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*** New Rules Changes are noted in red**

2015 Season **Participation Rules**

I. Definitions

- a. **Non-Equity Theater** – Any theater that does not have an agreement with Actor’s Equity Association, a union that is affiliated with Associated Actors and Artistes of America (4As), or any other union that provides professional actors to stage in their shows and/or are paid standard union rates or higher than the standard union rates.
- b. **Submitted Production** – A production/show, submitted by a participating theater company that is to be reviewed and judged by the MAT Committee.
- c. **Theater Representative** – An individual, from a participating theater company, that is solely in charge of working directly with the MAT Committee. Each theater designates one individual as a representative to assist the MAT Committee on any information that needs to be provided or communicated throughout the season.
- d. **MAT Board** – A board of individuals made up of the President, Vice President, and Director of Ceremonies of the Metropolitan Atlanta Theater Awards. The current President is Russ Ivey, Vice President is Eileen Hilling, and Director of Ceremonies is Elise Dotson. They are solely for the purpose of enforcing rules and general management.
- e. **Production Category** – One of three categories: Musical Category, Play Category, or Original Works Category that a judging panel is seated within.
- f. **Musical/Play Judging Panel** – A panel of judges that view the submitted musicals and plays and score the productions to determine who is nominated and ultimately wins the Award Categories, per Production Category.
- g. **Original Works Panel** – A panel of judges that view the submitted original works and score the productions to determine who is nominated and ultimately wins the Award Category.
- h. **Season** – A season is any period beginning July 1st, of any given year, and extending 12 months to June 30th of the following year (**The 2015 Season is July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015**).
- i. **Official Nominee** – One of four individuals/theaters (unless there is a tie for fourth place), selected by a Judging Panel through a vote process, in any Award Category.
- j. **Award Winner** – An individual/theater that has won the award they were nominated for, having been selected from one of the Official Nominees.

- k. Award Category – One of thirty four different awards that are presented every season to the Award Winners.
- l. Awards Ceremony – An event that presents the winners with their awards.

II. Theater's Participation Requirements

a. Permissible Theaters

1. All Non-Union Professional and Community Theaters that primarily stage adults (over the age of 18) to their Submitted Productions. Also, any production having characters that are primarily made up of children will be considered as long as everyone who is cast fits the age of the character (i.e., "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" is mostly made up of children. However, the adult roles must still be cast by adult actors). No "School Edition" or "Junior" style productions will be allowed.
2. The MAT Board reserves the right to determine what theaters are considered non-union or union. If the MAT Board determines that a theater is questionable, then it will be reviewed and determined if that theater may participate by the MAT Board. The following rules regarding union theaters and their performers are currently in effect:
 - a. No theater may be contracted or have a Letter of Agreement with Actor's Equity Association, a union that is affiliated with Associated Actors and Artistes of America (4As), or any other theatrical union that requires the theater to pay union rates. However, no more than two (2) union contracted actors may be used in a production and must be contracted as a "Special Appearance". **Yet, those actors will not be considered for individual awards and will also make the production ineligible for Best Ensemble and/or Best Overall Production.** The theater must produce a copy of the signed/executed agreement before the show opens.
 - b. No non-union actor may be paid higher than \$400 for the entire run of a production, including rehearsals, performances, per diem, pension, health insurance costs, or any combination thereof. If they are, then that individual will not be eligible for an award.
 - c. Directors, Choreographers, Lighting/Sound/Costumes/Set Designers, Stage Managers, and Music Directors may be paid as much as \$700 for the entire run of a production, but may not be a contracted union member under any circumstances (unless they are one of the two "Special Appearance" actors in the production and are filling multiple roles. However, the position/category they are filling will be ineligible for award contention).
 - d. It is our understanding that most unions do not allow member actors to be in a production without a union contract or written permission to start with, along with a minimum pay scale that must be met. Therefore, if it is found that there is any violation of their union membership, the show and/or certain people within the production will be disqualified for unethical behavior. Any awards or nominations given to any element of the production will be revoked since it will be considered the theater's and/or individual's fault for knowingly allowing this to occur.
 - e. Any complaints received regarding a potential violation of this rule, or any suspicion of a violation of these rules by the MAT Board, will require a full investigation by the MAT Board and the participating theater will be required to produce all paperwork showing legitimacy of contractual/permission terms, payment records to performers, etc. Failure to provide or be thoroughly open about this information will result in automatic dismissal from the MAT Awards and revocation of all awards and/or nominations for the production/people in question.

