School be designed to identify appropriate vocabulary and reinforce the need to relate observations and recommendations in terms portraying the primary role of each category. That is, for MUS, tie comments to the material being performed, and for PRS, link comments to the entertainment value of the presentation.

II. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MUSIC AND SINGING

One elegant feature of our judging system is the considerable overlap among the categories. In the part III of The Judging System in this handbook, we read the following:

Each of the three categories --Music, Presentation, and Singing --should be a particular orientation or perspective from which a judge views the total performance, rather than a blinder that restricts his focus to a certain domain. To some extent, accordingly, all judges

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should be judging the total performance and, to some extent, certain elements of a barbershop performance will be evaluated by judges in two, or even all three, categories.

Music and Singing are both vitally concerned with the barbershop sound. The Singing Category Description puts it thusly:

The 'ring' of a barbershop chord will always be the hallmark of the style. Any listener to a barbershop performance expects to be thrilled by the sound of a ringing climax, or awed by the purity and beauty of a soft and elegant expression of a song.

Compare that to this passage from the Music Category Description:

The primary hallmark of the barbershop style is its consonant harmony. Thus, the quality of any barbershop performance depends largely on the presence, accurate execution, and artistic delivery of the consonant harmony traditionally identified with the barbershop style.

The simplest musical definition of consonance is lack of dissonance. In terms of the Music category, though, we mean essentially, are we hearing that great characteristic barbershop sound? Thus, there is great emphasis placed in both categories on ringing chords in artistic fashion.

Interestingly, it would seem that all vocal sounds that go into determining the Singing score are also taken into account in some fashion by Music. It may well be, however, that since both categories judge the entire performance from their own vantage point, everything audible that affects Music relative to performance also has some effect on the Singing judge.

Of course, there are also differences between the two categories. Music has primary responsibilities regarding style issues. Theme will capture more of the Music judge's attention too, though it certainly bears on the artistry that Singing takes into account, especially at the higher levels. Singing will focus closely on whether the chords are ringing while Music pays attention also to the structures that allow chords to ring to a given degree.

Music concerns itself greatly with the structure of the song/arrangement and how musically the performer brings that material to life. Singing deals much more with the vocal quality of each individual singer and how the consistency of proper technique is carried throughout all voices. A sound in good vocal quality will be freely produced, resonant and well articulated, and will have depth, color, definition, and a forward focus.

Despite the fact that both categories place great emphasis on the barbershop sound, they do not always look at this area in the same way. Singing is more concerned with how the tone is produced in the context of vocal freedom, quality, and lock and ring while Music focuses more on the tone in the context of theme, delivery and overall musicality.

Music is more concerned with unity in the sense of execution, which may be roughly defined as each singer's having the same idea of what is to be done and then doing it effectively as an ensemble. Synchronization, precision, volume relationships, blending of voices, variations in dynamics, phrasing, intonation, vocal ranges, and other factors interweave in this important area, affecting the vital touchstones of theme, delivery, and consonance. If Singing judges hear a unit sound that has full, matched resonance and intonation, tall sounds being freely produced,

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matched word sounds and the like, other execution problems will not disturb them as much as they do Music.

On the other hand, Singing is more focused than Music on unity in the sense of blend via a similar approach to vocal production with good quality, though that area is certainly important to Music as well. The latter is not quite as distracted by blend shortcomings that result in musical "noise."

A. Category Terminology

While a wide range of recommended corrections ("fixes") may be well within the judge's coaching ability, care should be taken during evaluations to relate the problem and possible solution to the principal role and perspective of his own category.

1. Music adjudicates how musically, artistically, and stylistically the performer brings the song/arrangement to life. Singing adjudicates the degree to which the performer achieves artistic singing in the barbershop style. Thus, some terminology will be unique to each category, and some will be shared.
2. Terms more likely to be used by the Music judge include chord progressions, homophony, consonance, embellishments, theme, and construction. Singing is more apt to use such terms as vocal quality, well supported, freely produced, formants, and articulation.
3. Since both categories are concerned with locking and ringing chords artistically, they use much of the same vocabulary; for example, intonation, resonance, unity, synchronization, sound flow, expansion, volume relationships blend, tone color and artistry. Because Music and Singing look for musical singing and correct singing, respectively, these terms are used in essentially the same fashion by each.
4. Singing deals more with terms involving the intricacies and specifics of vocal production per se while Music takes a more general approach to a musical barbershop sound. Judges must take care to use terms, and to provide assistance in evaluation sessions, in ways that are consistent with their category's focus.
5. Here are some examples of how each category might relate to a given area that concerns them. These examples are designed to illuminate possible differences in perspective, not to minimize legitimate overlap. In our evaluation sessions the most important issue is to establish category perspective up front and then to make certain that comments made are within that framework. And, indeed, within this framework, a tremendous percentage of the performance is "in bounds" for both categories.

a. TONE COLOR

MUS - Did it effectively support the song's theme, either throughout or in a given phrase?

