



THE BLACK THEATRE NETWORK

40 Years of Excellence: Bold, Thriving, Nexus

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YOUNG ARTIST EXPERIENCE STUDENT COMPETITION INTEREST FORM

The Black Theatre Network (BTN) presents **40 years of Excellence: Bold, Thriving, Nexus 40th Annual Conference July 24 - 27, 2026 in Winston-Salem North Carolina**. BTN has been at the forefront of ensuring the survival of Black Theatre since 1986. It is the nation's premiere organization of actors, playwrights, designers, technicians, academics, students and theatre lovers dedicated to the exploration and preservation of the theatrical visions of the African Diaspora.

As part of its conference offerings, BTN hosts the Young Artist Competition Experience, which includes the S. Randolph Edmonds Young Scholars Competition, the Judy Dearing Design Award (in multiple areas of design) and a Monologue Competition. Information on all these competitions can be found at blacktheatrenetwork.org and FULL SUBMISSION DETAILS ON EACH COMPETITION can be found below. All Entries will be evaluated by a panel of professional designers and academics.

ALL QUESTIONS ABOUT ANY COMPETITION SHOULD BE SENT TO BTNSUBMISSIONS@BLACKTHEATRENETWORK.ORG

Young Artist Experience Overall Info

All Questions and Submissions should be sent to btnsubmissions@blacktheatrenetwork.org

COMPETITION	SUBMISSION DEADLINE	NOTIFICATION DATE
S. Randolph Edmonds Scholars Competition	April 15, 2026	May 1, 2026
Judy Dearing Student Design Competition	April 15, 2026	May 1, 2026
The Fifth Annual Monologue Competition	April 15, 2026	May 15, 2026

S. RANDOLPH EDMONDS SCHOLARS COMPETITION

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: April 15, 2026

ALL QUESTIONS AND SUBMISSIONS SHOULD BE SENT TO BTNSUBMISSIONS@BLACKTHEATRENETWORK.ORG

The Black Theatre Network (BTN) is currently seeking papers from students at the Undergraduate and Graduate levels that address aspects and concerns of Black Theatre. Entrants need not be members of the Black Theatre Network to submit.

In recognition of Black Theatre scholar and educator, S. Randolph Edmonds, the BTN instituted the S. Randolph Edmonds Young Scholars Competition in 1988. This competition seeks to encourage research and scholarship in Black Theatre. The competition supports the overall mission of BTN—"to expose the beauty and complexity of the inherited theatre work of our African American ancestors" and "preserve and develop Black Theatre's unique art form."

EDMONDS COMPETITION DETAILS

- Papers must be typed, double-spaced and in MLA Format with a Bibliography page. If applicable, also include endnotes that demonstrate awareness of formal methods of documentation.
- Papers should be 10-12 pages for undergraduate students and 12-20 pages for graduate students. This does not include endnotes or Bibliography pages. If a submission is longer than 12 pages and selected as a winning entry, the author will need to shorten the paper to a focused 12 pages for presentation and/or publication.
- Use an easy to read font such as Times New Roman.
- Papers should have a 250-word abstract
- Make 1-inch margins on the top, bottom, and sides
- MLA Paper Formatting Basics. Leave one space after periods and other punctuation marks. These guidelines come from the MLA Style Center's web page "Formatting a Research Paper."
 - o The first word in every paragraph should be indented one half inch.
 - o Indent set-off or block quotations one-half inch from the left margin.
 - o Double space the entire research paper, even the Bibliography page
- Submission should be accompanied by a cover letter stating the entrant's name, university affiliation (if any), class rank (or equivalent), advisor or mentor's name (if any), current and permanent address, telephone number, e-mail address, and a one paragraph biography.
- Please submit a digital professional headshot. The bio and headshot will be used to feature winners on the BTN website.
- One submission per student. Students must submit their own work; a professor cannot submit on the student's behalf.

