

2024 JUTE Actors Studio Pathways Program Script call out

A Professional Script Development and Production Opportunity



JUTE Theatre Company and Overall Arts are calling for playwrights from Cairns and district to write a one-hour script to be performed by young people aged 16-18 years old.

The selected play will be workshopped and developed through JUTE's Professional Pathway Program in 2024, by a group of young emerging actors who are seeking a professional career in the theatre sector under the direction of a professional director and in a professional setting.

The script will go on to be produced by JUTE's Pathways Program in a short season at Bulmba-ja Arts Centre in late November/early December 2024.

Important dates

Opening Date: 20 December 2023

Closing Date: February 9, 2024

Entries of complete scripts (not a synopsis or outline) must be emailed to kathryn@jute.com.au by 12.00pm midday February 9, 2024

Our receipt of your completed script will be acknowledged. If you don't get an acknowledgement, call us.

The selection process will involve a panel of three professionals including Kathryn Ash of JUTE, Amber Grossmann of Overall Arts and one other independent script assessor.

Announcements for the successful script will be made in mid to late February 2024

All enquiries regarding this opportunity should be directed to Kathryn Ash, Senior Creative Producer at JUTE Theatre Company, telephone 0742816832.

A production of the work will be scheduled in late November, early December at Bulmba-ja Arts Centre

Objectives

JUTE is looking for a short script to be workshopped throughout 2024 in their highly successful youth program, JUTE Actors Studio Professional Pathways. The call out is open to emerging or professional writers of *any age* who would like the chance to have their new work developed and produced.

Every year JUTE's Professional Pathways program has a small intake of young actors aged 15-18 who only access the program by demonstrating in a professional audition that they have the chops to seek a professional career in theatre. Over an intensive 12-month program the young ensemble train and work together with their youth facilitator Amber Grossmann of the youth-focused theatre company, Overall Arts, and other fabulous professional facilitators including JUTE's Artistic Director Suellen Maunder as well as other guest artists.

From June 2024, the ensemble will begin to focus on the script that will be produced by Overall Arts and JUTE for its end of year Youth Mainstage Production, a season of two consecutive nights.

To give yourself an idea of the type of scripts we have used in this program previously produced by JUTE and Overall Arts, research online for synopses of the following:

The Three O'Clock Flagpole by Steve Pirie

Koalazilla By Keziah Warren

One Second by Amber Grossmann

What is the value of this opportunity?

The selected play will give its playwright a genuine developmental boost for their work and skills and provide hands-on experiences to enhance their theatre-making careers.

The playwright will be supported to develop their script and their skills by a celebrated and respected contemporary theatre company through;

- inclusion into JUTE's script development program, Write Sparks, at no cost. Value \$450 (JUTE subsidises this \$900 value program)
- Up to 50 hours of one-on-one dramaturgical support through the year as a JUTE Writer-in-residence at no cost. Value \$5,000
- Workshopping of your script within an ensemble of enthusiastic and extraordinarily talented young actors over at least a 6-month process. Value, priceless.
- A possible one-week creative development (pending funding) of the work with a professional team and the young actors in July. Such a creative development would cost over \$10,000.
- A royalty of 10% of the production's box office takings.

In addition, JUTE will be investing over \$20,000 of its resources toward the work's development and production through venue, administration, creative production, promotion and marketing.

Can I apply if I live outside of Cairns?

We will prefer Cairns-based playwrights. If, however, you are living outside of Cairns but *in a regional Queensland area* and you present an irresistible script that the assessors cannot ignore, the panel will contact you to discuss what can be done.

Sorry, if you are metropolitan based (that is, you do not live and work daily in a regional area), we cannot accept your application. JUTE Theatre Company invests in building the capacity of regional theatre and artists who live and work in regional Queensland.

GUIDELINES and HINTS

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING CAREFULLY

What sort of scripts are we looking for?

JUTE and Overall Arts are looking for an original short script:

- 45-60 minutes in length
- suitable for theatre performance by **six to eight young actors**, aged 15-18 years. This does not limit you to 6-8 characters!
- with a light, humorous (or even absurdist) tone
- that requires a minimal set and limited design elements.
- that celebrates positivity, overcoming obstacles and gives the young adult audience a sense of a pathway to hope.
- that reflect *honest* attitudes, speech*, circumstances** common to young adults and issues that impact young adults.
- that will resonate with a young adult audience.

Special consideration given to any Christmas or Holiday themed scripts.

*Swearing is acceptable. But be clever with it, don't overuse it, save it for laughs or impact moments only.

** All of the young actors performing it will have had their parents/guardians' express permission for the representation of young adult concepts. Teenage life is about making mistakes, working out who you are and navigating the path to adulthood. You do not need to overly sanitise or censor yourself. Make the core of your characters true to young adult life.

What are we NOT looking for?

A Handy List of Don'ts

- Don't submit a script longer than 60 minutes.
- Don't submit a script that is inherently a film script, one that requires frequent and complex set changes and excessive special effects. Please note: prescriptive stage directions stating specific design elements should be avoided, for example spotlights and sound effects. A script that relies on projection elements is also a big nope.
- Don't submit a script that is not your original work. If the work is an adaptation of other written work, please ensure that you have the rights to your adaptation.
- Don't write about culturally specific perspectives or specify characters of a stated race/culture. JUTE and Overall Arts are committed to diverse casting and also culturally appropriate casting but be aware that the culture you are writing from may not be represented in the acting ensemble. If the actor in the Pathways program who is chosen to play a character is from a specific cultural background, we can talk about *their* need to make their cultural identity a part of how they present on stage, being authentic to their language or their perspectives. But for now, keep it very simple and neutral.
- Don't be very prescriptive about gender. The 6-8 actors for this program are not yet determined (auditions are in January) so keep it open. Keeping it as flexible as possible increases the likelihood we can cast our actors into roles in your script.
- Don't ask in the script for specific recorded music like pop songs you love but you do not have the rights to.
- Don't write songs and/or dance numbers. Even if you wrote the songs yourself. No musicals, please.
- Don't focus on heavy teen issues such as suicide, suicide ideation, sexual abuse or cyber-bullying...the production will be in early December, as school is breaking up and Christmas is on people's minds, so we need to keep it light, fun but also engaging.
- Don't submit a script that has little or no relevance to a contemporary society- historical scripts, for example, would not be appropriate unless there was a specific thematic idea running through it that resonated with today's society.
- Don't centre your script on the emotional world. Please have a plot, dynamic dialogue, and action.

SCRIPT PREPARATION – WHAT TO KEEP IN MIND

Now if you want to give your script the best chance, you should do the following.

- Present your script as a **UK formatted play script**. Google it. It is the same script format used all over the world in theatres, even in the USA. Submitting a play to a theatre company in film script formatting is not acceptable.
- Put **page numbers** on every page of your script. This task seems like something you could skip but make sure you don't.
- Include a cover page (with the play's title, your name and contact details and the date)
- Include a character list with a brief description of each, and any suggestions you may have for actors who may play multiple roles. Use the same character name throughout the script to indicate that character – no nicknames or abbreviations.
- Submit your script in Microsoft Word or PDF for electronic submission.
- Fonts should be readable. A 12-point font in Arial
- If a word is to be emphasised use *italics*. **No whole words in capitals, please**. Not even in stage directions.
- To make sure your script is not too long or short; time it by reading it aloud to yourself, allowing for action sequences.

