

Thespian Events Co-ordinator Application -2018

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1) What is your vision for the Thespian club?

Thespian Club is the dramatics club or society of IIT Madras. It is related to theatre where plays are put up to entertain our fellow IITians. As a co-ordinator one should be able to organize all the events properly by choosing the "right venue", putting it up at the right time etc.

My vision for the Thespian Club is simple. The plays put up should be versatile and should attract a mass audience irrespective of it being a club event, litsoc or Saarang. The aim of putting up a play is to satisfy the audience. Many of our thespian events haven't witnessed a mass audience for the past two years. I want thespian club to not be one of the best clubs but the BEST club there is. It's very saddening that after weeks of practise and a lot of effort put up by our own kin, only a few people show up. The plays put up needn't only be english plays. They could aim to restore cultural heritage or simply do it in different languages. It could also do plays related to famous movies or TV shows frequently(say once a week or so).

The Thespian club could also do short movies and put it up in OAT or so. This is plausible as it doesn't require a lot of work. I'm suggesting this because many people won't turn up for plays due to different issues given the circumstances. But they'll always have time to spare for some short movies. Thespian club could tie up with other clubs to do so. Recently there was this video put up by IIT Madras regarding arranged marriage. That attracted a lot of people countrywide.

These could be a few things that could be done.

2) What were the positives and drawbacks of this vertical last year? Suggest solutions for the drawbacks. Discuss both Litsoc and Saarang.

Saarang:

A) Dramatics :

Positives:

- 1.The event saw many versatile plays put up in different genres.
2. The trailer round was not there and instead by starting on Day 0, every team had the opportunity to put up the full-length play.
3. The lights were put up much before the event started giving enough time for the teams to do their tech-rehearsals.
4. We saw increased participation from the previous year – 13 teams.

5. We were able to incorporate a non-competitive mime performance by Stella Maris, which had been a problem the previous year.

Drawbacks and solutions:

1. There was miscommunication and one of the judges was picked up late.

Judges are the most important people in a competition. So this should've been sorted out before confirming who are coming and should've contacted them in advance to avoid any miscommunication. I personally went to pick up one of the judges and he showed up late. We should've called him beforehand and told him about the schedule.

2. One team backed out last minute, one didn't show up.

This was our fault partly. The team backed out at the last moment because they didn't have time to practise or they'd have not been able to contact any of us members. Either we should inform about the events taking place a long time ago or should have a strong contact with the head of their drama club.

3. There was a scheduling problem; one team showed up late, and another misunderstood their time slot. Therefore the entire schedule was delayed by an hour and a half.

This is catastrophic. The schedule of the event should be prepared much before and sent to the respective teams one day before they put up their play. There should be more co-ordination with the teams.

B) Monoacting:

Positives:

1. Monoacting saw good participation, of about 30-40 participants.

2. The performances were of good quality and the venue selected had a good stage for the event.

Drawbacks and Solutions:

1. The venue was very nearly not opened on time.

The venue chosen was really good but it took a lot of time to get it. This could've been sorted out beforehand by the conveners.

2. There was a problem in bringing the judge into campus.

Again there was miscommunication and we didn't know if the judge could make it on his own or he needed a cab. I'd suggest to pick him/ her up as there wouldn't be any process of delaying.

3. Most of our participation was from Christ University.

Other colleges didn't show any enthusiasm for this or they weren't informed beforehand. Should've informed and publicized it more.

4. There was no sound system.

These are some of the basic things that are required to put up any event and shouldn't be lethargic about it. There were four co-ords. One could be incharge of the venue ,one could be incharge of installing tech- systems, one could be incharge of picking up the judges and the other could be incharge of contacting the teams. There should've been proper planning.

C) Vernacular Monoacting:

Positives:

- 1.This was the first time this event was conducted and the event saw good participation, of 30 participants considering the fact that it was done in Hindi/Tamil.
2. The performances were of very good quality.

Drawbacks and Solutions :

- 1.The judge selected did not have a very good grasp of Hindi.

This was completely the club's fault. Considering that the event takes place in the vernacular languages – Hindi and tamil , it's the duty of the conveners to choose an appropriate judge knowing both the languages. A simple call asking about the same would have sufficed.

