

ANNUAL YOUTH THEATRE FESTIVAL 2022



Information & Application Pack

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Q Theatre champions theatre training, development, and presentation for our community 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 **you** – secondary school teachers – and your drama students the opportunity to explore different theatrical styles through hands-on theatre-making. School groups are traditionally in years 10 /11, and work with industry professionals to create an original performance staged at The Joan, Penrith.

2022 marks the 30th anniversary of AYTF, which continues to celebrate student theatre practice and presentation in our region. The AYTF program focusses on two experience-based outcomes:

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

Information & Application Pack: This document serves as an introduction and primer to Stages 1-7 of the **AYTF program**. It includes a Schools Application Form weblink and details of the fees and processes you can expect. We recommend you review this entire document before completing your application.

Considerations & Questions

Accessibility: we encourage school drama groups that have students identifying with a disability to engage in AYTF. Please note that all accessibility and learning requirements for students involved in AYTF are the responsibility of the School during all hours of engagement with AYTF. It is the responsibility of the School to manage and communicate all access requirements to the AYTF staff as part of your application process.

The Application is to be used to communicate your students' needs and goals for the AYTF program, and what resources/staff you will be using to support them and your guest teaching artists throughout the festival period.

Festival Contacts: You can contact Q theatre's team with any questions at:

Phone (02) 4723 7606

Email creativelearning@penrith.city

STAGE 1. PREPARING YOUR GROUP'S APPLICATION

Part A, Your Group's Purpose

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

- *What theatrical style have your students studied/experience working with, and would like to engage with in their AYTF performance creation and production?*
- *What learning outcomes do you expect to see from the students' engagement with AYTF?*

Part B, Your Group's 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.

Note: *AYTF's* aim is to take the theatre skills your students have learned and apply them to a performance preparation & presentation program. *AYTF* is not a training course in your chosen theatrical style: please only consider theatrical styles your students have some learning in / are familiar working 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.

Part C Your Group's top 3 Provocation 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*. We have found each school group's response unique and comes from key ideas they are keen to discuss and share through performance.

This year, *AYTF* is coming to you, the teachers, and students, to produce a provocation for our 2022 Festival:

What *inciting concept/s* are you as a group keen to explore through theatre?

We suggest engaging students in a short brainstorm activity to play with ideas and voice 1, 2, or 3 ideas that resonate for them. Your provocations can be between a word and a phrase in length, to send with your application.

STAGE 2. FESTIVAL APPLICATION

Application Form (Application link available below)

Once you have your group's 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 elevated level of interest, we receive from schools to participate in *AYTF*, we recommend you submit your school's application at your earliest convenience.

Important Points for your group to consider:

1. Preferred Stagecraft Workshop sessions at The Joan (26-28 April, 9am / 1pm / 5pm)
2. Preferred rehearsal sessions with your director at your School (which weekdays and times suit your group)
3. Preferred Technical/Dress Rehearsal sessions (06-08 June, 9am / 1pm / 5pm)
4. Booking the performance sessions into your calendar (12.00pm and 7.30pm, Thursday 9 June 2022)

[Click here to complete the AYTF 2022 Application Form](#)

OR Copy and paste this weblink:

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

**Close: 6pm, Friday, 11 February 2022.
Applications will be accepted until this time.**

STAGE 3. REGISTERING SCHOOLS

Part A, Application Assessment & Registration

Your school group's application will be reviewed by the Q Theatre team, and you will be notified about your application's success by **Monday 14 February 2022**. Your theatrical style will be confirmed and are required to Register to take part.

Successful Applicants

Schools successful in their application are required to Register to formalise their engagement in AYTF. They will receive:

1. A message confirming if their application to *AYTF 2022* has been successful;
2. **AYTF Registration Form** to confirm your school groups' details, due **Friday 04 March 2022**.
3. **AYTF Provocation Voting Ballot** (see Part B, below), due **Friday 18 March, 2022**
4. **AYTF Registration Invoice** for your school's group's fees of \$1,200, due **Friday 01 April 2022**. The Registration Invoice covers:
 - o Festival Registration of \$600
 - o Ticketing* of \$600, for 30x student tickets to the 12pm performance of *AYTF*, Thursday 9 June.

***Ticketing Questions:** Contact the Festival Coordinator **before Friday 18 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.

Part B, Provocation Voting

During AYTF's Application process we will compile all Provocations for the Provocation Voting Form for Registered Schools to vote on, in the form of an online "ballot." Each school can vote for their top 3 preferred provocation idea, in order of preferences. The one with the highest number of preferred votes will become the theme for the festival for all the school groups involved.

