

RULES FOR DRAMAFEST

OVERVIEW

Dramafest is administered by the Independent Theatre Association of WA (ITA) and operates as follows:

1. The theatre/organisation submits an application to have its production adjudicated. The ITA Secretary and Treasurer process the application and notify the adjudicators.
2. Four adjudicators typically attend each metropolitan production and two adjudicators attend a country based production. Adjudicators make their reservations, attend the production, and evaluate an array of production categories. The process is confidential; judges are instructed not to discuss their opinions with others, including the ITA committee.
3. Judges' scores are tabulated in a computerized database maintained by one of the adjudicators.
4. Productions receive nominations across categories, and at the Awards event, a winner is announced.
5. The entire process is confidential.
6. The commitment required of adjudicators is substantial. They are volunteers who commit to attending every show assigned to them. Adjudicators have a variety of backgrounds; many are active in theatre or have theatrical backgrounds. All have a love of the performing arts and all have a commitment to be objective. The ITA Committee and the Senior Adjudicator provide orientation, materials, and training.
7. Dramafest Awards will be presented at The Robert Finley Awards each year.

ENTRIES

The organisation/theatre should complete an Entry Form as soon as applicable.

For metropolitan clubs this should be received at least three (3) weeks prior to opening night of the one act season. For country clubs, applications should be received four (4) weeks prior to opening night, or they may risk the production missing out on adjudication.

Applications received after these cut off times will be considered a late application and charged an additional late fee. These entries will not be considered received until confirmation that at least three adjudicators can attend the production. If at least three adjudicators cannot attend, the production will not be accepted. In these circumstances, the application fee will be refunded.

No production will be accepted for adjudication until the entry fee is received. No production will be accepted for adjudication after the season has opened. There is a \$30 entry fee for each production submitted by metropolitan clubs and a \$90 entry fee for country clubs.

There is an additional \$30 late fee for any entry submitted after the deadline as specified above. Please include the additional \$30 late fee with the application.

SCRIPTS

If an organisation wishes to enter a production in a one act season for the Best New Writing Award, an electronic copy of the script must be provided with the entry or hard copies of the script must be forwarded to the ITA as soon as possible.

PROFESSIONALS

No professional actor, director, club, group or organisation may compete in the Festival. A professional actor is defined as one having earned more than half their income from acting in the year preceding the Festival, with the exception of full time students. A professional director is defined as one having earned more than half their total income from his/her activities in teaching production/direction at a tertiary level or in continuous work in live theatre as a director.

No one may be paid for their involvement in a production entered in Dramafest.

TYPE OF PLAY

The dramatic work offered by the entrant must be a piece that is intelligible to the audience without prior written/oral explanation be it:

- A dramatic work featuring a cast of two (2) or more players
- A One-Act play
- A single extract from a longer play

NOTE: Dramafest is regarded as an adult competition and as such a children's play is considered unsuitable, due to the difficulties of judging an adult play against a children's one. Plays with children in the cast as part of an adult play are of course eligible for entry. Please contact the ITA if a difficulty arises with this rule. There is a separate competition for youth productions.

There will be no upper limit on the number of cast members in any dramatic work entered. The minimum number in a cast shall be two (2).

No entry shall be less than twenty (20) minutes, or longer than ninety (90) minutes in duration.

A play that is entered in Dramafest cannot be entered in The Robert Finley Awards and vice versa.

PERFORMANCE RIGHTS

If the entered play is subject to copyright, it is the responsibility of the entrant to obtain permission for the performance and to pay the appropriate royalty fee in advance. The

entrant is required to certify that this has been done, a disclaimer is part of the entry form and must be signed before any entry will be accepted.

NOTE: All alterations to a script must be approved by the author or his/her representative or estate. Proof of copyright compliance must be able to be supplied upon request by the ITA.

STATUS OF PERFORMERS AND PRODUCTIONS

Productions must be recognized as a community theatre production. Productions must be "theatre" and not other forms of performing art. Music, dance and choral productions, talent or variety shows, non-published musical revues, and workshops are not eligible.

Productions must run for multiple performances with at least two performances over a one week period and be open to the general public in Western Australia (unless an audience is restricted by the rights of a play).

Productions must be performed during the eligibility year, which runs from 1st December to 30th November the following year. Productions opening during the last week of the eligibility year must have the majority number of performances in the current year. If not, the production will be eligible for the following year's awards.

OTHER GUIDELINES

Your entry form becomes the adjudicators notification form. If your theatre is in a larger facility, e.g. a school, please also include directions from the parking lot to the theatre.

