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## The Orlando International Fringe Festival: An Historical and Administrative Overview

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# **THE ORLANDO INTERNATIONAL FRINGE FESTIVAL: AN HISTORICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE OVERVIEW**

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The School of Theatre

by

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B.F.A. University of Central Florida  
M.F.A. University of Central Florida  
December 2021



Dedicated to Danny and Marcelle Hanemann

I think the strange, the crazed, the queer  
Will have their holiday this year,  
I think for just a little while  
There will be pity for the wild.

I think in places known as gay  
In secret clubs and private bars,  
The damned will serenade the damned  
With frantic drums and wild guitars

I think for some uncertain reason,  
Mercy will be shown this season  
To the lonely and misfit,  
To the brilliant and deformed-

I think they will be housed and warmed  
And fed and comforted a while  
Before, with such a tender smile,  
The earth destroys her crooked child.

– Tennessee Williams  
“Untitled,” *The Collected Poems of Tennessee Williams*

“Here’s to the uninvited...No matter who you are or where you come from, everyone is  
welcome on the Fringe.”

– Fringe Society  
“The Fringe Blueprint”

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation marks the first historical and administrative overview of the Orlando International Fringe Festival. The Orlando International Fringe Festival (OIFF) is America's oldest still-operating fringe theatre festival. This two-week performing arts and immersive cultural event features uncensored, unjuried, accessible, and inclusive performances on indoor and outdoor stages. The Festival subverts traditional commercial theatre models by giving 100% of ticket proceeds back to its artists. Originally held in Downtown Orlando, it now resides at the Loch Haven Cultural Complex of Orlando where it overcame struggles common to arts organizations such as the beer truck scenario, a sustainability issue linking an organization's health to the number of individuals whose loss would bring about project failure.

The OIFF plays an influential role in a network of over 200 fringes worldwide, all of which can trace ties back to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, the globe's first fringe which began in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1947. To understand the ethos of the OIFF, it is helpful to trace its roots back to the festivals that inspired it: the Edinburgh Festival Fringe and the fringes of the Canadian circuit. This study positions the OIFF as a utopian-leaning alternative to traditional commercial models and answers the question *What is Fringe?* by examining the OIFF through experiential, logistical, and ancestral lenses.

Even though the OIFF enjoys a reputation for being a leader in the world-wide fringe network, partners with Fringe World Congress, holds leadership positions with the Canadian Association of Fringe Festivals, and helped to found the United

States Association of Fringe Festivals, it has been unjustly neglected as the subject for academic analysis. In its first year, the OIFF featured 28 shows with an attendance of approximately 2,500. It now spotlights more than 150 producing companies with attendance surpassing 74,000 and boasts a local economic impact exceeding \$3.2 million. Traditional theater models are experiencing a downward spiral, however the OIFF survives and puts over \$400,000 into the hands of its practitioners annually. It is time for scholars and administrators to take note of alternative models and to take the Orlando International Fringe Festival seriously.

## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

I can viscerally recall the first sunny Saturday afternoon I discovered the Orlando International Fringe Festival.<sup>1</sup> It was 1995. I was invited there to see a show by a local group of actor friends who had started as students at SAK Comedy Lab, a comedy improv theatre in downtown Orlando. The group was testing the waters at Fringe to see if they could succeed as their own sketch comedy group, which they named “THEM.”

I was told that Fringe was a ten-day festival that showcased performances of every discipline on makeshift stages across downtown Orlando. I was told anyone could put up a show: first-come, first-served. When I rounded the corner to my friends’ Fringe venue, which had been a dusty vacant storefront just three weeks prior, I was shocked. A line of patrons wrapped around the corner, all clamoring to get one of the last remaining tickets to my friends’ show. Word-of-mouth promotion from audience members from their first week of performances had suddenly positioned this group of fledgling performers to a spot among the highest sought-after shows. “THEM,” a group of unknowns, had thrown their hat into the Fringe ring, and the experiment proved that they indeed had draw.

Without the Orlando International Fringe, the group would not have had the funds, the venue, or the technical support to sustain a full-length run of their original sketch comedy, but the Fringe supplied all of these, along with a devoted audience

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1. When referring specifically to the Orlando International Fringe Festival, I capitalize “Fringe” and “Festival.” I use lower-case to refer to other fringes and festivals.



base. In the coming years, “THEM” would return time and again as darlings of the Orlando International Fringe Festival, would go on award-winning tours of the entire North American fringe circuit, and members of their troupe would one day build successful careers in Hollywood as comedy screenwriters for Los Angeles-based film and television.<sup>2</sup>

Members of “THEM,” along with myself, a number of my college peers, and fledgling artists across our region, all discovered our first viable opportunities to gain experience as paid creative artists by taking advantage of the unique support made possible by the Orlando Fringe Festival. We could create, produce, and perform without caveat and without restriction. The freedom and autonomy that the Fringe offered to artists yearning to create was incredibly inspiring. At the time of my discovery, I could not have foreseen how intimately I would come to know the Festival, how my career would become inextricably interwoven with the Orlando Fringe and its global fringe network, or how I would one day seek to shine a spotlight on the Festival, coaxing it into academic analysis. At the time, I just wanted to immerse myself in this fertile new world I had discovered.

