

Repertoire Guidelines Updated 7/30/25

Non-traditional choral music sung at choral festival needs to fall within the framework of the MSVMA's choral rubric with the understanding that it is adjudicated by classically trained choral adjudicators. The following considerations should be made:

1. Within the realm of vocal jazz, there are choral arrangements of ballads that fall neatly into the scope of choral music that can easily be laid against the MSVMA rubric for adjudication. The same goes for arrangements of songs that originated in the realm of musical theatre and even popular music but have been arranged in a choral style.
2. Performance of music that carries certain characteristic elements from the original style in question is discouraged. Examples include:
 - a. Vocal jazz music that requires a jazz combo, improvisation, swung rhythms or scat singing by an individual or group.
 - b. Arrangements of musical theater or jazz standards that call for a soloist to perform a majority of the work. These arrangements are problematic because they present unnecessary challenges for the adjudicator trying to assess the performance using the MSVMA rubric for concert choral performance.
 - c. Most typical contemporary pop a cappella arrangements (beatboxing, solo-centric, pop melodies)
 - d. Barbershop music
3. MSVMA sponsors separate events that are specific to ensemble or individual performances in jazz, musical theater, and a cappella. We expect these genres to be performed at the appropriate festival.

In lieu of an exhaustive list of title names or “dos and don’ts” regarding literature selections for concert festival, MSVMA requests that directors give careful attention to these guidelines when considering selections that would be non-traditional, and do not hesitate to reach out to our leadership with any questions or concerns as decisions about repertoire for festival performance are being made.