

TENNESSEE
THEATRE
SINCE 1928

*Marquee
Awards*

MAY 18, 2025

PARTICIPATING SCHOOL
HANDBOOK

SUMMARY	1
IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES	2
RULES & REGULATIONS	3
AWARD CATEGORIES	4
JUDGING CRITERIA & SCORE SHEETS	
Lead Actor/Actress & Supporting Actor/Actress	5
Ensemble/Chorus, Choreography Execution, Overall Musical	6
Student Design	7
Lead Actor/Actress Finalist Auditions	8
THE AWARDS CEREMONY	
Student Performances	11
Attire	12

SUMMARY

The Marquee Awards are dedicated to supporting the talents, education, and opportunities of high school theater students in East Tennessee to build a strong and inclusive theater community.

This program will consist of three pieces:

- ⚙️ **Adjudication** - A panel of adjudicators attend each school's musical and provide feedback on the performance.
- ⚙️ **Nomination** - Schools and individuals receive awards that honor achievements in performance, technical, and creative categories at an Awards Ceremony held at the Tennessee Theatre. Some nominees will also have the opportunity to perform at the Awards Ceremony.
- ⚙️ **Education** - Through our partnership with Clarence Brown Theatre, nominees will participate in a day of workshops and masterclasses led by University of Tennessee artists and educators before attending the Awards Ceremony. Participating schools will also be the first to know about additional educational opportunities such as masterclasses and workshops.

The Tennessee Theatre's membership in The Broadway League allows the Marquee Award Outstanding Actress and Outstanding Actor winners to attend The Jimmy Awards® in New York City. This national celebration of outstanding student achievement recognizes individual artistry in vocal, dance, and acting performance and elevates the importance of theater arts education in schools.

IMPORTANT DATES

Below you will find a list of important dates and deadlines.

- Sept. 3, 2024: Last day to register to participate ([Click here for the form](#))
- Sept. 12, 2024: Mandatory participating teacher meeting
- Sept. 27, 2024: Performance Details for Fall Performances due ([Click here for the form](#))
- Dec. 1, 2024: Fall Performances receive adjudicator feedback
- Dec. 20, 2024: Performance Details for Winter/Spring Performances due ([Click here for the form](#))
- April 25, 2025: Last day for show adjudication
- April 28, 2025: Outstanding Lead Actor and Actress Finalists announced
- April 30, 2025: Finalist Auditions
- May 1, 2025: Spring Performances receive adjudicator feedback
- May 2, 2025: Nominees announced via livestream and email
- May 5, 2025:
 - ✿ All-Star Cast/Crew nominations due
 - ✿ Inspiring Teacher nominations due
 - ✿ Student Design submissions due
 - ✿ Production photos and playbills due
 - ✿ Student Ticket Requests due
 - ✿ Nominee Acceptance Forms due
- May 17, 2025: Rehearsal at the Tennessee Theatre (all nominees and performing students)
- May 18, 2025: Educational workshops, tech rehearsal and Awards Ceremony

RULES AND REGULATIONS

Adjudication

All schools will receive an onsite production evaluation by at least three members of the judges' panel. After the onsite visits, comprehensive written critiques and scores of the productions will be completed, using the rubrics included in this packet. If a show is double-cast, it will only be seen once; the school chooses the cast that will be judged. The completed evaluations will be emailed to the school contact person on the dates listed on the previous page. **Adjudication of your show must occur by April 25, 2025.**

One finalist from each school will be chosen in the categories of Outstanding Lead Actor and Outstanding Lead Actress and will participate in a second round of adjudication on April 30, 2025 at 5pm. Any student performing in a role from the National High School Musical Theatre Awards list of eligible shows and roles is eligible to be chosen. Students will be selected for these auditions based on adjudicator scoring. At this audition, finalists will sing 32 bars from the eligible role that they performed during their school's musical, as well as participate in a dance call for our panel of judges. More information and score sheets can be found later in this packet.

For the purposes of this program, a finalist is a student that performed in a Jimmy Awards eligible role and was selected based on performance scores to participate in the finalist auditions. There will be one Lead Actor and one Lead Actress selected from each school. A nominee is a student that was selected in any of the Award Categories and is eligible to win that award. They will participate in the Awards Ceremony and accept the award should they/their school end up winning.

