2027 MAC AWARDS ELIGIBILITY RULES AND CATEGORY DEFINITIONS

THE AWARDS PROCESS

For an artist to be considered for a MAC Award, an application must be submitted documenting his/her eligibility. The application can be submitted by:

- The artist him/herself (or by someone else with the artist's permission)
- A MAC member club in which the artist performed
- A member of the Eligibility Committee or one of the specialist committees (see below)

The MAC Awards Eligibility Committee will review all submissions to verify eligibility and ensure that applicants have consented to being submitted for an Award.

For most categories, there will be two ballots submitted to all MAC members:

- The preliminary ballot, prepared by the Eligibility Committee, which will list all eligible applicants in each category. The people appearing on this preliminary ballot are not nominees and may not be advertised as such. Every MAC member may select up to three choices in each category—except in categories for which the instructions on the ballot specifically state otherwise. The votes will be tallied by the independent voting company retained for this purpose.
- The final ballot listing the top vote-getters from the preliminary ballot, with a maximum of five in each category (unless a tie in the preliminary ballot voting requires that the number be expanded, or if the Eligibility Committee, in its sole discretion, determines that a greater number is appropriate—for example, if warranted by the large number of candidates in the category). The people appearing on this ballot are *MAC Award nominees* and may be advertised as such in publicity or press materials. Every MAC member may select one choice in each category; the votes will be tallied by the independent voting company retained for this purpose, and the MAC Award winners will be determined.

For other categories, specialist committees may select the nominees; those categories are identified in the category definitions below. Each such nominating committee shall consist of at least four members, at least one of whom will be a MAC Board Director; the committees will choose the nominees in each category. This selection process will take place concurrently with the first round of membership voting described above. Nominees in these categories will appear on the final ballot, to be voted upon by the MAC members as described above.

GENERAL ELIGIBILITY

Only work performed live (not virtual) in calendar year 2026 is eligible. Shows performed in 2026 that had first been performed in a prior year are eligible, so long as that show did not receive a MAC nomination in a prior year. Shows performed in 2026 that have substantially the same content as a show nominated in a prior year are not eligible.

Either the candidate must have been a MAC member in good standing at the time of the application process or the work to be considered for an award must have been performed in a MAC member club in 2026. (MAC member clubs are listed on the MAC web site, www.macnyc.com.) People who are not MAC members or who did not work in a MAC member club can qualify by joining MAC no later than the application submission deadline.

For most performance categories, MAC members must have given at least three eligible performances during the eligibility year (January 1 - December 31, 2026). At least two of those performances must have taken place in the greater New York City area (within 90 miles of New York City); if the third performance took place outside the greater New York City area, it must have taken place in a MAC member club. Non-MAC members must have had a total of at least four eligible performances in one or more MAC member clubs located in the greater New York Metropolitan area. For both MAC members and non-MAC-members, in many of the categories—e.g. the vocalist categories—the qualifying performances need not have been of the same show. If you are not sure whether this applies to your category, contact us at cabaretmacnyc@gmail.com or leave a message on the MAC Hotline (855-622 6921) and someone will get back to you. To be eligible, a performance must take place live in an eligible venue before an in-person audience. **See the category definitions, below, for rules and exceptions specific to individual categories.**

Guest spots in benefits, anniversary shows, variety shows and special events do not count towards eligibility. However, complete shows that were presented as benefits are eligible for consideration. Shows not open to the general public (e.g., performances with an invited guest list or shows open only to members of a club) are not eligible, nor are class shows.

No person may appear in more than one category in any given year for essentially the same work (e.g., Female Vocalist and Female Musical Comedy Performer)—except for shows chosen by the Board as nominees for Show of the Year. However, where categories are clearly different, one person may be eligible in more than one category (e.g., vocalist and director). Performers are not eligible in the Director category for directing their own shows, and vocalists who accompany themselves are not eligible in the Musical Director category for those shows. The MAC Awards Eligibility Committee will review the categories in which the artists have been submitted and will adjust them if the Committee deems it appropriate. Artists will be given the opportunity to appeal category reassignments with the Committee. The Committee's ultimate decision will be final.

There is a unique application form for each category. A separate application form must be submitted for each category in which the artist wants to compete. DO NOT submit multiple categories on the same application. For example, if you are applying in both the Recurring Series and Emcee categories, two separate applications, in separate emails, must be submitted.