SNG - Was it freely produced, in good quality and performed as a unit?

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b. RESONANCE

MUS - Were we hearing a consonant barbershop sound? If not, was the root cause in the material, in the execution, or a perceived defect in the musical skill set of the group?

SNG - Was the sound supported, tension-free, open, tall, and balanced by proper forward placement?

c. UNITY

MUS - How effective was the execution?

SNG - Did the voices blend well with good quality? Were the word sounds matched and performed together, and how did they affect expansion and sound flow?

d. DICTION

MUS - Did the delivery of the word sounds show that the group understood the musical theme of the song?

SNG - Was there clarity, accuracy, ease, uniformity, and expressiveness?

e. EXPANSION

MUS - Did we hear a musical, stylistic barbershop sound which supported the musical theme?

SNG - Did the group use proper technique to produce a quality sound that reinforced consonant overtones and produced combination tones? Was there sufficient resonance in the sound?

B. Shared Elements

When any shared element influences the score of either a MUS or SNG judge, it is appropriate during the evaluation sessions to mention the favorable or unfavorable contributing impact of that element on the total score. However, if that element is the primary focus of another category, the contestant should frequently be referred to the appropriate category for “fixes.” As stated earlier, while some recommended corrections may be well within the judge’s coaching ability, care should be taken to relate the problem and possible solution to the principal role and perspective of his own category.

On the other hand, it is important to note that the shared elements are no less an integral part of each category than are its unique aspects. An effective evaluation will focus as much or as little on the shared elements as is appropriate to the performance.

1. In the barbershop style? – The responsibility for adjudicating the Definition of the Barbershop Style, which is written in four distinct paragraphs (Chapter 2 of this handbook), has been specifically allocated among the three scoring categories. MUS judges adjudicate paragraphs 1 and 2, SNG judges adjudicate paragraph 3, and PRS judges adjudicate paragraph 4.

2. Ringing, in-tune sound? – Naturally SNG will be more heavily influenced by this area, as this is the core of the category. The MUS score will also depend significantly on theme and

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delivery. On the other hand, this aspect has much to do with a consonant barbershop sound, the hallmark of the style, so it is quite important to MUS.

3. In good quality? – Again, this is one of the SNG judges' main elements, so they are more concerned with this area, though MUS is affected in the core areas of consonance and theme.

4. Suitable to performer? – MUS will look at such matters as level of difficulty, vocal ranges, and the performers' personalities, ages and general ability to delivery the theme artistically. SNG will be more concerned with vocal abilities/capabilities and tessitura matters.

5. From the heart? – Though SNG is certainly concerned with artistry, this area impacts MUS more profoundly. If the singers are simply going through planned motions and not singing from the heart, it is quite difficult for them to render the theme of the song in musical fashion and to demonstrate their understanding through artistic delivery. SNG will be more focused on making the performers' vocal techniques less noticeable and more natural, so that they do not interfere with the perception of heart, and on giving them new techniques to enhance that perception.

C. Areas of Concentration by Grade Level

1. "A" Performances – In both categories, an overall perception of artistry that transcends technique is evident. Indeed, artistry comes into play more with the Singing category at this level than any other. MUS, on the other hand, is more focused on musical artistry, or the lack of it, at all levels. Since the barbershop sound is the most defining feature of our style, we count on the Singing category to make certain that the highest scores are given to the groups that lock and ring chords the best and most artistically. Still, the emotional aspects of an excellent performance rightly have some positive effect on the Singing judge. However, SNG has less leeway to be "blown away" by these aspects and thus is more analytical and critical at this level. In the A level, the Music judge sometimes finds that a group with low- or mid-A consonance can attain mid- or high-A musicality by virtue of outstanding theme and delivery. Conversely, a group that is ringing virtually every chord, but in mechanical fashion, will not achieve an excellent score.

2. "B" Performances – Groups performing at this level frequently demonstrate a good mastery of their art and craft. Though there will be plenty of overlap, this scoring range tends to require more than the others that each judge stick to his or her own category matters. Regarding tone color, for example, a Music judge might say, "This tender lyric message could be enhanced by a warmer tone color to deliver the theme more effectively. Try singing this warmer." In the evaluation session MUS should be free to offer some help in this area, though a deeper physical problem manifested by one or more singers ought to be referred to the Singing judge. The Singing judge will be more concerned with whether the tone color was produced well and done with correct vocal production. The Singing judge also can offer vocal techniques that would enhance and improve the group's musical plan.

