



Bucks County Playhouse Student Theater Festival Handbook



Bucks County Playhouse Student Theater Festival Handbook

Table of Contents

Welcome 3

About the Festival 4

 Sample Schedule.....4

 Arrival and Registration.....4

 Parking.....4

 Workshops.....4

 Lunch4

About the Performances 4

 Time Limit4

 Content5

 Set and Props5

 Sound5

 Stage Dimensions5

 Adjudication5

 Awards5

Other 5

 Best of Fest.....5

 FAQs6

 Contact.....6

The logo for Bucks County Playhouse, featuring the text "BUCKS COUNTY PLAYHOUSE" in white, stacked vertically, on a red square background.

**BUCKS
COUNTY
PLAYHOUSE**

The logo for Newtown Arts Company, featuring the text "Newtown Arts Company" in a serif font, with three stylized theater masks (tragedy, comedy, and neutral) positioned between the words "Arts" and "Company".

Newtown
Arts
Company

Welcome!

The Student Theater Festival at Bucks County Playhouse is in its 50th year! Originally known as Dramafest for one act plays, the Student Theater Festival has evolved into a multi-week celebration showcasing talented student performers from all over the region. Students perform on the historic stage, take workshops to develop their knowledge and skills in the arts, and receive adjudication by theater professionals.

When the Playhouse closed in 2010, Newtown Arts Company, located in Newtown, PA, hosted the Festival for the next two years. After a lavish \$6 million renovation, the Playhouse reopened its doors in 2012 and welcomed the Student Theater Festival back to its stage along with a partnership with Newtown Arts Company; a relationship that remains a strong component of the Festival to this day.

Top performances are selected at the end of the Student Theater Festival to participate in “Best of Fest”. “Best of Fest” celebrates outstanding student performances in a one night showcase for friends, family, and the community. “Best of Fest” concluded its 3rd year in 2017.

The network of Bucks County Playhouse Student Theater Festival alumni is ever expanding and we are so glad to welcome you to the family!

About the Day

Sample Daily Schedule

8:30 am - 9:00 am - Arrival/
Registration
9:00 am - 9:30 am - Welcome
9:30 am - 11:45 am - Workshops
11:45 am - 12:45 pm - Lunch
1:00 pm - 4:30 pm - Performances
with Adjudication Sessions
4:30 pm - 5:00 pm - Load-Out and
Awards

Arrival/Registration

Schools and groups arrive at the Playhouse, unload props at the loading dock, and check in at our theater lobby. Welcoming remarks begin at 9:00am and then students are dismissed for their morning workshops.

Our Parking Lot

Parking in our lot is \$3 per hour or \$20 for the entire day (CARS & VANS ONLY, LIMITED AVAILABILITY). It is a public lot, so it is open to other visitors to New Hope. Please note buses CANNOT park in our parking lot. However, we welcome buses to pull into our lot to drop off group members before finding additional parking.

Parking for Motor Coaches and Mini Buses

If you are bringing a bus, you can park it in the New Hope Shopping Center (by Staples and Superfresh). You can drop your party off and then park the bus. It is approximately a 15-minute walk from the Shopping Center parking lot down to the Playhouse.

- 1) Head out of the parking lot towards Martine's Restaurant (the yellow riverfront house on your right.)
- 2) Turn left, continue to the stop sign (next to New Hope Apparel Company.)
- 3) At the stop sign, go straight onto West Ferry Street (There will be a cannon across the street on your right-hand side.)
- 4) Continue on West Ferry St until it turns into West Bridge Street.
- 5) Continue onto West Bridge Street. After you pass St. Martin of Tours Church you will see on the right the New Hope Shopping Center (Staples and Super Fresh.) Make the next right into the shopping center's parking lot.

Workshops

Each student may take two hour-long workshops in the morning. There are 3 workshops offered which may include, but are not limited to: movement, dance, tap/jazz, improv, theater games, Shakespearean acting, audition technique, and a variety of other subjects. We also offer a technical theater workshop. Teacher and student directors and tech students work with Bucks County Playhouse production staff during the morning to prep their shows and ensure they are ready to be presented in the afternoon.

Lunch

We offer pre-ordered boxed lunches from a local café or students may opt to bring their own. We have a spacious patio and

there are many quaint restaurants in New Hope for the students and teachers to explore during their lunch break.

