SASKATCHEWAN MUSIC FESTIVAL ASSOCIATION

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ADJUDICATOR BRIEFING

Dear SMFA Adjudicator:

On behalf of the Saskatchewan Music Festival Association President, Theresa Brost, I thank you for agreeing to adjudicate at one of our 49 affiliated music festivals. The part you play in these festivals is an important one indeed! The 'cast of thousands' involved in producing our annual festivals includes volunteers at the district and provincial levels, provincial office staff, music selection committee, music distributors, teachers, students, parents and patrons.

Your part is essential because it allows us to perform our art and receive criticism in the very best sense of the word. We all benefit from hearing the performance in the light of your **constructive criticism and encouragement.** Remember, this is a 'Festival' experience not an examination!

Please read and familiarize yourself with the attached briefing documents and the current Rules & Regulations (if you require a 2010–2012 Syllabus, please contact our office or see our website). Also available from our office, as a resource, is a DVD that SMFA recently produced entitled *The Art of Adjudicating*. This DVD covers the philosophy behind our festivals, the rules and regulations, the marking guidelines, as well as possible scenarios in which adjudicators find themselves. In addition, an article *Music Adjudication: An Art in Itself* by John Griffiths can be found online at http://www.smfa.ca/Administration/Adjudicators/adjudicators.htm

The district festival committee will meet with you prior to your first session to provide a more in-depth briefing. If you have any questions or comments please contact our office.

Yours truly,

SASKATCHEWAN MUSIC FESTIVAL ASSOCIATION INC.

Carol Donhauser

Carol Donhauser, Executive Director
Saskatchewan Music Festival Association

sk/Attach.

Travel, Local Accommodation, Expenses

To assist you in making travel arrangements, an "Information Form" for each festival assignment is sent to both you and the district festival secretary/administrator. Please advise the district's contact ***directly*** of your exact ***travel plans***, so arrangements can be made to meet you at the bus or airport. If you are flying, it would be appreciated if you would make your reservations well ahead of time to ensure seat sale prices.

Adjudicators must reserve and purchase their own air, train, or bus tickets unless otherwise notified by a district festival. Car rental is at your own expense and will not be reimbursed by the festival.

The district festival secretary is responsible for making local accommodation arrangements for you and will take care of your hotel bill. Most festivals prefer to give their adjudicators a cash per diem upon arrival to cover costs of meals but some prefer that you charge your meals directly to the hotel or pay for them yourself.

Expense Form

An expense form is provided for you and can also be found on our website at www.smfa.ca. It is important to complete this form fully and accurately. Hand in the completed expense form to the district committee for payment following the festival assignment. Please submit copies of all bills, for which you have paid - travel, meals, taxis, etc.

Note: Bar bills, laundry, baby sitters, and long distance phone calls are not allowable expenses.

The district festival is responsible for reimbursement costs of travel, food, and accommodation of the ***adjudicator only.***

Adjudicating

Each performer, from the best to the ones who trail the class, is given a ***verbal*** adjudication as well as a ***written*** one. It is customary to give these adjudications at the conclusion of each class, but you may wish to group 2 or 3 successive small classes together. The verbal adjudication gives you the opportunity to deal with general as well as specific problems, and to demonstrate by performing a technique, part of, or all the selection, etc. Spend a minute or so on each person, depending on your time, and perhaps 2 or 3 minutes for a few general remarks to all. Remember that your adjudication is directed not only to the student but also for the benefit of everyone in the audience. If you feel your voice does not project well please ask the committee for the use of a microphone.

You may be asked to adjudicate a small number of entries in a less-familiar area of specialization: please base your judgments on the musical qualities of the performance and don't worry that you may not be able to give detailed, technical assistance. Please don't say "I know nothing about the _____".

Marking

A sample adjudication sheet is also attached. It shows the official table of rating this Association uses. Numerical marks are given only to the top two performers and these marks are announced by you at the end of your verbal remarks. All other performers are to be assigned a rating by letter rather than number, according to the table on the marking sheet, and are not announced to the audience. You will probably find it necessary to keep track 'privately' of the numerical mark of all competitors in order to choose your winner. This information is for your use only.

Although adjudicators differ somewhat in their range of marking, please keep the marks fair and in some cases tempered with a touch of generosity. We want every competitor to have a pleasurable and profitable festival experience, and after all, they have all paid an entry fee! Do remember, though, that you help to set higher standards for future musicianship in the community.

The whole scale of festival rating and marking is not as severe as music examinations. Emphasis is placed on encouragement and assistance with the adjudicator conducting an interesting and helpful 'public music lesson'. Point out the good aspects and the not-so-good aspects of the performance and give suggestions for further study and improvement. Please try to begin individual adjudications with a positive remark for each student.

