



Winner of the National Theatre Company Award from American Theatre Wing, American Blues Theater is a non-profit arts organization that produces high-quality productions with a focus on stories that are relevant, timeless, courageous, and inclusive to the American spirit.

ABOUT THE BLUE INK AWARD FOR PLAYWRITING

The nationally-renowned Blue Ink Award was created in 2010 to support new work. Since inception, we've named 15 Award winners, 172 finalists, and 258 semi-finalists. Nearly \$20,000 in cash prizes and development were distributed to playwrights in 2025.

A few of our previous winners include Benjamin Benne, Inda Craig-Galván, Nathan Alan Davis, Kristoffer Diaz, Yussef El Guindi, Idris Goodwin, Alyssa Haddad-Chin, Jamie Pachino, and Elaine Romero. Winning scripts have gone on to receive premiere productions in Chicago, New York City, Los Angeles, Boston, San Diego, and other cities.

Each year, American Blues Theater accepts worldwide submissions of original, unpublished full-length plays. The winning play will be selected by Executive Artistic Director Gwendolyn Whiteside and the theater's award-winning Ensemble & Artistic Affiliates.

The winning playwright receives a monetary prize of \$3,000. Cash prizes are awarded to finalists and semi-finalists too. There is no fee to submit.

Submissions will be accepted by American Blues Theater from August 1, 2025 to August 31, 2025 at 11:59 PM CT. Playwrights may only submit one (1) manuscript each year for consideration, and plays must be submitted digitally as a PDF or Word Document via the submission form at AmericanBluesTheater.com.

Please see the next page for full competition rules and guidelines.

BLUE INK AWARD SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Please follow these guidelines in preparing your manuscript:

1. There is no fee to submit.
2. This contest is restricted to plays written predominantly in English. Worldwide submissions are accepted.
3. Submissions must be original, unpublished full-length plays. Adaptations are accepted with proof of rights held unless source text is in public domain. Translations, musicals, and children's plays are not accepted.
4. Playwrights may submit only one (1) manuscript per year.
5. Plays that have been professionally produced or published are not eligible. Plays that have had a workshop, reading, or non-professional production will be considered.
6. Plays may not be under option or scheduled for professional production or publication at the time of award announcement.
7. American Blues Theater reserves the Right-of-First-Refusal to produce the world premiere of the winning manuscript for one (1) year beginning on date of the public announcement of the winner.
8. Plays must be submitted digitally as a PDF or Word Document via the submission form at AmericanBluesTheater.com.
9. If you need technological accommodations to submit your play, you may send scripts to American Blues Theater, 5627 N Lincoln Ave, Chicago, IL 60659. Scripts are ineligible if received after Sunday, August 31.
10. Questions should be sent to info@AmericanBluesTheater.com.

Submissions for the 2026 competition must be submitted no earlier than August 1, 2025 and no later than August 31, 2025 at 11:59 PM CT.

**American Blues Theater reserves the right to reject any manuscript for any reason.
American Blues Theater reserves the right to not choose a winner for any given year
and reserves the right to determine the ineligibility of a winner.**



August 1, 2025

Submissions open.

August 31, 2025

Submission deadline.

March 2026

The Blue Ink Winner, Finalists,
and Semi-Finalists are notified.

Summer 2026

The 2026 Blue Ink Festival.