2. Christ university had the most participation.

This was a new event. So it needs more publicity and encouragement. This lacked. It can be done by informing all the colleges in advance by meeting the club heads directly. PUBLICITY is the main thing that thespian club lacks.

3. See (4) of monoacting.

D) Dial-a-Director:

Positives:

- 1.Showed good participation of 10 people for a new event .
2. The event was aimed at the demographic which hadn't done serious dramatics before and it came out very well. The winner was someone who only had experience with short films, and there were participants who only just learned what a director was.
- 3.The event started mostly on time and ran smoothly after that.

Drawbacks and Solutions:

- 1.The team is given 48 hours of preparation time. This year, we sent out emails to all the team leaders a little erratically. We also gave some on-spot registrations topics by word of mouth only.

Refer to solution 2 of Vernacular monoacting.

See (4) of monoacting.

E) Street Play

Positives:

- 1.High quality of performances.
- 2.Better participation than the previous year – 7 versus 5 teams of the previous year.
- 3.The new venue – in front of the library – worked out very well. There was a very good crowd to watch the event, since it was just off the central road of Saarang.

Drawbacks and Solutions:

- 1.The participation is still not good enough for a Saarang event.

Many participants are opposed to the idea of a theme. This just needs local awareness.

LitSoc :

A) Litsoc Monoacting:

Positives:

- 1) The event saw a good participation of about 20 people-30 people with almost all hostels putting up performances.
- 2) The actors were really good. Some even put up two.

Drawbacks and solutions:

- 1) There was only one judge and the venue was small with no sound systems. Volumes had to be kept low inorder to not disturb the neighbouring classrooms.

Venue and time should've been looked after beforehand and not at the last moment. Judges should be contacted before inorder to avoid any miscommunication.

B) Litsoc Dial-A-Director:

Positives:

- 1) The event showed a good amount of participation inspite of it being a new event.
- 2) The venue chosen was good and acts came out very well .

Drawbacks and solutions:

- 1) One of the judges came an hour late making the other judge wait. Also , the first team delayed their performance.

The judges should've been contacted before. If they've informed us that they're going to be late, the event should've started with one judge and they should be informed about the same.

Competitions can't be postponed.

- 2) Performances were not of good quality.

Teams chosen should comprise of experienced people. This will give the team a good hand to think about a good topic and also have good actors.

3) Explain all the events that you think should be held next year , for Saarang. Suggest atleast one new event .

Dramatics:

This has been there for ages and will always be. Had a few drawbacks in organization this year but can be corrected if looked after properly.

There can be a break every 2 hours and audience could be provided with refreshments if possible.

Monoacting and Vernacular monoacting:

It's better to organize it in the afternoon in an air-conditioned hall. Deciding about the venue should be done beforehand by contacting the FR co-ordinators. Judges should be contacted in advance and there shouldn't be any discrepancy in the schedule.

Street play:

This year's street play went well. The venue chosen was very good as it was amidst the mass gathering where everyone could have a watch. So the audience wasn't a problem at all. All it needed was publicity and that could be looked after this year.

New events:

1. Short film contest

Colleges could make a short film and that could be put up at Saarang. This could be done in our OAT considering it's a widespread area and can hold a lot of people.

Colleges can make more than one play based on a particular genre. For example, if it's the Horror Round, different colleges can put up their own short films based on this genre and have the audience decide which one's the best.

2. Scenes from a hat

This is a beautiful concept. Teams could be registered on-spot and be given random topics . This could be conducted at the last as it doesn't really require much work and requires only participation. This could also be done in vernacular languages.

4) Suggest a few viable sponsorship avenues (both kind and cash) for this vertical.

Sponsorship mainly involves two supports. One is financial aid and the other is provision of products and services. Thespian sponsors can be either theatre-related groups or corporate sponsors. Corporate sponsors are contacted by the spons team of saarang. Saarang's biggest Thespian sponsor is Crea Shakthi- they offer kind deals and cash prizes. This increases their publicity. There are other theatre groups that we can approach. Masquerade , mind-screen

film institute, alchemy kids etc. They could provide products and services needed for organizing the play. It needn't only be financial aid.