All required supporting documentation must accompany the application. The withholding of information that could affect eligibility or category placement, or supplying information that proves to be materially false, may result in disqualification or subsequent revocation of an Award.

The timetable for application submission will be communicated to members well in advance of the deadline.

To avoid the uncertainties inherent in postal delivery, **all applications must be submitted by email**, as follows:

- Your completed category-specific application form and all supporting documentation should be included **in a single email**. The subject line of the email should identify the category in which

you are submitting—e.g., Female Vocalist submission. If you are submitting in multiple categories, **a separate email must be submitted for each category**. The email, including your application form and all supporting material, should be sent to:

MacAwardsSubmissions@gmail.com

You will receive an immediate confirmation of receipt.

- Instructions for submitting entries in the two Recording categories and in the Song and Comedy/Novelty Song categories can be found on the respective application forms for those categories.
- If you have any problems submitting your application by email, contact us at cabaretmacnyc@gmail.com or leave a message on the MAC Hotline (855-622 6921) and someone will get back to you.

IN ALL MAC AWARDS CATEGORIES IN ANY GIVEN YEAR, NO PERSON OR SHOW IS ELIGIBLE TO COMPETE IN ANY CATEGORY IN WHICH THEY HAVE WON THREE TIMES WITHIN THE 5 YEARS IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING THAT YEAR.

CATEGORY DEFINITIONS:

Following are the requirements for eligibility in each award category. Unless otherwise specified, the general eligibility requirements stated above apply. *Note: Categories may be added, combined or eliminated during a given Awards year if the MAC Awards Eligibility Committee, in its sole discretion, determines it appropriate to do so.*

NOMINEES IN THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES WILL APPEAR ON BOTH THE PRELIMINARY AND FINAL BALLOTS

VOCALIST–MALE
VOCALIST–FEMALE
A singer who has performed his/her own show, regardless of genre ("cabaret," jazz, R&B, pop, etc.). A vocalist is not eligible in these categories on the basis of having appeared as a guest in someone else's show. In a show that includes guest artists or back-up vocalists, only the headline performer qualifies for this category.

MAJOR ARTIST–MALE
MAJOR ARTIST–FEMALE
Artists in these categories should have achieved clearly recognized stature and prominence within the MAC live performance community. In addition, they may have received reviews by major media and may have appeared in a major New York venue. These categories encompass all performing art forms and genres: vocalist, instrumentalist, comic, jazz, pop, etc.

An artist is not eligible in these categories if he/she appeared as a guest in someone else's show. In a show that includes guest artists or back-up vocalists, only the headline performer qualifies.

CELEBRITY ARTIST
Artists in this category should have achieved national or international stature and prominence, and should be an established name outside the performing arts community. They will have received reviews by major media. The category encompasses all performing art forms and genres.

NEW YORK DEBUT–MALE
NEW YORK DEBUT–FEMALE
A performer who is presenting his/her own show in New York City for the first time. Performers must be doing an entire act to qualify. A performer who previously appeared as an opening act or as a performer in a revue or as part of a group is eligible for these categories. Performers will not be disqualified by virtue of having done either (a) no more than two performances in the last three months of 2025 or (b) a single performance of a show in any prior year—but not (a) *and* (b). Prior year performances that were not open to the general public do not impact eligibility. In a show that includes guest artists or back-up vocalists, only the headline performer qualifies for these categories.

SPOKEN WORD ARTIST
A performer who entertains in his/her own show predominantly through the spoken word. This category includes all genres (comedy, drama, monology, etc.). An artist is not eligible in this category on the basis of having performed short routines or having appeared as a guest in someone else's show. In a show that includes guest artists, only the headline performer qualifies for this category.

IMPERSONATION/CHARACTERIZATION/DRAG ARTIST
A performer who entertains in their own show by impersonating a non-fictional character or creating one of their own, either with or without music. A performer is not eligible in this category on the basis of having appeared as a guest in someone else's show. In a show that includes guest artists or back-up vocalists, only the headline performer qualifies for this category.

MUSICAL COMEDY PERFORMER–MALE
MUSICAL COMEDY PERFORMER–FEMALE
A performer whose act consists mostly of comic songs, parodies, novelty songs and/or other musical comedy material. To be eligible, the performer must have done his/her own show; he/she is not eligible in these categories on the basis of having appeared as a guest in someone else's show. In a show that includes guest artists or back-up vocalists, only the headline performer qualifies for this category.