3. "C" Performances – This may be the area where it is most tempting to give an inappropriately generic or broad evaluation. There is usually plenty of crossover available.

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The Singing judges will have plenty to do at this level, as these performances can span the gamut of their category, and will experience less temptation to stray than will the Music judges. MUS will have a wide field to choose from in offering suggestions to the group -- after all, every sound the ensemble makes bears on its musicality -- and overlap with SNG will be great. MUS must take care to focus on musical artistry, theme, and delivery, leaving specific SNG fixes primarily to those whose job they are.

4. "D" Performances – Again, SNG will probably have no difficulty finding lots in its own bailiwick to talk about, most likely the very basics of good vocal production and intonation. At this level, though, it is proper for MUS to spend considerable time on consonance, competent singing, and probably notes and words. After all, a group cannot get an effective theme established without good vocal tools. MUS needs to leave the nitty-gritty matters of vocal production, exercises, and such to SNG.

D. Recommendations and Summary

In evaluation sessions, MUS should de-emphasize recommendations on specific vocal-production techniques best left to SNG. Also, though consonance is vitally important, MUS must give adequate weight to theme and delivery.

It is confusing to our competitors when the two categories score a given performance differently and the Music judge(s) states that his or her (usually lower) score is heavily based on consonance. One explanation for this stems from the fact that SNG is more concerned with proper vocal production and technique. When fine vocal technique and production are present but other aspects of making a good barbershop sound (balance, intonation, synchronization and the like – all still important to Singing, of course) lag behind, MUS can be expected to view consonance in a less positive light than does SNG.

Secondly, since purely vocal matters constitute a smaller proportion of the Music category, MUS's view of consonance is more intertwined with other aspects of the performance (theme, delivery, and so on) than is the case with SNG. Thus, it can be said that MUS looks at consonance as something "in service of" other aspects of musicality. When a group sings with inconsistent intonation, then, MUS would be expected to be bothered more than SNG in light of the deleterious effects on theme and artistry. We heartily recommend cross-category training in this entire area.

Two aspects of consonance as judged by MUS are how the group is ringing what is written in the arrangement and what the potential is for these chords to ring. The latter is affected by whether there is a predominance of barbershop sevenths and major triads or, conversely, a goodly number of less ringable chords, such as minor triads, minor sevenths, and dissonances. Of course, chord voicing has a significant effect as well.

Tessitura and volume relationships are additional elements of overlap. Thus, we need to better educate our performers in choosing material that keeps each voice in its most effective range, as well as in balancing chords more effectively. SNG can be expected to be especially sensitive to

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whether voices are outside of their effective range while MUS can raise awareness regarding any structural matters – for example, chord voicing and voice leading – that cause problems.

Finally, we must make certain that each category's focus is clear to judge and competitor alike, and is maintained in both scoring and evaluation sessions. Establishing an appropriate context for all commentary, as MUS now does with the "nutshell," is critical. MUS must be certain that comments pertain to musicality, song elements, and stylistic acceptability and SNG must relate comments to producing the barbershop sound artistically. Considerable overlap among the categories is clearly beneficial, but blurring of category perspective can lead only to confusion.

III. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRESENTATION AND SINGING

The theory of overlap among the scoring categories is that each scoring category views the same performance but from a unique perspective. Some of the performance events that are observed may be the same (or “overlapped”) but described using varying terminology because of the different perspectives at play, or at times, using similar terminology but relating it to the central role of that judge’s category. The overlap areas will not necessarily contribute equally to the score in each category. The purpose of this paper is to state some principles that should be used by Singing and Presentation judges in dealing with issues where this overlap exists.

In general, the Singing judge evaluates the technical and qualitative aspects of the performer’s sound and vocal production while the Presentation judge evaluates the aspects of the performance that communicate the message of the song and generate emotional impact. Certainly, technical aspects of singing, such as intonation, synchronization, vocal production, and artistry, have a great impact on the generation of emotional impact. Just as certainly, techniques used by a performer to communicate a message, such as volume and tempo planning, vocal coloration, and staging and choreography, have a great impact on the perceived sound. The Presentation judge must remember to approach the scoring and evaluation of the technical singing aspects in terms of the effect they produce in generating emotional impact. Likewise, the Singing judge must remember to approach the scoring and evaluation of the presentation aspects of the performance in terms of how they impact the vocal production and sound of the performer. We have the potential to cause confusion in the contestants when a Presentation judge tries to offer fixes to the vocal production or vocal skill aspects of the performance or when a Singing judge tries to change the performance plan.

