

**A GUIDE TO  
RECEIVING AND UNDERSTANDING  
THE *TheatreFest* ADJUDICATION PROCESS  
(Prepared by ANZDA)**



The adjudication process is, in essence, informative and educational - for the players, directors, technicians, and the audience.

**The Essence of Adjudication is:**

- Knowledge and Understanding of the Medium Used
- Objectivity – Detachment – Growth – Education – Evaluation - Improvement

**The Process of Adjudication is to:**

- Assess objectively
- Give constructive evaluation
- Inform the audience, performers, directors, and production team

**The Outcome of Adjudication is to:**

- Encourage performers, directors, and production teams
- Affirm positive aspects of the work presented
- Foster audience appreciation
- Give constructive pointers for improvement

**The Ethical Premise of an Adjudicator is to:**

- Assess with objectivity, integrity and without prejudice or bias and to conduct themselves in a professional manner

**The Adjudicator**

- The Adjudicator expresses their opinion of excellence, based on specialised educational training and practical experience.
- The assessment **framework** used, considers the following aspects - **design/concept, direction, acting, and overall impression**. This brings an objective view to the Adjudicator's thoughts.
- Their responsibility is to offer a detached and impersonal view of the overall success and unity of the production. This can be confirming and/or dis-confirming.

**The Adjudication Package**

**Phase 1 - On-Stage Adjudication:**

- Its main purpose is to enlighten the audience about the production coupled with immediate constructive feed-back to the players.
- This helps the audience understand what they have just witnessed. Particularly if it is outside their own theatrical experience. Audiences sometimes like to see if they agree with the Adjudicator, as performances can be seen differently by audience members.
- The Adjudicator also addresses what the supports and challenges of the play/production were and how they were met. These often become the points for further discussion with the teams.

**Phase 2 - Green Room Discussion:**

- The Green Room discussion gives the adjudicator and the teams the opportunity to clarify the comments made from the stage.
- This is a discussion time, so teams should contribute, to make it a two-way process. They can seek clarification of terms used by the Adjudicator.
- It is a time for the Adjudicator to fully explain and discuss with the team more deeply what worked and what seemed not to work.

### **Phase 3 – The Written Report:**

- The written report is set out with the assessment framework headings giving the Adjudicator a guide towards a balance in their comments on the production.
- It is where topics raised and discussed previously can be expanded and given in greater detail.
- It also gives teams time, to digest and process those comments.
- It is also here that an Adjudicator's personal strengths and style of approach, may enhance their comments.

### **Summary**

- Adjudicators are not telling teams to change their production, but to find ways to enhancing it.
- What they are offering are,
  - 'ways of working'.
  - Of uncovering and expressing, from various angles.
  - Not re-jigging or re-directing a production.
- Actors need to take what they can from each Adjudicator, what they understand at their current level of development and then apply it.
- The same can be said of Directors. Never stop finding new ways of working. In seeking to deepen your own work you will enhance everyone around you.
- Criticism offered by an Adjudicator is most helpful when seen by directors, actors, and technicians as coming from an educational base. The emphasis should be on growth of theatre skills, stimulation of fresh ideas for discussion, and encouragement to apply newly understood theatrical principles in future productions.
- The adjudication process is helping teams to gain new skills, and to enhance their work.
- "Theatre is not a way of life - but a way to life".
- Theatre is a team sport, it also needs camaraderie and the joy of 'playing'.