About the Performances

Schools perform segments of plays or musicals with casts of varying sizes. Adjudicators provide feedback after the 1st session of performances and again after the 2nd session. Typically, there are 4-5 schools per day with 8-9 performances.

Time Limit

- Performance slots are 20 minutes. Performances must be 20 minutes in length or shorter. Performances will be timed by Bucks County Playhouse staff.
- Five minutes are allotted between each performance for change over.
- If a performance goes over the allotted time, there will be a 2-minute warning from the Stage Manager, followed by a dimming of the lights and fade out. This is to ensure that all performances receive the same amount of time on stage and to keep the festival on schedule.
- Schools may sign up for a maximum of 2 times slots per day. Schools can perform two 20-minute segments of their show, for example an Act 1 and Act 2, but they will not be performed consecutively.

Content

- Selected material can be from published sources and/or student-written/ directed.
- To make the BCP Student Theater Festival enjoyable for all participants, material should be suitable for a public performance before a general audience at your own school. We ask that selections contain no extreme adult language, nudity, sex, violence or other content that, in the view of the festival, could be considered offensive.

Set and Props

- Set pieces, backdrops and large pieces of furniture cannot be used. Only handheld props and small objects can be brought to the Playhouse.
- Participating schools will be provided with a list of furniture that will be available at the Playhouse for their use.
- No liquids are allowed on stage.
- Use of any prop weapons must be approved by BCP Education staff in advance.

Sound

- Schools need to provide a CD, flash drive, or file of their musical tracks.
- Schools may have no more than 3 musicians if they are using live music.
- A piano or keyboard will be available. Please notify BCP Education Staff if you require a keyboard.

Stage Dimensions

- The stage depth is 30' with about 15' of wing space on either side.
- The proscenium height is 19'3" and width 29'9".

Adjudication

- Typically, the teaching artists who lead the morning workshops will adjudicate the afternoon performances. This is done so the adjudicators have a chance to meet the students in the morning and to provide continuity for the students throughout the day.
- Feedback is positive in nature, designed to enhance the performance and provide insight on how students and teachers may improve future productions.

Awards

- Each day of the Student Theater Festival culminates with a short awards ceremony. Daily awards are given out to schools and individuals that show excellence in their performances.
- Adjudicators deliberate following the final performance of the day and award the schools and individuals that stood out to highlight their performances.
- Daily awards are subject to change and categories vary year to year and day to day during the Festival.

Please Note: The festival does not focus on competition, but rather on a supportive environment to share talent, collaborate with theater students that they would not normally meet and to encourage their fellow performers.

OTHER

Best of Fest

Several outstanding performances from the Student Theater Festival are invited back to perform in Best of Fest. "Best of Fest" is a one night showcase performance for friends, family, and the community.

- Schools invited to "Best of Fest" may be asked to cut the run time of their 20-minute segment down or perform specific numbers from their musical.
- Schools participating in Best of Fest will have 30 minutes to tech their piece earlier in the day.
- Pending ticket sales, students performing in Act 2 will sit in the audience and watch Act 1, then switch with the students who performed in Act 1 during intermission.

PLEASE NOTE: Daily awards at the Student Theater Festival do not correlate to whether a school or performance will be invited to Best of Fest. Schools are selected under the advice of the adjudicators, Bucks County Playhouse and Newtown Arts Company staff.

FAQs

What is the cost of the festival? *(new for 2018)*

\$50 per 20-minute segment

\$20 per student

Teacher and advisors come free of charge.

Do I bring costumes?

Schools may bring costumes, but they are not judged on them.

Can I bring 2 segments of the same show?

Yes, schools can perform 20 minutes of Act 1 and Act 2 – but they will not be performed consecutively.

How many performances can I bring?

We limit schools to 2 performances per day.

How do I sign up?

There registration form is available to download on our website.

Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis and we try and accommodate each school and their schedules. We ask that schools give us several choices of dates.

What if my students don't want to take a dance class?

There are several options for workshops and they change each year – improv, theater games, movement, dance, tap and jazz, Shakespeare, audition prep, and more. We also offer a technical workshop in the morning which typically includes lights, sound, a tour of the facility and wardrobe.

CONTACT

Bucks County Playhouse

Box Office

70 South Main Street, New Hope, PA 18938

(215) 862-2121

www.bcptheater.org

Joann Bull

Student Theater Festival Coordinator

(215) 740- 2090 x113

Joann@bcptheater.org

Ellen Gallos

Education Manager

(215) 740- 2090 x106

Ellen@bcptheater.org