

# **ACT-CO FESTIVAL** **ADJUDICATION EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES**



## **General Guidelines**

Adjudicators are hired based on their expertise as theatre professionals, and his/her ability to teach and communicate to community theatre artists. The adjudication is an educational process, and will have the following:

- Positive reinforcement about what the company did well;
- Tools to help the company improve in the areas where it could do better;
- Detailed references to all areas of the production;
- Two-way dialogue between the adjudicator and the participants;
- Sensitivity to the participants;
- Balanced and tempered commentary between on-stage and off-stage participants;
- Understanding of the company, and the conditions, opportunities and restrictions of their theatre (this can often be achieved through dialogue with the designers at the private adjudication.)

The adjudicator shall not refer to other productions he/she has adjudicated in the Festival. As the Festival is competitive, the Adjudicator shall refrain from using superlatives (e.g. "the best") during the adjudication.

## **Specific Areas To Be Covered**

### **Public Adjudication** (10-15 minutes long)

This is a "general" assessment of the production, at the group's option. The goal of the public adjudication is to provide the audience with observations and insights about the play (such as the context of its creation and production history), and the challenges and achievements of that evening's performance, illustrated with specific references to the production.

### **Private Adjudication** (60-90 minutes long)

A detailed assessment of the production which covers, in detail, all production areas and individual performances. The adjudicator will lead an open dialogue between the adjudicator and the company. The adjudicator will use leading questions to get the group talking, if necessary.

1. **SET:** Does the set reflect and enhance the interpretation of the play? Does it capture its mood? Does it function well? Does it complement other design areas? (This should include comment on set construction, painting and dressing.)

2. LIGHTING: Does the lighting reflect and enhance the interpretation of the play? Does it capture its mood? Does it function well? Does it complement other design areas? Was it executed correctly?

3. COSTUMES: Do the costumes reflect and enhance the interpretation of the play? Do they capture its mood? Do they function well? Do they complement other design areas? Do they suit the characters?

4. SOUND: Does the choice of music and sound effects reflect and enhance the interpretation of the play? Does it capture its mood? Does it complement other design areas? Were the levels correct? Were they well-timed? Were they well-executed? How could it be improved?

5. PROPERTIES: Do the properties reflect and enhance the interpretation of the play? Do they function well? Do they complement other design areas?

6. HAIR AND MAKE-UP: Does the hair and make-up reflect and enhance the interpretation of the play? Do they function well? Do they complement other design areas? Are they appropriate for the production and setting? Was there any special hairstyles or make-up needed? Was it executed well?

7. DIRECTION: How has the director interpreted the play? Is the interpretation well-reasoned? Does the interpretation show understanding of and integrity to the author's intention? How has the director executed that interpretation? Does the production have pace (as opposed to speed)? Does the play build to its climax? Are there levels to the production? How well did the director block the characters? How did the director use the design elements to complement the interpretation of the play?

8. ACTING: Each member of the cast will be mentioned individually, except in the case of large ensembles such as a chorus where the individuals work together as an integrated unit, and who will be mentioned as a collective. Does the actor thoroughly understand his/her character? Did the actor understand the text? Was the character well-interpreted? How did the actor use his/her voice? Did the performance have 'colour'? Did the actor 'listen' to himself/herself and the other actors on stage? Did the actor remain in character when he or she was not speaking nor actively participating in the scene, or did the actor 'ham it up' or upstage other actors and the play? Was the character convincing at all times? How well did the actor move? Was the actor's performance integrated with the others on stage or was it more of an individual performance?

9. DANCING AND CHOREOGRAPHY: Did the choreography reflect the mood in the scene? Was it original and innovative? Was the dancing well executed?

10. SINGING: Are the voices strong enough? How well are the songs interpreted and executed? Is there balance between the voices and orchestra?

11. MUSICAL DIRECTION: How well does the Musical Director interpret the score? Is it an intelligent and sensitive interpretation? Has the MD succeeded in transmitting his or her interpretation to the orchestra? Has the MD elicited the best from the orchestra? Does the orchestra properly accompany the singers?

12. PRODUCTION: This area shall include all other production staff. How is the play stage managed? Does backstage crew work well? Does the show start on time? What is the entire 'feeling' of the show, as this will reflect the stamp of the producer. In multi-scene productions, how were set changes executed?