A. Shared Elements

When any shared element influences the score of either a Singing or Presentation judge, it is appropriate during the evaluation session to mention the favorable or unfavorable contributing impact of that element on the total score. However, if that element is the primary focus of another category, the contestant should frequently be referred to the appropriate category for “fixes.” While some recommended corrections may be well within the judge’s coaching ability, care should be taken to relate the problem and possible solution to the principal role and perspective of his own category.

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On the other hand, it is important to note that the shared elements are no less an integral part of each category than are its unique aspects. An effective evaluation will focus as much or as little on the shared elements as is appropriate to the performance.

“Ringin, in-tune sound” and “In good quality” are obviously primary concerns of the Singing category. These factors will have greater weight in the scoring by the Singing judge than by the Presentation judge. The technical performance of these factors and ways to correct any perceived problems should be addressed solely by the Singing judge in the evaluation session. The Presentation judge can note the influence of these factors on the effect of the performance but should not attempt to offer corrections to technical issues around problems in these areas.

While the Presentation judge might mention, for instance, a tuning problem in a featured chord, a segment of a song, or general intonation problems, he should not attempt to address what he thought the tuning issue was (“the baritone was flat on those two notes”). He might mention a perception of a mismatch between parts, or breath support problems, but if he does, he should relate it to the impact on the effect generated during the performance. He should never attempt to fix vocal production issues, even if qualified, as this will create confusion with the contestants.

The Singing judge might mention Presentation issues as they impact these factors. For instance, if the group does physical antics or uses a singing posture that he believes impacts the quality, tuning, etc., he certainly should bring that up in his evaluation. However, he should be careful to only relate it to the impact on the above and should not attempt to suggest changes to staging, choreography, etc., to avoid creating confusion. The contestant should get feedback from the Presentation judge on the impact of the staging or choreography on the effect produced and from the Singing judge on how it affected the SNG score, and the contestant then has to determine the best compromise between the two.

Other areas of vocal production, such as the placement of the tone (nasal, throat singing, etc.) and the vocal timbre and coloration used, certainly affect both categories. Again, the Presentation judge should be only scoring and commenting on these areas as they relate to the effect produced on the impact of the performance and should not evaluate nor comment upon whether he feels they are good or bad vocal techniques. Likewise, the Singing judge should only comment on these areas as related to the technical requirements of his category and how to use better vocal techniques to improve and enhance the performers plan. The Singing judge should address anything that he perceives to be incorrect vocal technique but should do so when it pertains to proper sound production and techniques to enhance the impact of the vocal performance.

“From the heart” is obviously the primary concern of the Presentation judge. The impact, or lack thereof, of the vocal and visual presentation plan and how to change or improve it to maximize the impact of the performance should be addressed primarily by the Presentation judge in the evaluation session. While the Singing judge might mention his perception of the presence or absence of “from the heart” singing in his evaluation and the impact this had on his score, he should only attempt to improve vocal techniques utilized in the presentation plan for the contestant and should not attempt to change the visual aspects of the plan.

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If the Singing judge is going to address suitability to the performer, this should be for technical vocal skill, capability or tessitura reasons, and not because he feels that the performer cannot suitably present the emotional content of the song effectively. Likewise, if the Presentation judge is going to address suitability to the performer, this should be from the perspective of a lack of performance skill or ability to effectively communicate the message of the song in all its fullness and not because of a perceived lack of vocal production skill.

B. Areas of Concentration by Grade Level

The focus of the scoring and evaluation of performances shifts dramatically according to the level of the performance. While each judge must obviously use his or her own experience to determine the right level of commentary for a given performer, below are some general guidelines, by scoring band, to use in helping to address those areas of potential overlap.

1. “D” performances: When evaluating a D performance, it is perfectly appropriate for a Presentation judge to spend most of his time talking about singing quality issues, while putting a slant on this around impact on communication of a message and mood creation. It is very important that the Presentation judge, when addressing singing issues, relate them in terms of the PRS category. This will reinforce the points that will doubtless also be made by the Singing judge but will keep the contestant from thinking that this was another SNG evaluation. For instance, if tuning is a major issue, the Presentation judge should certainly mention this in the evaluation but should make sure to address the fact that the reason he is mentioning it is that out-of-tune singing distracts the audience from getting into and enjoying the message of the song. The Singing judge will spend all of his time on category-specific comments, and not talk about much else, unless he saw obvious PRS issues (staging, for example) that impacted the ability to sing. In D-level evaluations, the focus is on the technical issues and not as much on the particular songs performed, except to reinforce the points made.

