

Elly Awards Program 2011-12

Guidelines for Judges

The following guidelines are to assist those volunteering as Elly judges.

Season

The Elly season begins July 1 and ends June 30.

Categories

Judges are required to attend all productions assigned to them in one of the following categories:

- Comedy
- Drama
- Musicals
- Young People's Musicals
- Young People's Plays
- Original Works
- Education

The Education category was created to accommodate the growing number of high schools and middle schools who have become member theaters. All productions submitted by educational institutions are judged in this category.

Judges' Commitment and Conduct

Judges must be able to commit their time and effort to one full season.

Judges must attend every production assigned to them. The number of productions varies by category and by season. SARTA may place more than five judges in categories with a high volume of productions and rotate the productions randomly among the judges such that each production is assigned to five judges but not every judge is assigned to every production.

Judges must always stay for the entire production.

Judges may not be artistically involved in any production in the category they are judging.

Judges may not judge close family members or any other individual whose relationship to the judge would conflict with the judge's ability to objective. It is the responsibility of the judge to notify the Elly Coordinator of any such conflict. If the conflict comes to SARTA's attention after the judging has occurred, the judge's scores shall be removed from the tabulating.

Some travel is required. SARTA has member theaters as far away as Nevada City, Placerville, Stockton, Yuba City and Fairfield.

Judges must maintain impartiality, discretion and confidentiality at all times. Judges may not publicly express their opinions of eligible productions, and may not discuss productions with other judges before their own judging forms have been completed.

Judging Procedures

SARTA attempts to notify judges of each production three weeks before opening night. The Judges' Notification Form includes dates, times, directions, and other pertinent information.

Theaters will provide each judge with two complimentary tickets to each production. Judges are responsible for making their own reservations. Judges should identify themselves by name and as Elly judges when making reservations, to ensure that their tickets are complimentary and that theaters know that judges are scheduling the show.

Judges should reserve tickets immediately upon receipt of the notification form to avoid difficulty if the theater sells out its performances. Many theaters fill quickly, and judges should neither expect nor require special accommodation. We recommend avoiding scheduling reservations for closing weekends, so the judge will be able to reschedule in case of an emergency.

Judges should notify the theater immediately if they must change their reservations. Judges should notify the Elly Coordinator at once by telephone or e-mail if they become unable to attend a production.

Judging forms and guidelines are provided. Return envelopes, address labels, and postage stamps are provided for judges who submit their forms by US Mail.

Judges must submit their completed judging forms to the tabulator within two weeks of seeing each production. This assures SARTA that productions are being seen and permits SARTA to tabulate scores in a timely manner.

Immediately following the end of the season, judges will be sent a ballot listing the ten top-ranking candidates for each award in their category. They will be asked to rank each of the candidates and return the ballot promptly. The resulting top five candidates are nominated for the Elly Award. The top candidate will receive the Elly Award. This is a silent and confidential balloting process. Judges should not discuss it with others.

Judges should keep sufficient notes to enable them to recall the elements of the production months later. Judges must retain hard copies of their judging forms, notes, and theater programs for one year.

Aspects Judged

In the Comedy, Drama, Musical, Young Peoples', and Education categories, we give awards for the following:

Male and female lead	Set Design	Costume Design
Male and female support	Lighting Design	Overall Production
Direction		

In the Young People's categories, separate awards are given for youth (actors under 18) and adults (actors over 18).

In the Musicals and Young People's Musicals category and in the Education - Musicals subcategory, we also give awards for:

Musical Direction
Choreography

In the Original Works category, we give awards for:

Original Script (to the playwright)
Production of Best Original Script (to the producing theater)
Adapted Script (to the playwright)
Production of Best Adapted Script (to the producing theater)

Theaters submitting Original Works productions may also submit the production in its natural category, such as Comedy or Drama, to have individual performers and technical aspects judged if they wish. This is the only circumstance under which a theater may submit a production in more than one category.

Original Works judges must obtain a copy of the script from the theater on the date they attend the performance for their use in evaluating the script's merits. The script is for the judge to keep.

Theaters are responsible for choosing the category in which their show belongs. Judges may take this choice into consideration when evaluating the director's concept of the show.

Theaters designate which roles they consider the leads. Judges may take this, too, into consideration when evaluating the director's concept of the show. Judges should evaluate the leads designated by the theater without exception. If the theater designates no leads, judges should assume that the theater conceives of all roles as support or ensemble.

Judges should always evaluate at least three supporting male actors and at least three supporting female actors, unless there are fewer than three male or three female supporting actors in the show. Judges may evaluate additional supporting actors if they wish.

Double-cast roles are never eligible for consideration, but judges should evaluate all other eligible roles and the technical aspects of the show.

Where a character of a particular gender is performed by an actor of the opposite gender, the actor's eligibility for consideration is based on the actor's gender, not the character's gender.

Where an actor performs multiple roles in the same production, judges should consider the actor's performance in all of the roles collectively. An actor performing multiple roles is eligible for consideration for only one acting award for that production. For example, if one of the roles the actor performs is a role designated by the theater as a lead, the actor is not also eligible for consideration as support.

Except as provided below, judges must always evaluate all technical aspects of each production (set, lighting, and costume designs, plus musical direction and choreography if applicable), even if these are not specifically credited in the program or even if the design was very minimal. The exception is that judges need not judge technical aspects that the theater has indicated are ineligible, for example, sets or costumes that were not designed by the theater. If a question arises as to whether a technical design should be eligible, the judge should notify the Elly Coordinator.

SARTA Membership

Elly Judges must be members of the Sacramento Area Regional Theatre Alliance. Judges are entitled to a complimentary one-year membership.

Elly Awards Ceremony

Elly Award nominations are announced at a Nominees' Reception in August. The Elly Awards Ceremony is held in September. SARTA provides each Elly Judge two complimentary tickets.

SARTA appreciates the tremendous commitment of its volunteers who serve as judges. Judges in good standing may continue to serve as judges for as long as they wish. Continuing judges may change categories if they wish and if openings are available.

If judges have questions or suggestions about the Elly Award judging procedures, contact the Elly Judge Coordinator either directly, or through the SARTA Office at (916) 443-8229, or by e-mail at sarta@sarta.com. Additional program information can be found in the Elly Program Guidelines for Theaters.

Attachments: Definitions
 Point Scale Rubric
 Play Production (Technical)
 Judges' Notification Form