

THEATRE NOVA SCOTIA

ROBERT MERRITT AWARDS

HANDBOOK



Eligibility Criteria

Rules and Regulations

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RULES AND REGULATIONS

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Eligibility Criteria

- 1) To be nominated for any award, a company must be a member in good standing of Theatre Nova Scotia. Only productions of theatre companies are eligible.
- 2) Productions must be professional and must be described by their producer as a theatrical work by a theatre company. *Professional for the purposes of the Theatre Nova Scotia Merritt Awards is defined by a company or organization which supports, presents and/or produces the work of professional artists. A professional artist is defined as an artist whose arts practice has assumed career significance through a combination of individual competence, recognition by the community and economic return.*
- 3) Workshops, fundraisers, excerpts and training productions are not eligible.
- 4) Producers must file a registration sheet with Theatre Nova Scotia.
- 5) In the case of a co-production, the Theatre Nova Scotia member company must be intrinsically and continuously involved in the production and actor's contracts must bear the names of all partners. Presentations hosted by Theatre Nova Scotia member companies (productions that are not produced by the member company are not eligible.)
- 6) In the category of Best New Play (awarded to the playwright), the production must be a Nova Scotian premiere by a Nova Scotian playwright. For the purposes of these awards the term "Nova Scotian playwright" refers to a person who either was born in Nova Scotia or who has resided in Nova Scotia for at least two years.
- 7) No production may be nominated twice in the same eligibility year.
- 8) No award winner (actor, director, designer, playwright, production) may be nominated again for the same production.
- 9) The Theatre Nova Scotia Board of Directors shall rule on any questions regarding eligibility.

Award Categories

AWARDS DECIDED BY A JURY

Best performance by an Actor - awarded for an outstanding performance by a male actor in any eligible production.

Best performance by an Actress - awarded for an outstanding performance by a female actor in any eligible production

Best Director - awarded for outstanding direction of a show in any eligible production

Best Set Design - awarded to a set designer for an outstanding set design in any eligible production

Best Costume Design - awarded to a costume designer for an outstanding costume design in any eligible production

Best Lighting Design - awarded to a lighting designer for an outstanding lighting design in any eligible production

Best Production - awarded to a theatre company for an outstanding overall production of a play or musical

Best New Play (Playwright) - awarded to a Nova Scotian playwright for outstanding writing of a new play. For the purposes of these awards, Nova Scotian is defined as a person who was born in Nova Scotia or has resided in Nova Scotia for at least two years

Best Original Music or Sound Design - awarded to the Sound Designer or musician for outstanding original music composition or sound design

NOMINEES DECIDED BY MEMBER COMPANIES

Achievement Award - The achievement award is voted on by the members of the jury and the professional theatre committee of Theatre Nova Scotia and is awarded to an individual who has made a significant contribution to Nova Scotian theatre. This award recognizes a body of work and may, but is not limited to, recognizing achievement in the areas of performance, direction, design, playwrighting, technical theatre, administration and artistic direction.

Emerging Artist Award - The achievement award is voted on by the jury and members of the professional theatre committee of Theatre Nova Scotia and is awarded to an emerging artist who has made a significant contribution to Nova Scotian theatre.

Stage management / Technician Award - This award is voted on by the members of the professional theatre committee of Theatre Nova Scotia and is awarded to an individual who has made a significant contribution in the areas of stage management or technical theatre.

The Process

The Jury

Each jury shall be composed of 4 individuals. At least 3 members of the jury shall be made up of artists , the remainder may be chosen from all sectors of the community including but not limited to academics, administrators, advocates of theatre and patrons.

Eligible theatre companies agree to provide the each juror with two complimentary tickets to each production in their season.

Jurors are expected to attend all eligible productions and shall be required to retain ticket stubs from each production, and may be asked to submit the stubs in order to verify attendance. Jurors will receive two complimentary tickets to each eligible production.

A juror who does not attend 85% of eligible productions may at the discretion of the Theatre Nova Scotia board be dismissed.

Theatre Nova Scotia agrees to reimburse jury members for travel and accommodation expenses subject to approval by the General Manager.

The Vote

The performance year for the Merritt Awards is from September 1 to August 31 of any given year.

At the end of a performance year the jury will receive a listing of all eligible productions and names. Jurors will be asked to select the top five candidates in each award category.

A ballot with all the selected candidates will then be distributed to the jury. Jury members will be asked to cast a secret ballot for the five outstanding candidates in each award category in the following manner; five points for his/her first choice, four points for the second choice, three points for the third choice, two points for the fourth choice and one point for the fifth choice.

No jury member may abstain from voting in any category or vote fewer than the prescribed number of nominees in any one category. The only reason for abstention is conflict of interest.

The votes will be tabulated. The top five names receiving votes shall be the nominees in any given category with the winner receiving the highest number of votes. In the event of a tie, jurors will be asked to select a top candidate.

Theatre Nova Scotia will retain all ballots for a period of one year.

Theatre Nova Scotia shall not disclose the number of votes given by any nominee.

The names of the winners shall not be made public until the day of the awards.