Key Dates

- Complete your online Provocation Voting Ballot, due **Friday 18 March 2022**.
- The votes will be tallied by the Theatre staff and the Provocation AYTF 2022 will be announced on **Friday 01 April 2022**.

Purpose of the Provocation: 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 **26 – 28 April 2022**. 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.

Things to consider: 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

Once your school group has registered for *AYTF 2022*, they will be paired with a Director experienced in their chosen theatrical style. Your group will be introduced to your Director in person at 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:

- 26-28 April (session tbc): Your 3-hour introductory **Stagecraft Workshop** that starts the six weeks development, either 9am-12pm, 1pm-4pm, or 5pm-8pm (see **Stage 5** below);
- 29 April – 08 June: 14-hours of **Performance Development workshops** that take place at your school with your Director, to be negotiated between your group and the Director (see **Stage 6** below). NOTE: 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 & Dress Rehearsal); and,
- 06 – 08 June (session tbc): Your final 3-hours with your Director, the **Technical & Dress Rehearsal** in the Q Theatre, either 9am-12pm, 1pm-4pm, or 5pm-8pm (see **Stage 7** below).
- 09 June: **Performance Day**, 12.00pm School Matinee and 7.30pm General Public performances (your Director is invited to attend).

Over this brief period of engagement, your Director will work with you to guide your school group's performance development for the festival: facilitating an introduction to your chosen style for performance, engaging responses to the provocation; reflecting on your group's skills and dynamics to build processes for how they will work together, support your group's generation of ideas and performance material, and mentor the creative and artistic development of your work together. 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!

It is possible 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.

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

Your creative process begins with the **Stagecraft Workshop**. This consists of a single session in Term Two, within the week of **Tuesday 26 April - Thursday 28 April 2022**. You may be partnered with another participating school, during your session: if so, we encourage you to introduce yourselves to them and begin sharing the festival spirit!

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

- **Two x 60-minute sessions** of your **Performance Development Workshops** are led by your Director, which bookend the one-hour Technical Workshop (see below). Use this time to introduce yourselves to your Director: discuss the processes and schedule for 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 sessions will take place in one of two venues: one in the Q Theatre, one in the Mullins Studio. The order will be worked out on the day at The Joan.
- **One hour** will be used as a **Technical Workshop**. Your group (and a partner school group if present) will meet the Festival Director and members of The Joan's technical and production teams to learn about the Festival, the venue, the technical opportunities available at The Joan, and information for how to publicise the Performances (including information on the Posters and flyers we will provide your school group to help). Bring a pen and paper to take notes: It is the perfect time to ask questions about what is possible for the Festival, so also bring your curiosity and enthusiasm!

The Stagecraft Workshop is an opportunity to identify 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 practical solutions – to them.

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

Tue 26 April: 9:00AM - 1:200PM, or 01:00PM-4:00PM

Wed 27 April: 9:00AM - 12:00PM, or 01:00PM-4:00PM, or 5.00pm-8.00pm

Thu 28 April: 9:00AM - 12:00PM, or 01:00PM-4:00PM, or 5.00pm-8.00pm

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

STAGE 6. PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

Held between Friday 29 April – Wednesday 08 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

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

- 3 x hour initial **Stagecraft Workshop** in the Q Theatre (26-28 April) PLUS
- 14 x hours of **Performance Preparation Workshops**, at your school (29 April – 08 June), that could break up as follows:
 - 7 x 2-hour sessions, OR
 - 4 x 3-hour sessions, and 1x 2-hour session,
 - OR any combination of 2- and 3-hour sessions
- 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.

We recommend a min. of 2 hours engagement at a time, to allow you, your group, and your Director the time to re-connect, generate, and refine performance material with depth, and plan activities to be conducted before the next workshop.

*NOTE: 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. Venue availability is limited: include this in your application if you are keen to take advantage of this venue opportunity and contact the **Festival Director** early to look at space at The Joan for these workshops.*

STAGE 7. PRODUCTION WEEK

Part A, Technical & Dress Rehearsals

Production Week begins with a Technical Rehearsal within **Monday 06 – Wednesday 08 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), and **Afternoon (1:00pm - 4:00pm)**, or

Afternoon (1:00pm - 4:00pm), and **Evening (5.00pm – 8.00pm)**

with a meal break for lunch / dinner 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.

If time permits, we recommend your school group provides an opportunity at the end of your Technical Rehearsal time (**11.30am for morning sessions, 3.30pm for afternoon sessions, 7.30pm for evening sessions**) to invite their partner school to be an audience for a Dress Rehearsal of their performance. They can provide a supportive voice for your school group and engaging them is very much in the spirit of this Festival.