3. Only theaters that perform within the county limits of Fulton, Dekalb, Cobb, Gwinnett, Clayton, Henry, Cherokee, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, and Rockdale will be allowed to participate, unless the MAT Board decides otherwise.
4. "Out of Area" Theaters will be considered on a season by season basis and must be voted on by the MAT Board for participation each year. The following guidelines must be met by "Out of Area" Theaters:
 - Only one Musical, One Play, and One Original Work is permitted to be submitted.
 - Membership Dues are \$100.00 per production.
 - "To Be Determined" Productions are not permitted by Out of Area Theaters.
 - No Productions that are only performed for one weekend or less are permitted by Out of Area Theaters.
 - Extensions will not be granted under any circumstances to Out of Area Theaters.
 - "Out of Area" theaters that did not participate with us last season (2014 Season) will not be allowed at this time.

b. General Application/Participation Requirements

1. Applications may be filled out online at www.matawards.com/participate/become-a-member/. If a paper application is needed, then contact Russ Ivey at russ@matawards.com or 678-207-6434.
2. The deadline date to submit an application and membership dues is **June 1st, 2014** (one month before the season begins).
3. The MAT Board will allow an extension to **June 20th, 2014** (ten days before the season begins) **only** if requested by the theater company & if the performances of the Submitted Productions do not fall within the 1st Quarter of the season (July 1st – September 30th).
4. For each Production Category (**Musical and Play Categories only**) that a production is submitted to, the theater must provide one primary judge to seat on the respective Judging Panel for that Production Category, along with one alternate judge. This judge must have acceptable theatrical experience through acting/directing/technical positions, have a functioning email address that they regularly check, and have basic computer knowledge (basic Excel knowledge is a huge plus).
5. Because we are now combining the Judging Panels for Musicals and Plays into one judging panel, **if you are submitting a musical and a play, you still have to provide two primaries and two alternates for that one judging panel.** Please keep in mind that if you are having trouble finding a Representative Judge, please just ask us to help you find one. We may be able to do this for you to help you from having to pay membership dues. However, you really should find someone yourself, because the point of this is so you have your own "stake in the game".
6. If the Member Theater can not provide a primary and/or alternate judge, then they must pay a membership due of \$100.00 for the production they are submitting in that Production Category. **If the Member Theater provides all of the required judges, then membership dues will be waived.**
7. Theaters are not required to provide judges or pay membership dues for any Original Work submission. This includes if the Original Work is also submitted to the Musical/Play Panel.
8. No theater may participate without first reading the rules, thoroughly filling out the application, signing the agreement, and turning in the application/agreement with any membership dues by the end of the day of the deadline date.
9. Each participating theater company must provide one Representative on the application.
10. All membership dues must be paid via online at www.matawards.com/participate/become-a-member/, or a money order/check made payable to:
 - "12th GA Light Artillery, Inc."
 - 400 Willow Creek Lane, Apt 302
 - Woodstock, GA 30188
7. Each theater company must allow all MAT Judges and Board Members to have free access to all Submitted Productions.

8. Participating Theaters must recognize that the MAT Board reserves the right to dismiss any theater, participant, judge, or nominee from the awards program at any time, if it is found that there is any dishonest/incorrect information on the application, dishonest voting/rigging, or any other unacceptable behavior that is determined by the MAT Board. There will be no refunds of membership dues in the case of a dismissal.
9. Participating theater companies must be willing to provide a one page ad (designed by the MAT Board) in the programs of the Submitted Productions that will detail the MAT Season's participants, their Submitted Productions, and other MAT related information. If the theater company does not want to provide a one page ad, then a one page insert is acceptable (It will be the theater's responsibility to place these in each program). Failure to follow through with this will result in disqualification of that production from awards consideration. Also, any show that is listed as "To Be Determined" will not be placed on the MAT Ad. However, that Participating Theater Company must still post the ad to help the other theaters advertise their listed productions.
10. All participating theaters must provide a "Judge's Sign-In Sheet" at the box office of every performance so that the judges can sign in and prove that they have seen the show that is being reviewed. This sign-in sheet will be provided to the Representative before the show opens and it will be the Representative's responsibility to make sure that it's at the box office each performance. When the show closes, the Representative will be responsible to fax/email/mail the sign-in sheet back to the President **only** if there is evidence that one of the required judges failed to sign in or attend.

