

This document is intended to be used in conjunction with the Official Rulebook and Evaluation Criteria, and not as a substitute for either. Download the Official Fine Arts Rulebook and the Evaluation Criteria at www.faf.ag.org/rules.cfm.

WORSHIP LEADING SOLO

1. YOUR TEAM

The category is “worship leading solo” but really, you are a duet. You and the Holy Spirit are working together to lead others in worship. You have to listen to Him more than ever to stand on a stage by yourself and effectively engage worshipers.

2. GET A COACH AND REHEARSE

Find an experienced, well-skilled worship leader who is willing to provide coaching and rehearsal time. It is a proven fact that those who excel at anything put in 10,000 hours of personal rehearsal. To be an effective solo worship leader, hours and hours of rehearsal are required. To play and sing at the same time effectively, without fumbling or allowing or creating personal distractions, takes time and practice.

3. STOP OVER-PLAYING AND OVER-SINGING

Space, simplicity, omission, distance, modesty, clarity, restraint; these are all key words in deciding what to play or sing and when to play or sing. After arranging your worship set, ask yourself if you’ve implemented at least two of these descriptive words.

4. BE DYNAMIC

Picture a heartbeat monitor. Peaks and valleys, right? Great songs and consequently great worship sets/arrangements happen in waveform. The further the peak is from the valley, the more dynamic the arrangement. Let swells in volume and intensity create interest in your arrangements, playing, and overall worship set.

5. ARRANGE YOUR WORSHIP SET WITH FLOW AND UPWARD MOVEMENT

It creates “lift” in your presentation if you arrange your set intentionally with an upward movement of key signatures. Rather than stopping after each song to change keys, choose songs in the same or related keys. Also pace your presentation with tempo and theme – find ways to create variety and interest in tempo while at the same time, creating a nice “arc” to the overall presentation.

6. FIND SONGS THAT FIT

Song selection is crucial. The latest Hillsong tune may be amazing on your iPod but may not be the best choice for you to lead on your own. Will the song still be great with nothing more than an acoustic guitar and a single voice? Choose songs that can shed the production fluff and not lose their effectiveness.

7. VERBAL QUEUES

As a solo worship leader, you have to be able to seamlessly layer in verbal queues to help the worshipers know where you are headed. Without a team of musicians and singers behind you, you have to be prepared to carry the worship set with verbal queues, facial expression, vocal inflection, dynamics, and body language.

8. THIS IS NOT A VOCAL SOLO CATEGORY

Keep in mind, the intent of the Worship Leading, Solo category is not so that you have another opportunity to sing a solo. The intent is that you actually lead a congregation in worship. You must find ways to engage the audience and bring them along with you on your worship journey. In this category, we don’t want to watch you sing a solo, we want to worship God with you.

9. BE APPROACHABLE

Your stage presence needs to be relaxed and comfortable. You should look and feel at home behind your instrument and in front of a crowd. If the audience senses uncertainty or that you are just performing a solo, it will be difficult for them to enter into an attitude of worship. Be personable and approachable – as a fellow worshiper.

10. MASTER THE BASICS

How many different styles of music can you think of? There’s no shortage of tastes, genres, or preferences. But what are the non-

negotiables of music?

- Tuning/Intonation/Pitch – Tune your instrument! Then re-tune it. Then . . . tune it again. Get proficient at tuning quickly and inconspicuously.
- Rhythm and Tempo – Lock it in! Rehearse with a metronome to reduce tempo fluctuation.