

OPERATIONS MANUAL: THEATRE FOR YOUTH DIVISION

PURPOSE OF THE THEATRE FOR YOUTH FESTIVAL

The purpose of the Theatre for Youth Festival at MTA is to promote love and appreciation of theatre for young performers and audience members in Mississippi. The festival achieves this purpose by creating an entry point for festival group participants, especially secondary and community groups introducing theatre to young audiences in Mississippi, as well as engaging in outreach to community and school groups.

DUTIES OF THE THEATRE FOR YOUTH DIVISION CHAIR

1. Maintain the handbook page for Theatre for Youth Responsibilities
2. Maintain appropriate records of participant contact and production information and other relevant festival-related data.
3. The Executive Director will send out registration forms to schools and theatres asking for their participation.
 - a. Communicate with theatres that do not normally participate in the MTA Festival
 - b. Encourage them to attend the festival.
4. Coordinate the Theatre for Youth Festival schedule.
 - a. The Chair will communicate with participating schools and organizations and ensure that the schedule does not conflict with other festival activities in which the same group is participating.
 - b. The Chair bears the responsibility to maintain the schedule, to keep the festival running at the published times, and to help schools and organizations resolve conflicts with other festival obligations.
5. Work with the host facility for the Theatre for Youth Festival
6. The Vice President will get a token of appreciation for the TFY adjudicators.
7. The Vice President will contact the TFY adjudicators before the festival and will coordinate and lead the adjudicator meeting
8. Respond to e-mails from the President and the Executive Director in a timely manner.
9. Review festival materials as requested by the President and the Executive Director.
10. Prepare and submit a division report to the board following the state festival.
11. Provide content for newsletters, blog posts, and social media as requested by the President and the Executive Director.
12. Attend all board meetings and develop ideas make the division stronger; propose these ideas to the board.
13. Review the division guidelines in the MTA handbook and edit so that they remain up-to-date. Submit handbook changes to the MTA secretary two weeks prior to a board meeting.
14. Attend meetings (such as the Secondary Workshop, Town Hall Meetings, Arts on the Capitol Day, etc.) when requested by the President and the Executive Director.
15. Stay mindful that this position means that sometimes the Theatre for Youth Chair and Vice Chair will have to miss performances, be back stage, or do work at the festival that separates them from the main festival events. Bear in mind that these positions are to better the organization and not the individual interest of the Chair or Vice Chair.
16. Update and maintain any websites or public forum created for Theatre for Youth
17. Create digital educational package of public-domain and original works performance recordings and supporting educational materials for schools, daycares, and community youth centers across the state of Mississippi.
18. Create and maintain records of PreK-12 schools, daycares, and community centers that would like to receive information concerning TFY performances, recordings, and educational support materials.

THEATRE FOR YOUTH ELIGIBILITY

Any amateur group that performs plays with content intended for young audiences is eligible to participate.

THEATRE FOR YOUTH FESTIVAL FEES

1. Any theatre performing in the Theatre for Youth Festival will be responsible for paying the theatre festival fee of \$50 per theatre/production.
2. Anyone planning to stay for the entire festival or remaining portion of the festival will need to either pay the applicable weekend pass or the festival fee + MTA membership fee.

THEATRE FOR YOUTH SELECTION GUIDELINES

1. Productions entered in festival may be of any type provided the material presented is appropriate for children.
 - a. Each participating group must inform the Chair of the Theatre for Youth Division if their show contains material that makes it unsuitable for younger audiences.
 - i. As the division is for young audiences, material should be suitable for all ages.
 - ii. The Chair retains the discretion to refuse to allow unsuitable content to be performed in the festival.
 - b. To be included in year-round resources provided to schools, daycares, and organizations for youth across Mississippi, selections must be original or public domain.
 - i. Participants who are interested in inclusion in this project must sign a media release form.
 - ii. This is not mandatory for participation in the TFY festival.
 - c. Care will be taken to match each show with an appropriate audience.
2. The total length allotted for each individual performance will be 30 minutes.

