

ANNUAL YOUTH THEATRE FESTIVAL 2021



Information & Application Pack

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Q Theatre champions theatre training, development and presentation from the heart of Penrith. Each year, Q Theatre provides schools from around the region access to theatre-making opportunities through our drop-in and intensive workshops, as well as workshop projects such as the *Annual Youth Theatre Festival (AYTF)*.

AYTF gives high school drama students - traditionally in years 10 and 11 - the opportunity to explore different theatrical styles through hands-on theatre-making. Students work with industry professionals to create an original performance staged at The Joan, Penrith.

For over 25 years, *AYTF* has championed and celebrated theatre practice. The program focusses on two experience-based outcomes:

1. Learning the value of each step in the **theatre-making and theatre performance process**: from *coming together as a company* - to *generating ideas* - *play development* - *rehearsals* - *performances* - *reflection* and *repetition*; and,
2. Learning the skills, responsibilities, and values of **theatre-making as a collaborative artform**. The production is only made possible through a range of people working together to bring it to life, including creators, technicians, coordinators, publicists and audiences.

This document serves as an introduction and primer to *AYTF*. It includes a Schools Application Form weblink on the last page of the document. We recommend you review this entire document before completing your application.

You can contact the Festival Coordinator, Ian Zammit with any questions at:
Phone (02) 4723 7606 | Email ian.zammit@penrith.city or
creativelearning@penrith.city

STAGE 1. PRE-APPLICATION : PURPOSE , THEATRICAL STYLE , PROVOCATION

Purpose

Before applying for *AYTF*, teachers are encouraged to consider the purpose for engaging in the festival, individually and together with their students, through these key questions:

- What theatrical style have your students studied and would like to engage with?
- What outcomes do you expect to see from the students' engagement with *AYTF*?

Theatrical Style

AYTF provides the opportunity for your students to develop their skills in a theatrical style they have studied and engaged with. You will choose the style in your application, and we recommend you consider and choose a theatrical style the students are already familiar with.

Popular theatrical styles from past festivals include:

Classic/Greek Theatre	Comedy	Contemporary
Dance Theatre	Epic Theatre	Mask
Musical Theatre	Physical Theatre	Shakespeare
Verbatim Theatre	Theatre for Children	Theatre of the Absurd

Alternatively, you can choose a style outside this list that suits your class' study focus and level of experience, especially one they wish to explore further and put their stamp on. The theatrical style is to provide inspiration for your group's stylistic choices, rather than a straight jacket requiring you to adhere rigidly to all its conventions.

Provocation: Your Top #3 Ideas

Each year, participating schools respond to a provocation: an inciting concept that forms the leaping off point for ideas for your school group's development and production. Previous year's provocations have included: *Mother*, *Decoded*, and *The Tower*.

This year, AYTF is coming to you, the teachers and students, to come up with a provocation for our 2021 Festival. What *inciting concept* are you as a group keen to explore through theatre?

We invite teachers to engage students in a short brainstorm activity to come up with your top provocation idea, between a word and a phrase in length, to send with your application.

STAGE 2. FESTIVAL APPLICATION & REGISTRATION

Application Form (Application link available at [Appendix 1](#))

Once you have responses to your Purpose, Theatrical Style and Provocation ideas, complete the **Online Application Form** via the weblink at the end of this document, and when finished click the button "**Submit**". You will receive a confirmation email of your application details, and receipt from the Festival Coordinator, within 48 hours of applying. Due to the high level of interest we receive from schools to participate in AYTF each year, we recommend you submit your school's application at your earliest convenience.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Friday 12 March 2021.

Application Assessment

Applications will be reviewed by the Q Theatre team. Schools will be notified regarding their application's success and a Provocation voting link (Stage 3) by **Wednesday 17 March 2021**.

Successful Applicants

Schools successful in their application will receive:

1. A message confirming if their application to *AYTF 2021* has been successful;
2. The **AYTF Registration Form** to confirm school details. Due **Friday 26 March 2021**.
3. The **AYTF Registration Invoice** for your school's \$1,200.00 entry fee + 30x student tickets to the 12pm performance of *AYTF*, Friday 25 June. Payment is due **Friday 21 May 2021**.