2. “C” performances: The C-level performance provides lots of opportunity for specific category-related discussion, but there are increased instances where crossover can occur as they relate to intonation, quality, etc., for the Presentation judge, and physical presence and delivery (energy, focus, gestures, etc.) for the Singing judge. For a C performance, it's perfectly appropriate for a Presentation judge to talk to the group about singing quality, tuning issues, etc. and how those impact all three categories. However, the Presentation judge should be using category-specific language and examples to make his points. For example, if the Presentation judge is going to talk about the flow of sound, legato singing technique, or energizing ends of phrases, he should make sure to tell the contestant how this impacts the flow of the emotion of the song. The Singing judge will talk mostly about technical issues from his category but might bring in more points around flow of the sound, physical energy support of the sound that might also impact the visual sell, etc. Again, the primary focus is more on the technical points to be made than the songs performed, other than to back up the points made with specific examples from the songs. Each judge must be careful to only talk to the contestant about the issues that are in his own category and not attempt to “fix” things that are outside his category description, even if he has the ability to do so.

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3. “B” performances: For B-level performances the focus for both categories becomes quality and competency vs. artistry issues. There will be many performance issues that impact both the PRS and SNG category in these performances. Each judge should spend the great majority of his time discussing his own category issues unless there is an obvious cross-category issue, like a group standing stiff with no expression mentioned by a Singing judge or a group singing occasionally out of tune or with some technical flaw (non-legato, etc.) that affects the Presentation judge. The focus of these evaluations is much more on the specific performance while still making general points to carry over to all songs.

There will be many opportunities for overlap in the evaluation sessions for ‘B’ performances, and it is vital that each judge keep his comments all related to his category’s perspective and that he not attempt to “fix” things that do not fall under his category description.

4. “A” performances: For A performances the focus of the evaluation changes to the identification of the few issues that were not at the quality level of the rest of the performance and to helping the group increase the artistry level of the performance. Presentation judges should feel free to comment on how the quality of the singing performance enhanced the PRS scoring and to point out any specific places where the vocal quality particularly enhanced or detracted. The Singing judge should feel free to point out any places where PRS aspects, such as particularly heartfelt singing, vocal coloration, and expression, perhaps even particularly supportive staging/visual enhancement, contributed to the overall SNG score. The focus of these evaluations is almost exclusively on details of the particular song performances in an effort to compliment the gems and correct the nits of the performances.

C. Recommendations and Summary

While it is important to acknowledge that natural overlap exists between performance items addressed by the SNG and PRS categories, it is equally important to remember that items that potentially overlap must always be addressed by each judge from the perspective of how they affect his own category. Each judge must be able to articulate how each item discussed is addressed in his category description and how it impacted his score. While other recommended corrections may be well within the judge’s coaching ability, care should be taken to relate the problem and possible solution to the principal role and perspective of his own category.

7/2/2000

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GLOSSARY

AD LIB: the style in which a song segment is delivered without particular attention to the meter, but within the described form of the passage being sung.

ARRANGEMENT: the harmonization of the song with embellishments and other added material.

ARRANGEMENT DEVICE: a musical element contained in the arrangement of the song that provide opportunities to enhance the theme of the song and the barbershop style of performing it.

ATTACK: the onset of sound; characterized by three basic types: aspirate, glottal, and coordinated.

BEAT: in Singing, a pulsation in sound intensity produced by the combination of two or more tones or partials of slightly different frequency; the beat frequency is equal to the difference in frequency between any pair of tones; in Rhythm and Meter, a metrical pulse which, when combined in recurring patterns of strong and weak beats, defines Meter.

CHROMATIC: the adjective used in connection with the chromatic scale or instruments that can produce all, or nearly all, the pitches; the chromatic scale consists of 12 tones, each 1/2 tone higher, ascending, or 1/2 tone lower, descending.

CIRCLE OF FIFTHS: (1) generally defined as root progression of chords by descending fifths; classic barbershop progressions are created by the use of secondary dominants resolving by descending fifths back to the tonic “around the circle of fifths;” (2) the twelve tones of the chromatic scale arranged in a sequence of ascending or descending perfect fifths.

CLIMAX: the point of maximum emotion in the song.

CLOSED POSITION VOICING: the distribution of notes in a chord when all four voices fall on consecutive notes of the chord, and the interval from the highest to lowest note is an octave or less.

