

Music Theatre Wichita (MTWichita) Jester Awards Rules and Guidelines

In keeping with the goal of the Jester Awards to specifically recognize the work of high school faculty members and students, and in coordination with similar high school awards programs across the country, the following rules have been implemented regarding eligibility for Jester Awards:

To be eligible for Jester Awards, individuals must be current faculty members or students of the school whose production is being judged. Independently hired guest artists (directors, choreographers, musical directors, scenic designers, costume designers, lighting designers, sound designers, and program designers) may only be recognized in two special guest award categories. However, the scores for all contributors (faculty, students, and guests) will be included in the Overall Production total.

Application

Schools wishing to participate should be within approximately 200 miles of the Wichita area and not participating in any other similar awards program.

Applications (or at least the intent to participate, which will include the name of show if available, production dates and times) should be received by September 15th for Fall productions and December 15th for Spring productions. This deadline is necessary so that show judges can make arrangements to attend. Completed applications and fees must be received before judges will be confirmed to attend your production.

It is the responsibility of the coordinating teacher to communicate any changes from the original application to the Jester staff at least two weeks prior to their show opening. Please be advised that Jester Judges attending your production will be provided with a copy of your application prior to attending. This is your opportunity to communicate the resources available to your school, challenges you face and any other factors they may need to consider.

Productions entered must fall into one of the following categories and must be billed accordingly in the program:

- A published musical, operetta or revue (either currently held by a licensing house or having entered public domain);
- An original piece which features an original script, music and/or lyrics and which is covered under a valid copyright;
- An original compilation of material from other sources that is presented with the approval or permission of the original creators or their representatives.

Schools may submit one application per school year.

There is a \$30.00 non-refundable application fee per school. Checks should be made payable to Music Theatre Wichita.

All productions must take place prior to April 14, 2019.

Eligibility

Productions shall be nominated in the category of Outstanding Overall Production based on the following criteria:

- Continuity and appropriateness in all production elements according to the demands and specifications of the scripts
- Balance between attending to the physical aspects of the production and the performances of the students
- Demonstrated enthusiasm and commitment from the cast
- The average numerical value awarded each school (as provided by the judges)
- The number of nominations received by each school in individual categories

Productions shall be nominated in the category of Outstanding Orchestra Direction is based on the following criteria:

- Orchestra must consist of at least 10 musicians
- Orchestra must be at least 75% students
- Eligibility in this category will be based on information provided in the school's application form and program listings and shall be at the discretion of the awards committee.

MTWichita employees that serve as director, choreographer, designer or work in other prominent positions on the creative or technical staff of a participating production are not eligible for nomination but their score will be included in the Overall Production total.

Schools that use an independently hired guest artists (director, choreographer, musical director, scenic designer, lighting designer or sound designer) may only be recognized in two special guest award categories. However, the scores for all contributors (faculty, students, and guests) will be included in the Overall Production total.

Productions nominated in the category of Outstanding Scenic Design cannot rent or borrow more than 25% of the sets/props used to be eligible in that category but their score will be included in the Overall Production total.

Productions nominated in the category of Outstanding Costumes cannot rent or borrow more than 25% of the total costumes to be eligible in that category but their score will be included in the Overall Production total.

Nominations for Technical Achievement are based on the following criteria:

- Teachers are invited to make recommendations on one student who has given his or her time and talent in a backstage capacity (e.g., stage manager, stage crew, light board operator, costumes, etc.).
- Teachers are asked to complete the online nomination form.
- Teachers are asked to submit a one-page essay/letter outlining the student's contributions to the production.
- Recommended students will submit a self-created portfolio in support of their work on the production. Portfolio Requirements: 1) One page personal essay about his/her experience with the production. 2) At least one supplemental piece or artifact that

demonstrates the student's work on the production. The amount of supplemental materials provided in the portfolio is at the discretion of the student and their teacher. Please note that more information included in the portfolio allows for a stronger evaluation and sets up an application for greater success. Supplemental materials can include but are not limited to: a) Prompt book, b) Crew lists, c) Shift lists, d) Lighting plots, e) Sound plots, f) Design renderings or sketches, g) Cue scripts, h) Rehearsal materials, i) Video support or a highlight reel of a student's process or work, j) Resume, k) Photos, l) Other relevant evidence of the student's planning and execution. All information must be received by the deadline listed in the application.