**Please contact the Festival Coordinator before Friday 26th March if you require more than 30 tickets to meet your matinee numbers. Please ensure you have your calendar dates and your financial requirements arranged before applying.*

STAGE 3. CONFIRMING SCHOOLS AND PROVOCATION VOTING

When we confirm the participating schools, we will compile all Provocations and send them through an online "ballot". Each school can vote for their top 3 preferred provocation ideas. The one with the most votes will become the theme for the festival.

Key Dates

- Send your online provocation voting ballot through by **Friday 26 March 2021**.
- The votes will be tallied by the Theatre staff and the Provocation *AYTF 2021* will be announced on **Friday 23 April 2021**.

Your response to the provocation as a group is designed to begin from the moment you engage with your *director* in Stage 4 of the *AYTF* program, beginning at the Stagecraft Workshop, at The Joan between **3 - 6 May 2021**. Your response will evolve by the time you reach your performances and can be in any form your group chooses. There is time for you to reflect on your responses and processes in your post-performance reflection at the end of June.

Food for Thought: The provocation is intended to *stimulate* the early creative process with your director and is not required to be a prominent feature of your finished work.

STAGE 4. ENGAGING YOUR DIRECTOR

Schools accepted into *AYTF 2021* will have their theatrical style confirmed and will be paired with a director experienced in that theatrical style. Your group will be introduced to your director in your Stagecraft Workshop at The Joan on your chosen day in May, to begin your six-weeks of development together. Your director will spend a total of **twenty (20) face-to-face hours** working with your group.

This time includes:

- Your 4-hour introductory **Stagecraft Workshop** that starts the six weeks development, in the week of **4 - 7 May** (see **Stage 5** below);
- 13-hours of **Performance Development/Rehearsal workshops** that take place at your school with your Director, decided between your group and the Director; and,
- Your 3-hour final **Technical Rehearsals** in the Q Theatre that ends the six weeks development, in the week of **22 - 25 June** (see **Stage 7** below - contact the Festival Coordinator if you also wish to book your final Performance Development/Rehearsal workshop on the same day either before/after your Technical Rehearsal).

Over just six weeks, your director will facilitate an introduction to your chosen style and the provocation, reflect and guide discussions for how your group will work together, support your group's generation of ideas and performance material, and help guide the creative and artistic development of your performance. It is likely that you will hold several in-school sessions outside the hours scheduled with your director: we recommend you plan together for how you can best use this time in your director's absence.

Your director is your school group's direct link to years of theatre-making experience, at your school group's disposal for the Festival: utilise their time well!

You can consider nominating an area of performance craft which you would like your Director to focus on, such as physical or vocal skills, acting, writing or directing, and we will consider your preferences when selecting your artist.

STAGE 5. STAGECRAFT WORKSHOPS & PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

Your creative process begins with the **Stagecraft Workshop**. This consists of a single session in Term Two, within the week of **Monday 03 - Thursday 06 May 2021**.

You and your students will undertake a four-hour workshop at The Joan:

- **Two x 90-minute sessions** of your **Performance Development Workshops** are led by your Director, bookending the one-hour Technical Workshop (see below). Use this time to introduce yourselves and to discuss the processes of the festival; begin exploring your theatrical style and the provocation; set expectations for how you wish to work together; and develop a schedule for your school meetings. These two sessions will be divided between two venues: one in the Q Theatre, one in the Mullins Studio. The order will be worked out on the day and split between your school group, and a partner school group also engaging in their **AYTF** workshop at The Joan - introduce yourselves when you meet!
- **One hour** will be used as a **Technical Production Workshop**, to split up the 90-minute workshops. Both school groups (yours and your partner group) come together to meet members of The Joan's technical and production teams and learn about the Festival, the venue, the technical opportunities available at The Joan. It's the perfect time to ask questions about what's possible for the Festival, so bring your curiosity and enthusiasm!

