



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS The American Prize

www.theamericanprize.org

PREAMBLE to The American Prize (2009)

More than ever, we need to encourage our artists, for they are the soul of a great nation. As important as teachers or clergy, police or firefighters, doctors or lawyers, artists have the power to bring joy and understanding, peace and contentment to others. They are the vessels of the emotional history of humankind. Artists can heal.

Even as the performing arts in America are now largely ignored by the national media, and while many artists and organizations struggle for recognition and financial support, we know that great art is being made in this country.

All across the U.S., in communities large and small, orchestras, choruses, bands, theater companies and dance troupes are performing; professional, semi-professional, amateur, school-based and faith-based artists are entertaining audiences, enriching their communities and contributing to the quality of life.

With absolutely no bias against small city versus large, or well-known artist versus unknown, The American Prize seeks to recognize and reward the best America produces. That is the reason for The American Prize.

What is The American Prize?

The American Prize is a series of new, non-profit, national competitions designed to recognize and reward the very best in the performing arts in the United States—in schools and churches, and at community and professional levels. The American Prize was founded in 2009 and will be awarded annually, beginning in 2010.

When and where are the competitions held?

The American Prize is judged solely through recorded performances. There is no live competition. Competitors complete the application and submit CD, DVD or VHS video of performances by the deadline date. (Because of their unreliability, we do not accept audio or video files sent electronically.) The judging panel considers each application, selects and notifies semi-finalists, finalists and winners, according to the timetable published for each competition.

What are the requirements for the recording?

The requirements for each recording are listed in the application. Please read it carefully. Neither the location nor repertoire of any qualified individual, nor the size nor make-up of any qualified organization limits eligibility. Excellence within categories is the primary criteria for the selection of finalists and winners. Applicants need not prepare a special tape for The American Prize. A previous recording, whether of a performance made in front of an audience or one created in a recording session without an audience, is perfectly acceptable, provided it is performed by those listed in the application.

What do winners win?

Winners in each category receive cash prizes and award certificates. Finalists receive certificates and written evaluations. Semi-finalists receive certificates. Finalists and winners are announced to local and national arts media and on our website; winners are also profiled on the website. Financial awards range from \$100 to \$500 or more, depending on the category, the year, and the number of applicants. The judges reserve the right to

withhold prizes and to award honorable mentions and additional cash prizes, as warranted. Their decisions are final.

What about refunds?

Application fees are non-refundable, except if a specific competition is canceled, in which case applicants will receive a full refund.

Who are the judges?

Maestro David Katz is the chief judge of The American Prize. Professional conductor, award-winning composer, playwright, actor and arts advocate, Katz was the founder and for twelve years chief judge of the Friedrich Schorr Memorial Performance Prize in Voice international competition. Joining Katz is a panel of judges as varied in background and experience and as geographically diverse as we hope the winners of The American Prize to be. Representing every region of the country, judges include professional, community and faith-based musicians and educators, selected for their interest and expertise.

How often can I apply?

Applications are welcome in any category for which the applicant and/or ensemble is qualified. Organizations and individuals may apply any year they wish. Semi-finalists and finalists are especially encouraged to reapply. There is no prohibition against winners reapplying.

Who is eligible?

Eligibility is categorized by discipline (i.e. choral music, orchestral music, vocal performance, etc.), by type of organization (school, community, church, professional) or, for individual awards, by performance level (i.e. amateur, student, professional). The focus of The American Prize is on encouraging quality and recognizing talent, not on competition against other individuals or ensembles.

What are the criteria for winning The American Prize?

The American Prize is awarded for excellence. The best performance in each category, in the opinion of the judging panel, is awarded The American Prize. The number of finalists and semi-finalists from each competition will be chosen at the discretion of the panel. Finalists and semi-finalists may not be ranked. Performances will be judged on artistic quality, based on the full breadth of possible criteria, including the overall effect of the performance, musicality, rhythmic incisiveness, ensemble, tone quality, accuracy, intonation, knowledge of style.

When are winners announced?

Semi-finalists, finalists and winners of The American Prize are announced according to the strict timetable published with each competition. In general, this process takes approximately 90 days from the application deadline to the announcement of the winner(s). The decision of the judges is final.

Who administers the competitions?

The American Prize is administered by Hat City Music Theater, Inc., a 501(c)3 non-profit performing arts organization based in Danbury, Connecticut.

How can I get more information?

Answers to most questions can be found on the website. Please read the applications carefully. In case you have a question to which you can't find an answer, please email the administrator at theamericanprz@aol.com or theamericanprize@gmail.com.