Please notify the ITA immediately if you cancel or change a production that has been entered.

Please make sure that the Box Office phone number is a number where the adjudicators can make an actual booking or leave a message about making a booking. Please make sure that the contact phone number is one that is monitored right up to curtain up, so the adjudicators can contact you if they get lost or need to notify you of a cancellation. If there is no box office, please provide the contact details of someone who can organise tickets for the adjudicator.

Please have your box office keep track of the adjudicators reservations. You can help us by notifying the ITA ten days before closing night if judges have not reserved tickets by then. Please provide the names of the judges that have reserved tickets so the ITA can identify and contact those that have not yet reserved tickets. An adjudicator's sign in sheet has been developed to assist with this.

Adjudicators will require two (2) complementary tickets per entry and a complementary program for the season.

Where there are multiple plays in a season, a written adjudicators report will be provided for each season, not each entry, however, each entry will be considered separately for the purpose of the awards.

Nominations will not be announced for Dramafest Awards.

The adjudicator's decision will be final in all aspects, and no discussion or correspondence will be entered into.

BREACH OF RULES

Any breach of these rules, whether deliberate or negligent may result in a disqualification.

AWARD CATEGORIES

The Dorothy Barber Award for Best Overall Production

The Peter Mann Award for Best Costumes

The Mike Binns Award for Best Director

Dramafest Best Actor

The Rob De Vaack Award for Most Innovative Production

Dramafest Best Actress

The Peter Kemeny Encouragement Award

Dramafest Best Supporting Actress

Dramafest Best Supporting Actor

The Jenny McNae Adjudicators Award

Dramafest Adjudicators Certificates

The Beryl Silvester Award for Best New Writing

STANDING RULES FOR DRAMAFEST ADJUDICATORS

Adjudicators shall serve one (1) full theatrical year beginning 1st December and ending 30th November. Adjudicators will also be required to serve in their voting capacity until the completion of the final Finley Award Night balloting, and attend both the Finley Nominations night and Robert Finley Awards Night.

Adjudicators shall serve for a term of one (1) year, with an option to reapply for a second term and so on. On or about October 1st of each year, the ITA Committee shall confirm appointments of the Adjudicators for the new theatrical year.

Adjudicators may not be involved in any production that is being adjudicated. Violation of this will result in removal from the Adjudicating Panel and the disqualification of that production for any Finley Award or Dramafest Award that year.

An adjudicator who resigns for any reason during his or her term shall be ineligible for awards in any category for the remainder of that theatrical year.

Adjudicators may see only one (1) complete performance of each production. Attendance by an adjudicator at any auditions, rehearsals, or any other preliminary presentations of any production or a portion thereof is strictly prohibited.

When an adjudicator attends a production, he/she must see the entire production. The adjudicator is excused only due to an emergency. If the production is not seen, the adjudicator may not adjudicate, discuss or score that production. That adjudicator may, however, adjudicate and discuss scores when preliminary list is cut down and the production he/she missed is not included as a finalist.

A person who has or will receive remuneration in any form for services relative to a production being adjudicated in competition shall not be eligible for any award. In addition, the production itself may not be considered for any other categories of competition. It shall be the duty of the theatre to notify the ITA in advance of the production what roles are disqualified from consideration.

Awards to be given are listed earlier in this document. Any extra awards shall be approved by the ITA Committee.

Theatres must notify the ITA *3 weeks prior for metropolitan clubs and 4 weeks prior for country* in advance of the opening performance of shows to be adjudicated. It is not the responsibility of the adjudicators to seek out production dates. Lack of notification exonerates the ITA and Adjudicator if he/she fails to see that performance.

Member organizations shall provide adjudicators two (2) tickets to each production. It is the individual adjudicators responsibility to confirm reservations with the theatre. Adjudicators must also notify the box office when they arrive at the theatre that they are ITA Adjudicators and sign in on the sheet provided by the ITA Committee. It shall be the theatre's responsibility to provide the notes regarding the categories for performers and off-stage talent and crafts-persons. In the absence of such 'notes', the judging committee shall determine nominations and categories based upon the results as tabulated from individual adjudicator's ballots.

Adjudicators must report to the Senior Adjudicator or ITA Committee if they have missed seeing a scheduled production. If an adjudicator misses two (2) productions without a valid reason, the ITA shall request the resignation of that adjudicator.

Adjudicators will receive an honorarium of \$2000.00 each per theatrical year, only as compensation for travel and fuel. In the event of attending a country production, up to two night's accommodation will be paid. Only two adjudicators are required to attend a country production.