Kind deals with theatre groups such as Evam, Stray factory and so are made. This time a few judges were also called from different theatre groups like Theatre Nisha. This helps us very much as it increases our tie-up.

My best friend is currently doing theatre in The Mumbai Film city. He said he'd contact the institute regarding their participation in sponsorship. I also have other friends who work in theatre. My grandfather worked in AVM studio. AVM studio has taken part in Saarang before.

Another important source of sponsorship would be utilizing out Alumni-network and get in touch with those who've showed interest in theatre. For example, Prasanna(director of Stagecoach 2016) is currently working in Creashakthi. There are other people who've shown interest too. Some people are stand-up comedians. They could tie up with our Saarang team and put up their performances too.

One can also collaborate with lit-fests,similar to the attempt made with Hindu Lit-fest like Thespo.

5) Discuss your plans to publicize Thespian events for Saarang.

The main reason to publicize events is to create awareness and increase participation.

For colleges present in Chennai, we can directly approach the colleges and put up posters at their place or conduct a meeting with their Dramatic club. We have a lot of people to do this. This year, us volunteers contacted some of the colleges in Chennai through our friends. It was effective and showed participation of sixteen colleges. At the same time it's also important to attend their college cultural fests like Anna, SRM etc. We also have a Facebook page which can post about these events.

For colleges in cities outside Chennai like Bangalore or Hyderabad, we need to contact the college and talk to the Dramatic club conveners there. This year Christ university showed maximum participation in all the events that took place. It's again important to make sure the participated teams attend the next year's Saarang too. We can ask Christ university to contact the other colleges in Bangalore and inform about our events. We can send emails and posters with the prizes and send it to them. We are also invited to attend Christ university's cultural fest this year. While doing so ,we have a chance to meet the other colleges there.

By looking at the record of previous years, we have an idea of the colleges that participated in the previous years. We can still be in touch with them and strengthen our ties.

6) Talk about the events(both club and LitSoc) that you would like to hold as a co-ordinator. Suggest atleast one new event for each.

Club events:

A) Freshie night

Will put up a play from our side in different genres to attract freshies to the club. As the freshies would lack experience (mostly) , we can conduct workshops and informal sessions to guide them. This could take place at SAC.

B) Quarterticket

There will be two quarterticket plays, one in each mid-semester. Each quarterticket will consist of two plays one solely put up by freshers and the other put up by the rest. Venue could be CLT.

C) Short- Film making (New event)

For this, we would like to tie-up with the media club where people would be starring in a short film directed by us.

Apart from the above events, there'll be two non-competitive long plays put up excluding Stagecoach.

LitSoc events:

A) LitSoc drams

This one has been happening for a long time and will continue to do so.

B) Monoacting

There are two rounds. I'd suggest to remove the second round as it's painful and tiring for the participants. Instead of holding an improv round right away, they could given some time to work on their act.

C) Couch potato

This event did go very well this year considering the fact that it was new. I'd make sure this event is conducted on a proper working day to get enough audience unlike this year.

D) Intimidating Improvs(New event)

A team of five is to participate. They'll be assigned characters from a script or a movie and they'll be given a situation different from what happens in the movie/script. The rule is to be in character and not deviate and continue acting out till the judges ask them to stop.

7. Use this question to mention any points or initiatives that do not fall under the purview of any of the previous questions.

8. What makes you think that you are suitable for this position? Give credentials and references.

I feel that I'd be suitable for this post as I'm very passionate about theatre and have experience acting in a lot of plays put up in both college and outside.

1) I took part in the event called "Scenes from a hat" and my team won the second place. I also won the Best-Actor award for this. References: Yvv Aditya:9176480365 , Ramya Vijayram :9791019233

2) I took part in Freshie night play . References: Ramya: 9791019233

3) I was a part of a play called " Sure Thing" . References: Ramya and Ganesh:9496961797

4) I was also a part of the play " Witness for the prosecution" . References: Urmika Sinha:9677764609

5) I was a volunteer for the Thespian Club during Saarang 2017. I was there for all the events. References: Yvv Aditya

I've also worked as a volunteer for the Entrepreneurship Cell Of IIT-M to promote the event "Hackathon". References: Aman Verma:9789817952