

Massachusetts High School Drama Festival

A Distinguished Tradition

The Massachusetts High School Drama Festival, begun in 1931 under the name of “Massachusetts Drama Day,” is the Guild’s largest event of the year, which annually draws more than 110 participating member schools. Now in its seventh decade, this play competition is open to every public, private, and parochial high school in the Commonwealth. Through participation in Festival, students with interests in acting, directing, and technical theatre gain valuable performance and production experience. 2009 marked the 55th anniversary of the Boston Globe’s sponsorship of MHSDG. More than 3200 students participated in last year’s event with over 2,500 people attending the Boston Globe State Festival

Organization of Festival

The Festival is organized on three levels — preliminary, semi-final and state. Individual excellence is recognized at each level, including the selection of a Festival All-Star Company at the finals. Two schools chosen at the State Festival represent Massachusetts in the New England Drama Festival, the regional showcase of secondary school theatre.

Overview of Festival Rules

- To enter the Festival, a school must be a member of the Massachusetts High School Drama Guild, with membership dues paid in full prior to the annual directors’ meeting in January.
- A play selected for entry must be approved by the participating school’s principal as indicated by his or her signature on the “Drama Festival Entry Form.”
- A school may elect to perform on a non-competitive basis by checking the appropriate box on the Entry Form. All rules governing Festival apply. A non-competitive entry is not eligible to advance to the next level; however, students in a non-competitive entry are eligible for individual acting and technical awards.
- No entry may exceed 40-minute running time, 5-minute set-up time, and 5-minute strike time.
- A musical or cutting from a musical is not permitted unless the publisher grants specific written permission for the play to be performed without the sung material. Scene-change music, incidental music, background music, and songs which occur in the text of a non-musical play are permitted. Dance is permitted if it occurs in the text of a non-musical play. Interpretive movement, with or without music, is also permitted if it occurs in the text of a non-musical play. In any case, all music and/or dance must have prior approval from the President. All directors will be asked to complete and submit a use-of-music request form at the mandatory Directors’ Meeting in January.
- A school may not enter a play in Festival that it entered in the previous three years.
- All technical elements, including set, lighting/sound design, and special effects, must be able to be accommodated by the existing physical and technical capabilities of the host schools. Since host schools vary greatly in their production resources, directors are strongly advised to keep the technical elements of their productions simple and flexible.
- The director, cast, and crew must attend all levels of Festival in which they participate.
- Attendance of the director, cast and crew is required at all performances except the one immediately preceding their own.
- A school is responsible for obtaining permission from the publisher or author for the performance of its entry and for paying all applicable royalty fees. Permission to perform a cutting of a longer work or to combine two or more works under a banner title must also be obtained from the publisher(s). Proof of permission to perform and payment of royalty must be submitted at each level of Festival in which the school participates.

- Any school entering a competitive production is expected to continue to the semi-finals and finals, if selected.
- All Festival directors must attend the organizational meeting on January 23, 2010 at Framingham High School (snow date: January 24). ***Failure to attend this meeting will result in disqualification.***
- A school may not enter a play title that was performed in the previous year's State Finals. In the 2010 Festival, the following 14 plays may not be performed:

<i>Bac on!</i>	<i>Effigy</i>
<i>Eleven Zulu</i>	<i>Polaroid Stories</i>
<i>Epic Proportions</i>	<i>The Maderati</i>
<i>The Sacrificial King</i>	<i>The Big Eleven</i>
<i>Wake Up, Jack</i>	<i>Sakuntala and the Ring of Recollection</i>
<i>Fabulous Fable Factory</i>	<i>The Romance of the Willow Pattern</i>
<i>Tragedy of Richard III</i>	<i>Angels in America, Part 2: Perestroika</i>

Festival Entry Deadline

The “Drama Festival Entry Form” must be postmarked by December 1. Any entry postmarked after this date will be subject to a \$100.00 late fee. In addition, MHSDG must receive your check or organization’s purchase order for current year membership dues by December 1 in order for a festival entry to be accepted.

The Guild reserves the right to reject entries for late submission or non-payment of membership dues after December 1.

Wanted: Host Sites

The Guild is asking its member schools to consider serving as a host site for a Preliminary and/or Semi-Final Festival. We realize that hosting a festival is a major undertaking, and if you indicate an interest in doing so, we will send a hosting information packet for your consideration. It addresses questions you might have about facility, technical, and personnel requirements. If you are selected as a host site, we will offer every possible assistance to help you succeed. There is a particular need for host sites in the central and western areas. Your facility does not have to be state of the art; we will provide on-site consultation by qualified professionals that will help you maximize your facility’s technical potential. For more details, please call Linda Jean Smith at (978) 256-3101.

Festival Entry Form Below

MHSDG High School Festival Form

Non-Competitive Entry _____ Competitive Entry _____

Will you host a Preliminary Festival? Yes _____ Will you host a Semi-Final Festival? Yes _____
Would like more information about hosting _____

(PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT. NOTE: A Guild Membership Form must also be returned for this entry to be accepted.)

Is the primary director of this play a high school student? No Yes

If yes, print name and phone number of the student director below.

Name of Student: _____ Phone Number: (_____) _____

SCHOOL: _____ :

SCHOOL ADDRESS: _____ :

CITY: _____ ZIP CODE: _____ SCHOOL PHONE: () _____

Provide below information for the ADULT responsible for this production.

DO NOT enter information about student directors below.

ADULT NAME: _____ PHONE NUMBER: (_____) _____

HOME ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____ CELL PHONE : (_____) _____

(Print clearly. Use capitals and distinguish clearly between letters and numbers.)

PLAY TITLE: _____ AUTHOR: _____

PRODUCED BY ARRANGEMENT WITH: _____

Date application was made to publisher for royalty arrangements and license to perform, if applicable? _____

I understand that this entry, signed by both the adult responsible for the production **and** the school principal, must be postmarked no later than **DECEMBER 1** or it will be subject to a **\$100.00 late fee**. I further understand that MHSDG must receive my check or organization's purchase order for current year membership dues of \$300.00 by December 1, and that the Guild reserves the right to reject an entry for late submission or non-payment of membership dues. I have read the "Overview of Festival Rules" listed on the "Massachusetts High School Drama Festival" insert and agree to abide by them. I further agree to obtain all rights and licenses required to present this play in live stage performance.

Signature of Adult Responsible for Production: _____ **Date:** _____

I approve this show for production, and the above-named adult director/supervisor.

Signature of Principal: _____ **Date:** _____

Mail completed form to: *MHSDG, Inc., P.O. BOX 93, CHELMSFORD, MA 01824*