

The Divine Madness Players are seeking quality comedy sci-fi scripts for its seventh annual Comedy show at Necronomicon, Tampa Bay's annual Sci-Fi convention – now in its 44th year. Divine Madness will take place in the main stage of the convention with seating for 150+. Scripts must be humorous. There is no pay, but also no submission fee.

This year's theme is "Cryptids."

Cryptids are defined as creatures whose existence is disputed, or unsubstantiated by science.

Famous cryptids include ape-like creatures such as Sasquatch, Big Foot, Yeti, the Skunk Ape, or sea creatures like giant sea serpents, Gillman, or the Loch Ness Monster. Also, creatures considered extinct like Woolly Mammoths, Thylacines, Giant Sloths, and Megaladons. They may be more obscure, or regional such as: Chupacabra (Central America), Jackalopes (Western North America) Mothman (West Virginia), the Jersey Devil (New Jersey.)

Divine Madness Submission Guidelines

1. Plays must be humorous. We want laughs.
2. Must fit the theme: "Cryptids." Anything in the Cthulhu mythos is also accepted.
3. Cast limit of 6. (Roles may be doubled, but please do not burn out our actors with rapid costume changes.)
4. Our stage space is limited, so no elaborate sets or complicated set changes, but we can cobble together a variety of props and costumes if needed (we got cosplayers – they got stuff.) We can also manage multiple sound and lighting cues.
5. Plays/skits may be between 30 seconds and 10 minutes long.
6. Use a 12-point font (preferably Courier, New Courier, or Times New Roman.)
7. Use one-inch margins, and number all pages.
8. Scripts should (but are not required to) follow standard playwriting format. You can find the format at this link: www.dramatistsguild.com/sites/default/files/2020-01/traditionalformat-New.pdf
9. Scripts must be no longer than 11 pages. (Scripts over 11 pages in length, and/or those not adhering to the margin and font guidelines will be disqualified.)
10. Please email all submissions to **divinemadness@stonehill.org**
11. Email should be addressed to Divine Madness Literary Manager.
12. You may send up to 3 scripts. PDF or MS Word (.doc or .docx) accepted.
13. Name of writer may appear only on the cover page of each play. (Scripts are provided to judges with cover page redacted to avoid any possible bias.)
14. Resubmissions of scripts previously submitted is accepted so long as the play fits into this year's theme.
15. Subject line should contain: Divine Madness – [Name of your Play(s)]
16. Deadline is **April 21st 2025 at 11: 59 PM ET**.

Tips:

Your script is more likely to be chosen for production if:

1. You keep the jokes tight, snappy and ongoing. We especially favor scripts that keep the humor popping line after line.
2. You limit your number of characters to 3 or less.
3. Your script is less than 7 minutes in length.
4. It clearly fits the theme for this year's convention.

How scripts are judged

Each year, a minimum of three judges will read through the submissions. Ideally, all judges will read all the scripts. However, if an excessive number of scripts are received, the judging duties may be divided between three or more readers.

Submissions are scored in these categories: Plot, Characters, Dialogue, Creativity, Humor, Theme and Overall. Judges may also provide feedback on the script in the comment section of their scoresheets. (Warning to sensitive writers: sometimes the comments can be negative and/or blunt.)

While it would be ideal to send the scores/comments individually to each writer, it is simply too labor intensive to divide up all this information and send each writer an email given the number of submissions received each year. Since only the title of the submission is listed on the scoresheet provided to the judges, we will publish the scoresheets on our website after the judging has been completed and the scripts are selected for production. If you do not want to see the title of your script in this spreadsheet, or the comments on the script, please state in your email along with your submission that you do not want feedback on your script.

How scripts are selected for production

Not all the top scoring scripts are selected for production. We typically select the top five scoring scripts to stage. (Exceptions occur – in 2024 we had a four-way tie for 5th place.) In cases of a tie, our director will decide which script(s) will be produced. Much depends on how much time is left in the show, and how many actors are required to fill the available roles.

If, for example, the top scoring scripts leave us with about five minutes to fill, and the next top three scripts are all over seven minutes in length, the director will have to skip these for something shorter. Or if our top scripts require large casts, or complicated costume changes, we may need a simple script with a small cast to proceed or follow. Our director's goal is for a tight show with minimal down time between pieces. Thus, we have settled on a formula where the top five scripts get green lit for production, leaving the next five to ten high scoring scripts for the director to select from based on what best suits the show for available time and cast.

Theme can also be a factor. In 2022 the convention theme was Monsters. Five of the top ten scripts featured monsters in dating situations. The director decided there were too many similar pieces (with similar jokes) and skipped over a couple of high score scripts in favor of others that did not have a dating premise. It should be noted that two of the scripts that missed out that year were later selected for

production in subsequent years. A good script is a good script, and we do accept resubmissions, so writers should not grumble if they do not get selected in any given year, especially if their script receives a high score.

A side note: The highest scoring script that year (a competitive one with 100+ submissions) was “Big Date” by John Busser. You can read this script by clicking on the Sample Scripts link.

Convention and post-convention productions

Divine Madness will be producing an hour-long show at the Necronomicon convention. There is a plan to move the show to a local theatre after the convention. The theatre show will be 90 minutes long. Three or four additional pieces will be added to the post-convention show, and those writers will be informed of location, dates and times. (Barring any hurricanes which have interrupted the past 3 years.)