The Stagecraft Workshop is the perfect opportunity to identify potential performance style or technical questions, challenges or limitations, which are best to address early in the rehearsal process. It is recommended to use this time to ask

questions of our Technical Crew and take down the answers they provide: the team has decades of theatre-making experience between them and know the Q Theatre space well to answer your questions. Also, the earlier we receive your enquiries, the earlier we can provide answers - and possible solutions - to them.

Session times are available as follows. Please indicate your top 3 preferences on your application:

Mon 03 May: 9:00AM - 1:00PM, or 01:30PM-5:30PM

Tue 04 May: 9:00AM - 1:00PM, or 01:30PM-5:30PM

Wed 05 May: 9:00AM - 1:00PM, or 01:30PM-5:30PM

Thu 06 May: 9:00AM - 1:00PM, or 01:30PM-5:30PM

We recommend indicating 2 - 3 preferences in your Application where possible. This will make it easier to find a session that suits both your school group and your fellow schools.

Performance Development Workshops (held between Friday 7 May - Friday 18 June)

We recommend using the end of the Stagecraft Workshop to arrange your Performance Development workshops with your Director. Each Director is available for a further 13 hours' face-to-face time in the weeks leading up to Production week and your Technical Rehearsal day (see **Stage 6**). Note that your Technical Rehearsal date includes up to an additional 3 hours available for a final Performance Development workshop, which is recommended to include in your rehearsal schedule with your director.

Talk with your Director at your earliest convenience to arrange your schedule together. Discuss the roles you will have in the 6 weeks engagement with the students, especially for those times the Director will not be on site at your school, and what goals you will set for the students to develop their performance piece at those times.

Performance Development Workshops: Schedule and Logistics

The breakdown of the 20 face-to-face hours with your director:

- 4 x hour initial **Stagecraft Workshop** in the Q Theatre (MAY 3, 4, 5, or 6)
- 13 x hours of **Performance Preparation Workshops**, at your school (MAY-JUNE)
- 3 x hours on your **Technical Rehearsal day** (JUNE 21, 22, 23, or 24)
 - 3-hour **Technical Rehearsal** in the Q Theatre
 - Contact us to book your final **Performance Preparation Workshop** in one of The Joan's rehearsal venues before/after your Technical Rehearsal (max 3-hours)
- In addition, Directors are invited to either of the **AYTF Performances** on Friday 25 June: the matinee at 12.00pm, or the evening at 7.30pm.

A suggested model for the 13 hours of Performance Preparation Workshops:

- 4 x 2.5-hour sessions, either at your school or The Joan, plus
- 1 x 3-hour session at The Joan on your Technical Rehearsal day.

We recommend a minimum of 2 hours engagement at a time, to allow your Director and students time to reconnect, generate and refine performance material with some depth, and plan activities to be conducted before the next workshop.

*Where available The Joan can offer rehearsal spaces as an alternative to your school facilities, if this suits both your school group and your Artist. Contact the Festival Coordinator to discuss availability at The Joan. Conducting some or all your workshops at The Joan can help your students develop a more intimate understanding of the environment they will be performing in and can help promote focus and creativity during workshops. Venue availability is limited: include this in your application if you are keen to take advantage of this venue opportunity and contact the **Festival Coordinator** early to look at space at The Joan for these workshops.*

STAGE 6. PRODUCTION WEEK & TECHNICAL REHEARSALS

Production Week begins with a Technical Rehearsal within **Monday 22 - Thursday 25 June**. Each group will return to Q Theatre at The Joan on one of these dates for a full day of rehearsals. A “partner” school will be booked for the same day for the schools to provide mutual support for each other during their processes.

The day is split into two sessions, broken up by 30 minutes for lunch:

- **Technical Rehearsal (3 hours):** a session on the Q Theatre stage. If there is time, this session will also include one or more dress rehearsals); and,
- **Optional Performance Development Workshop (3 hours):** spent rehearsing / fine-tuning your performance with your Director in a rehearsal venue.

