

News Release

22 May 2012

For immediate release

Playwriting competition offers the chance to be published and win a range of great prizes

Trinity College London has launched its third annual International Playwriting Competition, which offers playwrights the chance to win a cash prize of up to £1,000 and a trip to London to see their play performed at the Unicorn Theatre. All of the top entries will be published in a collection of plays for young people and distributed internationally. The competition aims to encourage the creation of new, creative writing for young performers and audiences and is open to writers of any age, level or nationality. Previous winners and runners up have come from Australia, Hong Kong, India, Ireland, Singapore, South Africa and the UK.

Entry opens today, and closes on Friday 7th September 2012. The winning plays will be announced at the end of October, and will be performed as part of Trinity's first ever International Festival of Playwriting & Performance in January 2013.

John Gardyne, Head of Drama & Performance at Trinity College London, said, *"There has been a frustrating lack of material for schools and young drama groups to engage with, and Trinity aims to change this through the competition."*

He added, *"There have been lots of great new books for young people but great new plays for young actors have been rather thin on the ground. Children and teenagers have a huge capacity for imagination and creation but when it comes to harnessing these talents on the school or drama club stage there is little new material for teachers to choose from."*

Annie McCourt of Cumbria picked up the top prize in the Plays for Teenage Audiences category last year, with her play 'Moth to The Flame'. The play begins as a straight-forward bitter sweet portrayal of first love between a city girl and country boy and moves artfully into a far darker story of betrayal. It was performed at the Unicorn Theatre in January by two 15 year old actors. McCourt said she was blown away: *"they were absolutely fantastic – I was*

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amazed by what they did with the play.” *Moth to the Flame* is being taken to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe this summer by Trinity. *“Seeing my play performed at the Unicorn Theatre was a delight and a real high point in my career as a writer. I’m really excited about the work being performed at the Edinburgh Fringe – I’m looking forward to seeing it brought to life once again.”*

The winning playwright in the 2010 Plays for Young Performers category was Andre Lemmer from South Africa. His play ‘Isilwanyana Esoyikekayo’ was based on an African folk story about a ‘terrible animal’ which is the Xhosa translation of the title. Lemmer, a retired associate professor in teacher education said this was his first attempt at a play and he wrote it with the aim of helping young people with their English language studies. *“Children love stories and acting in plays and when you are teaching English as a foreign language, it is an ideal way of getting them to understand the language.”* He travelled to London to see his play performed by a young cast at the Garrick Theatre in the West End. *“This unforgettable experience has inspired me to continue writing”* Lemmer said.

Young writers are also being encouraged to enter the competition with their own plays for their peers. Many young people are writing in the classroom or in creative writing groups, and the competition presents a real opportunity for their work to be recognised, performed and applauded. Trinity has added new awards for the Most Promising Young Playwrights (under 16 years) with up to five prizes of £100.

Over 200 entries came from 20 countries in 2011. Gardyne said *“playwrights from across the world took up the challenge of digging into their imaginations in order to create a work of art where none existed before. We are confident that even more writers will engage with the competition this year.”* He added, *“The introduction of our first International Festival of Drama & Performance will allow even more writers to be showcased.”*

The International Playwriting Competition is open now, and entry can be made online or via post. For full information visit www.trinitycollege.co.uk/playwriting or contact the Drama and Performance department at Trinity College London on 0207 820 6100.

Ends.

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Note to editors:

Higher resolution images, logos and entry form can be accessed via [YouSendIt](#).

Press contact details:

For any further information about Trinity College London and the International Playwriting Competition or for further interviews please contact Carolyn Van Dongen at carolyn.vandongen@trinitycollege.co.uk or 020 7820 6109.

Further Information

Categories

Plays for Young Performers – One-act plays suitable for performers aged 11 years and under.

Plays for Teenage Audiences – One-act plays suitable for audiences aged between 12 and 16 years.

Prizes

Winning play in each category:

- Cash prize of £1,000
- Headline performance at the International Festival of Playwriting & Performance at London's Unicorn Theatre in January 2013 (including travel and accommodation for the winning playwrights)
- Plays to be published in a collection of the best plays for from the competition

Up to six Highly Commended plays:

- Cash prize of £500
- Plays to be published in a collection of the best plays for from the competition

Up to six Most Promising Young Playwright Awards (for entrants under 16 years old)

- Special awards of £100 will be made to young playwrights who show outstanding potential

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Background Information

Trinity College London is an international examinations board offering accredited qualifications in English language and the performing and creative arts. Trinity conducts 500,000 assessments each year worldwide, from graded examinations and certificates to diplomas and higher level vocational qualifications.

www.trinitycollege.co.uk/playwriting