

## Local Spotlight

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APRIL BARTLETT/St. Albert Gazette

StArts Fest organizer and playwright Tracy Aisenstat hopes budding playwrights will have their submissions ready for July 15.

### StArts Fest playwriting competition

If you're looking to fill those lazy, crazy days of summer, just whip out your computer and bang out a mini-play.

This year StArts Fest, the city's official arts celebration for Alberta Arts Days, runs Sept. 30 to Oct. 2. As a major part of the arts festivities, it is hosting a play competition and the entry deadline has been extended to July 15.

Organizers are searching for six unpublished gems with a 10 to 15 minute playing time. They will fill a two-hour theatrical presentation at St. Albert Place on Saturday, Oct. 1 to coincide with Canada Culture Days.

Playwrights need to have a St. Albert connection and must either reside here, work, learn or play in the community or have lived here at one time.

Topics are wide open. Last year subject matter ranged from mommy issues, a guidebook to dating and buddy sketch to a mystery, a redneck revival and a war piece. "It was nicely rounded out – a couple of funny pieces, a couple of serious plays and a mystery. It was a good mix," says organizer/playwright Tracy Aisenstat.

The script needs to be typed and double spaced with no more than three characters. “A three-hander works well in a smaller space with a shorter time frame. It’s easier to get to know the characters.”

Aisenstat adds that with the time and character restrictions, playwrights need to really dig into their creative juices. “It sets the bar higher because you need to work within the rules.”

But there are also advantages to writing a short script or sketch. “You can get an idea, write it down and see the end goal. It’s an attainable goal and if it leads to a bigger project that’s great.”

An electronic copy can be emailed to [plays@startsfest.ca](mailto:plays@startsfest.ca). Hard copies can be dropped off at the Community and Cultural Services reception desk in St. Albert Place.

St. Albert Theatre Arts Guild Entertainers (STAGE) will produce the six plays. Anyone interested in acting, directing, working production or running crew for these shows can contact Kelly at 780-422-8421 or 780-459-9857.

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