These sessions will be either **morning (9:00am - 12:00pm)** or **afternoon (1:00pm - 4:00pm)**, with a break for lunch in between. While one school group is booked in for the Technical Rehearsal morning session, their partner school can use the Performance Development workshop time to rehearse at the same time. The schools will then swap venues for the afternoon. We recommend the schools provide an opportunity at the end of their Technical Rehearsal time (**12pm for morning sessions, 4pm for afternoon sessions**) to invite their partner school to be an audience for a Dress Rehearsal of their performance, who can provide a supportive voice for your young performers and is very much in the spirit of this Festival.

STAGE 7. PERFORMANCES

The two Performances of *AYTF 2021* will take place on **Friday 25 June** in the Q Theatre:

- 12pm for school audiences (including 30 students from your school); and
- 7pm for the general public.

Although each performance is targeting a specific audience group, anyone may elect to attend either performance.

TIPS FOR DEVELOPING YOUR PERFORMANCE

We have compiled a short list of guidelines to help you and your students avoid some common pitfalls. Consider them ahead of your stagecraft workshop, when you will have a chance to experiment and identify potential challenges early-on.

Duration

Your work is to be within **7 - 10 minutes**, once performance ready.

Audience

Have in mind that your audience will range in age from Year 7 students to adults: **consider appropriate language and content accordingly.**

Voice/Volume

Work on your **breathing and voice** from the start of your *AYTF* journey. There is a dramatic difference between rehearsing speech in a classroom and performing in professional venues such as the Q Theatre. We recommend you develop a keen awareness of the vocal projection required through the Stagecraft rehearsals at Q Theatre in May, and continue this in workshops at school. If you identify vocal skills as a major challenge for your students, please let us know so that we can work to support them through the rehearsal process.

Floorspace

For maximum impact keep the **dimensions of the Q Theatre** in mind when developing your work. To aid you in this we have included a stage plan with this pack (**APPENDIX 1**).

Consider the stage dimensions, entrances and exits, aisles and other features and how you could exploit them.

For example, consider how your performance could spread across the auditorium; or, the effect of contracting it onto a restricted area. If you are ever unsure about an aspect of the space, contact The Joan's team for clarification.

Design

Beyond the script and the staging there are plenty of opportunities for you to embellish and enhance your performance by imaginatively employing elements of set, costume and props design. Working with the Artists, each school can balance the opportunity to dream up a design aesthetic for the production and refine the number and quality of items you will eventually use in the fully realised final design.

We recommend schools do not rely on 'placeholder' items such as rostra: the stage will need to be struck and reset before each school's performance, so the fewer the items you must bring out, the fewer the items you will have to move back/store backstage.

TECHNICAL PRODUCTION & DEADLINES

AYTF is a great way for students to learn about the technical aspects of mounting a production, and teachers and tutors are encouraged to involve students in the technical design of their works throughout the rehearsal period.

If any of your students are especially interested in **technical production**, contact the Festival Coordinator ASAP: we may be able to offer them an opportunity to spend some time working with our technical crew in the lead-up to the performance day. This experience will count toward VET Entertainment hours where applicable.

MUSIC/AUDIO (recommended: Copyright Free options)

Music or sounds recorded by other artists are protected by copyright: many can still be used through application to the appropriate agencies.

We require at least 6 weeks' notice if you intend to use music or sounds in your work that have been recorded by other artists, as such content is subject to a 3 - 8-week clearance process and approval is not guaranteed.

COPYRIGHT FREE MUSIC: We recommend use of music that is out of copyright or copyright free. One way is to engage any musicians in your group who are willing to permit use of their compositions in AYTF for free. This also adds another form of artistry your group can share with your audiences. Another way is through YouTube Audio Manager, who have a library of hundreds of titles and styles of music to choose from to suit a range of moods for a theatre production, and the majority are copyright free. Contact the Q Theatre team if you would like assistance in finding YouTube Audio Manager copyright free tracks to suit your piece. Ultimately we recommend groups focus on presenting their skills and talents as theatre-makers, rather than of any recorded music used to enhance it.

