

Section III
EQUITY PRODUCTIONS

A. Season

The Equity season runs from August 1 – July 31 of each year. The presentation of the Equity Jeff Awards is made at a ceremony in the fall, usually held no later than the first Monday in November.

B. Eligibility Rules and Procedures

1. A theater organization that has a production determined by Actors' Equity Association to be an equity production and wishes to have that production judged must notify the Equity Wing Chair by the 18th of the month before the month in which the opening performance of that production is to take place. Actors' Equity Association's determination shall be deemed final and conclusive. In order for that Equity production to be judged, the theatre must show that it has committed to produce a minimum of 18 performances, excluding previews, over a period of at least 3 consecutive weeks. Additional requirements as to the minimum 18-performance rule are: at least one performance per week must take place on the weekend, one weekday matinee a week can be counted towards the minimum of 18 performances, and a production will become ineligible if it actually runs for fewer than the required minimum number of performances.

2. Additional eligibility requirements:

- a. The Jeff Committee does not judge late-night performances (i.e., all curtains at or after 9:30 p.m.), puppet theatre, opera, performance art, children's theatre, student or youth theatre, foreign language theatre, mime theatre, unscripted or improvised productions, or staged readings. The Committee no longer judges Touring Productions under its prior (and now eliminated) separate category of Touring Production Awards. A specific production originating from a non-Chicago area CAT/LORT theatre (commonly referred to as a "Touring Production") which is not being produced by a Chicago CAT/LORT Theatre is eligible for consideration if it is presented as part of that Theatre's subscription season.
- b. The Committee does not judge evenings of multiple plays unless all artistic components, with the exception of actors, are the same for each (i.e. director, set designer, etc.). With rare exceptions, no performer in such productions will qualify for the Principal Actor/Actress category.
- c. For productions presented in repertory, the minimum number of performances requirement may be modified, although for each show included in the repertory presentation there still must be at least three performances each week, with at least one of the performances on a Friday, Saturday, or Sunday, and a total of 14 performances.
- d. A revival of the same work by a theatre, even with additional producers, in a different venue or in the other Jeff Wing, is not eligible to be judged if that prior production was judged less than seven (7) years earlier.
- e. The Committee does not judge productions presented at locations located more than 45 miles driving distance from the Chicago intersection of State and Madison Streets.

- f. Theatres are to provide one or two (if requested) complimentary ticket(s) for a Jeff Committee member to see an eligible production.

C. Eligibility Judging and Ballot Procedures

1. Judging Procedure

- a. Seven judges (5 Jeff judges and 2 A/T judges) are randomly assigned to attend the opening night. Jeff judges are generally limited to judging one opening per season for any company. Judges may not judge productions where they have a conflict of interest with that company or any member of the cast or artistic team.
- b. Judges report their votes by 7:00 a.m. the morning following the opening night for any elements of the production they consider excellent or to register no votes.
- c. With seven judges in attendance, an Equity production is recommended if it receives 21 total votes for a play; 25 total votes for a musical; or 5 votes for a single element.
- d. With only six judges in attendance, an Equity production is recommended if it receives 18 total votes for a play; 22 total votes for a musical; or 4 votes for a single element.
- e. If recommended, the theatre and the members of the Jeff Committee are notified. They are not told what elements of the production received votes. Each member is expected to see the production during the course of the run and submit a ballot voting for any element(s) he or she considers excellent.

2. Final Ballot Procedure

- a. At the end of the season (8/1 to 7/31), the ballots are tabulated. The top 5 vote recipients in each category are placed on the final ballot, provided the votes for that nominee fall within an appropriate percentage. In the case of a tie, the category may be expanded to include more than 5 nominees on the final ballot.
- b. On the final ballot, members may vote in any given category only when they have seen at least three nominees when there are five or more nominations or at least two when there are two to four nominations.
- c. Voting in each category is to be “weighted voting” in which members may cast in each category the number of votes equal to the number of nominees seen in such category. Such votes should be cast for one (1) nominee only, except in the categories of New Play, New Musical and Artistic Specialization, for which a member may cast his or her votes for multiple nominees.
- d. The ballots are tabulated and the award recipients are determined after all final ballots are turned in. One recipient is identified per category, except in the case of a tie. Multiple awards may be presented for New Play, New Musical and Artistic Specialization categories.