DUO/GROUP
Two or more performers (vocalists and/or instrumentalists) performing together as a group. The category encompasses all musical performing arts and genres: vocal groups, musical comedy groups, jazz ensembles, etc. An accompanist singing with a vocalist does not qualify as a duo/group unless this is a considerable part of the act and the two are billed equally together. To be eligible, the duo or group must have done its own show; they are not eligible in this category on the basis of having appeared as guests in someone else's show. In a show that includes guest artists or back-up vocalists, only the headline performers qualify for this category. For purposes of this category, performances need not have fixed sets or starting times, but may be open sets or performances throughout an evening.

MAJOR DUO/GROUP
Two or more performers (vocalists and/or instrumentalists) performing together as a group. Artists in this category should have achieved clearly recognized stature and prominence within the MAC live performance community. In addition, they may have received reviews by major media and may have appeared in a major New York venue. The category encompasses all musical performing arts and genres: vocal groups, musical comedy groups, jazz ensembles, etc. An accompanist singing with a vocalist does not qualify as a duo/group unless this is a considerable part of the act and the two are billed equally together. To be eligible, the duo or group must have done its own show; they are not eligible in this category on the basis of having appeared as guests in someone else's show. In a show that includes guest artists or back-up vocalists, only the headline performers qualify for this category. For purposes of this category, performances need not have fixed sets or starting times, but may be open sets or performances throughout an evening.

REVUE
This category includes the following examples:
- a revue of original material written specifically for the show
- a revue of material written for another show or medium, linked together for the first time by a theme
- a revue of material from multiple sources written by one songwriter/songwriting team
- a thematic revue of material by multiple writers
- a revue consisting primarily of parodies, novelty songs and other forms of musical comedy material

A revue must have at least two performers and should be able to be recast without suffering artistically. A revue should not rely on any specific performer's participation for its identity. The award will go to the driving or creative force(s) behind the production, who must be identified in the application; this might be, for example, the producer, the director, the developer, or the writer(s). If none of the driving/creative forces is a MAC member, all (four) required performances must have taken place in a MAC member club in the greater New York metropolitan area.

RECURRING SERIES
A show or series with a standard format and a changing lineup of acts. This category includes all formats (open mic, variety show, etc.), and the acts can consist of any combination of musical performers, comedy performers, songwriters, and/or variety acts. Benefit series are not eligible in this category. The award will go to the driving or creative force(s) behind the series, who must be identified in the application; this might be, for example, the producer, the director, the emcee, the developer or the writer(s). If none of the driving/creative forces is a MAC member, all (four) required performances must have taken place in a MAC member club in the greater New York metropolitan area.

EMCEE
A person who emcees a show or a series; the shows need not all have been the same show or in the same series. Emcee duties typically include introducing the acts, banter with the performers, and non-musical entertainment of the audience. The emcee may or may not also be involved with the production of the show and may or may not also perform in the shows. In a show with multiple emcees, only the primary emcee(s) are eligible.

TRIBUTE SHOW
A show that celebrates the work of another artist or of an artistic style/period in depth, with substantive analysis and insight. For example, what distinguished the artist's work, or how events in the artist's life impacted his/her choices, or what distinguished the style/period from other styles or trends, or whether and how it was revolutionary. By contrast, a show consisting of material that was written or performed by a specified artist or artists, sprinkled with superficial facts and little or no enlightening analysis, is an example of a show that would not qualify for this category.

SPECIAL PRODUCTION
A show that does not fit into any of the other categories. The award will go to the driving or creative force(s) behind the production, who must be identified in the application; this might be, for example, the producer, the director, the developer, or the writer(s). If none of the driving/creative forces is a MAC member, all (four) required performances must have taken place in a MAC member club in the greater New York metropolitan area.

DIRECTOR
Must have directed **at least three different shows or performers in the greater New York metropolitan area** in 2026. There is **no minimum-number-of-performances requirement**. The performances must have taken place in MAC member clubs or the candidate must be a MAC member.

MUSICAL DIRECTOR
Must have provided musical direction for **at least three different shows or performers in the greater New York metropolitan area** in 2026. There is **no minimum-number-of-performances requirement**. The performances must have taken place in MAC member clubs or the candidate must be a MAC member.