The submission deadline is April 15, 2026

Winners will be announced by May 1, 2026 and invited to deliver their paper at the 2026 BTN Conference in Winston-Salem, NC July 24-27, 2026.

Selected winners:

- Receive 1st Prize \$500; 2nd Prize \$250 awarded in both Division I (Undergraduate) and Division II (Graduate);
- Receive one-night stay in the conference hotel for your attendance at the Young Scholars' Award Ceremony.
- Will participate in a Special Reception in their honor at the conference to meet national and international Black Theatre dignitaries.
- Winners will be announced on the BTN website and in Black Masks Magazine.

- Winners may be published in BTN's journal THE BLACK THEATER REVIEW (tBTR).

Papers must be received by midnight (EST) on April 15, 2026.

JUDY DEARING STUDENT DESIGN COMPETITION

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: April 15, 2026

ALL QUESTIONS AND SUBMISSIONS SHOULD BE SENT TO BTNSUBMISSIONS@BLACKTHEATRENETWORK.ORG

The Judy Dearing Student Design Competition is presented in memory of distinguished costume designer Judy Dearing. Judy Dearing (1940–1995) was an African American costume designer, dancer, choreographer and educator. She is most well-known for costumes that covered a wide range of theatre and musical productions, including Charles Fuller's Pulitzer Prize winning drama *A Soldier's Play* and Ntozake Shange's *for colored girls who have considered suicide / when the rainbow is enuf*.

The purpose of this competition is:

- 1) To encourage design students of African descent and present an opportunity to have their work evaluated by professional designers and other theatre professionals.
- 2) To provide opportunities for mentorship and develop relationships with professionals in their field.
- 3) To expose them to producers and Artistic Directors from theatres nationwide.
- 4) The winners will have the opportunity to exhibit their work at the Black Theatre Network (BTN) Conference in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, July 24-27, 2026.

A cash prize of \$500.00 will be presented in each category (Sets, Costumes, Lighting and Sound). Each winner will also be the guest of BTN for two nights at the BTN conference where they will present their work. Additionally, each winner will be granted one-year BTN membership, and mentoring by a professional.

The competition is open to all graduate and undergraduate students of African descent enrolled in American colleges and Universities.

The submission deadline is April 15, 2026

Application requirements:

Scenery:

- 1) Two productions (at least one produced), ground plan, section, elevations, etc., using VectorWorks or AutoCAD. Sketch/rendering or model photo, research, and statement of design approach.
- 2) Production photos
- 3) One page resume

Costume:

- 1) Two productions (at least one produced) full production color renderings with fabric, research, and statement of design approach.
- 2) Production photos
- 3) One page resume

Lighting:

- 1) Two productions (at least one produced) using VectorWorks or AutoCAD, ground plan, section, paperwork, research notes, magic sheet, and statement of design approach.
- 2) Production photos
- 3) One page resume

Sound:

- 1) Two productions (at least one produced) using VectorWorks or AutoCAD, research, sound plots, cue sheets, composed music scores
- 2) Play-able samples (3 per show) which should also include production photos of the corresponding cues
- 3) One page resume

General: All Drawings, renderings and documents should be sent as PDF files, all production photos should be sent as JPGs. Total file should be no larger than 15mb. Additionally, if you have a website, please include the link. All entries should be submitted no later than 12 midnight April 15, 2026.

THE FIFTH ANNUAL MONOLOGUE COMPETITION

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: April 15, 2026

ALL QUESTIONS AND SUBMISSIONS SHOULD BE SENT TO BTNSUBMISSIONS@BLACKTHEATRENETWORK.ORG

The Monologue Competition offers young actors a platform that showcases their talent, enhances their performance skills, and fosters a spirit of collaboration. Additionally, it will nurture new, excellent, and visionary theatre professionals.