Don't hesitate to give a good big fat mark if it is justified and don't be afraid of a fairly wide range of marks if the standard varies within a class. ***Avoid first place ties***. Please keep in mind that a minimum mark of ***87*** must be attained before a student may be recommended for Provincial Competitions.

Your verbal remarks are intended to be of use by not only the students and therefore the teacher, but also for the audience. They are present to enjoy the performances, to give encouragement and support to the performers, and also to learn more about music.

Special Classes, Substitutions

You may find, on occasion, that a student has entered the wrong class, is performing an unauthorized selection, or has prepared a wrong sonatina movement, etc. Simply deal with such cases by creating a special class to accommodate any uninformed competitor. All that is necessary in order to avoid these entries being in direct competition with the 'correct' ones, is to place the letter "A" after the class number, and mark it 'for adjudication only' on the marking sheet. These special classes need not be rated nor are they eligible for any scholarships. Keep the syllabus and current Rules & Regulations with you to provide you with class requirements, regulations, etc.

Often the district committee creates new or special classes in advance of the festival. The secretary will then advise you whether or not such classes will be for adjudication only or if they may be treated as regular competitive classes.

Memory

No set marks can be given for memory work, but when all other music qualities are more or less equal, memory work may be the deciding factor.

Repeats

We do suggest that all long repeats (over sixteen measures) be omitted. The repetition of very short sections may be observed to preserve the structure of the composition. All *da capos* and *del segnos* should be observed.

Editions

Editions are a perennial problem. Some, we know, are better than others, but it is best not to be too dogmatic about this matter. Make suggestions by all means, but avoid being overly insistent, especially with young students.

All music is provided for you to observe during each performance. The use of ***photocopied copyright music*** by ***competitors*** or ***accompanists*** is ***unacceptable*** in the Saskatchewan Music Festival Association. Failure to comply with this rule will result in ***disqualification*** of the competitor by the district committee. Please notify the district committee if this situation arises.

Scholarships and Awards

You will be asked to choose scholarship and award winners at the conclusion of the festival. This is always a gratifying responsibility but it is often your most difficult festival duty.

All awards, including scholarships, trophies, prizes, etc., and the naming of District Winners and National candidates, is the ***responsibility*** of the ***adjudicator, not*** the ***district*** scholarship or executive committee. Such committees, at the request of the adjudicator, may provide information such as age of competitors, marks, and number of classes, etc.

Provincial Finals and National Competitions

The Provincial Finals and National Competitions are very important for the students involved, providing opportunities for further training through adjudications and performances, for further cash awards, and for prestige at the provincial and national levels. Many exciting, talented Canadian musicians derive their musical development through the festival system.

Provincial Finals - Many class winners are eligible to compete for scholarships and awards at the Provincial Finals as District Winners upon attaining a mark of ***87*** and your written recommendation as the adjudicator. Your festival secretary will provide you with the District Recommendation Charts ("District Winner Charts") which clearly outlines those eligible classes. Make sure you complete these charts before leaving the festival should you wish to make any recommendations. The charts must be **signed by you** in order for the chosen students to advance.

National Competitions - Students hoping to compete in the National Music Festival must first enter a district festival in the appropriate National Class. The winner of each district National Class may advance to the Provincial Level of National Competition, upon attaining a mark of ***88*** and your written recommendation as the adjudicator. There are special National Recommendation Charts for this purpose and they must be ***signed by you*** in order for the chosen students to advance.

A Quick Review of Some Important Regulations:

- A change of selection from the printed program is not allowed unless authorized by the district festival committee.

- No current festival test selection is eligible as an "own choice" selection in the same discipline. However, test selections may be used in other disciplines. Note: In woodwind, brass, percussion and string classes, test selections may be used as own choice on **other** instruments within the same discipline.

- If a test selection is listed only as Sonata, Sonatina, or Concerto, with no indication of a particular movement, the competitor is to perform any one movement.

- Change of key in vocal or choral test selections can be no more than one tone up or down.

- To qualify for a festival scholarship or award a solo competitor must compete in more than one festival class.

- Any person may enter a festival "for adjudication only".

- All scholarship winners and competitors recommended for further competition at the Provincial Finals and Provincial Level of National Competition are chosen by the adjudicator.

- To be recommended as a District Winner for a Provincial Finals Class, competitors must have competed in two or more classes and received a mark of at least ***87***.

- To be recommended to advance to the Provincial Level of National Competition, competitors must have entered the appropriate National Class and received a mark of at least ***88***.

Thank you for your attention to all these important details.