

Jury Voting Procedures

The BISQC Competition Jury Procedures are based on the “Optimal Jury Scoring System,” Copyright No. 459777, by Ernest Enns and Moses Renert.

Participants in Voting Procedures

Jury facilitator – The jury facilitator is a person closely linked with BISQC, typically the competition director, who is very familiar with the goals and philosophy of the competition. The jury facilitator is a non-voting participant in all voting sessions.

Jurors – The seven jurors attend all of the competition performances. They are the only voting participants in voting sessions.

Official mathematicians – The two official mathematicians monitor and regulate the voting process and the scoring procedures to ensure absolute fairness. They are non-voting participants in voting sessions.

Competition Jury Guidelines

The competition jury has these tasks:

1. To choose the winner of the Székely Prize for the best performance of a Bartók quartet.
2. To choose the winner of the Canadian Commission Prize for the best performance of the commissioned Canadian composition.
3. To choose four quartets for the Final Round after four rounds of competition.
4. To rank the four prize winners after the completion of the Final Round.

The jury facilitator and the competition director (if not the same person) have the right at any time to remind the jury of the criteria which the competition has established for the choice of quartets, in order to maintain the integrity of the process. The jury facilitator and the competition director may also invite discussion at any time. In the unlikely case that a juror votes in a fashion that compromises the integrity of the process, the official mathematicians will alert the jury facilitator. The jury facilitator may then decide not to include that juror's scores.

Any juror who has or have had a previous professional or personal relationship with a member of a participating quartet must notify the jury facilitator prior to the start of the competition. The jury facilitator may rule that the juror is ineligible to vote for a particular quartet because of such a relationship. In that case, the official mathematicians will evaluate the quartet's ranking as if the juror had not scored any of the quartets. The official mathematicians will then assign a score to the quartet which will maintain the same ranking. This procedure preserves the integrity of the scoring and ranking process, both for the quartet concerned and for all other competing quartets.

To avoid undue influence, jurors must not communicate their views of performances and of participating quartets with other jurors at any time during the competition, except in discussions during voting sessions.

Competition Jury Procedures

These procedures will take place at different times during the voting sessions:

Procedure one: Voting by Secret Ballot

Each juror is given an official ballot form with the names of the quartets to be scored. Each juror scores the quartets on the official ballot form using the whole numbers one to 20, with the lowest scores assigned to quartets that, in the juror's opinion, have least to commend them, and highest scores assigned to quartets of exceptional achievement. Decimal scores are not allowed, and a juror may assign the same score to more than one quartet. Each juror decides his/her own scores without reference to other jury members. When a juror has finished entering all of the scores into the official ballot form, the juror gives the completed form to the official mathematicians.

Procedure two: Ranking the Quartets

The official mathematicians convert the scores provided by the jurors into individual rankings. The method of conversion from scores to ranks is as follows: the highest score of each juror receives rank one, the second highest score receives rank two, and so on. When ties arise, the scores are given equal rank in such a way as to preserve the ranking of those with ranks above and below. For example, if the fifth, sixth, and seventh highest scores of a juror are tied, each will receive rank six (i.e., the average of ranks five, six, and seven). The eighth highest score of that juror will then receive rank eight. Similarly, if the first and second highest scores are tied, each receives rank 1.5. The next highest score receives rank three.

The official mathematicians then produce a ranked list of the quartets. To create the ranked list, the official mathematicians write in order the names of those quartets which appear in the top ranking of the majority of the jurors, then those in the top two rankings, then those in the top three rankings, and so on until an ordered list of all quartets has been obtained.

If needed, the official mathematicians create two slates by placing the quartets ranked highest into a first slate and the quartets ranked below them into a residual slate.

Procedure three: Completion of the Residual Slate

The jury facilitator asks each juror whether there is a quartet not on either slate whom the juror feels strongly ought to be included. Each juror has the right to add one name to the residual slate. The jury facilitator invites each juror who added a name to state briefly why the added quartet should be included.

