

Criteria Descriptions for One-Act Play Festival

The following descriptions give you a more concrete idea of the tangible and intangibles at which judges are looking.

Theme – Understanding of Piece

- Did the play strongly **challenge the ability** (potential) of the actors?
- Was the main idea concepts (unwritten dialogue) of the play **brought out clearly** and communicated to the audience WITHOUT insulting its intelligence?

Voice – Voice, Pitch, Texture, Diction

- Could the actors be **heard**? Did they project/throw their voices?
- Was there a **variety of rate and inflection**? (Avoid overly patterned tempo/meter – when one is unsure vs. panicked, and monotone ONLY when a character demands it.)
- Were **pronunciation and articulation** correct for each character? (NEVER let them know you are a Texan.)

Tempo – Pace and Rhythm

- Was it **too fast to follow intelligently**? Was it **too slow**? (Underestimate your audience)
- Was the **pace in keeping with the mood and atmosphere** of the play?
- Were **climaxes well developed**? (Conflict clearly identified? Moments of truth? Denouement?)

Movement – Movement, Presence, and Setting

- Was there **logical reason** (What's my motivation?) for all movement by the actors which was **consistent and in keeping with the characters portrayed**?
- Was **movement well executed**? (awkward crossings vs. natural composure of characters)
- (Don't let "what's your name" get in the way of the relationship between your character and his/hers) Lose yourself on stage, let go of inhibitions . . . some of the greatest actors we know are shy/insecure/physically flawed. What makes them great is they leave THAT person in the dressing room and bring the role they were cast to play to life on stage or on camera.

Setting:

- Within arena limits, did **stage arrangement** satisfactorily represent the idea of the play?

Business:

- Were **exits and entrances properly timed**?
- Did the actors **frequently block** each other?
- Was the **designated stage business** adequate to support the idea of the play?

Characterization – Presence (from above) and Ensemble

- Was there a **complete physical and mental re-creation** of the character by the actor?
- Was there apparent **understanding of objective** (want, intentions), obstacle, tactic, expectation? (That is that unwritten dialogue mentioned above.)
- Were his/her **reactions to the other actors correct and effect**? (A "good" actor is a good "RE-ACTER") Reactions to others action/dialogue is CRUCIAL to making audience believe!
- Was the actor's characterization believable the entire time he/she was on stage? Were **emotional transitions natural and effective**?

Ensemble:

- Was there smoothness of action which indicated adequate rehearsal and close cooperation and understanding among the actors?

OVERALL:

* Stage harmony, true ensemble, coordination, synchronized timing, upstaging vs. balance, blending, believability, monologue/aside, exposition (intro – background information), 4th wall (imaginary between audience and actors), falling action (climax to end), genre, hero/heroine, lighting plot, properties, diagonal (actors on different planes of playing space), protagonist (character with which audience most identifies), sight lines, spectacle, stage business, stage pictures, strike, tableau (silent/motionless depiction), transitions, adjust proscenium to arena