c. Production Submissions

1. No later than three days before the Submitted Production opens, a cast/crew list must be given to the President detailing all individuals that are in the show, in their proper award categories along with any character names. (Note: If the same production has been submitted in prior seasons, the MAT Board may use the same categories for the characters, unless special circumstances prevent this). Keep in mind that the MAT Board reserves the right to review these categories to make sure they are fairly determined.
2. If a Submitted Production has a cast of 10 or more people, then headshots should be provided by the Theater Representative. Group photos are allowed as long as the caption clearly designates who is who in the group shot. The best way to do this is to post them in a facebook group page or something so judges have access to them. As a note: If you do not provide this, we won't penalize you. However, keep in mind that judges have a hard time figuring out who is who in large productions, so someone may lose out on a vote if the judges don't know who they are. This is for your benefit.
3. Productions must be submitted on the application no later than the end of the day of the deadline date. The production does not have to be cast or staffed by the deadline. However, the location **must** already be determined and indicated on the application, along with dates/times (or a general timeframe: meaning which quarter it falls in if they're still securing rights).
4. Original Work submissions are unlimited. They will not be included in the Musical/Play Categories unless requested by the theater. If it is requested that the Original Work be submitted to the Musical/Play Categories, then it will count as the "one production submission" that is allowed under that category.
5. No less than 50% of a production's performance dates must fall within the season's timeframe. If the show only runs one weekend, the entire weekend must fall in the season's timeframe and be at least three performances.
6. No productions may be submitted for review that will be "double cast" in performance roles. However, if one or two roles are double cast due to schedule conflicts or something of the like, then those roles will not be eligible while the rest of the production is eligible.
7. Actors/Actresses may not be placed in more than one acting category (i.e., if an actress is 15 years old and is playing "Dorothy" in *The Wizard of Oz*, technically she is qualified for both the Leading Actress and the Youth Award categories. However, she can only be placed in one acting category, **not both**). It is up to the theater to decide which category they prefer this person to fall in (just a suggestion: Put them, reasonably, in a category they have the best chance at). This particular rule does not apply to an actor who is also a tech/staff worker, director, or other non-acting category

(i.e., if an actor is listed as Major Supporting and is also the Set Designer, then they are permitted to be listed in both categories). *We would like to point out that just because it is up to the theater to decide what category people fall in, the MAT Board will review these submissions to make sure that people are not placed in “unreasonable” categories. If this happens, the MAT Board will re-categorize those submissions to better suit the award program in a fair and impartial manner. Secondly, if this show has been reviewed in the past at some other venue, we may use the same category as past submissions.*

11. If two or more production submissions are of the same production, then the award categories must be identical. The MAT Board will ensure this takes place after conferring with all theaters that submitted the identical productions. (In 2008, *Chicago* was submitted by two separate theaters. Therefore, the MAT Board made sure that all of the characters were in the same acting categories for both productions).
12. In the event that video recording of a production is needed, solely for voting purposes only, the theater must allow the MAT Committee to video tape a performance. This will be strictly in line with copyright laws and the MAT Committee guarantees that it will not violate those laws by distributing/selling those recordings that are needed. It will be for archival purposes only.
13. If a Judging Panel has 13 shows or higher submitted to it, a Judging Matrix will be created to accommodate the high show load for the judges (see Section IV-f). Judges will be placed on the matrix in a manner that keeps them away from their “home theater” as much as is reasonably possible (Naturally, we can’t control how many or who the judges are. So, if we get a large flux of judges who happen to all be tied to the same “home theater”, naturally some of them will have to judge their home theater’s show in order to keep the matrix balanced. However, the MAT Board will do everything in their power to prevent this). The matrix will be sent out to all Theater Representatives for approval and comments once it has been completed.
14. In all Director and Technical Categories, no “Assistant” roles may be submitted. Yet, a “Co-Role” (i.e., Co-Director) will be permitted.

d. “To Be Determined” Submissions

1. If a participating theater is still trying to secure the rights to a production after the June 1st deadline, then a “To Be Determined” posting may take place until those rights are secured. **However, the participating theater must already have the Location, Production Category, and general timeframe of the performances assigned so that the appropriate Judging Panels can schedule accordingly.**
2. “TBD” productions must land in the latter half of the season (January 1st – June 30th).
3. “TBD” Productions forfeit their right to have their productions advertised at other theater locations during the season. However, the “TBD” Production must still have the MAT Ad included in their production programs at the time of the performances.
4. The MAT Awards must be notified no later than 3 months before the production opens of what the production is, along with the dates of the production so that judges may schedule accordingly.

