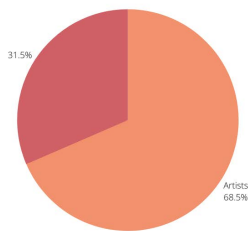


# The Elizabeth Sterling Haynes Awards Committee

## The Future of the Sterlings Survey Results Findings & Report to the Edmonton Theatre Community

### 68.5% of Respondents Identified as Artists



The Elizabeth Sterling Haynes Awards Committee published a survey for Edmonton theatre artists, administrators, and supporters to help determine the future of Sterling Awards related events and assess the needs, wants, and wishes of the theatre community.

### Survey Result Highlights

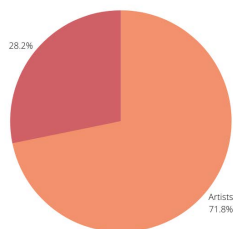
92 Total Responses

68.5% identified as artists

71.8% of respondents were between 21-40 years of age

34 respondents identified themselves as part of an underrepresented community

### 71.8% of Respondents Were Between 21-40 Years of Age



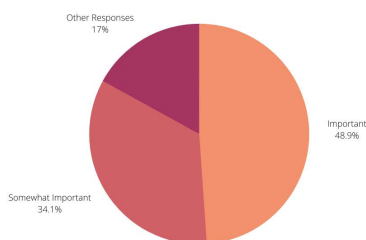
The most common answers people attended the Sterling Awards

- Were nominated or part of a nominated production
- Wanted to celebrate with community

The most common answers for why people did not attend the Sterling Awards

- Too expensive
- Location was inaccessible
- The event feels exclusive and inaccessible

### How Important is a Nomination to you?



48.9% of respondents said that being nominated for a Sterling Award is important to them

34.1% of respondents said that being nominated for a Sterling Award is somewhat important to them

The most common reasons respondents said being nominated for a Sterling Award is important to them

- Recognition and validation from peers
- A Sterling Award looks good on a grant
- Can be helpful for promotion ▶

The most important aspects of the event according to respondents were:

- Socializing
- Awards (Juried and Legacy)
- Cocktails

Most common comments from Jurors on their experience

- A lot of work
- Lack of consistency in training and/or guidance from committee
- Enjoyed seeing the work of so many different artists

Most common comments in the open forum question

- What is excellence and who gets to determine that?
- The event is too long
- The awards and event need more recognition for multilingual performances
- The same companies seem to win every year
- An awards show or recognition event of the work done in the community is of value

#### **A note from the committee on written responses within the survey**

The committee was humbled to have so many respondents share their experiences. Some joyful and others difficult. Folks' willingness to be honest and vulnerable in the sharing of their difficult experiences are much appreciated and taken to heart.

#### **Based on these findings the Sterling Committee has decided on the following action items**

- Move forward with planning a Sterling event for the 2021/2022 season (in-person or online depending on COVID-19 gathering restrictions)
- A new location and format for the show
- Continued consulting to develop a restructuring of awards and jury process for season and legacy (lifetime) awards
- Anti-bias training for jury and committee members is a must
- Direct consulting with not-for-profit, for profit, and independent theatre companies on how to move forward with the Sterling Award event and how to build a stronger collaboration with the theatre community as a whole.

#### **The Future of The Sterling Committee**

Building an event with a progressive mandate that awards the community, individually and otherwise, is an evolving process. Currently, the Sterling Committee is a volunteer run ad-hoc group.

Historically a Sterling trophy itself had a cost of \$250 and the more awards added, the more trophies must be made. The cost alone for the 2018/2019 trophies was \$6000+gst. More information can be found on our Transparency Page on Sterling's website [insert link].

The Sterling Committee currently has \$1500.00 in their bank account. This money goes to pay for website fees, maintenance, and future events. Historically, costs were covered by sponsorship and tickets fees covered the cost of the venue rental.

Transitioning the Sterling Committee into a not-for-profit organization has been discussed, but the current committee feels that this could further hurt the ability for the group to remain flexible and operate beyond current ►

colonial and capitalist models of organization. The Sterling Committee remains open to conversations around this idea and would welcome your feedback.

**Conclusion**

The Sterling Committee continues to invite potential committee members to the table. Our application form is always open.



Theatres are opening once again and audiences, artists, technicians, and administrators are working hard to bring life to their stages while keeping everyone safe and healthy. The Sterling Award Committee would like to commend everyone involved in the Edmonton theatre community for their dedication and hard work.

The future is uncertain, but these difficult times have provided a chance to revitalize and bring new energy to the Sterling Awards event. The Sterling Committee welcomes continued input from all Edmonton theatre community members and we encourage you to share your ideas, expertise, and insight.

Much love and many thanks,  
The Elizabeth Sterling Haynes Award Committee