

FUNCTION OF THE ADJUDICATOR

The most important function of the adjudicator is to serve as an educator. True, they must recommend outstanding plays, but adjudication without a carefully prepared critique, which teaches as it criticizes, deprives play festival participants of a most valuable feature: the opportunity for qualitative improvement.

An effective critique requires, among other things, extensive knowledge of all styles and types of drama, an understanding of the physical theatre with special concern for limitations often imposed upon the various performing areas in the province. The successful adjudicator must be able to discuss the plays they have seen in a firm but courteous manner. They must be objective, direct, and detailed in their criticism without imposing personal opinions dictatorially.

The adjudicator has the special responsibility of evaluating seriously the efforts of the director and their company, and of treating them and their performances with respect. Through many hours of rehearsal, they have sought to perfect creative performances, not only to be a Regional representative, but for the satisfaction which comes through the search for perfection in the arts. The adjudicator must be familiar with the guidelines of the Alberta Adult One-Act Drama Festival and Alberta Drama Festival Association, and understand limitations imposed on directors. To treat such effort casually would defeat a most important function of the adjudicator.

The adjudicator should use their skills and experience to make each Festival a pleasant and richly educational experience in the lives of participants as they seek to understand more fully the art of theatre.

ADJUDICATION GUIDELINES

1. Adjudicator **SHOULD**:

1. Realize that you should be critically constructive. Help the director and actors with sound suggestions which they may use to improve their work.
2. Understand that most actors try as hard as they know to be effective.
3. Whenever possible, find something about the performance which you can honestly commend.
- d. Be specific in criticizing the production and use examples from it.
- e. Keep your personal opinion of the playwright and script to yourself.
- f. Request to stop the Festival if audience behavior makes it difficult for you to hear or concentrate on the performance.

2. Adjudicator **SHOULD NOT**:

1. At any time comment about the play. It may not be the best play for a particular cast to produce at a particular Festival, but the adjudicator has no responsibility in a Festival to be publicly critical of the director's choice of play.
- b. Criticize only in a negative way. Try to be constructive. It is your duty to help the director to improve their work.
- c. Make a "performance" of your critique. Do not "act a role" before a captive audience.

- d. Re-direct the plays. Suggestions are always in order, but let the director interpret them for their company and use them as they see fit.
- e. Embarrass the director or actors, during either public or private adjudication. This includes use of sarcastic, ridiculing or belittling remarks.
- f. Make any of the following or similar remarks:
 - "I didn't like your play."
 - "I would (or would not) have done it this way."
 - "This play did not challenge the actors."
 - "You should have tried a newer play. This one has been done so often." "What can you expect with a play by this author?"
 - "I'm so tired of seeing that play."
 - "As an actor, you were playing to type (or were typecast)."
 - "You were not the right actor for this role"
 - "This role is beyond your capabilities as an actor."
 - "I didn't like your interpretation of this role."
- g. Spend critique time trying only to justify your decision.

Under **no** circumstances give play directors your worksheets or notes. If you care to provide a written critique, do so only after you have had time to carefully consider the written commentary and how it might be interpreted.

ADJUDICATOR STANDARDS FOR EVALUATING

1. ACTING

- a. **Voice:** Could you hear the actors distinctly? Was the rate too fast or too slow? Was there a variety of rate and inflection? Was pronunciation and articulation properly done for each character? If dialect was used, was it done correctly and naturally?
- b. **Characterization:** Was there a complete bodily and mental recreation of the character by the actor? Were their reactions to other actors correct and effective? Did we "believe" the actor's characterization all the time they were on the stage?
- c. **Movement:** Were the movements of the actors in keeping with their characters?
Was there a great deal of random movement? Was the pantomime accurate and convincing? Did the actor have a well-controlled body?
- d. **Contrast:** Were there clearly contrasting moods in the dialogue? Were emotional transitions natural and effective? Were the lines delivered in a manner natural to the characters in the play?
- e. **Ensemble:** Was there a smoothness of action that indicated adequate rehearsal and close co-operation and understanding of the play among the actors?

- f. **Timing:** Did the actors pick up cues properly? Was the production static in places because the actors seemed to lack a correct sense of pace?
- g. **Motivation:** Was there a logical reason for all business and movement by the actors, consistent and in keeping with the characters in the script?

2. DIRECTING AND STAGE MECHANICS

- **Set:** Did the set satisfactorily represent the idea of the play? Were the furniture and props used in a way that assisted but did not hinder the action?
- **Lighting:** Did the lighting effects blend harmoniously and unobtrusively into the action of the play?
- **Make-up:** Was the make-up natural and in keeping with each character and style of production?
- **Costume:** Were the costumes for each character correct as to colour, style, and period?
- **Business:** Were exits and entrances properly timed? Did the actors frequently cover or mask each other? Was the business properly motivated? Was the designed business adequate to bring out the idea of the play?
- **Tempo:** Did the production drag? Was it too fast to follow intelligently? Was the pace of the production in keeping with the general idea of the script?
- **Picturization and Composition:** Were the actors grouped to give proper emphasis to the right characters at the right time?
- **Plot:** Was the dramatic action of the script clear?
- **Theme:** Was the main idea of the play brought out clearly?

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