III. Representatives

- a. There will be one Representative, per participating theater, each season.
- b. The purpose of a Representative is to assist the MAT Committee on communicating anything back and forth between the participating theater and the MAT Board that is needed (i.e., providing the Judging Panels with Cast/Crew lists, ensuring that the Judge’s Sign-In Sheet is at the Box Office each performance, etc)
- c. Whatever Representative’s contact information that is provided on the application will be solely used as the direct form of communication between the Representative and the MAT Awards. If the Representative fails to comply with any requests, or fails to respond to emails, phone calls, etc., then the theater, or production, will be considered “in default” and will not be reviewed by the Judging Panel.

IV. Judging Panels

- a. Participating Theaters must provide one primary judge to seat on the Production Category that their production is submitted in and one alternate judge. Both must have acceptable theatrical experience, as determined by the MAT Board.
- b. There will be a minimum of 5 judges per Production Category (although, the MAT Board will try to make the judging panels larger depending on how many judges they can acquire that are qualified to be on the panel).
- c. Each judge will get one vote, per vote process, by filling out a score sheet for each production.
- d. Each judge will be required to sign the provided “sign-in sheet” at each production location. If there is any evidence that any judge has not attended the minimum number of required productions, then their vote will not be counted at the end of the season.
- e. **Judges may not participate in any Submitted Production that they are voting on.** They are permitted to be in a production they are not voting on and will be eligible for an award. However, if a judge is slated to see a production and does not see that production, by using their alternate, they still may not be in the production and/or be eligible (this eliminates tricky games of trying to be in a show and be eligible when they were supposed to judge it).
- f. If a Judging Panel has 13 productions or higher, then an approved judging matrix will be created to allow each judge to only see approximately 12 shows, or less.

V. Awards Categories

- a. The following Awards will be reviewed, judged, and awarded each season:
 1. Leading Actor, Musical
 2. Leading Actress, Musical
 3. Leading Actor, Play
 4. Leading Actress, Play
 5. Major Supporting Actor, Musical
 6. Major Supporting Actress, Musical
 7. Major Supporting Actor, Play
 8. Major Supporting Actress, Play
 9. Minor Supporting Actor, Musical
 10. Minor Supporting Actress, Musical
 11. Minor Supporting Actor, Play
 12. Minor Supporting Actress, Play
 13. The Moira Thornett Director’s Award, Musical
 14. The Moira Thornett Director’s Award, Play
 15. Music Director (Musical Category Only)
 16. Set Design, Musical
 17. Set Design, Play
 18. Costume Design, Musical
 19. Costume Design, Play
 20. Lighting Design, Musical
 21. Lighting Design, Play
 22. Sound Design, Musical
 23. Sound Design, Play
 24. Choreography (Musical Category only)
 25. Original Work

26. Best Ensemble, Musical
 27. Best Ensemble, Play
 28. Youth Award, Musical
 29. Youth Award, Play
 30. Best Overall Performance of a Musical
 31. Best Overall Performance of a Play
 32. The President's Award (as eligibility requires)
 33. Honorary Stage Manager Award (chosen by MAT Board)
 34. Board Award (chosen by one or more MAT Board members)
- b. The "Youth Award" will be given to any adolescent, age 16 or younger, for demonstrating an exceptional acting/singing/dancing talent. This is a non-gender award.
 - c. The "Moira Thornett Director's Award" is an award provided to the best director of that production category. This was originally titled "Best Director" but was changed in honor of the late Moira Thornett (first recipient of this award in the Musical Category). At this time, only Directors and/or Co-Directors are permitted. We do not allow "Assistant Directors".
 - d. "Original Work" will only be provided if 3 or more original productions have been submitted.
 - e. "Best Ensemble" is awarded for the best cast. This is an award to the theater (Individual Actors are not considered Nominees/Winners).
 - f. "Best Overall Performance" is an award for the best production. This is an award to the theater (Individual Actors/Directors/Tech Workers are not considered Nominees/Winners).
 - g. An "Original Work" is only qualified for the MAT program if the following criteria is met:
 1. It has never been performed before (a read-through does not count).
 2. It must be written by a current resident of the State of Georgia.
 - h. Future seasons will review the awards categories to determine if additional awards should be considered.
 - i. The "President's Award" is presented to anyone who has surpassed a cumulative 10 Nominations over the years. The number of wins is irrelevant, since the MAT Awards recognizes that being nominated is an honor within itself.
 - j. The "Honorary Stage Manager Award" is an award, chosen by the MAT Board, and presented to one individual who has produced outstanding Stage Management work through the years. The MAT Board will consult with member theaters to get recommendations and will make a decision based on those recommendations.
 - k. The "Board Award" is chosen by one or more members of the MAT Board. There will be 4 Nominees chosen for the Musical Category and 4 for the Play Category. These could be a combination of actors, directors, and/or tech staff and will encompass those that did not receive a Nomination by the Judging Panels. It is replacing the "Honorable Mention" category from past seasons. One winner from each Production Category will be selected from those Nominations.
 - l. The "Music Direction" category will permit the Music Director and Conductor as part of this category. However, no "Assistant Music Directors" are permitted.

