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For Immediate Release
Wednesday, April 28, 2009



Theatre Engaged

in association with

the interactive improv experience
comedysportz™

announces

DrekFest 3

Stage Left's Third Annual National Contest
for the WORST Ten-Minute Play

It takes guts to write crap!

ABOUT THE CONTEST:

Welcome to DrekFest 3, Stage Left's third annual, national search for America's worst ten-minute play. The first contest of its kind (as far as we know!), DrekFest is on a mission to expose bad writing for what it really is: damn funny. DrekFest is also on a mission to expose the new-play development process for what it sometimes can be: pretty damn ridiculous.

For clarity's sake, we are not out to make fun of writers or those who love them! What we *are* doing is asking good writers to intentionally write awful plays that make us laugh on the inside (especially if that's noted in the stage directions) — and out loud.

We are now accepting submissions for bad, bad ten-minute plays. Of these, four finalists will be performed on Tuesday, July 21st, 2009, at The ComedySportz Theatre in Chicago, Illinois. One of these will be chosen as the Grand Prize-winning *Worst Play* by the audience in attendance.

Cash prizes will be given to all four finalists, as well as other highly coveted honors for the truly terrible. In addition to Worst Play, prizes that may be awarded by our panel of adjudicators include those for *Worst Title*, *Worst Opening Line*, *Worst Stage Direction* and *Worst Character Name*, among others.

As this is a development-process spoof, all plays will be performed as staged readings with minimal or no tech, and all stage directions will be read aloud. When the performances are complete, the writers will join the panelists onstage for a mock critique (safe, and all in good fun!), during which the awards will be given. Previous panels have included theater critic and professor, Jonathan Abarbanel, Steppenwolf Managing Director David Schmitz, ComedySportz Artistic Director Matt Elwell and nationally known playwright Mia McCullough.

Past DrekFest finalists include Chicago-area playwrights Steve Spencer (author of the acclaimed plays *Another Day In The Empire* and *Camp Freedom!*) and two-time champion Rob Kozlowski (whose prizewinning DrekFest plays include *Wilhelm Ferguson, Nationally Renowned Playwright, in the Midst of the Production of his Holocaust Play The Holocaust, Falls in Love with a Wheelchair-Bound Vietnam Veteran with AIDS, Whose Name Remains Unknown, Like So Many Others Like Him*, from DrekFest 1, and *The Frenzied Beating of the Jungle Tom-Toms Once More, Once More*, from DrekFest 2).

Stage Left is proud to partner with The ComedySportz Theatre for DrekFest 3. ComedySportz team members will be joining Stage Left and our guest directors in staging the four finalists.

EVENT INFORMATION:

DATE/TIME: Tuesday, July 21st, 2009 at 7:30 p.m.

LOCATION: The ComedySportz Theatre, 929 West Belmont, Chicago, Illinois

TICKET PRICES: \$15 General Admission, \$10 Stage Left Subscribers, \$10 Students & Industry

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

If it's not already painfully clear, we want the funny! Preference will be given to scripts that make us laugh. Here are the submission guidelines:

DEADLINE: Submissions must be received by Friday, June 12th, 2009 (note, this is not postmark date, it is a "received by" date).

Plays must perform at ten minutes or less (remember that stage directions will be read aloud). Maximum of 5 actors per script (however, write as many characters as you please). There are no limitations on genre or subject matter.

Even though we're spoofing the development process, plays do NOT need to about play development. And...even though Stage Left's mission is about political and social debate, we know that bad writing knows no genre, so don't worry about adhering to the mission for this contest.

We will be using a Blind Submission process. Please include the following materials with your submission:

- **A cover letter** on a separate sheet of paper, included in the envelope with your play (or as a separate attachment, if emailing). Envelopes and emails will not be opened by judges, only by non-judge staff members. List your contact info, including name, phone, email & street address on your cover letter.

- Cover letter should include **your availability to be in Chicago on July 21st, 2009**. Given this year's economy and the state of arts funding, Stage Left cannot provide travel support. You do not need to be able to travel to Chicago in order to send a submission to DrekFest; however, most of the fun is in being there!
- **Your resume.**
- **Your play(s).** Do NOT include your name, by-line or contact info on the play itself. If mailed, plays must be clipped or bound in such a way that the pages can be easily separated for copying – no spiral bindings.
- **Your submission fee of \$10.00 per play** (e.g., \$20.00 if you submit two plays). All submission fees will go towards the cash prizes awarded to the winners – we won't make a dime off your dimes. If mailing, include a check made out to "Stage Left Theatre." If emailing, call us at 773-883-8830 x.3 by Friday, June 12th to charge your fee to a Visa or MasterCard.

A Note About Cash Prizes:

One hundred percent of the submission fees received are paid out as cash prizes. Therefore, the amount of the prizes will depend on the number of submissions we get. In past years, the Grand Prize has ranged from \$300.00 to \$400.00, and may be less or more as submissions warrant.

Please mail your submissions to: <input type="checkbox"/> Stage Left Theatre <input type="checkbox"/> Attn: DrekFest 3408 N. Sheffield Ave. <input type="checkbox"/> Chicago, IL 60657	— OR —	Email your submissions to: <input type="checkbox"/> drekfest@stagelefttheatre.com
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For questions or info, please contact: Laura Blegen, Managing Director, at 773-883-8830

ABOUT STAGE LEFT:

Stage Left Theatre is an off-loop Chicago theatre now in its 27th season, with a mission to develop and produce plays that raise debate and challenge perspectives on political and social issues. Operating out of a 50-seat, storefront theatre in Chicago's vibrant Wrigleyville neighborhood, Stage Left has become a regional center for the development of new plays. The theatre's new-play development arm is Downstage Left, a multi-tiered program giving emerging and established playwrights the tools they need to bring a play from conception to production.

The company consists of an ensemble of directors, playwrights, designers, actors and stage managers who collaborate to mount a yearly subscription season of mainstage shows and our annual new-play festival, LeapFest.

ABOUT THE COMEDYSPORTZ THEATRE:

About ComedySportz:

ComedySportz (comedysportzchicago.com) is an improv-comedy entertainment and business services company. We provide smart, fast comedy in our theatre and on the road; and we use the

fundamentals of improv to provide creative business solutions. Our theatre products and services include live shows in our theatre, improv training for life and work, and hosting events for small to large groups. Our creative business services include: customized corporate workshops and individual skills training; a traveling ensemble for private and hospitality events; talent/spokespeople for consumer events, trade shows and guerilla/street marketing; and other innovative, improv-based business solutions.

UP NEXT AT STAGE LEFT: LEAPFEST 6

Can't wait for DrekFest? Want to see what Stage Left's new-play development program is *really* about? Then join us for LeapFest 6, running May 12-30, 2009!

LeapFest is Stage Left's annual festival of political and social theatre. The goal of the festival is to be the bridge between development and production. To that end, every year five new plays are given three weeks of rehearsal and presented as workshop productions in rotating repertory over a three week festival period. From the first five installments, ten LeapFest plays have gone onto world premiere productions, two have been published and three have received the Jeff Award for Best New Work, Chicago highest theatrical honor.