The adjudicators shall meet at the discretion of the Senior Adjudicator; however, any adjudicator may call a meeting of the other adjudicators with fourteen (14) days' notice given to all involved.

Scores and decisions are handled with total secrecy. Ethics and integrity are required from each adjudicator. Discussion of individual performers and productions must be confined to the adjudicators meetings and the contents of those discussions must be handled with the utmost confidentiality.

No adjudicator may publicly review a show that they are adjudicating and adjudicators reports must be provided to the contact at the member club. No reviews or adjudicator's reports may be published on social media by the ITA or the ITA adjudicators.

The adjudicators will act at the discretion of the ITA Committee and, if need be, justify its actions to the Committee.

GUIDELINES FOR ADJUDICATING

ESTABLISHING CRITERIA

Continuity of production?

Is the playwright's intent perceived?

Artistic and/or entertainment value?

Conflict and irony?

Ensemble – interplay, reaction, work together cohesively?

DIRECTING

Balance of casting?

Rhythm, timing, transition, pace?

Variety and imagination?

Staging, blocking, movement, flow?

Interpretation?

ACTING

Voice and diction appropriate for character?

Believability and acceptance by audience of character?

Interplay, action and reaction to others on stage?

Sensitivity and imagination?

Power and projection? (auditory and emotional/emotive)

Consistency of characterization?

Line interpretation?

Pantomime and movement, gestures, expression?

Depth of role/character?

Insight into role/character?

TECHNICAL ARRANGEMENTS

Lighting – appropriate, mood enhancing, special uses

Sound – appropriate, mood enhancing, special uses

Properties – appropriate, quality, variety

Scene Changes – pacing, effort

Set Decoration – creativity, appropriate, non-invasive to movement

Special Effects – pyrotechnics, hydraulics, creative scenery

Exceptional handling of difficult task(s)

The set itself

COSTUMING

Fits the period?

Fits the actor? Ease of movement; eases, or complicates performance?

Enhance the overall look of the production?

Interpretation, creativity, effort, craftsmanship?

These are merely provided as guidelines. Your opinion and expertise are the only criteria upon which you should rely.

ADJUDICATORS RESPONSIBILITY SHEET

Remember to call your reservations in to the theatre in advance. Seating is very limited in some of the venues. Make your reservation as soon as allowable prior to a show's opening. The season and our individual schedules can get hectic and shows do sell out. Always confirm the date, time, and place of performance when you are making your reservation. Most reservations are handled by answering machines. LISTEN to the information provided on these recordings.

If you arrive at a production late and it is already in performance, DO NOT go ahead and view a partial performance. Adjudicators must see a complete performance and are only allowed to view a performance ONCE.

Adjudicating decisions must be based on that one performance only. If something or someone is having an off night, "them's the breaks!" You may not compensate for something or someone you know normally gives a stellar performance.

You are required to sign an adjudicator's sign-in sheet at your attendance of each performance.

You should be given a set of notes for each performance you see. This does not mean you cannot consider other persons listed in the program for all categories as you see fit.

Each production is to be viewed as an entity unto itself. Do not withhold points thinking you will see something better later. Score based on what had merit within the individual show. Any aspect which has merit should be given the opportunity to be considered for

a preliminary nomination. Comparison of shows takes place on the final adjudicators meeting.

You must be objective. Do not vote for a show just because it features a friend or relative. Do not go into the production with preconceived notions about a theatre or script.

Be careful of any comments you might make when attending productions. Sometimes innocent comments can be misconstrued and you never know who is within earshot. The best plan is to make absolutely no comments whatsoever about the productions you are currently seeing within the confines of the theatre building. An adjudicator should NEVER discuss a production with anyone other than another adjudicator and should certainly be aware of their surroundings if he/she is involved in such a conversation.

Adjudicators should see all shows. Missing shows is not an option, but in the case of an emergency a show may be missed. Missing too many shows without prior arrangement or valid reason will require the ITA Committee to request your resignation. As a side note, if an adjudicator misses a show and a category from that show makes it to the final meeting, the adjudicator will be excluded from voting in that category.

Adjudicators must supply a written report to clubs whose performances they have adjudicated. These reports could be provided no later than two weeks after adjudicating a performance and provided to the contact person for that club as listed on the entry form.

If for some reason you must resign, please notify the Senior Adjudicator and ITA Committee immediately.

Remember that you have been selected for an important job and your opinions are greatly valued and anticipated by all the participating theatres and that you represent the ITA.