COLOR: variation in timbre of the vocal sound for effect; the quality of the vocal sound that evokes emotional response. (See Timbre.)

COMBINATION TONE: in musical acoustics, a tone of different pitch that is heard when two loud tones are sounded simultaneously; its frequency is the difference or sum of the frequencies of the two primary tones or of their multiples.

COMEDIC: a style of song or performance that focuses on the humorous value of the presentation; it may be generated by the words, performer’s style, or both.

COMPLETE CHORDS: voicings in which all chord tones are present.

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CONSONANCE: a pleasing sound resulting from the combination of two or more tones whose frequencies are related as the ratios of small whole numbers and in which the roughness related to the beat phenomenon is reduced to a minimum.

CONSONANT: (1) referring to Consonance; (2) any non-vowel sound, including pitched (m, n, l, r, ng), voiced (b, d, g, j, v, z), unvoiced (c, ch, f, h, p, s, sh, t).

CONSTRUCTION: the order and organization of the components of the song (introduction, verse, chorus, interlude, coda, etc.).

CONTRAST: (1) the variation applied to a performance after the establishment of unity; (2) the variation in the melodic lines of song phrases, as in the B section of an AABA song form.

CRESCENDO: a gradual increase in volume.

DIFFERENCE TONE: a type of combination tone created, when two loud tones sound simultaneously, that differs in pitch from the two sounded tones; its frequency is the difference of the frequencies of the two primary tones or of their multiples.

DIMINUENDO: a gradual decrease in volume.

DISSONANCE: the absence of consonance, characterized by a rough sound resulting from the beats produced by two or more tones whose frequencies do not relate.

DIVORCED VOICING: the vertical organization of voice parts resulting when the lowest or highest note in the chord is distantly removed from the other three voices.

DYNAMICS: the use of contrasting energies, colors, vocal volumes, or physical motions, for effect.

ENERGY: the presence of vitality, intensity, liveliness, etc., in the vocal and visual parts of the presentation.

EMBELLISHMENTS: swipes, echoes, key changes, back time, and other devices, which elevate the music from the level of a harmonization to that of an arrangement.

ENHARMONIC: the relationship between two notes of different spelling that are identical on keyboard instruments, e.g., B# and C.

EQUAL TEMPERAMENT: a method of tuning that divides the octave into 12 equal-ratio half steps, such as is used in tuning pianos; barbershop singers do not tune vertically using equal temperament, but it is satisfactory for melodic lines and in staying true to the tonal center for songs whose melodies do not progress harmonically more than three steps on the “circle of fifths.” (See Pythagorean Tuning.)

Glossary

EXPANDED SOUND: the effect resulting from the combined interaction of voices singing with accurate intonation, with uniform word sounds in good quality, with proper volume relationships that reinforce the more compatible harmonics and combination tones, and with precision, all producing an effect greater than the sum of the individual voices.

FERMATA: the symbol placed over a note or rest to indicate that it is to be prolonged beyond its normal duration; also called a pause or hold.

FIRST INVERSION CHORD: a chord whose lowest note is a third above the nominal root of the chord.

FLOW: the sensation of progress, motion, and orderliness of the vocal and visual aspects of a performance.

FOCAL POINT: a specific place, direction, or location to which the performer wishes to draw attention.

FOCUS: the object of the song: an idea, feeling, person, place, or time (not to be confused with focal point).

FORM: the pattern of the two-, four-, or eight-measure phrases that subdivide the song's Verse or Chorus or other major section (Trio, Patter, etc.).

FORMANTS: a series of broad resonant frequency bands that correspond to the natural resonant frequencies of the vocal tract; during singing, unique patterns of resonant formant frequencies are established that are influenced by the positioning of the jaw, tongue, lips, etc.

FORTE: loud.

FORTISSIMO: very loud.

FORWARD MOTION: the sense of progress of the presentation, that is, the use of musical tempo and physical development to lead toward a climax.

FREE STYLE: the style in which a song segment is presented without regard to a symmetrical time balance (meter or rhythm) or phrase structure (form).

FREQUENCY: the number of periodic vibrations or cycles occurring per second.

FULLNESS: the sense of space or size of a sound, not to be confused with volume.

FUNDAMENTAL: the name for the harmonic of the lowest frequency of a harmonic series.

GESTURES: actions of the hands, arms, head, or other body movement designed to illustrate or amplify the theme of the song.

Glossary

GLISSANDO: a movement from one pitch to another during which discrete rather than continuous pitches are heard. (See Portamento.)

