

PRESS RELEASE

The King's Cross Award for New Writing 2009

The Courtyard is delighted to announce that the 5th King's Cross Award for New Writing will be formally launched on 3rd November 2008, and entries will be accepted between now and the closing date, 1st May 2009.

The Award, which is open to writers of all levels of experience resident in the UK or Republic of Ireland, seeks imaginative, original work which explores the unique possibilities of writing for the stage.

Thanks largely to the commitment of the Courtyard's Artistic director, June Abbott, to promoting new writing, the Award has grown since its inception in 2003 from a modest local contest with only 27 entries to one of Britain's key national new writing competitions. In 2005, the Award received nearly 300 entries and this increased to 400 in 2007.

The Award is now biennial, rather than annual, and the winning playwright will be awarded with a full professional production by leading directors and designers at our new Courtyard Theatre in Hoxton. This superb state-of-the-art 150-seater venue with separate 80-seater studio and bar facilities is a cultural beacon and the main arts facility in this vibrant, metropolitan community.

Our Award panel in previous years has included such prestigious individuals as noted playwrights Debbie Isitt, Robin Soans and Mark Ravenhill, the National Theatre's literary manager Jack Bradley, leading theatre critic Aleks Sierz, and Nick Quinn from top literary agents The Agency.

The Courtyard's 2007 dramaturg, Melanie Branton says, "We want to bring the work of the top-class writers whom we are now attracting to the attention of more directors, writers and literary managers and offer a prize which will help them with their long-term career development."

Several winning and shortlisted writers from previous years have gained a literary agent as a direct result of their involvement in the contest, and several of their plays have since been mounted in London and beyond. Additionally, a book of audition speeches, compiled from outstanding entries to previous years' Awards, is currently being planned.

Entries may be sent, marked "King's Cross Award 2009" and accompanied by a £6 entry fee (made payable to The Courtyard Theatre Ltd) and a large SAE for return of script, to:

THE COURTYARD THEATRE, BOWLING GREEN WALK, 40 PITFIELD STREET,
LONDON, N1 6EU

Full rules and conditions and further details may be found on the Courtyard's website, www.thecourtyard.org.uk

Please note that telephone calls or enquiries regarding The Kings Cross New Writing Award 2009 will not be accepted.

Press Enquiries: Louisa FitzGerald

louisa_fitzgerald@hotmail.com / tim@thecourtyard.org.uk