

# ***Judging Guidelines 2020***

Both the open and junior judging panels follow a set of guidelines and criteria set out by the Music Theatre Guild in regard to nomination and commendations. The panels meet four times a year to discuss the productions viewed and begin the process of collating the nomination and commendation list from these meetings. Prior to the final meeting, the judges provide a score for each nominated item, without prejudice or influence, which is then averaged by the number of judges who attended the production, resulting in awarding the recipient of each award.

There are five full time panel members. On some occasions, the entire complement of the panel may not be able to attend a production. We have a bank of relief judges who will attend on the panels' behalf. All relief judges provide an in-depth report as well as inclusion in the scoring at the end of the year. No company is disadvantaged by having a relief judge attend.

Music Theatre Guild Victoria Judges are not permitted to participate in the discussion of a show with which they, their partner, or immediate family have been associated or any other productions of a show they've been associated with in the same year. Judges are not eligible to be a recipient of an Award within their panel.

## **Production of the Year**

- Achieves the creatives' vision to the highest extent, within the scale and context of the company
- Rates highly across all categories
- Has no significant weak areas
- Overall flow and continuity within the production, combining all elements

## **Direction**

- Evidence of an overarching vision for the production
- Integration of all aspects of the production (such as design, technical effects, sound, choreography, wardrobe, lighting)
- Work effectively with respect to the confines of the space
- Effective blocking that allows for purposeful movements, makes use of the performance space, creates visual variety, creates focus for the audience
- Believable characterisations
- Clear relationships between characters
- Generation and maintenance of audience interest and excitement throughout, including during scene changes
- Variation in pace and rhythm to maintain energy and interest
- Interesting blocking that supports the action
- Cast discipline - performers working together as a team
- Effective solutions to any special challenges of the production (for example lots of scene and costume changes, large cast, technical challenges, different historical periods)
- Effective solutions to any special challenges arising from the venue (for example stage size and shape, lack of technical facilities)
- Evidence of effective rehearsal and a well-rehearsed production

## Musical Direction

- An engaging interpretation of all aspects of the music that supports the director's vision for the production
- Style/interpretation of the source material
- Quality of the vocals in terms of quality, accuracy and diction
- Quality, accuracy and sensitivity of the orchestra
- Good balance between orchestra and singers, soloists and chorus, vocal sections, orchestral sections
- Evidence of making the best use of limited resources; for example adapting style to the talents of the singers, rescoring / rearranging orchestral parts

## Choreography

- Originality
- Supports the director and musical directors vision, so that all elements of movement and dance work as part of the larger picture
- Suits the style of the music and matches the genre or period
- Suits the abilities of the performers and caters effectively for different skill levels
- Variety across musical numbers
- Variety within routines, for example using different rhythms, spacing, intensity, climaxes
- Overcomes any special challenges, for example limitations of stage space, costumes
- Creative use of performance space
- Evidence of effective, well-rehearsed techniques

## Settings

- Aesthetic appeal
- Supports the director's vision for the production
- Complements other elements of the production such as lights, costumes, props, choreography
- Suggests the style and tone of the production and creates mood and atmosphere appropriate to the production
- Suggests the period and location of the musical
- Offers creative opportunities for movement and grouping of the actors
- Internal balance within the components of the set (for example doors, windows, furniture etc. are in appropriate proportion with each other)
- Appropriate for other aspects of production for example size of cast, size of stage, size of venue
- Authentic to a particular period or location, where appropriate
- Overcomes any problems of the venue (small stage, lack of wing space, low ceiling, problems with sight lines etc)
- Overcomes any special challenges of the production (for example lots of scene changes, large cast, technical challenges, orchestra on stage, etc)
- Well-constructed, with good quality painting and decoration, and attention to detail