VI. Nomination Procedures

- a. Judges will use a scoring sheet, provided by The MAT Board, to score each show.
- b. No longer than one week after a production closes, the judge must submit their scoring sheet to the MAT President. New judges, who have never been on a judging panel with the MAT Awards before, will be given till one week after the closing of their third show to turn in the forms for all three shows.
- c. Failure to turn in the scoring sheet in a timely manner will result in the dismissal of a judge and suspension of the theater that provided the judge for one full year.
- d. Each scoring method must be cast in the exact way that the form dictates. Failure to follow instructions will void the score in question.
- e. Each judge must submit their scores to the President via email or online voting (depending on what is available for a given season).
- f. Judges may only score individuals/shows that they are mandated to see.
- g. The President and another Board Member will tally the score sheets. The top four nominees of each Award Category, with the most points, will be considered the Official Nominees unless there is a tie for fourth place.
- h. The MAT Board will post the Nominees on the MAT Awards (www.matawards.com) website, along with individual congratulatory phone calls.
- i. If a judge submits an incorrectly filled out score sheet, but there is still time to make corrections before the deadline, then the MAT Board will try to contact that judge and ask them to correct their errors.

VII. Voting for an Award Winner

- a. Winners may only be chosen from the Official Nominees that were determined, per Award Category.
- b. The winner will be chosen from the points during the Nomination Phase. The individual/theater with the most points will be declared the winner.
- c. Those that tally may **not** reveal the Award Winners, or any scoring, to any person until after the Award Ceremony under any circumstance.
- d. If a tally of the votes determine there is a tie for winner, then the President will do the following:
Step #1: Have the judges revote based on only the Official Nominees.

Step #2: If a tie still exists, the tie stands.
- e. The MAT Board will keep all score sheets and tally forms on record, for one full year, in case there is ever a dispute about legitimacy. Only Theater Representatives may review tally sheets and score sheets.

VIII. The Award Ceremony

- a. The Award Ceremony may take place anytime after July 31st, 31 days after the end of the season.
- b. The MAT Board will be responsible for sending out the Official Nominee invites and preparing the plaques for the ceremony. The MAT Board will cover the expenses of these items, using membership dues that were paid by the participating theaters.
- c. It is each theater's responsibility (specifically the Representative) to make sure that the MAT Board has the correct addresses and phone numbers of every Official Nominee.
- d. The ceremony may be hosted by any theater that volunteers to do so, as long as the theater can accommodate the size of the ceremony. If a theater volunteers to host, they may receive all of the profits through ticket sales of that event (the MAT Board will be reimbursed for their expenses first).
- e. If no theater chooses to volunteer, then every theater will be equally responsible, monetarily, to assist in providing a location for the ceremony. Tickets will be sold to the Ceremony, with an equal percentage distributed to each theater to help reimburse them for their contribution. Note: This has never taken place and will be avoided at all costs as long as the MAT Board is able to monetarily handle it, as it has in the past.
- f. The ceremony will be a semi-formal to formal event.
- g. The hosting theater will be responsible for arranging drinks, food, seating, volunteers (although the MAT Board will certainly assist), and general expenses of the ceremony unless there is no hosting theater. In this case, the MAT Board will take over the responsibilities of the previous mentioned, using the monetary contribution provided by each theater.
- h. The MAT Board will be responsible for the schedule of presentations and entertainment of the ceremony (which may include performers from all of the participating theaters). Each participating theater will be given an opportunity to assist with the presentation, if so desired.

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