GLOTTAL ATTACK/RELEASE: the beginning or ending of voiced sound resulting from the opening or closure of the vocal folds by direct pressure of the singer, rather than by starting and stopping of air movement across them; as this forces the two halves of the vocal folds in direct contact, it is not conducive to good vocal-fold health or good vocal production.

HARMONIC: tones of higher pitch that are present in a regular series in nearly every musical sound and whose presence and relative intensity determine the timbre of the musical sound; another term for overtone or part of a complex tone or partial.

HARMONIC PARTIALS: another name for overtones or harmonics.

HARMONIC SERIES: a theoretically infinite number of tones whose frequencies are small whole number multiples of the frequency of a pure fundamental note.

HARMONIZATION: the basic setting of the melody with three harmonizing parts.

HOMOPHONY/HOMOPHONIC: music in which one voice part carries the melody and is supported by chord tones in the other voice parts, with all voice parts moving together in the same rhythm, on the same words; relating to homophony (adj.). (See Polyphony.)

IMPLIED HARMONY: a succession of harmonies and chord progressions suggested by the song's melody.

INFLECTION: a distinctive emphasis of volume or color for effect; pulsation.

INTENSITY: in presentation, intensity refers to a focus of energy; in singing, intensity is perceived as energy expended to project the sound, although technically, the intensity of a sound wave is proportional to the square of both the amplitude and the frequency and decreases with the square of the distance separating the sound source and the listener.

INTERPOLATION: the insertion of a short segment from another song.

INTERPRETATION: the performer's choice of theme, moods, and action (vocal and visual) from among the many options offered by the composition and its arrangement.

INTERNAL GENERATION: a condition whereby the feeling conveyed comes from a real, true, and heartfelt condition (as opposed to trite, phony, artificial).

INTONATION: the degree to which the tonal center appropriate to any point in a song remains invariant, and the degree of maintenance of consonant-interval relationships between the harmony parts and the anticipated melodic line.

Glossary

JUST INTONATION: used in barbershop singing for the vertical tuning of chords, just intonation is a method of tuning that relies on intervals tuned in the ratios of small whole numbers, as derived from the natural overtone series.

LARYNX: the “voice box” in the throat containing the vocal folds.

LEGATO: the style of smooth connection of successive notes.

LOCK and RING: “lock” refers to the feeling associated with a justly in-tune chord, whose quality is determined by the degree of intonation achieved in and between the individual voice parts (See Just Intonation); “ring” is the sound resulting from the production and reinforcement of harmonics in the composite voice parts, derived from the ringing quality contained in the individual voices.

LOUDNESS: the magnitude of the auditory sensation produced by sound; loudness relates closely to intensity and frequency, but because the ear is non-linear in its response – being most sensitive to higher frequencies and higher intensity levels – our perception of loudness is subjective.

LYRIC: the words of a song; a style of song relying mainly on story values.

MARCATO: a strong sense of pulsation or accent akin to marching music.

MEDLEY: a construction in which major portions of two or more songs are used.

MELODIC STYLIZATION: changing the melody to provide musical contrast while maintaining a balance between the alterations and a character suggestive of the original song.

MELODY: the pattern of notes of a song; a style of song that relies principally upon melody for its impact.

METER: the orderly pattern of beats and measures of a song.

MEZZO FORTE/MEZZO PIANO: mezzo forte is moderately loud, less loud than forte; mezzo piano is moderately soft, but louder than piano.

MIGRATION: the natural tendency to change vowel sound and timbre with changes of pitch or volume.

MODIFICATION: the conscious adjustment of the vocal tract/formant frequencies to correct for the natural tendency of migration of the vocal sound; though modification amounts differ for different singers, normal modifications could include a slight brightening of timbre when low or soft and a slight broadening when high or loud.

MUSIC: the song and arrangement as performed.

Glossary

MUSICALITY: the degree of artistic sensitivity to the pleasing, harmonious qualities of music, as demonstrated in the performance.

NON-SINGING TIME: all elements of a performance other than those performed while singing.

OVERTONES: harmonics of second order or higher; it is usual to refer to the first overtone as the second harmonic, the second overtone as the third harmonic, etc.

PARTIALS: see Overtones.

PAUSE/GRAND PAUSE: see Fermata.

PHARYNX: the area of the throat that is subject to rather accurate control by the singer. It is the area above the larynx extending upward behind the mouth and nose.

PHRASING: a manifestation of the natural thought process contained in a complete phrase; it includes the addition or reduction of value to parts of a phrase, sentence, or word.

PIANISSIMO: very soft.

PITCH: the sensation of relative highness or lowness of a tone, determined primarily by the frequency of vibration of the sound-producing medium; the location of a musical sound in the tonal scale.

