

Physical Performance

Category Rules

This category is for performances that primarily involve physical movement (other than dance), including acrobatics, balancing, juggling, miming, mummering, sleight of hand, tumbling, stilt-walking, magic, plate-spinning, and any other similar art. Performers may do one or more different kinds of movement (e.g. juggling and tumbling). Interpretation should be done with period materials and likely scenarios. The tradition drawn on may be European, Middle Eastern, East Asian, Slavic, or from another culture that had documentable contact with Western Europe before 1600 C.E. The performance may be by a group or an individual. Groups will be evaluated as a single ensemble unless one or more entrants wish to be judged as individuals; in this case, individual entrants will register for the competition as separate entries and remind the judges that they are to be scored individually. Individual entrants will be judged on their own performances only; any other performer is not scored, except as it directly impacts the entrant's performance. Performances that involve potentially dangerous materials, such as fire, should be prepared to perform outdoors. Any entry that exhibits danger to the entrant(s), animal performers, judges, or audience will be immediately disqualified. Live performances may be no longer than 15 minutes. Performers may present excerpts or abridgements of a longer routine in order to comply with this time limit. Entrants who require space or equipment not available or usable at the event site should provide a video of the performance, plus equipment with which to play the recording without internet. The performance must be no longer than 15 minutes; for longer videos, the entrant must clearly indicate in the documentation which 15 minutes of the performance the judges should examine. Judged material need not be contiguous and may include up to five segments, as needed.

Research and Documentation (Score: 0-4 points)

A copy of the documentation must be provided to each judge. For full points, the documentation should discuss the societal context (i.e., where it would have been performed, by whom, under what circumstances, in what kind of physical space, for what purpose, etc.); the particular kind of physical performance as well of choices of materials, movements, etc., as they relate to the relevant historical place(s) and period(s) insofar as this information is available; and, if relevant, brief information on searches which failed to yield useful information.

Recognizing that some kinds of physical performance have limited amounts of source material, judges shall evaluate such entries with an allowance for a greater amount of intelligent guesswork on the part of the entrant, while still expecting a sincere attempt to document the entry.

- 0 No documentation provided with entry. Face-to-face judging adds very little information.
- 1 Minimal information is provided for time, place, style. Face-to-face judging adds some background info.
- 2 As in #1, generalized sources with no emphasis on primary and/or scholarly resources. In face-to-face judging, no further understanding of resources is evident. Materials/methods of composition described.
- 3 As in #2, there is a good balance of resources: primary and/or scholarly sources well supported by other resources. Documentation and/or face-to-face judging provides well developed discussion of research. Materials and methods of composition are described and reasons for choices discussed.
- 4 As in #3, in-depth and extensive documentation provides a good balance of resources, emphasizing primary (if available) and/or scholarly resources backed up with a significant selection of other resources. Documentation and/or face-to-face judging provide a good explanation of original research and experimentation related to the research. Face-to-face judging indicates a keen grasp of the research and the entrant can discuss it easily with active engagement. Appendices included in documentation (if any) help provide further pertinent information to subject and time period.

Materials and Methods (Score: 0-4 points)

Rank the historical accuracy, not the difficulty, of materials and methods where possible, and (where historic practice is unknown) the reasonableness of conjectures. Depending on the kind of performance, materials may include props and other objects, spoken words, and particular moves. Substitution of modern materials for period ones will be allowed, provided they are logical and the differences between the substitute and the original material/method adequately explained in the documentation. Specifically, substitutions are allowed when the historically accurate material would be expensive/difficult to obtain, dangerous, or when the entrant's personal characteristics (age, sex, race, etc.) would historically have prevented the entrant from participating in the activity.

- 0 Entry is completely modern with no relationship to period elements or practices.
- 1 Use of modern materials and methods to produce a performance that conforms only slightly to the medieval or Renaissance period.
- 2 Use of period (or modern, if explained) materials and methods to produce a performance that is evocative of the chosen time and place.
- 3 Use of period (or modern, if explained) materials and methods to produce a performance that feels mostly authentic (ex: three people tumbling, but with no reference to where the performance takes place).
- 4 Use of period (or modern, if explained) materials/methods in a performance that feels totally authentic (ex: juggling balls, clubs, rings, and manipulating diablos and devil sticks as if performing in a marketplace).

Scope (Score: 0-6 points for each bullet item)

Rank the **ambition**, not the success, of the entry for each applicable element respective to the intended style.

- Technical difficulty: Depending on the activity, this may include the amount of coordination, dexterity, strength, and/or limberness required. Does the performance use mostly basic moves or more advanced ones? How many different kinds of moves are included?
- Appropriate audience interaction: If the performance uses audience interaction or it would greatly enhance the performance, look at the methods the performer uses to connect with the audience, including speech, gestures, making faces, soliciting audience participation, etc.
- Showmanship: How entertaining/attention-grabbing is the performance? Has the entrant planned a sequence of events that builds excitement over time? Are transitions smooth? How well did the performer recover from mistakes? (Preference is given to maintaining concentration or even incorporating the mistake into the performance.) The feeling of a performance should be maintained throughout the performance with no noticeable dropping of the performing persona. Does the entrant make the performance look effortless when this would enhance the performance?
- Use of space: How does the performance interact with the space in which the performance is held? Is the amount of space used effective and appropriate? How does the performer deal with the challenges of the performance space (poor lighting, background noise, etc.)?

Optional

- Spoken words. Judge this category if the performance includes talking to the audience or other speech as part of the performance. Is the speech historically appropriate/SCA appropriate? Is it entertaining?
- Ensemble challenges. Judge this category if there is more than one performer. This includes all aspects of the entry in which performers interact (ex.: juggling objects between people, group gymnastics).

Skill (Score: 0-6 points for each bullet item)

How well are the technical aspects of the piece executed? Rank the **success** of the entry for each of the following (see Scope for descriptions).

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| • Technical difficulty. | • Showmanship. |
| • Appropriate audience interaction. | • Use of space. |
- Optional*
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| • Spoken words. | • Ensemble challenges. |
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Ingenuity (Score: 0-4 points)

Judge the ingenuity of the entry. Was the entrant resourceful and inventive in their approach to creating their entry? Does the entry reflect the entrant's vision of period context? Is original thought, contemplation, interpretation and vision, according to the entrant's period interpretation evident?

Judge's Observation (Score: 0-6 points)

Rank the performance as a whole: How well do all the separately judged parts fit together? The entry's overall effect is judged here. Points may be given for impressive aspects that may not fit in other categories (ex: piece learned from medieval notation; staging/costuming greatly enhanced performance). This is the only section where judges may allow personality/private opinions/personal preferences to influence scoring.