SOUND DESIGN & REQUESTS

We can accommodate the use of recorded and/or live sound in your performance. Recorded sound must be presented on a CD or USB drive. All tracks must be in order and already edited to be the desired length. Live sound/instrument requests are to form part of your technical requests. Please also note that you may not parody or change the lyrics of an existing work.

LIGHTING DESIGN & REQUESTS

Most things are possible, and more likely with notice! Contact us if you have any questions or special requests and we will do our best to accommodate your vision. We encourage you to carefully plan your lighting states for maximum dramatic effect. Consider the mood of your scene, the motivations and interactions of your characters and the general atmosphere you're working to evoke.

GRAPHICS/PROJECTION DESIGN & REQUESTS

The Q is equipped with a data projector and computer for projecting visuals onto the cyclorama, a large white curtain at the rear of the stage. Videos should be recorded and edited in the highest possible resolution to ensure the quality of the blown-up image and where possible presented in a full screen format without black bars.

SCRIPT/TECHNICAL DEADLINES

We understand that the final weeks of rehearsal are a period of rapid development and change, however in order to allow the team at The Joan enough time to source and prepare the necessary equipment for all schools involved in *AYTF 2021*, contact us earlier rather than later in the process to ensure a smooth process for all.

FRIDAY 14 MAY (6 wks before performance)	Email the Festival Coordinator with ALL recorded songs/sound requests to the Festival Coordinator are due.
FRIDAY 04 JUNE (3 wks before performance)	Contact the Festival Coordinator with ALL technical queries and requests are due
FRIDAY 18 JUNE (1 wk before performance)	Email the Festival Coordinator with your final Production Script and ALL music/audio files

INDUSTRY FEEDBACK

One of the chief aims of *AYTF 2021* is to ensure that participants leave the festival having gained an insight into the practicalities and processes involved in mounting a professional-scale production, as well as to develop their critical faculties in looking at their own work and processes. To this end each year we assemble a panel of industry experts who provide individualised feedback to each group about their performance. This feedback will focus on three key areas: technical production, stagecraft and performance skills. The feedback is intended to provide valuable reflection material for analysis within the group and insights that will inform student’s future performance practice.

MARKETING THE FESTIVAL

AYTF is a non-profit event, and we rely on ticket sales to keep the Festival going year after year. It is expected that students and teachers will actively publicise the event, and all efforts you provide to spread the word are greatly appreciated by The Joan and all schools involved. We encourage you to advertise the Festival within your school networks and to direct interested parties to our **Box Office** for further information.

Q Theatre will supply you with posters and flyers closer to the performance date. We also strongly encourage you to utilise your 30 tickets by inviting other year groups, your staff and executive faculty members to help fill the house and give the performers the best experience possible.

KEEP IN TOUCH

Your main contacts at The Joan you can ask questions of and discuss your involvement throughout all stages of this year's festival:

Ian Zammit - Festival & Schools Coordinator

(02) 4723 7606 / ian.zammit@penrith.city

Contact Ian for all queries relating to the logistics of this year's Festival and urgent after-hours enquiries. Contact Ian in the first instance with creative, technical, venue-related queries.

Nick Atkins - Director, New Work

(02) 4723 7605 / nick.atkins@penrith.city

Nick leads the engagement with the Artists and the design of this year's AYTF. Contact Nick for all queries relating to your Artist, theatrical styles and the design aesthetic.

Geoff Turner - Technical Manager

4723 7608 / 0414 983 316 / technical@jspac.com.au

Geoff Turner is a veteran of the Festival and will be leading the technical preparations, rehearsals and operations for AYTF 2021. Contact Geoff with any urgent technical issues.

AYTF 2021: APPLICATION FORM

[Click here to complete the AYTF 2021 Application Form](#)

OR Copy and paste this weblink:

<https://form.jotform.com/200428031021030>

Deadline: 6pm, Friday, 12 March 2021.
Applications will be accepted until this time.

APPENDIX 1 Q THEATRE STAGE PLAN

