

Bath Fringe Report 2023

2023 was the year we definitely came back after the lows of 2020-22.

Audiences were much happier and more relaxed about coming out, and artists had shaken off the lethargy of the lockdown years, or finally come through with the show they'd been planning all that time.

Headline Successes were the Bath Fringe Children's Festival in Alice Park, and Fringe Arts Bath's [FAB] Residency in Newark Works.

**145 Events & Shows
over 17 days
to 16,200 people
including FAB 8000
Children's Festival 2400**



FAB* were being supported by TCN, the developers who have turned the Newark Works site [the historic former Stothert & Pitt Crane Works] into flexible workspace, and they inhabited a large as yet unallocated swathe of the building on 2 floors, enabling them to have most of their exhibitions together in one place. This in turn helps audience numbers, helps put on a decent show [some years are very short on available retail or business space for popup exhibitions], and to create various exciting synergies between visiting artists, performances and workshops which had more impact by being in 'FAB Central' where everything else was going on. Really this year they showed themselves at their best and most ingenious. It is hoped to use some of the space again next year, though obviously TCN will have rented out more of it by then too.

* Fringe Arts Bath is a sister organisation to Bath Fringe, we share a couple of management committee members, and help them with admin. It is an all-artist group providing the Visual Arts [and related Fine Arts disciplines] input to the festival.



Bath Fringe Children's Festival

The Children's Festival made a triumphant return - we've not had one on this scale since Spiegeltent days - under some of the old faces and some new volunteers too. The welcome was boosted by a small but significant amount of local sponsorship, a crowd-funder, and an excellent turn-out of families: overall attendance of **2400** at shows, activities, workshops, and more.

The event is keen to return next year, though may be on a different site again.



"It was accessible for all age groups from babies to teens and of course for the parents to enjoy too! Winning all round... It helps with everybody's well-being and brings different groups together. It's great that a lot of it is free, compared to other family events in Bath which can make it really hard for people to take part."
[Parent comment]



"Bath needs events like these. To celebrate creative arts, encourage people to get out, try new things and have fun together (something that many children have felt the void of for some time since the pandemic)"
[Parent comment]

The 'Umbrella' Programme

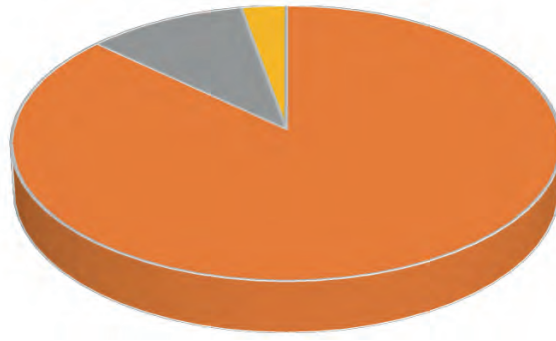
As you probably know, the Fringe doesn't programme events ourselves except when we have separately raised funds to do so - the same is true of the bigger Fringes like Edinburgh or Brighton. We rely then on Bath's own venue promoters, and on artists who want to come to Bath during the Fringe and make a suitable arrangement with a city venue themselves. Particular attention was drawn by the mammoth Choirthon, by dance companies [eg. at The Mission Theatre], folk music [Widcombe SC & The Bell], and noisy electric guitars. We worked a little on a Fringe-badged music programme with erstwhile Bath promoter Reuben Tyghe. The Rondo did their usual sterling thing - they do emerging performers all year round. Burdall's Yard showed itself as an interesting new community-focussed venue. We welcomed performers from Canada, Ireland, France, Spain, Keynsham and Outer-Bathwick.



FINANCE

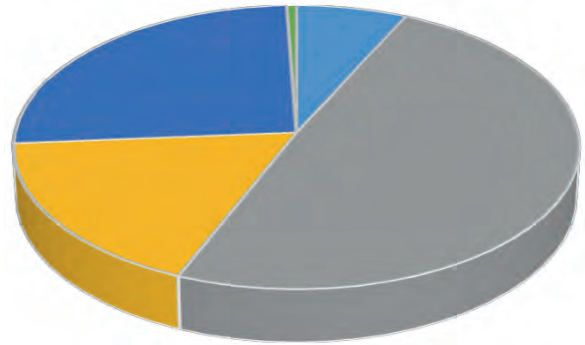
INCOME:

Donations	£29500
Advertising & Listings	£ 3575
Grants	-
Sponsorship	£ 1000
Total	£34,075



EXPENDITURE:

Staff	£16500
Event Production	£ 2344
Marketing & Print	£ 8592
Office	£ 5569
Other costs	£ 202
Total	£33,207



AND ONWARD...

We didn't of course get to do everything we had wanted to do. Arts & Culture funding, as again we're sure you know, is in some sort of crisis, everyone is tightening their belts even though loosening them and having some fun is a good counterbalance to our problems. In particular we didn't get to do our Street Arts weekend Bedlam Fair, which has been supported by Arts Council England in the past but their funding priorities have changed; we are researching alternative funding for this event, which used to be a Fringe Flagship Event, free too, and accounted for a large proportion of our audience as well. We aren't hitting those peaks again yet, but perhaps now is a good time to get involved to help us do that...



Bath Fringe is supported by:

- The Roper Family Trust
- The Joyce Fletcher Trust
- The Bell Inn
- The Grapes
- Green Park Brasserie
- Wessex Water
- ...and you?

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