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
Must have provided lighting and/or sound design for at least **five different shows or performers in the greater New York metropolitan area** in 2026. There is **no minimum-number-of-performances requirement**. The venues must be MAC member clubs or the candidate must be a MAC member.

ENSEMBLE INSTRUMENTALIST
An instrumentalist who, as a member of an ensemble of two or more instrumentalists, provides musical accompaniment for a vocalist(s) in a full-length show or for a different form of entertainment, e.g., a revue or variety show. Musical directors are not eligible in this category. To be eligible, the instrumentalist must have accompanied **at least three different shows or performers in the greater New York metropolitan area** in 2026. There is **no minimum-number-of-performances requirement**. The other ensemble members may be different from show to show. The performances must have taken place in MAC member clubs or the candidate must be a MAC member**.**

PIANO BAR SINGING ENTERTAINER–UPTOWN (*above 14th Street*)
PIANO BAR SINGING ENTERTAINER–DOWNTOWN (*14th Street and below*)
A singer engaged by a club, restaurant, or room, performing as an obligation of employment as part of the entertainment package in such establishment without fixed set lists or specific show times. Eligible singers must have other responsibilities, such as waiting tables or bartending. There is a **40-performance minimum requirement**, which refers to the number of evenings/afternoons the candidate performed on his or her regularly scheduled shift(s) or subbing in 2026. A candidate who worked in both uptown and downtown venues in 2026 should submit in the category that matches the location of the majority of his/her eligible performances. If the candidate is not a MAC member, the venue must be a MAC member club in the greater New York metropolitan area for an engagement to be eligible.

PIANO BAR INSTRUMENTALIST–UPTOWN (*above 14th Street*)
PIANO BAR INSTRUMENTALIST–DOWNTOWN (*14th Street and below)*
An instrumentalist (piano or other instrument), who may or may not sing, who entertains in a club, restaurant, or room functioning as a piano bar. Performers eligible in these categories are those who are engaged by the venue and who may do open sets without fixed set lists or appear at designated times. In addition, they may provide accompaniment for other performers, and/or conduct sing-alongs or other types of audience participation. Instrumentalists who provide background music but do not interact with other performers or the audience are not eligible in this category. There is a **40-performance minimum requirement**, which refers to the number of evenings/afternoons the candidate performed on his or her regularly scheduled shift(s) or subbing in 2026. A candidate who worked in both uptown and downtown venues in 2026 should submit in the category that matches the location of the majority of his/her eligible performances. If the candidate is not a MAC member, the venue(s) must be a MAC member club in the greater New York metropolitan area for an engagement to be eligible.

NOMINEES IN THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES WILL BE CHOSEN BY COMMITTEE—THE CATEGORIES WILL NOT APPEAR ON THE PRELIMINARY BALLOT. However, the MAC Awards Eligibility Committee may, in its sole discretion, choose not to submit any or all of these categories to a nominating committee and instead, include them on the preliminary ballot for voting by the full MAC membership.

SONG
A song whose predominant intent /tone is non-humorous.

- The song must have been performed publicly in 2026; there is **no minimum-number-of-performances requirement**. If neither the composer nor the lyricist is a MAC member, at least one performance in 2026 must have taken place in a MAC member club or at a MAC-sponsored event.
- Songs that have previously become famous are not eligible, nor are songs in which either the composer or lyricist has achieved a level of fame that has made them well-known nationally.
- Parodies are not eligible.
- Songs that are more than 10 years old (i.e., were written or published prior to 2016) are not eligible, nor are songs that were submitted in a previous year.
- The identity of the songwriter(s) must not be discernible from the song's title or lyrics.

The award for Song will go to both the composer(s) and the lyricist(s).

Nominees in this category will be chosen by committee; the category will not appear on the preliminary ballot.

Only one song in this category may be submitted by a writer or writing team. For example: a songwriter can submit a song for which (s)he wrote both music and lyrics, and also submit a song written with Collaborator A, and also submit a song written with Collaborator B, and also submit… However, no composer or lyricist may be represented by more than two nominated entries in this category: one entry in which (s)he is the sole writer and one in which (s)he is a collaborator. In the case of multiple submitted collaborations, the selection of which collaboration is eligible for nomination will be based on the judges' ranking.

