

BATH FRINGE 2019

Annual Report



Bedlam Audience Feedback:

Awesome – Long Live the Bath Fringe, Thank You

Unexpected treat!

Really nice to see that where the arts are funded this attracts people back into town

Saw web-site what's on and got on the train!



BEDLAM FAIR - Jon Hicks

It is said that we are living in a time of uncertainty and insecurity. But here at Bath Fringe, we're pretty sure that whatever else is going on, there will generally be a new contingent of emerging artists wanting us to witness whatever new thing they're doing, and an eclectic audience willing to shift this week's blues by checking out what they're up to. We're not saying it's not about money – artists need to eat (as do event organisers) – but for those with the arts bug there are other things just as important. So whatever problems other events may have, or cause, there is always a call for a Fringe Festival.

If the economic situation has had any effect on the Fringe, it may be that events may have gravitated to a smaller group of venues all of which have a commitment to host a substantial Fringe programme (eg. The Old Theatre Royal, The Mission) or who run a year-round programme of things more-or-less Fringe-y but make a special programme for our two weeks together (The Rondo, The Bell, Chapel Arts, St. James WV) – but so saying, Fringe and Fringe Arts Bath between them put on events in at least 36 different locations in 2019, so we've not given up on filling the city with art. What having dedicated Fringe fortnight venues can do, of course, is encourage a deeper relationship with audiences that come there, or even sponsors.

**130 Performances
47 Art Events & Shows
in 36 venues
by over 600 artists &
performers
to an audience of
about 20,000
over 17 days (and a
few more)!**

BEDLAM FAIR - Circle of Two



Bath Fringe Report 2019

NEW WORK WORKS ARTIST FEEDBACK

Bedlam was a perfect platform to launch our new show- you allowed us space and flexibility to try new angles and adapt the the inevitable changes that arose in the creative process. The Relaxed and open culture was really helpful and served the show beautifully. Thanks for all the extra help

It was really useful to get the show out there and try out some new stuff. I had a good time with the show, and thanks for looking after us so well.

Challenging, rewarding and fabulous

Everyone who lead the project was brilliant – professional, friendly and they clearly knew their stuff. From start to finish a fantastic experience!



BEDLAM FAIR keeping out of the rain

In a squeeze, collaborations seem like an even better idea than they do already. Bath Fringe has long-running collaborations with FaB Fringe Arts Bath, of course, and venues like the ones mentioned already and Green Park Brasserie. We have also been deepening our relationship with The Museum of Bath at Work, who have presented Fringe shows for a few years now but are thinking of more. Also this year we did a couple of collaborations with The Bath Festival: we booked some outdoor performers for them – that being one of our specialisations – and helped them in marketing a couple of events. Though the Fringe will continue to fiercely guard our independence, we do intend to look at further co-marketing opportunities in the years to come, including for some events that we originate. The project for a 3 week early summer festival in Bath, organised by various different groups, is already a reality, and mutual aid helps everybody.

We put a substantial proportion of the work we do – and of the grant money we apply for – into supporting emerging artists: helping them put themselves into the festival, adjusting plans and aspirations, and in the case of our New Work Works artist development programme a good deal more than that. This year we also started to try and see what we could do for young theatre companies, and will be developing that in years to come.

It's all new but also – we discovered this year – has been around for a while now. In 2019 we linked with veterans of Bath Arts Workshop and ComTek, who were celebrating 50 years since the first of the series of festivals that lead down to where we are today. We tried to invoke some of their inspired anarchy for a walkabout outdoor theatre show in Walcot Street, and the rippling echoes of 50 years of alternative arts & technology in Bath were felt throughout the festival. This coming year now also sees the 50th Birthday of our old friends the Natural Theatre Company, a Bath Treasure if ever there was one, and we will be finding ways to collaborate with and centrally feature them.

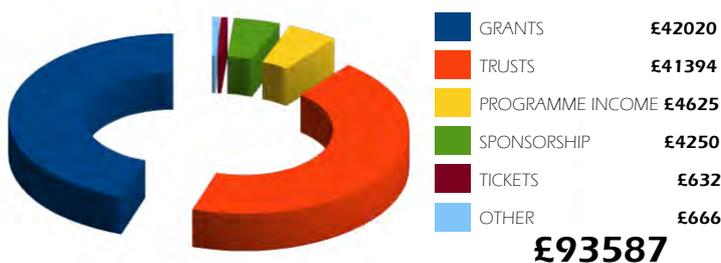


DR YAYA - some of his retinue

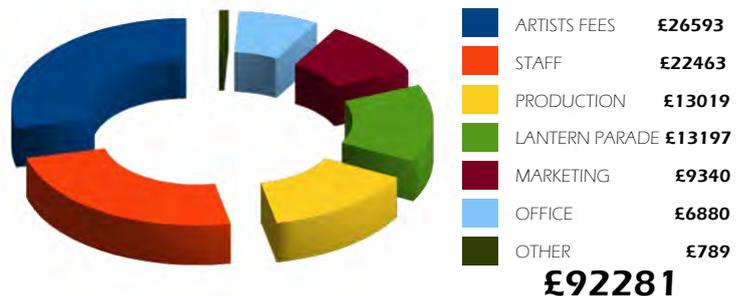
Our audience feedback tells us that this was a high quality year in the theatre Fringe, in the FaB visual arts programme, and for Bedlam & other outdoor performance. Nevertheless, attracting capacity audiences for every show remains only an aspiration.

A decisive step in that direction was however achieved with an ongoing major overhaul of the Fringe's website (with enormous thanks to Geoff Soper & Chris Pink) and further development of the Fringe's marketing & Social Media presence (thanks to Bath's Mr Theatre, Luke Emmett). Geoff and Luke (and Events professional Netty Miles) have been useful (and younger) new voices on our committee too.

OUTGOINGS



INCOME



BATH FRINGE Ltd.

A CoOperative Limited Company
 Company Number: 2716515
 Fringe Office - behind The Bell
 103 Walcot Street, Bath, Somerset BA1 5BW
 Telephone 01225 480079
 Email wendy@bathfringe.co.uk
 www.bathfringe.co.uk



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