WPI’s New Voices 37 Submission Guidelines

D term 2020, will mark the 37th year for New Voices!
New Voices 37 will run in the Little Theatre, April 15th-18th, 2020, curtain at 7p.m.

History of New Voices

New Voices is one of the nation's longest running collegiate new and original play festivals! In 36 festivals, New Voices has produced 452 original plays by 245 playwrights. From 1982 until New Voices became established in the Little Theatre [beginning in 2006], the festival featured performances of original, unpublished scripts from the entire WPI community: students, faculty, staff, alums, family, friends, acquaintances, audience members, and others. With the growth of academic programs in creative writing and theatre production, and the expanded study of dramatic literature in courses offered in the Humanities and Arts department, at WPI, New Voices determined to work to cultivate WPI undergraduate talent in play writing by limiting script submissions only to student playwrights. New Voices 32 produced nine plays, all written by undergraduates. New Voices 33 produced seven plays all written by WPI students, one playwright being a graduate student. New Voices 35 produced eight plays written by WPI students. Since New Voices 36 we have decided to accept submissions from students, faculty, staff, and alumni once again. This is due to the fact that we want to continue the undergraduate emphasis, yet provide the opportunity for the entire WPI community to get involved with the festival. In order to primarily encourage students to seize this opportunity to be heard through theatre, even though we accept submissions by the entire WPI community, only students will be allowed to submit more than one (1) script each.

In 2007, the Dramaturgs for New Voices 25 decided to select only seven plays for performance, which was quite a departure from previous festivals which could produce as many as 27 plays! Yes, 27 different plays were onstage for New Voices 7! This decision gave New Voices some opportunities that most of us liked, for example we could schedule all the plays for every performance, thus moving away from a random organization of performances and the chaotic atmosphere of so many plays, too few actors, and unpredictable technology requirements. We asked the NV 25 Dramaturgs to describe what they believed would be an ideal number of plays. Here is what they said: no more than 9 nor less than 5 plays, and no play should require more than 20% of New Voices' resources [including budget, actors, time, etc.]. New Voices has worked well when adhering to the "25" guidelines.

New Voices will accept any producible scripts: monologues, short plays or one acts, musicals, and other dramatic pieces. New Voices Dramaturgs read every script submitted and select the plays to be performed during the New Voices festival that year. The selecting Dramaturgs committee for New Voices 37 will be comprised by both faculty and students. We anticipate more than 40 submissions in 2019 for New Voices 37. The plays selected for NV37 will be announced on Friday, January 24th 2020, at the Masque meeting, at 5:00 p.m. in the Little Theatre.
Script Submission Guidelines

These guidelines are meant to be used as a checklist to ensure all requirements are complete before submission. Please make sure to carefully consider and complete all the instructions!

The plays selected for New Voices 37 will be announced on Friday, January 24th 2020, at the Masque meeting, at 5p.m. in the Little Theatre.

When and How?
- New Voices 37 will run April 15th-18th, 2020, 7p.m. curtain time, WPI's Little Theatre.
- Submissions are welcomed at any time, beginning October 25th, 2019.
- The deadline for submissions is December 31st, 11:59p.m.
- Submissions must be delivered electronically in PDF format, via e-mail to gr-nv-submissions@wpi.edu. You will receive an e-mail reply within a few days to confirm that your submission has been received.

Who can submit?
Current undergraduate and graduate students who are in residence at WPI or who are at WPI project centers, as well as WPI Faculty members, staff and Alumni are invited to submit. New Voices requires that all writers of plays selected for the festival must be in residence on campus or available to campus for events stipulated in the contract with the festival. Anonymous submissions will NOT be accepted. There is no limit to the number of submissions for current WPI undergraduate and graduate students. All else are welcome to submit no more than one (1) script each. A New Voices festival typically features 5-9 titles, so it is important that the submitted script will have a performance length shorter than 20 minutes. We want to make sure that all shows are treated equally, therefore each script should not make use of more than 20% of the festival’s resources (budget, show length, etc.).

What is required:

Submittals:
Two [2] copies of the script should be submitted:
- 1 identifying copy
- 1 copy that has no identifying information anywhere in the file
- A brief synopsis of about 25 words should be included on the cast of characters page

The script itself:
- A typeface of 12 pt. Times New Roman [or equivalent] is preferred.
- All pages must be numbered.
  - We prefer page numbers in the upper right hand corner of each page.
  - You may include Title and/or Act and Scene numbers in your header if you wish.
  - DO NOT INCLUDE YOUR NAME IN THE PAGE NUMBERING.
What to include:

- The identifying copy should have a title page with the title of the play, your name, your email address, telephone number, and any other contact information you wish to include.
- The non-identified copy should have a title page with ONLY the title of the play.
- A Cast of Characters list should follow the title page.
  - Less than one line of character description should follow the character's name.
- Other necessary information such as setting, time period, etc., should appear on this page.
- Stage directions should be clearly distinguishable from dialogue (e.g. italics and parentheses).
- We prefer that you do not use ALL CAPS, which also produce eyestrain.

If your script does not follow the above rules, it may not be considered for the current festival.

If your script is accepted:

New Voices assumes a level of participation by writers whose plays are accepted for the festival. New Voices is part of an academic theatre program and is dedicated to giving the writers an educational experience. We are not merely an exhibition play festival: we insist that the writers of the produced plays are in the Little Theatre at important production milestones. New Voices believes that this participation can enrich the writers' theatrical experiences, provide them with knowledge of their own original work that they could find only in the production setting, and broaden their understanding of how a play goes from page to stage.

Please make sure you are willing and able to participate in the following:

- Respond to the email notifying you of the acceptance of your play into New Voices 37;
- Attend the 5p.m. meeting on January 24th, 2020, at which New Voices 37 plays are announced;
- Attend at least one scheduled rehearsal during production;
- Attend at least one performance of your produced play Wednesday through Saturday nights;
- Make every effort to support the entire festival by spreading the word about New Voices 37; and
- Attend Strike of the set after the final performance of New Voices 37, Saturday night, April 18th.

New Voices considers the above mandatory. If you have reasons that make this participation impossible for you, please contact gr-nv-submissions@wpi.edu prior to submitting your play.

A letter of agreement between New Voices 37 and selected playwrights will be sent to you electronically when you are notified of the acceptance of your play into the festival. This document, when signed by you, will assure NV37 of three things:

1. That your work is original.
2. That when this play enjoys future productions, you will acknowledge (if possible) in the production program that your play was first presented in NV37 in an educational workshop.
3. That you agree to make every effort to participate as requested.

Decision:

The festival plays will be announced on Friday, January 24th at 5p.m. in WPI's Little Theatre. Before this date, you will be contacted by New Voices and informed of the results of your submission. If your play was not selected, both PDF's you submitted will be deleted from our files. If your play was selected, both copies will be held for the files. New Voices never duplicates a writer's work.