

The Valley Repertory Company's Second LabWorks 15-Minute New Play Contest

The Valley Repertory Company (Enfield, CT, www.ValleyRep.com) is seeking scripts for its Second LabWorks 15-Minute New Play Contest.

In its first LabWorks 15-Minute New Play Contest, staged February 18-20th, 2010, Valley Rep produced 12 wonderful new short plays. These plays were chosen from over 265 submissions by 175 playwrights from all over the United States and from four countries on two continents. The response by our audience was overwhelming, and we are excited to be able to offer the LabWorks 15-Minute New Play Contest again in our 2010-2011 season. The contest will be staged in February 2011 (specific dates TBA). Audiences will choose a winning play in the categories of comedy and drama. The winning playwright(s) in each category will win a prize of \$150.

For those who submitted to our first contest, please read our submission guidelines closely, as changes have been made.

Objectives of the Competition

1. To provide opportunities for writers of new, unproduced plays to gain recognition for themselves and their work.
2. To give VRC the opportunity to supplement its season with unique productions not yet seen by any of its patrons.
3. To provide opportunities for new and aspiring directors at VRC.
4. To provide opportunities for actors new to the VRC as well as VRC veterans.

Submission Guidelines and Restrictions

1. The competition is open to any playwright, but only two (2) plays per playwright may be entered. Members of VRC are eligible to submit plays to the contest, but if their script is chosen as one of the 12 semifinalists, they will be prohibited from working on the production of the contest in any capacity.
2. Entries must be original plays. Scripts may be co-authored, based on factual material, or an adaptation. Legal clearance of materials not in the public domain is the full responsibility of the playwright.
3. Submissions are restricted to plays that have not been published, and they must be royalty-free to VRC for this contest.
4. All scripts must be those that have not been slated for staging or staged in full production for a paying audience as of the date postmarked for submission. Scripts that have been staged in a workshop production, or those that have had a script-in-hand staged readings, are acceptable. VRC is seeking new plays which can be produced as world premieres.

5. VRC is not seeking, and will not consider for competition, one-man or one-woman shows, musicals, or children's theatre.

6. Plays must have a running time of no more than fifteen minutes (less is acceptable). Therefore, scripts are limited to no more than 15 pages (excluding the title page), using typeface **no smaller than** 12-point. Scripts of 16 pages or more will be rejected. While plays with running times of 10 to 15 minutes fit our contest best, any script of 15 pages or fewer will be considered.

7. Casts must consist of 2 to 5 characters. Scripts with 6 or more characters will be rejected.

8. VRC will accept submissions postmarked no later than **Saturday, September 4th, 2010**. VRC is accepting submissions by snail-mail only. **Mail three copies of each play being submitted (limit 2 plays).**
Mail submissions to:

The Valley Repertory Company Play Contest
P.O. Box 928
Enfield, CT 06083

9. Each script must be accompanied by a separate, completed copy of VRC's Submission Form (click [here](#) to view and print). Though each play must have a separate Submission Form, the two scripts need not be mailed separately. Please note:

- a. Plays will be chosen for the contest anonymously, so the playwright's name must appear on the Submission Form only. The playwright's name should not appear on any page, including the title page, of the script itself.

Inclusion of the playwright's name anywhere on the script will result in its rejection from the contest.

- b. List the name of each character and whether they are male, female, or flexible/neutral.
- c. Include a 25 to 55 word synopsis of the play, potentially for use in VRC's publicity.
- d. Include a one sentence tagline describing the play.
- e. Complete all author contact information *on the Submission Form only and nowhere on the script.*
- f. Sign, date, and enclose the Contest Agreement (click [here](#) to view and print). Only one copy of the Contest Agreement need be enclosed.
- g. To recap, a submission requires three copies of each play, a Submission Form for each play, and one Contest Agreement. Two plays may be mailed in one envelope.

10. Any script submitted to VRC's first LabWorks 15-Minute New Play Contest cannot be submitted again. VRC will NOT accept repeat submissions.

11. VRC seeks plays, not skits or sketches. Plays should have a beginning, a middle, and an end (though not necessarily in that order), and feature character development. Above all, make the script compelling.

12. VRC is a community theatre. If VRC foresees difficulty producing a play due to unusual script requirements, the play may be rejected.