The final nominations will be sent to the schools via email on May 2, 2025, as well as be announced in a streamed announcement video.

Communication

It is imperative that efficient communication be present between participating schools' educators, students and the Marquee Awards Manager. There is a lot of information being shared, sometimes with quick deadlines and turnarounds.

🌀 Monthly email newsletter - This will be sent out at the beginning of each month with important updates, masterclass opportunities, etc.

🌀 Gchat - A group will be created for educators and the Awards Program Manager to communicate with important group questions, as well as to connect and facilitate resource sharing, etc. between the various programs. We will also create a chat for students to connect, and more specific groups will be created once nominations are announced and rehearsals begin.

🌀 Google Drive - all important documents will live here for easy access.

Licensing

You should go through the normal process of securing rights for your production. The Theatre will request an extension of your rights on your behalf should your school have students performing in the Awards Ceremony. **Please do not return your music and other materials when your show ends.**

AWARD CATEGORIES

Award Categories

The following categories will be awarded at the Marquee Awards Ceremony on May 18, 2025. Some categories are awarded to the school, while others are awarded to individual performers and/or crew members.

Performance Awards

- ✿ Outstanding Ensemble/Chorus
- ✿ Outstanding Choreography Execution
- ✿ Outstanding Overall Musical
- ✿ Outstanding Lead Actor
- ✿ Outstanding Lead Actress
- ✿ Outstanding Featured Actor
- ✿ Outstanding Featured Actress

Nominees in these categories will be determined based on the criteria and scoring system detailed later in this packet. All roles eligible for the Jimmy Awards will be adjudicated in the categories of Outstanding Lead Actor and Actress. For Outstanding Featured Actor and Actress, teachers will submit one role in each category to be adjudicated when submitting their Performance Details Form. A list of roles to choose from will be provided, and the role should have at least one solo number in the production.

Student Design Awards

- ✿ Outstanding Set Design (including Props)
- ✿ Outstanding Costume Design
- ✿ Outstanding Choreography Design

Nominees in these categories will submit materials of their designs, which will then be adjudicated based on the criteria and scoring system detailed later in this packet.

All-Star Cast Member

Nominees in this category will be submitted by teachers or other students working on their productions and **cannot** be students who are already finalists for Outstanding Lead Actor or Actress. One student from each participating school will be recognized.

All-Star Crew Member

Nominees in this category will be submitted by teachers or other students working on their productions. One student from each participating school will be recognized.

Inspiring Teacher Award

Nominees in this category will be submitted by students working on their productions and should be teachers involved with their school's theater program, such as Music Director, Director, Drama Teacher, etc. Nominees must be a staff member at their school. One teacher will be recognized, and the winner will be announced at the live Awards Ceremony.

JUDGING CRITERIA & DEFINITIONS

Outstanding Lead Actor & Actress, Outstanding Featured Actor & Actress

Definitions

With the understanding that the judges are experts in different areas of the theater, we are providing brief explanations of the judging criteria:

Acting

⚙️ **Natural Ability:** Instinctive talent and using sensitivity in creating an imaginary environment.

⚙️ **Characterization:** Ability to make choices that remain true to the character and maintaining throughout the show, develops a strong relationship with other characters.

Vocal

⚙️ **Diction/Vocal Production:** Performances are vocally appropriate, consistent, and easy to hear and understand.

⚙️ **Musicianship:** Execution of notes and rhythms, ability to sing on pitch and demonstrate a range of volume and emotion.

⚙️ **Characterization:** Ability to make choices that remain true to the character in song or spoken word.

Movement

⚙️ **Technique:** Skill and execution of the movement, the ability to perform the choreography cleanly and in sync with the others.

⚙️ **Characterization:** Appropriate movement and energy for the particular character, scene, or show.

Scoring Method

0 – 3 Fair - Rarely

4 – 6 Good - Sometimes

7 – 9 Excellent - Often

10 Superior - Always

JUDGING CRITERIA & DEFINITIONS

Outstanding Ensemble/Chorus, Choreography Execution & Overall Musical

Definitions

With the understanding that the judges are experts in different areas of the theater, we are providing brief explanations of the judging criteria:

Overall Ensemble: The ability for performers to consistently sing and act as one cohesive unit while also showing individual characters. Actively engages, enhances world of the play and drives story.