SUBMISSION INFORMATION:

- The competition is open to all young actors who identify as Black/African American, or who are from the African Diaspora and who are ages 17-24 during the time of the competition.
 - **Actors will submit TWO 60 second contrasting monologues from contemporary plays by a writer of African descent. Please see a list of suggested plays and playwrights below. *Currently we will not be accepting any monologues from the plays of August Wilson. (Please see the FAQ's below for more info). BTN will also not accept original material or monologues from film or television. ***
 - Actors will email the following:
 - Registration Info
 - 1. Name
 - 2. Age
 - 3. Email
 - 4. Phone Number
 - 5. Actors will record their monologues and submit them via a WeTransfer link and submit the registration info AND the WeTransfer video link to this email: btnsubmission@blacktheatrenetwork.org
- Submission Deadline: April 15, 2026.**
- *Please see below for directions on how to record a good quality audition and a suggested list of plays and playwrights to aid in the search for monologues. ***
- Industry Professionals will choose the Top 5 Finalists who will be notified by May 12th
 - The Top 5 Finalists will participate in two workshops conducted by industry professionals and information sessions scheduled before and possibly during BTN's Conference.

THE LIVE COMPETITION:

- The Top Five Finalists will have access to the Live Conference, two-night accommodations in the host hotel as well funds to help with travel.
- The finalists will perform their monologues live in person for an audience and live on the digital stage via streaming through BTN's Facebook page.
- A panel of industry professionals will serve as the judges and select the winners which will be announced the night of the competition. The top three winners will win cash prizes: First place: \$500. Second place: \$300.00. Third place: \$200.00.

FAQ's:

August Wilson's monologues may not be used in the StudentQuest Monologue Competition.

- Due to copyright infringement laws August Wilson works cannot be used in this competition.

How do I know if my monologue will be approved?

- BTN will approve your status to participate in the competition after you provide verification that your monologues are from published work.

How do I record/submit my work?

- Detailed instructions on how to submit an appropriate self-taped audition are available below.

How many workshops are mandatory?

- If accepted as a finalist, ALL workshops are mandatory.

Directions on How to Record Your Audition

1. Please don't have anything distracting in the background. Please have a solid/bare wall behind you but don't lean on the wall.
2. Please be in some good light so we can see you.
3. Please make sure it's quiet when you record and you have good audio.
4. Please stand for this recording.
5. Please wear solid colors or not too busy patterns. Please don't wear any graphic T-shirts, or hats, drags, or hair bonnets.
6. Please introduce yourself:
 - A. Say your name
 - B. Your age
 - C. The name of your piece (s) (characters) and playwright (s).
 - D. Then you will perform both pieces one after the other without cutting. After you perform the first piece, please take a beat and then start the second monologue. It will be one video.

Example: Hello, my name is Eric J. Little and I ____ years old. I will be performing Walter Lee Younger from *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry and Sly from *Detroit '67* by Dominique Morisseau.

7. After you introduce yourself, take a breath and perform your pieces.
8. Please upload a YouTube Link/WeTransfer link of your audition.

Suggested List of Playwrights and Plays

Katori Hall- The Mountaintop, Hurt Village, Saturday Night/Sunday Morning

Lydia R. Diamond- Stick Fly, The Bluest Eye, Smart People

Pearl Cleage- Blues for An Alabama Sky, Flying West

Tarell Alvin McCraney-The Brother/Sister Plays (Trilogy), Choirboy

Suzan-Lori Parks- TopDog/Underdog

Dominique Morriseau- Detroit'67, Sunset Baby, Pipeline, Skelton Crew

Marcus Gardley- Every Tongue Confess

Lynn Nottage- Intimate Apparel, Ruined, Crumbs From the Table of Joy

Lorraine Hansbury- A Raisin in the Sun

Amiri Baraka- Dutchman

Zora Howard-Stew

Ntozake Shange- for colored girls who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuff; Spell No.7

Colman Domingo- Dot

Kirsten Greenidge-Milk Like Sugar, Baltimore

Jocelyn Bioh- School Girls; Or, The African Mean Girls Play