



**April 2001**

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**Cookie's Corner**

**Hello Everyone!**

**What is Artistry?**

One of our experienced Level 10 judges recently asked me, "Just what is artistry? How do I judge it?" What a good question! Art is the "the activity of creating beautiful things" according to the dictionary. But art, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder. Here are a few ideas to help beholders!

- The new elite Code of Points describes artistry of presentation as showing three qualities: projection of personal style, focus, and expression; femininity, beauty, and elegance; entertainment value.
- USAG dance clinicians have used the following phrases to describe artistry: movements appear effortless; movements are expressive; head, arm, and hand gestures are completed at the end of movements; the gymnast performs without seeming embarrassed by the movement; the performance is stylish: it's slow and beautiful when it's supposed to be slow; it's light and airy when that is the mood being portrayed; it's quick and cute when that is the image being projected.

One way to train your eye to recognize artistic movement is to observe art in action. Public television (education channels/arts channels) in most locations broadcast professional dance and theatre productions. Notice the way these professionals express themselves in movement, use gesture to accent a movement, complete every move, and extend their lines. Contrast what you see from professionals with what you see when you judge. While few athletes achieve professional dance levels, comparisons with professional dancers will help to train your eye for artistic performance. Recently, I was surprised to watch a dance performance on television and see a sequence from the compulsory beam routine performed by a dancer! The movements were precise, appeared effortless, unquestionably recognizable, flowing, and elegant. Seeing this sequence performed so superbly helped me to see the art and the artistry.

Artistry deductions in gymnastics are helpful in distinguishing performances among athletes. As judges, we need to train our eye to recognize and reward artistic performance. Take some time to watch dance performances on television, attend live professional dance performances, or sit in on dance and theatre rehearsals in your community and, most importantly, BEHOLD!

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