Music That Shows You Off!

THOUGHTS ON MUSIC SELECTION

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What Will You Sing Well?

SHOW OFF YOUR STRENGTHS!

Does The Song Fit?

Show off what you do well…

… while minimizing exposure of what you don't want to show off!

Suitability to Performer

SUITABILITY TO PERFORMER

Song 1

Song 2

Judge _____

PERFORMANCE (0-70 points)
Vocal Skills
Harmony Accuracy
Barbershop Style
　Tempo
　Rhythm
　Musical Unity
　Phrasing
　Dynamics
　Musical Energy
Musical Artistry

▶ A Music Category concept that speaks to the fit of the song selected to the skillset of the performer

▶ Evaluated by the Music Judge, but affects all the categories

▶ Are you showing off your strengths? Or are you putting skillsets still 'under construction' on display?

▶ At every level, try to choose music that shows off what you can do well <u>today</u>.

Song selection can showcase your skills and set you up for musical success… OR musical challenges!

What Will You Sing Well?

Like knowing your personality, you should have a good idea of your group's skillset as well as your challenge areas!

Make a list. What do you know about your group?

Vocal Skills? Breath?	Barbershop Style?	Tempo Preference?
Tessitura / Range?	Unity / Synchronization?	Ad Lib Delivery?
Tuning Capability?	Personality / Story Telling?	Backbeat / Downbeat?
Section Strengths?	Stamina / Energy?	Rhythm / Syncopation?

What Makes a Song/Arrangement Easier?

- A melody built primarily on the diatonic major scale (i.e. not a lot of accidentals)
- Strong voicings and smooth/sing-able part lines for all voices, including the melody
- Each voice part performing in their optimal range as much as possible
- All parts moving together in the same rhythms for the most part
- Tempo and rhythms understood by the group
- No key change, or a simple key change that your group can tune consistently
- Embellishments that can be executed successfully, or modified to enable success
- A message appropriate to the performing group
- Physical/energy demands that match the performing group's abilities
- Lots of opportunities to breathe – or ways you can make opportunities to breathe

What Makes a Song/Arrangement Harder?

- Chromatic melodies (lots of accidentals), jumpy melodies, range-y melodies
- Jumpy part lines (often related to a jumpy melody)
- A lot of chords spread beyond a tenth (i.e. spread voicings)
- A predominance of secondary chords (minor keys can be difficult to many)
- Extended range in the voice parts – more time outside of optimal range
- Tricky rhythms – syncopation – and tempos (ex. backbeat, stomp/swing, accelerando)
- Modulations and key changes
- Elaborate embellishments
- Physical/energy demands that exceed the performing group's abilities
- Lack of opportunities to breathe
- Any challenges in the voice part do not match strengths of the unit

Suitability to Performer

Easier

- A melody built primarily on the diatonic major scale (i.e. not a lot of accidentals)
- Strong voicings and smooth/sing-able part lines for all voices, including the melody
- Each voice part performing mostly in their optimal range
- All parts moving together in the same rhythms for the most part
- Tempo and rhythms understood by the group
- No key change, or a simple key change that the group can tune consistently
- Embellishments that can be executed successfully, or modified to enable success
- A message appropriate to the performing group
- Physical/energy demands that match the group's abilities
- Opportunities to breathe – or ways to make them

Harder

- Chromatic (lots of accidentals), jumpy or range-y melodies
- Jumpy part lines (often related to a jumpy melody)
- A lot of chords spread beyond a tenth (i.e. spread voicings)
- A predominance of secondary chords (minor keys can be difficult to many)
- Extended range in the voice parts – more time outside of optimal range
- Tricky rhythms – syncopation – and tempos (ex. backbeat, stomp/swing, accelerando)
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Tailoring For The Perfect Fit

▶ Are there specific areas of the songs that present challenges?

  ▶ Ask the arranger to make adjustments or

  ▶ Make your own adjustments with permission / support of the arranger

  ▶ Intros, tags, embellishments can all be adjusted

▶ Do you have enough places to breathe?

  ▶ Consider making rhythmic or lyric adjustments to give you the air you need. There's no award for the longest phrase!

  ▶ Learn how to sneak breathe in choruses – if no one knows you're doing it, then you're doing it right!

▶ Are there opportunities to make the song uniquely yours?

  ▶ Minor lyric adjustments are ok. Include your group name somehow. Make a local reference that your audience will appreciate. Be creative!

Before

After
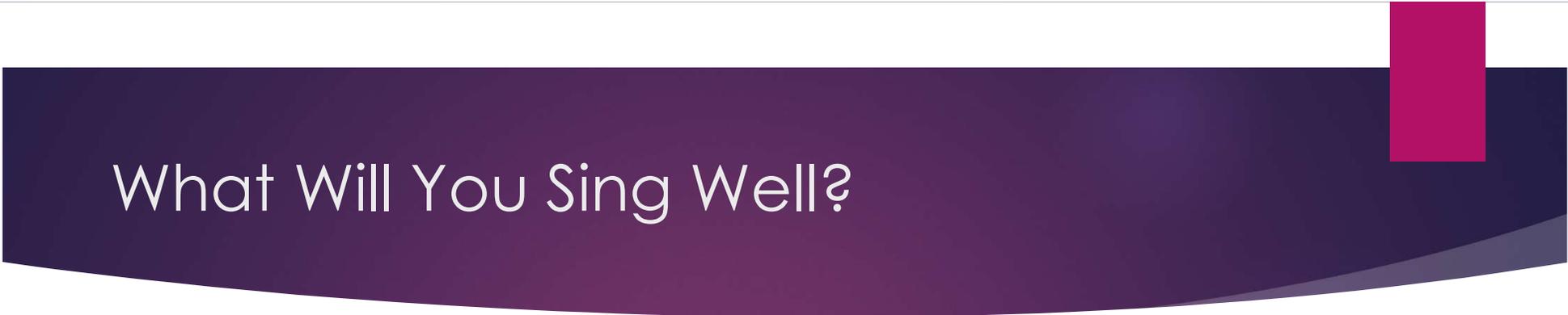
What Will You Sing Well?

Choose music that shows off your current skillset.

Don't be afraid to tailor it to show yourselves off.

As your skillset grows, so will your musical options.
Vocal skills, vocal skills, vocal skills!

Questions?

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