# Guidelines for Crash Test Drama

Melting Pot Theatre Bundanoon have been running Crash Test Drama since 2012. Over the years it has grown and changed as all creative endeavours do. But at its core C.T.D has remained the same; it is a fun, supportive opportunity for writers, actors and directors to hone their craft. It is also an entertaining night out for local theatre lovers to view original plays performed live in Bundanoon.

### Objectives of C.T.D are:

- To develop good-quality, original ten-minute plays through the process of workshopping and public performances of these works.
- To assist playwrights to develop their skills by facilitating them to see their work performed live on stage.
- Provide an opportunity for actors and directors to practice their craft through staged reading of original ten-minute plays in a supportive environment.
- Provide the Melting Pot Theatre backstage crew the opportunity to hone their skills by helping to stage these events. This can include lighting, sound, stage crew, sets/props as well as camera work and video editing.

### Guidelines for Playwrights

- Submitted scripts must be the original work of the writer/s. To be eligible for C.T.D the plays must not have been staged elsewhere prior to submission.
- C.T.D is for original 10- minute stage plays that are performed script-in-hand. Plays that run longer than 10 mins will accrue voting penalties. Up to 11 minutes (-5 audience votes), over 12 minutes the play will be disqualified from both the People's Choice and the Judges selection for best play.
- Once a script has made it to the performance round it cannot be resubmitted for future heats. C.T.D is meant to be a starting point – where writers can see what works and where a script can be improved – and as such each round is intended for original, never performed plays.
- A minimum of 6 and a maximum of 8 plays will be selected for performance in each round of C.T.D.
- The writers and directors should be present for the performance round so they can see their work live. This is an important part of the C.T.D process that allows the writer to see how they can improve or change the script for the next performance. In the instance of an online round of C.T.D which is recorded the director must be there on the day, but the writer can get an exemption if needed.
- In the instance that we do not have enough local plays submitted for a specific round the committee reserves the right to make up the minimum number with other scripts by non-locals. These plays would be part of a showcase program and would not be eligible for the audience vote, the judges Best play selection or to move forward to the gala final.

- Any plays that are submitted by non-local playwrights who are not able to attend the event in person will not be part of the C.T.D program proper, instead they will be eligible for the Melting Pot Theatre short play festival or can be used to make up the minimum play numbers for a round in the showcase program.
- An independent judge will be invited to preside over each round of Crash Test Drama, and they will select their choice of, best actor, best actress, best director and best play.
- Additionally, there will be an audience vote for the People's Choice of best play. Each audience member, actor, director and stagehand present for the performance round select their two favourite plays on the voting slip. If it is an online round then each member of the online viewing audience select their two choices for best play and email their vote selection.
- Both the Judge selection of Best Play and the audience vote of People's Choice Best play will be eligible to advance to the Crash Test Drama Gala final at the end of the year.

- When submitting your play please include a cover page on which is written:
- The title of the play
- The log line (a log line is a succinct, one sentence summary of your play, which gives an insight into the theme of the story.)
- The writer's name and all contact details
- When formatting your script please remember these basic guidelines:
- Character's names should be in UPPERCASE to help differentiate from the dialogue.
- Stage directions should be italicised.
- Character's names in stage directions are capitalised.
- It's a good idea to set a second-line tab so that dialogue always begins on the same vertical line. This makes it clearer and easier for actors to read.
- Dialogue is usually double-spaced between each character's speech but single-spaced within a character's speech. This again makes it easier for the actors to differentiate between characters.
- Pages should be numbers and it is a good idea to have the title of your play in the header of each page.
- If you are not directing your own play, please arrange for someone to act as director on your behalf. If your play is selected you should send us the name and contact details of the director at your earliest convenience.
- If your play is selected for the performance round you (or your director) are required to provide enough copies of the script for the entire cast, and another 2 for lighting and stage supporters.
- Props, costumes and staging are allowed but should be kept at a minimum, and as simple as possible as the actors will need to have scripts in hand during their performance. Every director is able to use any of the furniture currently available at the hall including chairs, tables, stools, and boards. The play's director is responsible for sourcing or bringing along any other that props required.
- Directors are encouraged to make use of the upgraded lighting system in the hall. You must therefore put all lighting and sound cues into the script.

Additionally, you should have a discussion with the duty stage manager during your rehearsal time about all lighting, sound and staging requirements.

- The script selection committee will meet at the first available opportunity after the submission deadline to evaluate all the scripts. The writers will then be notified whether or not their script will be moving forward into the performance round.

**Guidelines for actors:**

- All casting will be done on the day of performance and is open to anyone who buys a ticket. Each actor will read a line from the script sheet in turn and the directors will then make their selections for the cast. In the instance of an online round of C.T.D the directors will need to work with the MPT convenor to pre-cast roles but there is to be no rehearsal prior to the performance day.
- The actors and directors will have a period of two hours to workshop and rehearse the play before the performance time.
- Ideally each actor will only perform in one play per round of Crash Test Drama. In the instance of an online round final approval of casting must be obtained from the MTP Convenor prior to performance day. This is because we have a large group of willing actors and would like to give as many people a chance to be involved as possible.
- Writers are not permitted to perform in their own play as they will benefit more from watching the play performed by others.
- Each actor is eligible for either Best actor or actress. Even if they are in a play which is disqualified due to time limits the actors are still eligible to win Best actor or Best actress in the judge's selection.