Nominations for Program/Poster Design will be scored by our Judges regarding the overall appearance and usefulness of its information. In addition to their score points will be awarded for the following:

- Proper credit given to authors
- Proper credit given to licensing house
- Limited spelling errors
- Cast and Crew listed
- Bios (optional?)
- Musical numbers listed
- Acknowledgement given to rented/borrowed items
- Authorized Jester participation logo included (see below)

Final score will include the Judges overall score + the total required above

Show Program and Documentation

The link below is the MTWichita Jester program's official Jester logo and participation statement that must be included in each school's printed program.

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/0ezey9j9embemih/AAATDmrLvtxhmShwUAcBSnSBa?dl=0>

We ask that you take plenty of digital photos of performers in costume, cast photo, sets, lobby display, etc. so that they may be used for the Jester Awards. These will be requested after nominations are released. Please to not send unless requested.

Judges

The Jester Program utilizes volunteers to serve as Jester Judges, who are required to attend a mandatory meeting in the fall that provides an extensive orientation of the program and the evaluation process.

Judges evaluate how well a school does, based on that school's unique resources and challenges. The awards criterion emphasizes achievement, not budget or size of production. Reviewers are trained to observe and provide feedback based on what they saw or didn't see in your production. Your school size and budget size are considered when the reviewers look at how you used your resources. By looking at the show this way schools with big budgets and

small budgets, large student populations and small student populations are looked at through the same lens.

If a school chooses to double cast one or more roles, the school must select which cast is to be judged.

Each school shall furnish MTWichita with complimentary tickets to its productions.

At least four judges representing Music Theatre will be scheduled for each production with the three highest scores being tallied for the Jester Awards consideration. If MTWichita is unable to assign at least three judges to attend the production, other options may be discussed.

Dates and number of tickets for the judges (plus one MTWichita Staff Member) for each school will be arranged no less than one week in advance.

If you anticipate a full house, please reserve seats for judges and mark the seats simply "RESERVED". Please do not indicate on the signs that they are reserved for Jester Judges. If you anticipate ample open seating, judges may select their own seats upon arrival and there is no need to reserve seats for their use.

Judges may bring a guest with them to performances and tickets for these individuals will be arranged by MTWichita when reservations are made. Additional tickets shall not be unreasonably requested by Music Theatre nor unreasonably denied by participating schools.

Due to the great number of shows to be seen, and the challenge of coordinating schedules, we request that you provide us with the dress rehearsal, and school matinee dates and times, in addition to the regular performances.

Jester Awards Nominations and Ceremony

A preliminary list of nomination for the Awards shall be emailed to each school's instructor in mid to late April. This email is to confirm the names and spelling in each category your school is nominated for. Please do not share this information with students, social media, or media until the press release has been issued. Be aware that this information is subject to change before the nominee list is finalized. A press release will be issued in late April and emailed to each school and the newspaper offices for that area.

Each participating school will receive up to 10 complimentary tickets to the Jester Awards. Additional general admission tickets to the May 5th Awards Ceremony can be purchased on line at www.MTWichita.org or at the door before the awards.

Attire for the Jester Awards is formal. Students involved in any performance number or medleys may bring a change of clothes.

Leading Actor and Actress nominees may be asked to participate in a group number to be arranged and choreographed by MTWichita staff. Rehearsal information will be distributed after nominees are released.

Schools nominated in the Leading Actor, Leading Actress, and Overall Production categories will be asked to present at least one musical number from their production at the Awards Ceremony in May. Selection of the number will be made by the school's instructor and approved by the Awards Committee. No scenic or lighting elements will be allowed for the performance, but costumes and hand props that can be easily transported by the students will be permitted. Production numbers will be performed with limited accompaniment only, and the accompanists can be provided by the school. (To give our performers the most professional experience possible, no soundtracks will be allowed.) Leading performer solo (not from a nominated overall production) will have 2.5 minutes maximum. Overall Production (having no nominated leading roles) will have 4 minutes maximum. Overall Production (including any nominated leading roles) will have 5 minutes maximum. (Depending on the nature of the show, this might require choosing 60-90 second solo excerpts, performed by any nominated leading actors, and then using the rest of the allotted time to showcase the full company in an ensemble number or medley.)

Lighting and sound decisions are at the discretion of the Jester Award Staff.

Scholarships are awarded to three students who exhibit the highest level of excellence in their craft (Actor, Actress and Technical.) Previous recipients of scholarship awards will not be eligible again.

Feedback

Schools may request a written analysis from the judges who attended the production. The information will be emailed to the requesting instructor after the Jester Awards. This feedback is meant to help the school realize its full potential based on its resources.

*Dates subject to change