

WPI's New Voices 38

D term 2021, will mark the 38th year for New Voices!

New Voices 38 will be digitally presented on April 21st-24th, 2021, at 7p.m.

Information on the history of the New Voices festival can be found at the end of this document.

Script Submission 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 38 will be composed of both faculty and students. Each selected playwright will then participate in a faculty-led new play development workshop to further prepare their script for performance. Only revised scripts will be considered for production. The plays selected for NV38 will be announced on Friday, February 5th 2021, at the Masque meeting, at 5:00 p.m.

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! Please reach out to gr-nv-submissions@wpi.edu if you have questions.

Important Dates

- Submissions open: December, 1st, 2020.
- Tips and Tricks for Playwriting (Guest Artist Phaedra Scott): Sat. Dec. 12, 1-2 pm (via Zoom)
- Submissions close: January, 10th, 2021, 11:59p.m. EST.
- Scripts announced: Friday, February 5th, 5p.m. EST.
- New Voices 38 performance: April 21st-24th, 2021, 7p.m. EST, Digitally.

Who can submit?

Current undergraduate and graduate students, WPI Faculty members, staff and Alumni are invited to submit. Anonymous submissions will NOT be accepted. There is no limit to the number of submissions for current WPI undergraduate and graduate students. All others are welcome to submit no more than one (1) script each.

Length

A New Voices festival typically features 5-9 titles, so it is important that the submitted script will have a performance length no longer than 15 minutes. This may be a complete work or a portion of a longer play. If part of a larger project, please provide a description to contextualize the portion you are submitting. All shows will be treated equally, therefore each script should not make use of more than 20% of the festival's resources (budget, show length, etc.).

How will New Voices happen under COVID?

New Voices 38 will be a hybrid festival, with scripts staged in the Little Theatre, at home, or a combination of the two depending on world events. These plays will not be presented in front of a live audience. For this, all submissions are required to fulfill the following aspects:

Social Distancing:

- Scripts will need to account for a 6' distance between actors at all times. Because of this, we are limiting the cast of each script to five (5) actors.
- It has been a tradition of New Voices to assign roles to every auditionee, however we will need to break it to account for the on-campus COVID-19 policies. Not all auditionees will get a role for New Voices 38.
- We will also accept auditions from students who plan to participate in the festival remotely.
- Exchange of items on stage is not permitted.
- These rules are subject to change according to COVID policies updates.

Digital Format:

- Scripts should be adaptable to fit within digital formats, to serve de-densifying policies and meet the WPI campus requirements. Please indicate the format for which you are writing (audio, zoom, stage, etc.) in both your submission e-mail and the script.
 - Some options to consider: audio drama, zoom style format, pre-recorded in LT and streamed.
- Regardless of campus status, all scripts should be written with the intent to be staged and produced as a recorded theatrical production.
- The production will make the final decision on digital format for the whole production and individual plays.

Submission requirements:

Submissions must be delivered electronically, via e-mail to gr-nv-submissions@wpi.edu. You will receive an email reply within a few days to confirm that your submission has been received.

Submittals:

Two [2] PDF copies of the script should be submitted:

- Identifying Copy: Must include name, WPI email, and Graduation year (if applicable).
- Anonymous Copy: Should have no identifying information anywhere in the file.

The script itself:

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

- A typeface of 12 pt. Times New Roman [or equivalent] is preferred, Double-spaced.
- First page
 - Identifying (ID) Copy:
 - Title of play
 - Identifying information of playwright.
 - Anonymous (ANON) Copy:
 - ONLY the title of the play.
- Second page
 - A brief synopsis of about 25 words
 - Setting, Time
 - Other necessary information, like the format you are writing for (audio, zoom, stage, etc.).
- Third page:
 - Cast of characters, with an up to one-line description for each character.

- COVID Addendum: Regardless of the number of characters, a maximum of five (5) actors will be permitted.
- Stage directions should be clearly distinguishable from dialogue (e.g. italics and parentheses).
- All pages must be numbered.
 - We prefer page numbers in the upper right hand corner of each page.
 - Do not include your name in the page numbering
 - Optional: Title/Act/Scene numbers in your header.
- All scripts should be adaptable to fit within a digital format, to serve de-densifying policies and meet the WPI campus requirements. Regardless of campus status, all scripts should be written with the intent to be staged as a recorded theatrical production.

If your script is accepted:

The festival plays will be announced digitally on Friday, February 5th at 5p.m. 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 added to the Drama/Theatre archive, and shared with the production team. New Voices never duplicates a writer's work.

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 a substantial educational experience. For this reason, each selected playwright will participate in a faculty-led new play development workshop to further prepare their script for performance. Revised scripts will then be presented to the public. New York-based dramaturg, playwright, and director, Phaedra Scott will present a playwriting workshop open to the WPI community on December 12th, 1-2pm. She will then read the selected submissions and provide feedback for the playwrights in two rounds. A round-table for initial feedback and follow-up individual sessions with the playwright, director and dramaturg of each script.

A condition of your play's acceptance is that you are present 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, while ensuring that the integrity of your play is upheld throughout production. 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 38;

- Attend the 5p.m. meeting on February 5th, 2021, at which New Voices 38 plays are announced;
- Attend the Jan 29th virtual round-table for playwrights;
- Attend your script's virtual playwriting session along with the director and the dramaturg; this will be scheduled at a later date;
- Attend virtually at least one scheduled rehearsal of your script, during production;
- Attend virtually 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 38;
- If allowed by COVID-19 policies: Attend Strike of the set after the New Voices 38 final performance.

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 38 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 NV38 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 New Voices 38 in an educational workshop.
3. That you agree to make every effort to participate as requested.

History of New Voices

New Voices is one of the nation's longest running collegiate new and original play festivals! In 37 festivals, New Voices has featured 460 original plays by 251 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 32-35 determined to work to cultivate WPI undergraduate talent in playwriting by limiting script submissions only to student playwrights. Since New Voices 36 the decision was made to open the submissions to the entire WPI community once again, including students, faculty, staff, and alumni. This is due to the fact that we wanted 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 the opportunity to present all the selected plays each night, 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.