Choreography: Narrative, creative, style, characterization, level of difficulty, and execution.

Set Design: The level of style, structure, and use of space.

Costume Design: The ability for costumes to be thoughtful and relevant to the story.

Lighting Design: The use of color, atmosphere, time, and cueing.

Overall Presentation: Overall presentation of technical execution and musical direction. Cohesiveness and vocal capabilities of ensemble. Ease of set changes, limited distractions, timing, and execution of cues. Quality of every aspect of the performance. Interpretation, casting, use of space, consistency, artistic vision, clarity of story.

Suggested Additional Comments:

- ☞ What did you enjoy most?
- ☞ What were the strongest points?
- ☞ What could be improved?
- ☞ What was creative or exciting?

Scoring Method

- 0 – 3 Fair - Rarely
- 4 – 6 Good - Sometimes
- 7 – 9 Excellent - Often
- 10 Superior - Always

JUDGING CRITERIA & DEFINITIONS

Student Design

Definitions

With the understanding that the judges are experts in different areas of the theater, we are providing brief explanations of the judging criteria:

Natural Ability: Student(s) can elaborate an idea, theme, or personal interpretation to a point of realization, and shows the ability to apply artistic processes involved in designing.

Ingenuity: Design element displays creative new ideas, techniques, and is not a clear copy of previous productions.

Design Details: The design captures the essence of the musical by including details that accurately reflect the period, culture, or theme.

Reflection: Student(s) answer reflective questions on portfolio applications with intelligence, detail, and clear passion.

For Set (Props) and Costuming Only:

Technique: Skills and techniques are applied at a high level of proficiency (ie. sewing, set construction, painting techniques).

For Choreography Only:

Technique: Skills and execution of the movement, displays a clear understanding of musicality, the ability to design complex and creative choreography that serves show.

Characterization: Appropriate movement was designed for the character(s), scene, or show.

Scoring Method

0 – 3 Fair - Rarely

4 – 6 Good - Sometimes

7 – 9 Excellent - Often

10 Superior - Always

FINALIST AUDITIONS

On day, Wednesday April 30 we will be holding finalist auditions. These auditions will be for the Outstanding Lead Actor and Actress finalists, of which there will be two from each school (one in the Actor category and one in the Actress category). Finalists will be determined based on adjudicator scores. In the event of a tie, multiple students may be asked to participate. Teachers will be notified of the finalists from their school on Monday, April 28, following the final performances that adjudicators attend on April 25. With this email, you will also be sent a form that each finalist must complete.

While students are not auditioning, there will be brief interviews with finalists with the team from Rustic Roots Creative. These interviews will be used in nominee videos during the ceremony, as well as in promotional materials for the Marquee Awards in the future.

In order to determine final nominees in the Outstanding Lead Actor and Actress categories, scores from the on-site adjudication of the student's production will be combined with scores from the finalist auditions. In order to prepare students for the Jimmy Awards and careers as performers, the finalist audition score will be weighted at 60%, while the other 40% will be the student's performance score.

The Process

In front of a panel of judges, students will perform 32 bars of a song from their eligible role with an accompanist, as well as participate in a dance call that has been used in the past for the Jimmy Awards. The dance call will be taught on-site during the auditions. Students are expected to bring their own copy of their sheet music for the accompanist. These will be closed auditions. No parents, teachers or other students will be permitted in the audition room. Students will randomly be assigned numbers to determine the audition order.

Schedule

5-7pm - Vocal auditions

7-7:15pm - BREAK

7:15-7:45pm - Dance call

Attire

Please have students wear something that they can move comfortably and feel confident in. There is no dress code.

FINALIST AUDITION CRITERIA & DEFINITIONS

VOCAL CALL

Definitions

With the understanding that the judges are experts in different areas of the theater, we are providing brief explanations of the judging criteria:

Technique

⚙️ **Diction & Vocal Production:** Performances are vocally appropriate, consistent, and easy to hear and understand.

⚙️ **Musicianship:** Execution of notes and rhythms, ability to sing on pitch and demonstrate a range of volume and emotion.

Scoring Method

Excellent (10): Demonstrates precise and flawless execution of dance movements, with noticeable flexibility and control.