## Costumes

- Aesthetic appeal
- Supports the director's vision for the production
- Complements other elements of the production such as set design, lights, choreography
- Reinforces the style and tone of the production and helps create the mood and atmosphere appropriate to the production
- Suggests the period and location of the musical
- Supports performers' characterisations
- Distinguishes between major and minor characters
- Suggests relationships between characters and groups of characters
- Suggests changes in character development and age
- Authentic to the period and location of the musical, where appropriate
- Good use of colour with appropriate balance between colours and use of contrasting colours for effect
- Effective use of textures
- Appropriate for different body sizes
- Overcomes any special challenges of the production (for example lots of costume changes, large cast, lots of movement)
- Allows free movement, especially for dancers

## Lighting

- Visual impact
- Supports the director's vision for the production
- Complements other elements of the production such as set, costumes, technical effects, sound
- Reinforces the style and tone of the production and helps create the mood and atmosphere appropriate to the production
- Indicates time of day and location
- Defines acting areas and provides focus to the action
- Colour balance, appropriate to desired effect
- Even stage coverage with no inappropriate dark patches or over-lit areas
- Realistic representation of on-stage light sources such as on-stage lamps, fireplaces, windows etc
- Realistic special lighting effects such as flickering of fireplaces, daybreak, sunset, lightning
- Smooth and well-rehearsed operation and cues

## Sound

- Audible impact
- Supports the director's vision for the production
- Complements other elements of the production such as technical effects, lighting and mood
- Reinforces the style and tone of the production and helps create the mood and atmosphere appropriate to the production
- Provides sound balance throughout the production between orchestra and cast
- Appropriate use of sound effects to enhance the production, not distract
- Even stage coverage
- Microphones on cue when required
- Removes all frequency and possibility of buzzing, crackling etc
- Use of quality equipment to support above
- Smooth and well-rehearsed operation and cues

## Technical Achievement

Can refer to multimedia, sound design, pyrotechnics, special effects and props. The use of advanced technology is also considered in this section and that all technical elements of the production are well rehearsed and align.

- Supports the director's vision for the production
- Innovative
- Audience impact
- Complements other elements of the production such as set and lights
- Reinforces the style and tone of the production and helps create the mood and atmosphere appropriate to the production
- Technically challenging
- Well-rehearsed

## Male and Female Performers (*"Lead", "Supporting", "Junior", "First*

### *Performance in a Featured Role" and "Best Performance in a Cameo or Minor Role")*

- Ability to create a believable character within a role
- Ability to feel the right emotions within the role, and communicate them to audience
- Communication with, and reaction to other actors
- Ability to hold attention of the audience and other actors
- Ability to sustain a role through an entire performance; to sustain momentum, mood, atmosphere, rhythm and pace.
- Effective use of space and positioning in relation to other actors and the audience
- Effective physical movement, and use of props or set
- Effective vocal technique which supports the characterisation, including projection, articulation, variety, intonation, accents
- Suitability of the voice for the role
- Musicianship
- Vocal quality including tone, accuracy, dynamics, diction, evenness across vocal range
- Ability to 'sell' a song

## Dancer's Award

- Strong technique
- Ability to showcase the choreographer's intention
- Line, Body and Movement aligned
- Excels in all the dance numbers, whether featured or not
- Ability to feel the right emotions within the role, and communicate them to audience
- Ability to sustain a role through an entire performance
- Effective use of space and positioning

## **Best Ensemble Performance**

An ensemble means a group of performers working together closely as a group, where it is the group itself that is important, rather than the individual members of the group. The size of the group doesn't matter – it can range from a group of two up to the entire cast. There needs to be a real sense of togetherness, trust and mutual respect evident among the performers.

## **Creative Design**

The design award can include a range of differing areas within a production, that may not be able to be placed within an individual category (program design, costume transition, speciality makeup/prosthetics or wigs, properties design etc). Think of it as a visual wow moment or moments in a show.

## **Concert or Revue**

The Concert / Revue Award can be a non-narrative or narrative production. It can be self-devised, or available for hire through a rights company. It does not need to have "In Concert" within the title to be considered. As with Production of the Year, the panel assess the same criteria for the Concert / Revue Award.