

# Spoken Performance: Period Style

## Category Rules

This category is for all spoken-word performances, poetry or prose, recited or improvised. Pieces performed may be period (pre-17th c.) or in a period style, either from Europe or any culture that had documentable contact with Europe before 1600 C.E. Pieces from after 1600 C.E. must be period in style, such as those that would score highly as an entry in the Literary Composition categories. Dramatized performances (i.e., performances where actors take the roles of characters, with blocking, costuming, props, etc.); should be entered in the Dramatic Performance category.

The performance may be by a group or an individual. Groups of performers 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 will 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), judges, or audience will be immediately disqualified. The performance may be no longer than 15 minutes. Performers may present excerpts or abridgements of a longer work in order to comply with this time limit.

## Research and Documentation (Score: 0-4 points)

A copy of the documentation must be provided to each judge. It should include historical information relevant to the piece, as well as justification for performance decisions. For full points, the documentation must list period sources for performance techniques, a discussion of the style of piece in period, and societal context (where, when, and by whom the piece would have been performed). If the piece performed is in a language other than modern English, documentation must include the piece in the original language and a translation (translator listed).

- 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 are given with no emphasis on primary and/or scholarly resources. In face-to-face judging, no further understanding of the resources is evident. Materials and methods of composition of the entry are 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 quality and accuracy, not the difficulty, of the materials and methods used in the performance. Materials include the piece performed and other information conveyed as part of the performance. Methods include the performance style and methods of combining and interpreting material. Entrants will not be penalized for performing material that they would have been prevented from performing in period because of their personal characteristics (age, sex, race, etc.) or for changing or eliminating material that would be greatly offensive to a modern audience, provided the changes are logical and the differences between the substituted material and the original material are adequately explained in the documentation.

- 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 does not conform to period practice but which has some relationship to the medieval or Renaissance period (ex: Pennsic War story).
- 2 Use of **both** modern and period materials and methods to produce a performance that is evocative of the intended style (ex: a story originally in a foreign language that is performed in modern English).
- 3 Use of primarily period materials and methods to produce a performance that feels authentic (ex: piece is from pre-1600, performed in an approximately period style).
- 4 Use of totally authentic materials and methods (ex: piece is pre-1600 or if newly written follows period writing styles, and performance uses period performance techniques).

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

Rank the **ambition**, not the success, of the entry for each of the following elements.

- Audience interaction and awareness.
- Interpretation.
- Physical technique (facial expressions, gestures, movements, pantomime, use of space, etc.).
- Vocal technique (variety of tone, pitch, volume, inflection, projection, articulation, dialect, etc.).

#### *Optional*

- Editorial work: If the entrant has done significant work to transform the source material. This includes abridgement, translation, reconstruction, stylistically appropriate improvisation, combining material from two or more period sources, etc., as appropriate to the piece and style.
- Ensemble synthesis: If there is more than one performer. This category includes all aspects of the performance wherein performers interact with one another, as appropriate to the style of the piece.
- Improvisation: Unless the performance is reproduced wholly from memory, without changing each time it is performed. This category includes all elements that are chosen and implemented during the performance.
- Interaction with props, costumes, set pieces, musical instruments, etc.: If present. Judge only the performer's **use** of these pieces; quality of items may be scored in the Judge's Observation section.
- Memorization: Unless the performer has documented that memorization is inappropriate for the piece. This category refers to the amount of music and/or number of performance elements performed from memory.

### **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).

- Audience interaction and awareness.
- Interpretation.
- Physical technique.
- Vocal technique.

#### *Optional*

- Editorial work.
- Ensemble synthesis.
- Improvisation.
- Interaction with props, costumes, set pieces, musical instruments, etc.
- Memorization.

### **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 in this section, and points may be given for aspects of the performance that may not fit in other categories (ex: accurate costuming for the piece's period and culture). This is the only section of the Criteria where the judge may allow her/his/their personality, private opinions, and personal preferences to influence scoring.