

Transparency of jury's opinion – credit systems used worldwide

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1. Piano competition should guarantee its participants fairness and objectivity of assessments.

- It is possible when every participating pianist has equal and similar conditions for preparing him or herself for the performance and the conditions of the very performance in order to be able to present skills as well as possible.
- However, it also requires high competences of the assessing individuals both in terms of knowledge and ethics and adequate number of them,
- Jurors must be provided with good working conditions, and
- adequate procedures connected to evaluation must be applied.

2. Evaluation of artistic performance is subjective in its nature, but expressed by a numerous group of competent experts it gains less individual nature. Too few evaluating experts equals increase of subjective factor and weakens reliability of evaluation. (Van Cliburn – 5, Honens – 4, Warsaw 17 and more)

3. The organization of jurors' work should offer them comfort that is good acoustic conditions allowing for following the evaluated performance and the comfort of unrestricted expression of their opinion, without any pressure from outside.

4. The manner of translation of individual, subjective artistic experience of every juror into a quasi-objective verdict (expressing "group wisdom") constitutes a separate problem to focus on.

As a result, there is a postulate to create a mechanism allowing every juror to have identical impact on the verdict.

In practice, a broad range of methods is applied, starting with "humanist" methods (discussions) ending with extreme use of mathematics (assigning points with application of complex corrective systems). Various manners of voting with varied degrees of secrecy and dichotomy of "yes" and "no" opinions in reference to promotion of a given pianist offer a certain manner to solve the problem of discrepancy of opinions.

Humanist methods, in particular discussions ending with voting may lead to destroying the equality of all jurors and their equal impact on the verdict giving advantage to those which have better persuasive skills. On the other hand, mathematic systems exert numerical expression of artistic assessment sometimes causing objections. However, all comparisons, gradations and cumulations require mathematical tools by their nature.

5. In practice, the demand for impartiality signifies the need to release the jury's verdict from any extra-content features. Among them there are first of all relationships among jurors and the assessed pianists. A juror due to obvious reasons may be interested in the success of his or her students; consequently, such a juror should not evaluate them. It is prevented in various manners, in extreme cases, pedagogues teaching a given participant are not allowed to participate in jury's work, or such pianists which are students of a given juror are not allowed in the competition (Maria Canals). The compromise method comprises prohibition to evaluate own students (Busoni, Queen Elisabeth, Cleveland, Warsaw). *However, none of those methods secure against potential mutual favours in this scope rendered by two jurors who may provide excessive assessment for the student of their colleague.* Without application of adequate,

mathematical securities, under-assessments of competitors may take place to increase chances of own student thanks to the fact of not assessing him or her. Consequently such participant will not have under-assessed arithmetic mean of grades from the whole jury. (Van Cliburn, Moscow, Maria Canals, Cleveland)

6. Fairness of assessment requires unambiguous specification what should be subject to jurors' evaluation.

- It is possible to calculate the evaluated content scopes with assigning each of them a specific pool of points, e.g. general musicality 0-5 points, technical skill 0-10 points, sense of form 0-3 points etc. However, jurors are unwilling to adopt this type of less or more detailed stratification and they prefer final, total aesthetic experience.
- It seems important to decide whether e.g. the promotion to the competition finals should depend on the exclusive evaluation of the performance in semi-finals (it seems to be worse solution) or maybe all assessments from all previous stages should have impact on it and in what manner.
- The time of assessment constitutes a separate problem – should it be spontaneous or provided e.g. at the end of the day or at the end of a stage. Both solutions have advantages and disadvantages.
- In case of assessing the provided audio-video recordings, broadly applied in preselection for initial stages, it is especially important for the judges to be aware of dependence of the artistic effect on technical conditions of recording and the applied mechanisms typical for phonography.
- Moreover, the outfit and extra-musical personal features of the artist sometimes influence assessment. Sometimes this type of criteria is included in the assessment on purpose (Honens – interview, KCh – biography data in qualifications for the competition).

7. Large number of competitions taking place worldwide, variety of traditions and conditions, result in various practical solutions for the mentioned above problems. In addition, it is worth mentioning that there is no single good solution or correct model of the process of evaluation. As an example we may quote Van Cliburn's spectacular move away from a complicated mathematical description of competition situations and mathematical characterisation of particular jurors towards the primary simplicity of the yes-no system.

8. Transparency of evaluation procedure seems to be a good answer to all suspicions and claims concerning fairness and impartiality of assessment procedure.

- Diligent development and publication of rules and regulations of the competition and rules and regulations of the jury's work seems to have a disadvantage because organizers and juries cannot react to occurring during the competition problems in a flexible manner. However, from the point of view of participants and the audience, lack of availability of rules and regulations may be seen as a manner to cover unreliable motifs.
- Transparency may lead to revealing, after the end of the competition, all assessments of all jurors. This solution has its adversaries due to consequences in relationships among pedagogues and artists. It also has an important advantage: it motivates jurors to responsible and reliable work and eliminates potential suspicions of participants and audience.