POLYPHONY/POLYPHONIC: music that combines several melodic lines, each of which retains its identity as a line to some degree, as distinct from homophony; relating to polyphony (adj.).

PORTAMENTO: moving smoothly from one tone to another tone, continuously changing pitch; sometimes inaccurately referred to as glissando.

PRECISION: the quality of exact coordination of attacks, releases, vowels, diphthongs, volume balancing, physical movement, etc.

PRESENTATION: the giving or sharing of a musical performance.

PROPS: portable inanimate articles used to enhance a presentation.

PULSE BEAT: the stress beat or metronomic pulse in a composition; the rhythmic pulse on which the primary vowel sound should occur.

PUNCH LINE: occasions of major surprise, incongruity, or other comedic impact; may be expressed vocally, visually, or both.

PUSH BEAT: the accent of a syncopated pulse that occurs before either the strong or weak beat in a given meter.

Glossary

PYTHAGOREAN TUNING: a tuning of the scale characterized by pure fifths (3:2), pure fourths (4:3), and whole tones defined as the difference between a pure fifth and a fourth ($3:2 - 4:3 = 9:8$); tuning used by melody singers when the melody's implied harmony progresses at least four steps on the circle-of-fifths away from tonal center.

RELEASE: the termination or cessation of sound.

RESONATOR: that which acoustically reinforces the initial sound produced. The throat, mouth, and nasal passages make up the primary resonators for the voice.

REST: a suspension of the lyric, melody, or physical motion for a specified duration; used by the performer to heighten, sustain, or change moods.

RHYTHM: the distinctive pattern of relative duration of notes or syllables in successive measures of a song; a type of song that features rhythm.

RING: see Lock and Ring.

ROOT-POSITION CHORD: a chord in which the root of the chord is the lowest tone.

RUBATO: the style of moderate variation of tempo or duration of notes while maintaining a sense of meter.

SECOND-INVERSION CHORD: a chord in which the fifth of the chord is the lowest tone.

SETS: large, fixed articles of staging intended to enhance a presentation; not typical of barbershop contest presentations.

SONG: the composer's melody, lyrics, rhythm, and implied harmony, in conjunction with any added song elements provided by the arranger.

STACCATO: the style of separate, detached execution of notes.

STAGE PRESENCE: the physical persona of the performer as it relates to comfort or command of the stage and the music being performed.

STRONG VOICING: a voicing that places the root or fifth of the chord in the bass and has no divorced tones in the chord.

SUBJECTIVE TONE: another term for combination tone.

SUM TONE: a combination tone that is similar to a difference tone; instead of the frequency of the note produced being the difference of the two primary pitches, it is the sum of those two pitches.

Glossary

SYNCOPIATION: the displacement or shifting of accents: the contradiction of the regular succession of strong and weak beats within a measure or a group of measures whose metrical context remains clearly defined by some part of the musical texture that does not itself participate in the syncopation; attacks that occur between the beats rather than on them.

SYNCHRONIZATION: the degree of coordination achieved in the execution of chord progressions and word sounds.

TESSITURA: “the general ‘lie’ of a vocal part, whether high or low in its average pitch. It differs from range in that it does not take into account a few isolated notes of extraordinarily high or low pitch.” [Willi Apel, ed., *Harvard Dictionary of Music* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), 839.]

TEMPO: the rate of speed of the beats of a song.

TENUTO: a slight holding or lengthening of a note.

TEXTURE: the effect of relative fullness of the vocal sound upon the listener, described in terms such as “thin,” “thick,” “transparent,” “opaque,” “light,” and “dense.”

THEME: the essential, featured element in the music, whether it be lyrics, melody, harmony, rhythm, or, in rare instances, combinations of those elements.

THIRD INVERSION CHORD: a chord in which the third note above the theoretical root is the lowest tone.

TIMBRE: the harmonic profile or sound quality of a sound source or instrument; also called “tone color.” Certain descriptive words may be used to express the effect of musical timbre or tone color, such as: dark-brilliant; rich-mellow; fuzzy-clear; dull-sharp; complex-simple.

TIMING: the sensitivity of the performer to action/reaction moments in the presentation and its effect on communication with the audience.

TONAL CENTER: the keynote of the melodic phrase or series of phrases, used to define the beginning and ending of the chord progressions implied by the melody.

TRAVEL: the movements used to enhance and support the theme of the song.

TREMOLO: commonly means the excessive vibrato that leads to loss of distinct sense of a central pitch; usually results from lack of breath control and faulty control of the singing mechanism.