THEATRE FOR YOUTH PRODUCTION RULES

1. Each group needs to arrive prepared to set-up and strike their own set. Performance groups will be allotted a total of five (5) minutes for both setup and strike.
2. The house will remain open during set-up. However, the doors will close and remain closed during the production.
3. Lighting will be limited to lights up and down with basic wash covering the performance area. House lights will remain at least 25 percent intensity throughout performances.
4. All special requests (use of special effects, technical requirements, time slots, etc.) must be approved by the Theatre for Youth Division Chair.
5. Participating groups who do not adhere to the guidelines, rules, and time limits will be ineligible to receive the "Best Play" award but may receive other awards at the discretion of the adjudicators.

THEATRE FOR YOUTH FESTIVAL PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Before the Theatre for Youth Festival at MTA, each group is required to submit the following information to the Chair of the Theatre for Youth Division:
 - a. Proof of Permission to Perform / Proof of Payment of Royalty (if applicable)
 - b. Proof of Theatre for Youth Festival Entry Fee (payable online or with organizational registration)
 - c. Entry / Information Sheet
 - d. Signed media release forms for each performer (if applicable, see selection guidelines 1.b.)
2. Each school must provide 3 copies of the following information to the Chair prior to the performance (The Chair will file one copy and distribute a copy to each of the Theatre for Youth respondents):
 - a. School / Organization Name
 - b. Title of the Play
 - c. Author of the Play
 - d. Cast of Characters in Speaking Order:

- i. Character Name and Actor Name
 - » If the character does not have a name that is called in the play, include a description of some type that clearly allows the adjudicators to distinguish among actors
 - » Example 1: “CINDERELLA - Harriett Thompson”
 - » Example 2: “DWARF: red hat, green boots, big glasses - Marcellus Nguyen”
- e. Director, Crew, and Additional Support

THEATRE FOR YOUTH HOST THEATRE FACILITIES

1. The host community will provide a facility in which to perform.
2. The host facility will provide basic lighting and sound as needed.
3. Each participating group is responsible for furnishing sets, props, and furniture needed for its production.
4. Off stage storage will be provided for sets, etc.

PERFORMANCE ORDER

1. The order of performance of the Theatre for Youth Festival is at the discretion of the Theatre for Youth Division Chair. Requests concerning performance order due to conflicts or other specific needs will be taken into consideration and accommodated if possible.
2. The Festival Program will include:
 - a. Introduction and Welcome from the Chair
 - b. School or Organization Name, Show Title, and Performance Times
 - c. Intermission
 - d. Lunch Time
 - e. Adjudicator Feedback
 - f. Awards
3. Care is taken to match show appropriateness to age of audience. (E.g. Shows intended for very young children will be placed at the time in which audiences of that age are available.)

SERVICE TO COMMUNITY

1. The MTA Theatre for Youth Festival strongly supports the idea of providing theatre experiences to Mississippi's children at no cost.
2. To this end, the host city of the Theatre for Youth Festival is strongly encouraged to bus children to the festival to see the shows for free admission or, depending on scheduling, to publicize the festival performances within the community.
3. Additionally, a digital education package will be created including performance recordings of any public domain or original works with permission and supplemental materials to be distributed to interested groups across the state of Mississippi.

THEATRE FOR YOUTH AWARDS / RESPONDENTS

1. Written feedback will be provided after the conclusion of the festival.
2. Two in-state / local respondents will evaluate all entries in the Theatre for Youth festival.
 - a. The respondents will be provided with the informational one-sheet about the provided by the participating organization.
 - b. The respondents will give general educational, constructive feedback following each block of performances or at the end of the Theatre for Youth Festival, depending on capabilities of the host facility and festival schedule.
 - c. Respondents will discuss and compile a list of award winners and will provide the completed list to the Chair.
 - i. Two (2) awards will be given for The Spirit of Theatre for Youth.

- ii. Two (2) Outstanding Performer awards will be given.
 - iii. Each participating production will receive at least one (1) All-Star Cast member award.
 - iv. Additional special recognition to highlight notable technical or performance achievement may be given at the adjudicator's discretion.
- d. The Chair or their designated representative will announce the winners during the Theatre for Youth Festival Awards Ceremony.