

**Earth Matters On Stage:
Ecodrama Playwrights Festival &
Symposium
May 21~ 31, 2009 ~ University of Oregon**

CALL FOR SCRIPTS

**First place Award: \$2,000 and workshop production
Second place Award: \$500 and workshop production
Honorable mentions: public staged reading**

The mission of this Festival is to call forth and foster new dramatic works that respond to the ecological crisis, and that explore new possibilities of being in relationship with the more-than-human world. The Festival is ten days of readings, workshop performance/s, and discussions of the scripts that are finalists in the Playwrights' Contest. Some readings and workshops will be followed by facilitated talk-backs with the playwrights. In addition, a symposium of speakers, panels and discussions will advance scholarship in the area of arts and ecology, and help foster development of new works.

Play Contest: At the core of the Festival is a playwright's competition carrying a cash award and workshop production. The **Guidelines attached** describe the kinds of new plays that may be submitted. **Plays will be accepted from February through October 2008.** The winning plays will be chosen by a panel of distinguished theatre artists from the USA and Canada, including:

- Timothy Bond, Artistic Dir. Syracuse Stage; former Assoc. Artistic Dir. Oregon Shakespeare; faculty Syracuse University, NY.
- Olga Sanchez, Artistic Director, Teatro Milagro, Portland
- Diane Glancy, Playwright, Native Voices Award, faculty Macallister College
- Jose Cruz González, Playwright, Cornerstone Theatre; founder Hispanic Playwrights Project; faculty Cal State LA
- David Diamond, Headlines Theater Co, Vancouver BC

Guidelines for Playwrights

What kind of theatre comes to mind when you read the term “ecodrama”? Political plays that advocate for environmentalism, or educational theatre about recycling? While these examples would fit, please let your imagination soar beyond them.

Ecodrama stages the *reciprocal connection between humans and the more-than-human world*. It encompasses not only works that take environmental issues as their topic, hoping to raise consciousness or press for change, but also work that explores the relation of a “sense of place” to identity and community.

Help us create an inclusive ecodrama that illuminates the complex connection between people and place, an ecodrama that makes us all more aware of our ecological identities as a people and communities; ecodrama that brings focus to an ecological concerns of a particular place, or that takes writer and audience to a deeper exploration of issue that may not be easily resolved.

While many plays might be open to an ecological interpretation, others might be called “ecodrama.” Examples are diverse in form and topic: Ibsen’s *An Enemy of the People*, in which the town’s waters have become polluted and a lone whistle blower clashes with powerful vested interests; Schenkkan’s *The Kentucky Cycle*, the epic tale of a land and its people – Indigenous, European, African – over seven generations; August Wilson’s *Two Trains Running* that bears witness to the loss of inner city sustainability; Moraga’s *Heroes and Saints*, about the embodied impact of industrial agriculture; Marie Clements’ *Burning Vision*, which documents the impact of Canadian uranium mining on first nations communities and land; Giljour’s *Alligator Tales*, a one-woman play by a Louisiana Cajun native about her relationship to her neighbors, the weather, the oil rigs off the coast and the alligators on her porch; Norman’s *Secret Garden* that consoles a child’s grief; Albee’s *The Goat, or who is Sylvia*, that confounds human species taboos; or Murray Schaffer’s *Patria Project*, in which the landscape becomes a player.

When we leave the theater are things around us more alive, do we listen better, have a deeper or more complex sense of our own ecological identity?

We need your voice, so does the theatre, so does our world. Imagine! Write! Submit!

EMOS encourages submissions of full-length plays in English that do one or more of the following:

- Put an ecological issue or environmental event/crisis at the center of the dramatic action or theme of the play.
- Explore issues of environmental justice.
- Interpret “community” to include our ecological community, and/or give voice or “character” to the land, or elements of the land.
- Theatrically explore the connection between people and place, human and non-human, and/or between culture and nature.
- Grow out of the playwright’s personal relationship to the land and the ecology of a specific place.

- Theatrically examine the reciprocal relationship between human, animal and plant communities.
- Offer an imagined world where the characters' society is one that is more in harmony with principles of sustainability than we find in today's modern world.
- Critique or satirizes patterns of exploitation, consumption, or other ingrained values that are ecologically unsustainable.
- Are written specifically to be performed in an unorthodox venue such as a natural or environmental setting, and for which that setting is a not merely a backdrop, but an integral part of the intention of the play.

Submissions accepted: Feb. 1, 2008 – Nov. 1, 2008.

Early submission encouraged. / No electronic submission please.

Submit:

- ✓ A Title Page with Play Title, Author Name, Contact Information
- ✓ Two copies of the script with synopsis and cast requirements (Please do not put author name on the script, only on the title page).

Ecodrama Festival
c/o Theresa May
Theatre Arts, VIL 216
University of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97405.

Questions? Theresa May: tmay33@uoregon.edu, or ecodrama@uoregon.edu