Good (4-6): Displays solid execution with minor technical imperfections and some flexibility.

Fair (0-3): Shows basic execution but lacks consistency, with little flexibility.

Artistry & Style

⚙️ **Characterization:** Ability to make choices that remain true to character in song or spoken word.

Scoring Method

Excellent (10): Demonstrates a well-rounded and nuanced artistic interpretation.

Good (4-6): Generally solid artistic interpretation with some room for improvement.

Fair (0-3): Adequate artistic interpretation, lacks consistency.

FINALIST AUDITION CRITERIA & DEFINITIONS

DANCE CALL

Definitions

With the understanding that the judges are experts in different areas of the theater, we are providing brief explanations of the judging criteria:

Technique

⚙️ **Execution:** The ability to perform dance movements with precision and accuracy, paying attention to proper form and alignment.

⚙️ **Flexibility & Control:** The extent to which a dancer can move their joints through a full range of motion, showcasing flexibility and fluidity in movement.

Scoring Method

Excellent (10): Demonstrates precise and flawless execution of dance movements, with noticeable flexibility and control.

Good (4-6): Displays solid execution with minor technical imperfections and some flexibility.

Fair (0-3): Shows basic execution but lacks consistency, with little flexibility.

Artistry & Style

⚙️ **Emotional Connection/Stage Presence:** Performances are vocally appropriate, consistent, and easy to hear and understand.

⚙️ **Musicality:** Execution of notes and rhythms, ability to sing on pitch and demonstrate a range of volume and emotion.

Scoring Method

Excellent (10): Expresses a strong emotional connection to the music and theme, with seamless musicality.

Good (4-6): Demonstrates some emotional connection with occasional lapses and an understanding of musicality,

Fair (0-3): Struggles to convey consistent emotion throughout the performance, with little to no musicality.

CEREMONY PERFORMANCES

Performances

Several groups of students will have the opportunity to perform during the Awards Ceremony. When not performing, we will do our best to allow students to watch the other parts of the ceremony, and will have staff assigned to ensuring students are where they need to be.

Outstanding Musical Nominees

The nominees for Outstanding Musical will each perform a musical number, featuring their full casts, lasting no more than 5 minutes each. When teachers complete the Nominee Acceptance Form, they will provide information about the number (technical needs, number of performers, etc.) as well as the sheet music, including cuts, for their number. This number will be performed with a live orchestra. Each school performing must have a chaperone backstage.

Opening & Closing Numbers

The Opening and Closing Numbers will be numbers from shows in our upcoming season, and will be performed by the same group of students. This performance group will include the nominees for Outstanding Supporting Actor and Actress, finalists for Outstanding Lead Actor and Actress, and All-Star Cast and Crew nominees. The nominees for Outstanding Lead Actor and Actress will also join the group for the closing number.

Outstanding Lead Actor and Actress Nominees

Musical Medleys featuring the Outstanding Lead Actor and Actress Nominees will be performed before each respective Award winner is announced. Students will perform in their roles from the musical that their school performed.

Rehearsals

Leading up to the ceremony, rehearsals will be held for the Opening and Closing Numbers and Medleys. It is the responsibility of the Outstanding Musical Nominees to rehearse their chosen numbers on their own, prior to the technical rehearsal on Saturday, May 17.

CEREMONY PERFORMANCES

Performance Attire

Outstanding Musical Nominees

The nominees for Outstanding Musical will each perform in their costumes. If costumes were rented, the Tennessee Theatre will reimburse the cost of extending your rental.

Opening Number & Closing Numbers

Choose one of the following options (keeping in mind that ceremony dress code is semi-formal):

- ☑ Black suit, black dress pants, or black dress skirt with: either a black or solid colored collared, button-down dress shirts OR blouse (ties, vests, suit jackets, etc. are optional)
- ☑ Knee-length black or solid colored dress (no mini-skirts or mid-thigh length dresses)
- ☑ Dressy black or solid colored jumpsuit

Outstanding Lead Actor and Actress Nominees

Musical Medleys featuring the Outstanding Lead Actor and Actress Nominees will be performed in the students' costumes. If costumes were rented, the Tennessee Theatre will reimburse the cost of extending your rental.