The song must be submitted as an MP3 file (no other format) attached to an email; the lyrics must be submitted as a one- or two-page PDF or Word file, also attached to the email, and not as a link. Neither the mp3 content nor the lyric sheet should contain the writers' name(s) or other identifying information (this is a blind judging process.) The submission email must contain the submitter's name and a contact phone number, and the Subject of the email should be the writer's last name and the song title, e.g., "Sondheim – Send in the Clowns."

COMEDY/NOVELTY SONG

A song whose predominant intent /tone is humorous.

- The song must have been performed publicly in 2026; there is **no minimum-number-of-performances requirement**. If neither the composer nor the lyricist is a MAC member, at least one performance in 2026 must have taken place in a MAC member club or at a MAC-sponsored event.
- Songs that have previously become famous are not eligible, nor are songs in which either the composer or lyricist has achieved a level of fame that has made them well-known nationally.
- Parodies are not eligible.
- Songs that are more than 10 years old (i.e., were written or published prior to 2016) are not eligible, nor are songs that were submitted in a previous year
- The identity of the songwriter(s) must not be discernible from the song's title or lyrics.

The award for Comedy/Novelty Song will go to both the composer(s) and the lyricist(s).

Nominees in this category will be chosen by committee; the category will not appear on the preliminary ballot.

Only one song in this category may be submitted by a writer or writing team. For example: a songwriter can submit a song for which (s)he wrote both music and lyrics, and also submit a song written with Collaborator A, and also submit a song written with Collaborator B, and also submit… However, no composer or lyricist may be represented by more than two nominated entries in this category: one entry in which (s)he is the sole writer and one in which (s)he is a collaborator. In the case of multiple submitted collaborations, the selection of which collaboration is eligible for nomination will be based on the judges' ranking.

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RECORDING (LAMOTT FRIEDMAN RECORDING AWARD)
MAJOR RECORDING
To be eligible in one of these categories:

- The recording must be a complete album released in 2026 as either:
    - a bar-coded compact disc available for sale to the public.
      OR
    - a digital recording, available for download on such sites as CD Baby or iTunes

  AND

- If the recording contains selections that had appeared on an earlier recording that was performed by the same artist and submitted for a MAC Award, **either** more than 50% of the other selections on the 2026 recording must be new **or** more than 50% of the recording's running time must consist of new selections.

  Selections that are re-imaginings of previously recorded selections may qualify as new selections if in the judgment of the Eligibility Committee the change is so integral that it makes the selection seem fresh and new.

- The recording will be judged on performance quality, technical quality, and song selection.

Physical discs should not be submitted; only digital downloads in mp3 format may be submitted with the application. The application must include a link to a site where the recording is available for purchase or download, as well as a link to a drop box or similar folder where the recording and any cover art/liner notes can be accessed at no charge by the MAC recording committee. NOTE: If you place your recording on Spotify, you may satisfy the download submission requirement by submitting the Spotify link to us on your application form.

The artist, or at least one member of a group of artists, must be a MAC member or have performed at least once in a MAC member club in 2026. In the case of a compilation recording, the creative force behind the recording must be a MAC member or have worked in a MAC member club in 2026.

IF THE BOARD OPTS TO PRESENT AN AWARD IN THE FOLLOWING CATEGORY, NOMINEES IN THE CATEGORY WILL BE CHOSEN BY THE BOARD – APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AND THE CATEGORY WILL NOT APPEAR ON THE PRELIMINARY BALLOT. THE BOARD MAY ALSO CHOOSE NOT TO INCLUDE THE CATEGORY ON THE FINAL BALLOT AND, INSTEAD, PRESENT THE AWARD DIRECTLY TO A RECIPIENT OF THE BOARD'S CHOOSING:

SHOW OF THE YEAR
Either a special event or a show that drew a considerable amount of positive attention from the Cabaret community as a whole, generated an unusual amount of "buzz," and was generally acknowledged to be outstanding in all performance and presentation aspects. In addition, it may also have attracted a more general audience.

IN ADDITION, THE BOARD MAY BESTOW THE FOLLOWING AWARDS:

Benefit Series (The Ruth Kurtzman Award)

Hanson Award

Board of Directors Award

Lifetime Achievement Award [recipients of this award will no longer be eligible for MAC Awards in competitive categories.]