

## **2025 GTC Studio Festival Guidelines**

- *The Studio Festival is Georgia's new pre-qualifier competition for the Southeastern Theatre Conference (SETC). The top show that ranks as "Best in Show" will represent Georgia in the Secondary Festival at SETC (March 4-7, 2026, Chattanooga, TN). If the top show is unable to compete, the second highest scoring show will be notified to take their place.*
- *If a show goes overtime (30 minutes) no matter their score, they will not be passed on to SETC.*
- *Space specs are yet to be posted. GTC 2025 will be hosted by the City of Macon. Keep checking the GTC website to stay up to date.*

### **PRODUCTION MATERIALS:**

*All competing shows at GTC must provide the following information to the festival chair. These items can be emailed to GTC Executive Director, Jono Davis at [jono@georgiatheatreconference.com](mailto:jono@georgiatheatreconference.com) prior to arrival at convention, or they can be turned in during online registration. If you show up to check in without necessary materials, you will be directed to turn them in before your group can take the stage.*

### **Time Limit & Script Approval**

*Each production must adhere to the following rules regarding performance length and script usage:*

#### **1. 30-Minute Time Limit**

*Each performance must run no longer than 30 minutes bare stage to bare stage. Timing will begin with the first moment of action and end with a clear performance space.*

#### **2. Cuttings from Larger Works**

*Performances using cuttings from full-length plays or musicals must provide proof of rights to perform the edited version. This includes:*

- *A letter or email from the licensing company explicitly granting permission for the cut version*
- *The name of the original script and playwright*

#### **3. Original Works**

*Original works are permitted. Productions choosing to present an original work must provide documentation crediting the devising team and their written permission to perform the piece for competition.*

## **Walk-through**

*A 10-minute technical walk-through will be provided prior to the 30-minute performance time. During this walk-through, actors and directors may spike set pieces, clarify technical cues, and discuss or rehearse key performance elements among their production team. All students, set pieces, and props must be clear of the performance space at the end of this 10-minute time period.*

## **Costuming**

*To maintain a spirit of equity, creativity, and focus on performance over production, all Studio Festival performances must adhere to the following costume guidelines:*

### **1. Retail Blacks Only**

*All costumes must be composed entirely of retail-available black clothing, meaning garments purchased from standard clothing retailers (e.g., Target, Walmart, Old Navy, H&M, etc.) rather than specialty costume stores or theatrical suppliers. This includes items like:*

- Black T-shirts or blouses*
- Black jeans, pants, or skirts*
- Black button-ups or sweaters*
- Black shoes (predominantly)*

### **2. No Theatrical Costumes or Period Pieces**

*The use of overtly theatrical or character-specific costumes (e.g., Renaissance dresses, military uniforms, fantasy armor) is not allowed. The goal is to level the playing field and place the spotlight on storytelling, acting, and direction—not on budget or elaborate wardrobe.*

### **3. Accessory Use**

*Minimal, neutral accessories may be used (e.g., a simple belt, a plain scarf, or a hair tie) only if they are also retail items and do not dominate or define a character.*

### **4. Uniformity & Intent**

*Directors and actors should work together to ensure that costume choices support the tone and setting of the piece while staying within these limits. Variations in style (e.g., casual vs. formal black) may be used intentionally to distinguish characters but should remain simple and cohesive.*

## Set Usage

### **Approved Set Pieces Only**

*Each production may only use the following items for their set:*

- Eight acting cubes *\*\* (provide dimensions)*
- One table *\*\* (weight-bearing?)*

*No additional furniture, scenic pieces, or decorative elements may be used.*

### **Purpose and Philosophy**

*This minimalist set approach is designed to:*

- Keep the focus on the actors, script, and direction
- Promote equity among schools with varying resources
- Simplify load-in and transport, especially for traveling schools

### **Consistency Across Festivals**

*These set items will be provided at:*

- The State Conferences
- The Southeastern Theatre Conference (SETC)

## Props

### **1. Props Must Be Integral to the Story**

*Only props that are essential to the action and directly referenced or used within the context of the script are permitted. Each prop should have a clear, purposeful function within the performance and contribute meaningfully to the storytelling.*

### **2. No Props as Set Dressing**

*Props may not be used solely for aesthetic purposes or as background elements. This includes objects placed to suggest a setting rather than support the action. If a prop is on stage, it must be used by an actor in the action of the play.*

### **\*\*\*Prop limitations**

*In keeping with the festival's emphasis on performance and direction over production design, productions are encouraged to limit the number of props used. Directors should make thoughtful choices that enhance clarity and creativity without adding unnecessary elements.*

*\*\*\*All props utilized by a production must fit within one 20 gallon lidded tote. If necessary, the festival will require productions to demonstrate compliance with this limitation immediately prior to their walkthrough or following their performance.*

**\*\*\*Prohibited Items**

*Items that create debris or residue (confetti, glitter, silly string, etc) are strictly prohibited. Open food or liquids that may cause spills or crumbs are also prohibited.*

## **Lighting**

**Lighting Availability**

*Due to the likelihood of the festival being held in a ballroom or similar non-traditional performance space, lighting for all performances will be limited to a simple full “lights up” and “lights down” format. No additional theatrical lighting instrument may be used, including spotlights.*

*\*\*\*The lights provided by the festival will be the same for every performance, and may be a front wash or overhead lighting depending on the host venue. The state of the lights may be freely operated by the production team during their performance.*

**\*\*\*Prohibited Lighting**

*The use of theatrical lighting equipment, including dimmers, spotlights, or zoned lighting is prohibited. Directors and performers should plan their staging and storytelling accordingly, relying on performance rather than lighting effects to convey shifts in mood or scene. No theatrical lighting will be permitted.*

**\*\*\*Conventional Lighting**

*The use of handheld flashlights or lanterns without theatrical effects (color-changing, strobing, remote control, etc.) is permitted as long as they are operated by performers and adhere to the prop limitations.*

## **Music & Sound Cues**

**1. Sound System Availability**

*A simple, portable sound system with the ability to connect a playback device (computer, phone, or tablet) via an AUX jack will be provided. No additional sound equipment or microphones may be used.*

## **2. Use of Music & Sound Effects**

*The use of music and sound effects is permitted. All cues should be clearly motivated by the action or tone of the piece.*

### **\*\*\*Instruments**

*Productions choosing to utilize live instrumentation may provide their own handheld or body-worn instruments. The festival will provide one piano (or keyboard with amplification) for use by all productions. The provided piano may not be moved onto the stage. Up to five handheld or body-worn instruments per production are exempt from the prop limitation; additional instruments will be considered props and must adhere to the prop guidelines.*

## **SETC Selection**

*A school may represent the state of Georgia at SETC as either a 45-Minute Festival competitor or a Studio Festival competitor. Schools choosing to participate in both festivals at the state level must declare, at the time of registration, which festival production they intend to advance to SETC in the event they are selected as the representative for both.*