

Kia ora koutou,

We reveal the mysteries of convention competitions!

Hello everyone and welcome to the second edition of the Sing Wellington convention newsletter, in which we focus on the who, what, why and how of the contests and the judging process, and profile our great line-up of judges.

We'll also touch on the importance of post-performance evaluations, which are a very useful tool in helping you to understand how things went for you on the day, and what you need to do to squeeze those few extra points out of your performance. I strongly urge you to attend them or get a representative to do so and bring back the wisdom of the judges to your chorus.



We're keenly aware you want to know the cost of competing and the opening date for registration. We're working as fast as possible to finalise the cost of the convention and we will make an **announcement by the second week of July**. We will notify all BHS members directly and via our web site and social media channels. So look out for that.

Meanwhile, good luck in your preparation and don't let up – September will be upon you in a flash.

Ngā mihi

Antony Currington
Chair, Host Management Committee, Sing Wellington

Competition categories to remain unchanged from 2023

Competition categories for this year's convention will be unchanged from 2023.

Competition	Details
Quartet	Open*, Men's, Women's, Mixed, Senior, Novice
Chorus	Open*, Men's, Women's, Mixed, Small Chapter Chorus
Note* the chorus and quartet Open competitions are gender blind. All competitors in the Open competition compete against each other, in addition to other categories they may have entered.	

Judging categories explained


All chorus and quartet competitors are scored in three categories: Musicality, Performance, and Singing, each of which is scored separately and then combined into a total score for each chorus and quartet. We provide a brief description of each below.

Musicality

Judges in this category assess the extent to which the musical performance displays the hallmarks of the barbershop style, and the degree to which the musical performance demonstrates an artistic sensitivity to the music's primary theme. Judges in this category assess these musical elements in the performance:

- melody
- harmony
- range and tessitura
- tempo
- rhythm and meter
- construction and form
- embellishments.



And your Musicality judges are...

<p>Alex Morris</p> 	<p>Alex is an accomplished composer, arranger, choral director and vocal coach who, as their former Music Director, led Vocal Evolution to three Australia gold medals. He was Music Director with Geelong Harmony Chorus, shOUT Youth Chorus, cult choir sensations Shania Choir, and The Shanties Choir. Alex was inducted into the Barbershop Harmony Australia Hall of Fame in 2022.</p>
<p>Nick Schurmann</p>	<p>Details unavailable at deadline – for more information check out https://convention.barbershopharmony.nz</p>

Performance

These judges evaluate how effectively a performer brings the song to life. They respond to both the visual and vocal aspects of the performance, to evaluate the interaction of these aspects in creating the image of the song, as well as everything about the performance that contributes to emotional impact upon the audience. A performance judge will be asking if the musical and visual delivery of the song is from the heart, believable, and sensitive to the song and its arrangement throughout.

And your Performance judges are...

<p>Richard Reeve</p> 	<p>Richard has sung in choruses and quartets in NSW, WA and Qld, winning quartet gold medals with Alliance and TLA, and chorus gold medals with Vocal Evolution and Boulevard. He has held a variety of music director and president positions and is a member of the BHA National Education Faculty, where he teaches classes on many subjects including performance. He has been a judge since 2009.</p>
<p>Liam Whitney</p> 	<p>A protégé of fellow AGBJ Judge, David Brooks, Liam represented New Zealand at two international conventions with Vocal FX, placing as high as 6th. He studied theatre and film at Victoria University of Wellington and, in 2019, he trained with London's premier physical theatre company Frantic Assembly, and was instructed by some of the world's greatest practitioners. Liam was also made a BHNZ certified coach, and in 2023 became a certified performance judge.</p>



Singing

Judges in this category evaluate the degree to which the performer achieves good singing in the barbershop style. This involves the production of a consistent resonant sound created by good individual vocal techniques free from apparent effort, and by the quartet or chorus singing as a unit.

Singing judges listen for:



- precise tuning – melodic line (lead part) and harmonically
- a feeling of fullness or expansion of sound
- a high degree of vocal skill
- a high level of vocal unity and consistency throughout the performance
- a freedom from apparent effort that allows the full communication of the lyrics and song.

And your Singing judges are...

 <p>Rob Sequeira</p>	Rob's love for teaching and coaching began with drums and guitar, followed by coaching a cappella quartets and choruses in Australia, Canada and New Zealand. He's been on faculty coaching at several Californian, Australian and New Zealand harmony schools and has won medals with a range of choruses, including gold with Vox Canvas at Pan Pacific in Auckland in 2023. Rob is a BHA/BHNZ certified singing judge and the singing category specialist for Australia and New Zealand.
 <p>Kelly Shepard</p>	From the USA, Kelly has had a 30-year career as a music teacher and a lifetime of singing in barbershop quartets and choruses. He won two international gold medals with Masters of Harmony and two international quartet bronze medals singing with Metropolis. Now living in Australia, Kelly has won the Australian open quartet medal and the Pan Pacific men's quartet gold with The Collective, and directs Mixed Vocal Project, an Australian medallist chorus from the Gold Coast.

For the judging process to run smoothly, everything has to be in place, and there are a lot of moving parts: performers must be ready and in correct order of appearance, judges must have the wherewithal to make notes and score, scores must be tallied, recorded and published. All these functions and more are the responsibility of the Administrative judges.

And your Administrative judges are...

 <p>Linda Vinall</p>	Linda was first introduced to barbershop in 2008 singing bass in a mixed quartet, following which she became a founding member of a Sweet Adeline Chorus in Adelaide, South Australia. She is currently singing with Gospo Collective which completed a season in the Adelaide Fringe and performed in Sydney. Linda first qualified as a Contest Administrator Judge (now Administrative Judge) in 2011 and has enjoyed many contests in both Australia and New Zealand.
 <p>Kevin Day</p>	In 2014, Kevin became a Contest Administrator and has been part of the judging panel for contests in both Australia and New Zealand since then. At the Judges' school in Auckland in Sept. 2023, he requalified as an Administrative Judge for the next three years. When he's not collating scores or herding quartets through evaluations, Kevin is a cyber-crime fighter for the New Zealand Financial Markets Authority.

Evaluate your performance

One of the value-adds at the conclusion of the competitions is feedback from the judges, and it's not to be missed. This year, evaluations, a process managed by the Administrative Judges, will be held for quartets on Friday between 4:15pm-6:30pm for non-finalists and on Saturday between 4:00pm-5:30pm for finalists. Chorus evaluations will take place on Saturday between 3:00pm-3:30pm. The judges will take you through all three judging categories, describe how you went and give you advice on how you can improve. Check the programme closer to the date for information on locations.

Get all the background you need

The more nerdy among you may want to swat up on the rules of the contests, and you certainly can. Just go to [BHNZ Contest Rules](#) for all you will ever need to know about judging and contests. Enjoy!

Stay in touch!

Want to know more about convention as the information comes out?

Website: <https://convention.barbershopharmony.nz>
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