Email to Quartet ICC contacts, September 20, 2024

Hello, Quartet contact person for IC&C 2024 contestants –

We’re off to the races! We have all received lots of useful information from our convention manager, Allison Thompson, through Harmony, Inc. social media and email blasts. And the webpage is terrific, and constantly updated. [Harmony, Incorporated - IC&C (harmonyinc.org)](https://www.harmonyinc.org/ICC). And this year, it includes an information page specifically for contestants, which includes many of the documents described below, and more. As ICJC, though, I have a few things to reiterate or to pass along to ensemble contacts about contest activities. And so…

The **pattern schedule** for the quartet semifinal contest is on the website. [2024 Quartet Semi-Final Pattern Times](https://www.harmonyinc.org/files/ICC%20Info/2024%20Quartet%20Semi-Final%20Schedule_Final.pdf) The pattern schedule for the finals – with blanks to be filled in – is also on the website. For those who have competed in recent years when we have had a post-performance “quartet celebration room” in the pattern, you may notice that the pattern this year does not include one. Don’t let that stop you from celebrating your performance!

The schedule for the entire convention, also on the website, shows the **quartet stage viewing** on Wednesday, beginning at 4:00 pm and ending at 5:00 pm. That will require a certain level of efficiency. Here’s the plan.

On your way to the stage viewing, we strongly recommend that you follow the contest walk pattern, from the 2nd floor of the hotel into the ballroom seating area. Here’s the link to a map showing the [walk pattern](https://www.harmonyinc.org/files/Quartet%20Pattern%20Map.pdf).

Doors will open at 3:55 pm so quartets can be seated. Then at 4:00, Linda Hilko, our stage manager, will start the stage viewing at with a brief introduction. I say “brief” because our hope is that this email and the website (do check out the FAQ page and the recorded Know Before You Go session) will have answered all of your questions before you get to the stage viewing. But just in case you missed something, Linda, the ADM Judges, and I expect to be there to answer questions. Please plan to be there at 4:00 to hear Linda’s introductory remarks and to ask any remaining questions.

Once questions are answered, the quartets will line up in the hallway by the stage door entrance, and proceed up the ADA ramp and across the stage for a quick look around. The lights and mics should be fully set for the stage viewing, and there will be tape on the stage as a guide for quartets at the mic. We expect to have the monitors in position, too. Risers will be on the stage. This is a reminder that stage viewing is not “onstage time” with an opportunity to sing, as we have at AC&C. It is simply an opportunity to get a feel for the (curtainless) stage set up and for the room.

As noted above, the pattern approach has quartets entering AND exiting from stage right. Ordinarily, our quartets have options for customized entrances and exits, but space constraints in the stage area this year mean that all entrances and exits must be stage right.

When you arrive at the stage door on the day of the contest, you will be asked to place any **personal belongings** on a cart, which will be moved during your performance the short distance to your stage exit point so you can pick up your things before proceeding to the audience. Our convention team notes that a frequent cause of contest delay is backups at the “personal belongings” table. So, as always, please keep belongings to an absolute minimum, be sure any bag containing belongings is closed, and leave valuables in a safe location elsewhere. In fact, if all four quartet members can put belongings in a single bag, so much the better. And if you must carry liquids, screw the cap on tightly! The convention team, the audience, and I thank you for attention to these important details.

After you have walked across the stage on Wednesday, volunteers will guide you to the ballroom entrance. Quartet members who are also part of their chorus stage viewing team can choose simply to circle back into the audience to join their fellow chorus representatives for the 5:00 chorus stage viewing.

The pattern schedule puts a new quartet on stage every 9 minutes. Past experience suggests that, with cooperation from every contestant, this will allow us to maintain break and meal schedules that will keep our contestants, judges, and other audience members fresh to appreciate your performances. So please take care of your preparation rituals – huddles, hugs, fist bumps, whatever – in the warmup room after you receive your three-minute warning so that you are prepared to step out and sing as soon as you reach the backstage area. This small courtesy supports a positive contest experience for our audience and our later quartets.

As you may already have heard, we do not have space for **evaluations sessions** on site this year. We have been fortunate at a few venues in recent years to have been able to try some variations on eval sessions at IC&C. Those variations were of limited success in light of both time and space considerations. So we will revert to Harmony’s policy, actually in place since 2003, that there will not be feedback from judges for IC&C performances. The policy recognizes that our Area contests offer our primary on-stage education opportunities, and that, try as we might, it is often impossible to create space for contestant feedback in our IC&C schedule. Please use your quartet performance at IC&C this year simply to experience the joy of performing, and please do not contact judges for further feedback after the convention ends. Remember, our panelists are all volunteers, and many have day jobs and families to attend to once they get home. They are going to be putting in some mighty long days on our behalf, and I have assured them that we will respect their personal time.

Having said that, if you feel that your scores are in some way inexplicable, perhaps based on the feedback that you received from audience members, coaches, or knowledgeable friends after your performance, please contact me with your questions or concerns, and I will see whether there are options available.

If you have **changed personnel** since you submitted your Contest Information Form, please be sure that you have updated your quartet registration, and that you have submitted an amended CIF. We want the convention program and the award eligibility information to be accurate!

Are you ordering **photos**? Please be sure to have the completed [photo order form](https://www.harmonyinc.org/files/2024%20Intl%20order%20form%20no%20candids.pdf) and payment with you when you start the pattern on contest day.

And finally, although the **song registration** is not due till two weeks before contest, there is no time like the present for getting this done. You’ll find the form HAR-82 under the forms link on our members-only page.

Are you still with me? This email is long, but we as an organization seem to thrive on advance information and preparedness.

See you soon.

Kathy Greason, ICJC