Adult Amateur Category: From Chris Madden

I really feel this would be appealing to many people, and if we simply start it at the Division level with videos, it might not be too much of a logistical mess!  Of course, I’m open to other thoughts about how to run it, though!

The biggest adult amateur competition I know of is the Cliburn Amateur Competition, which can be found here: <https://cliburn.org/2022-amateur-competition/>

We could discuss what the parameters are for entering, but perhaps a good place to start would be to use their language:

**ABOUT THE CLIBURN AMATEUR**

Inaugurated in 1999, the Cliburn International Amateur Piano Competition was the first event of its kind in the United States. Hailed by the *Boston Globe* as “a celebration of music, and the people who have to make music no matter what;” the contest highlights the importance of music-making in everyday life and provides a forum for musicians age 35 and older who do not perform, teach, or compose piano music for their primary professional pursuit or financial benefit. The quadrennial competition brings together the best amateur pianists from around the world for seven days of performances, symposia, and social events.

Division Videos: From Chad Twedt:

I would suggest that performers in future years of this divisionals competition be required to have the camera no more than 15 feet away from the performer, and that judges are able to see at least a majority of the keyboard. This recommendation is prompted by my observations about Young Artist performer 1801379.  (Rest assured BTW, my comments here will have no impact on my adjudication of her performance this year, as I assume she made the recording in good faith.  I’m thinking purely of what happens in future years.)  The camera is placed really far away from the piano, also in a position where not a single key (or even her hands) are visible. This particular camera view (even with just manual video editing tools, without any use of exponentially-evolving AI services) would make it really easy for a performer (or computer-competent friend/family member of the performer) to do audio/video cuts anywhere they want without anyone noticing, even if the viewer is looking really hard for cuts.  It’s super easy to do audio cuts.  Video cuts have always been more difficult to pull off since it is a rare coincidence that a person’s body parts would all be in the exact same position at both ends of the cut.  But when the person’s body only takes up like 1 square inch on the screen, then video cuts essentially become no more difficult than audio cuts.

With this particular performer this year, there is a 98% chance that this is nothing more than a valid, neutral artistic decision that the performer wants the judges to get the “audience in the middle of the concert hall” experience with lots of reverberation rather than the up close and personal (and dry) experience.  But there is always that 2% chance that there is more to it than that.  (I’m just making these numbers up of course!  But if my 98% / 2% figures are wrong, we can at least be certain that it is not 100% / 0%.)

Senior Duet Category/ Improvisation: From Chad Twedt

One thing I’d love to see, especially for the duet categories (but of course for the solo too), is the requirement to specify:

- catalog number

  (might need to give a few examples - some teachers don’t teach their students about catalog numbers)

- publisher

- copyright date

- arranger (if applicable)

purchase / IMSLP link if any exists (if not, at least specify where they got their copy!)

#1780846- Senior Duet

I'm just weighing in on this student writing the intro and ending:  I think we ought to consider an addendum that says that going forward the pieces must be publically published.  How can any piece that is improvised be approved in advance by the committee when they don't know if it meets the requirements?

Also, the improvisation question is more just my bouncing ideas around for future coordinator meetings, not that I think we should raise questions about the validity of performances in the current competition.

This situation does bring up an interesting issue in that we don't seem to specify whether improvisation is allowed in the piano duo competition (and I don't think we clarify that question in solo competition guidelines, either). I can see no issue with a performer improvising when the score specifically calls for it (I'm thinking of some examples by Gulda or Anthony Davis), but is it consistent with other repertoire guidelines to allow performers to improvise sections of music ad lib. when a written score does not specifically ask for improvisation?