Procedure four: General Discussion

The jury facilitator invites general discussion about the competing quartets. The jury facilitator also invites the official mathematicians to share any scoring information that may assist the jury.

Procedure five: Runoff Voting

The jury facilitator asks each juror to vote for one of two competing quartets by a show of hands.

Procedure six: Reordering by Voting

Each juror is invited to suggest a different ordering. The official mathematicians will then outline all of the possible orderings – the original ranking and all suggested reorderings. Each juror will select and vote for it by a show of hands. If no reordering wins a majority vote, the original ranking stands

The Voting Sessions

Choosing the winner of the Székely prize for the best performance of a Bartók quartet:

Shortly after the Recital Round, the jurors will convene for a voting session that will consist of:

Procedure one – Voting by secret ballot

Procedure two – Ranking the quartets (no residual slate required)

The official mathematicians will reserve the name of the winning quartet until the end of the Final Round. In case there is a tie for the top ranking, the official mathematicians will notify the jury of the tie during the voting session that follows the Final Round. In that case, the jury facilitator will put into action:

Procedure four – General discussion

Procedure five – Runoff voting

Choosing the winner of the Canadian Commission Prize for the best performance of the commissioned Canadian composition:

Shortly after the Canadian Commission Round, the jurors will convene for a voting session. The jury facilitator invites the composer of the commissioned composition to describe his/her impressions of the performances. Voting commences after the composer leaves the room, and consists of:

Procedure one – Voting by secret ballot

Procedure two – Ranking the quartets (no residual slate required)

The official mathematicians will reserve the name of the winning quartet until the end of the Final Round. In case there is a tie for the top ranking, the official mathematicians will notify the jury of the tie during the voting session that follows the Final Round. In that case, the jury facilitator will put into action:

Procedure four – General discussion

Procedure five – Runoff voting

Choosing Four Quartets for the Final Round:

Shortly after the first four rounds (Recital, Romantic, Canadian Commission, and Beethoven or Schubert) are completed, the jurors will convene for a voting session that will consist of:

Procedure one – Voting by secret ballot

Procedure two – Ranking the quartets

The official mathematicians will provide the jury with a first slate of the three top ranking quartets, in alphabetical order, and a residual slate of the two quartets that are ranked in positions four and five, in ranked order. In case of ties, the official mathematicians may increase or decrease the number of quartets in either slate to reflect the scores accurately.

All of the quartets on the first slate will participate in the Final Round. To select the remaining quartet(s), the jury will enact:

Procedure three – Completion of the residual slate

Procedure four – General discussion

The official mathematicians will then create official ballots that include the quartets on the residual slate and any quartets that were added by the jury. Another round of scoring will take place according to:

Procedure one – Voting by secret ballot

Procedure two – Ranking the quartets

The official mathematicians will provide the jury with the residual slate in ranked order. The jury facilitator will then put into action:

Procedure four – General discussion

Procedure six – Reordering by voting

The official mathematicians will provide the jury facilitator with the names of the four quartets that move on to the Final Round in alphabetical order.

Ranking the four Prize Winners:

Immediately after the Final Round is completed, the jurors will convene for a voting session. The official mathematicians will provide the jury with official ballots that contain the names of the four quartets that participated in the Final Round. The jury facilitator will remind the jury that scoring must be based on the performances of the quartets throughout the entire competition, and not only in the Final Round. The jury will then enact:

Procedure one – Voting by secret ballot

Procedure two – Ranking the quartets

The official mathematicians will provide the jury with the four quartets in ranked order. The jury facilitator then put into effect:

Procedure four – General discussion

Procedure six – Reordering by voting

The official mathematicians will provide the jury facilitator with the names of the four prize winners in ranked order.

Contingencies

Although the majority of contingencies have been covered in this official manual, there may be instances when the jury or the official mathematicians find no specific direction on how to act. In such instances the competition director has the authority to make a ruling to address the contingency, and his/her ruling is final and irrevocable.