13. While VRC is a family-friendly theatre, adult content is acceptable. Profanity, if it is fully justified by the script and for the character, will not be cause for outright rejection; however, profanity is no replacement for good writing. VRC will reject any script that requires nudity.

14. Keep set, lighting, sound, costume, and prop requirements to a minimum. The contest will feature 6 plays per night, with quick changeovers. A script with complex technical requirements will probably lead to its rejection. Keep the following in mind: VRC has an open stage, 26 feet wide by 18 feet deep. The stage has no curtain and no off-stage wings (in other words, no true proscenium). All lighting is projected from the rear of the house.

Script Format

1. Include a title page. The title page will not count as part of the script's page count. In other words, if a 15 page script is submitted, the title page will be the 16th page. The title page must feature the title, and the title only, with no author information whatsoever.

2. The second page (the first page of the script proper) should begin with stage directions or dialogue. Do not include the title again at the top of this page.

3. All scripts should be typed or word-processed with typeface no smaller than 12-point.

4. Standard playscript format must be used, including 1-inch margins on the top, bottom, and sides. Click [here](#) for a sample of the desired playscript format.

5. Include footers beginning on the second page (the first page of the script proper). The footers should include the page number and the name of the play only. Do not include any playwright information in the footers (see the sample again [here](#)).

6. Scripts must be stapled only, with a single staple in the upper left-hand corner.

Contest Format and Play Selection Process

1. All submissions will first be reviewed for adherence to contest guidelines and restrictions.
2. All scripts meeting the contest guidelines and restrictions will be passed on to a play reading committee of VRC members. Every script will be read by a majority of the committee members.
3. The play reading committee will select 12 plays for competition: 6 comedies and 6 dramas. Whether a script is a comedy or a drama will be determined by the play reading committee: do **not** label your script “comedy” or “drama.”
4. Six plays will be presented on the first semifinals night and six plays on the second.
5. An audience vote on each semifinals night will select the finalists. The audience of the finals night will select a winner in the drama category and a winner in the comedy category. A detailed explanation of the performance format and of the audience voting system will be made available to the playwrights whose plays are chosen as semifinalists.

Additional Information

1. VRC reserves the right to change any contest rule.
2. VRC reserves the right to accept or reject any play submitted to the contest for any reason.
3. No playwright revisions will be accepted once a script has been submitted. VRC reserves the right to request changes to any script.
4. No written or oral critique will be given on plays submitted.
5. VRC will post the names of the semifinalists and their plays on its website once the selections have been made. If you wish to receive a printed list, please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your submission.
6. All entries will be handled with care, but VRC cannot assume responsibility for lost or damaged scripts. It is suggested that playwrights retain copies of their scripts.
7. If you wish to have your script returned in the event it is not chosen for the contest, please enclose a self-addressed envelope with your submission.
8. VRC will promote your play, but you should too.

9. For semifinal nights, two complimentary tickets will be made available for each playwright for his/her semifinal night. In order to reserve these complimentary tickets, please notify VRC at least one week in advance of opening night. After this time, VRC will release all seats for sale to the general public.

10. For finals night, two complimentary tickets will be made available for each playwright whose play reaches the finals. If playwrights whose works reach finals night cannot attend the finals, we ask that you inform us so we may release the tickets for sale to the general public. Other playwrights may reserve and purchase tickets if they wish to attend the finals.

11. Any additional tickets must be purchased. Ticket pricing for the contest is currently to be determined. Playwrights will be notified by mail of ticket prices at the same time as VRC's general audience. Ticket prices also will be listed on VRC's website when event pricing is made final.

12. The contest will be recorded, and a DVD copy *of your play only* will be available at a nominal cost (to cover the expense of production). You may use the footage of your play for self-promotion purposes, e.g. on your own website, if desired. Additionally, playwrights must agree to allow VRC to record their plays for archival purposes (not for resale or profit).

A Final Note

Audiences will choose the two prize winning plays from only 12 semifinalists, so once you're in the contest, your chances are pretty good...the tough part is getting a play into the semifinals. Write a great script that grabs us, makes us laugh or makes us think, or both. Good luck! Keep an eye out for announcements on ValleyRep.com, and you can also become a fan of the Valley Repertory Company on Facebook.com.