Part B, Performances

The two Performances of *AYTF 2022* will take place on **Thursday 09 June** in the Q Theatre:

- 12.00pm for school audiences (including 30 students from your school); and
- 7.30pm 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 brief 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

Your audience will range in age from Year 7 students (age 12+) to adults: **consider appropriate language and content accordingly.**

Voice/Volume

Work on your **breathing and voice** from the start of your *AYTF* journey, consulting with your Director with their experience as and when needed. There is a dramatic difference between rehearsing speech in a classroom and performing in large auditoriums such as the Q Theatre. We recommend you develop a keen awareness of the venue and the vocal projection you will need at the Stagecraft rehearsals at the Q Theatre in April, and continue your rehearsals at school with this in mind. If you identify vocal skills as a major challenge for your students, contact us 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 Directors, 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 large '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., and the less time required to do so.

TECHNICAL PRODUCTION & DEADLINES

AYTF is a terrific way for your students to learn about the technical aspects of mounting a production, and how to organise their time around a project. See below for the **Table: AYTF Production Deadlines** (page 12) as a guide for developing your group's Production Schedule: Directors and teachers are encouraged to involve students in the technical design and schedule for their works throughout the rehearsal period.

If any of your students are especially interested in **technical production**, contact the Festival Coordinator at your Stagecraft Workshop session: 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 (required: Copyright Free options)

Music or sound effects written by/recorded by other artists are often protected by copyright, especially many recent and popular pieces of music or effects. AYTF's production requires use of music that is out of copyright or copyright free. We recommend groups focus on presenting their skills and talents as theatre-makers, rather than spending time concerned about specific recorded music used to enhance their work.

Below are two simple options we can recommend for your school group to use copyright free music and sound effects for your work:

1. Engage any musicians within your school group to create music or sound effects for your work. You can request any musician or sound designer you have connection with to see if they would be willing to write to The Joan permitting use of their music/sound effects for AYTF for free, and if so, your school group can use this audio recording or have musicians within your school group perform the piece for your performance. This option has the bonus of promoting the local artist/designer and their work. If you are interested in this option, contact us for more information about this process.
2. Setup a free account with YouTube Audio Manager, who have a library of thousands of music files, with an amazing array of styles, genres, and atmospherics for free use in your performance. In addition, YouTube Audio Manager provides hundreds of Sound Effects options to set the scene for your work. Contact the Q Theatre team if you would like assistance in finding YouTube Audio Manager copyright free tracks to suit your piece.

SOUND RECORDING DESIGN, LIVE MUSIC, & REQUESTS

Recorded sound must be presented on a CD or USB drive by the deadline below. 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 lighting states are possible with the Q Theatre's lighting resources, the chances for special lighting states you envision for your performance increase if you let us know early! Contact us before the deadline below if you have any lighting 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 & 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. Carefully consider the time and resource required to produce any video you wish to use; note we cannot project any recordings that are under copyright by other artists. If videos are to be a part of your production, contact us by the deadline below with the details: videos should be recorded and edited in the highest possible resolution to ensure the quality of the blown-up image is kept for audiences, 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 to allow the team at The Joan enough time to source and prepare the necessary equipment for all schools involved in *AYTF 2022*, contact us earlier rather than later in the process to ensure a smooth process for all.

Table: AYTF Production Deadlines

<p><u>MONDAY 16 MAY</u> (3 weeks before production week)</p>	<p>Contact the Festival Director with ALL final technical queries <i>(NOTE: requests made after this point may not be considered due to production limitations)</i></p>
<p><u>MONDAY 23 MAY</u> (2 weeks before production week)</p>	<p>Email ALL recorded songs/sound files to the Festival Director creativelearning@penrith.city.</p>
<p><u>MONDAY 30 MAY</u> (1 week before production week)</p>	<p>Email your final Production Script for to the Festival Director: creativelearning@penrith.city <i>(NOTE: Production Scripts with formatting different to the AYTF Script Template provided may not be accepted for Production Week.)</i></p>

INDUSTRY FEEDBACK

One of the aims of *AYTF 2022* is to ensure that participants leave the festival with insights into the practicalities and processes involved in mounting a professional-scale production, as well as to develop a critical eye for their own work and processes. To support this we assemble a panel of industry experts each year who provide tailored 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: we rely on ticket sales for the Festival to continue year after year. It is expected that students and teachers will actively publicise the event. The efforts you provide to spread the word build the audiences for your events, and is 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 student 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:

Shy Magsalin – Festival Director

(02) 4723 7605 / shy.magsalin@penrith.city

Shy leads the engagement with the Directors and Teachers with each school, and curates the design of this year's *AYTF*. Contact Shy for all queries relating to your invoicing, festival logistics, Director, 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 2022*. Contact Geoff with any urgent technical issues.

APPENDIX 1 Q THEATRE STAGE PLAN