### The Orlando International Fringe Explained

According to the United States Association of Fringe Festivals, (USAFF), the Orlando International Fringe Festival (OIFF) is the oldest performing arts Fringe Fest

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2. THEM cast-member Bob Derosa is credited for writing the Ashton Kutcher, Katherine Heigl blockbuster, “Killers”. Other IMDB credits include “The Air I Breathe” starring Kevin Bacon, Brendan Fraser, Andy Garcia, Sara Michelle Gellar, and Forest Whitaker. THEM cast member, Josh Flaum, is a staff writer for Caffeine TV.

that is still in operation in the United States of America.<sup>3</sup> By 1999, the Festival was ranked first in attendance in US fringes and first in money returned to artists.<sup>4</sup> The organization showcases an annual gathering of artists who perform on indoor and outdoor stages for a span of two weeks each spring.<sup>5</sup> While “fringe” is a word that conveys both a style of theatre and a type of theatre festival, the focus of this study centers on the latter.<sup>6</sup> According to the USAFF, fringe festivals generally have the following attributes:

- Focused on the performing arts: At its core, fringe gives a spotlight to theater, dance, puppetry, music, visual arts, and spoken word. Fringes don't have a focus on one single discipline or genre, but are a performing-arts smorgasbord
- Uncensored: From family friendly to bawdy and burlesque, fringes do not curate or constrain the material or content used in participating shows.
- Ease of participation: Ticket prices are purposely low for audiences and production fees are low for artists. We strive to make the arts available to everyone. Show selection varies from festival to festival, but is generally quite open to participation by the gamut of amateurs to professionals
- Festivals: Fringes around the world vary. They last from just a few days to a few weeks and involve lots of people at multiple venues.
- Original: Fringes feature a wide array of original material—sometimes by design, but usually because that's what Fringes do naturally well.
- Rapid-fire: Typically, tech is minimal, and time is a factor at our festivals. Shows are often kept brief (fringes most frequently have shows right around 60 minutes

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3. “Orlando Fringe,” U.S. Association of Fringe Festivals, accessed August 29, 2021, <https://www.usaff.org/orlando-fringe.html>.

4. The eighth annual Fringe brought in \$60,000 in artist revenue and sold 13,000 tickets.

5. The official Orlando International Fringe Festival website can be found here: <https://orlandofringe.org/> This site is the digital home of the Orlando International Theatre Festival, upon which this study is based, along with the Orlando Winter Mini-Fest and Fringe Year Round.

6. *Wikipedia*, s.v. “Fringe Theater,” accessed August 29, 2021, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fringe\\_theatre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fringe_theatre). Wikipedia defines fringe theatre as “theatre that is produced outside of the main theatre institutions, and that is often small-scale and non-traditional in style or subject matter.” While this type of theatre can be part of programming for fringe festivals, fringe festivals also typically include more conventional offerings such as mainstream theatre, musicals, dance, comedy, and storytelling.

in length) and technical requirements kept simple (minor sets, streamlined cues, nothing elaborate)<sup>7</sup>

Not all US fringes adhere to these tenets uniformly. However, the Orlando International Fringe administration was one of the founders of the United States Association of Fringe Festivals, and a former Orlando Fringe producer served as an early USAFF vice president. This facilitated the OIFF's early adoption of these tenets, and the organization continues to uphold them.

Born in 1992 in defiance of the perceived chokehold that the area's theme parks had on the region's creative artists, the Festival was inspired into existence through direction, toiling, and perseverance of performers based in Central Florida who had visited the original fringe in Edinburgh. (I describe the Edinburgh Fringe's history in the next chapter.) These performers wished to combine the spirit of the Edinburgh festival with managerial structures they observed in Canada's first fringe, the Edmonton Fringe Festival, to create a US fringe in Florida. The annual Orlando International Fringe Festival now serves as a successful production model that provides stages for an uncommonly diverse group of practitioners spanning every performing art genre imaginable. Over the course of thirty years, the Orlando Fringe rose to become a production powerhouse, inspiring creative communities through a commitment to remaining 100% uncensored, 100% unjuried, 100% accessible, and 100% inclusive.<sup>8</sup>

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7. "What is A Fringe?" U.S. Association of Fringe Festivals, accessed August 29, 2021, <https://www.usaff.org/fringe-definition.html>.

8. These terms and their relationship to OIFF operations are clarified in detail in Chapter 2 of this study.

Also, for thirty years, the Orlando International Fringe Festival has, like most United States fringes, been largely overlooked by scholarly research. Why is this the case? One could argue that the OIFF has gotten lost in the shadows of the mother fringe from which it sprung: the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

### Edinburgh Festival Explained

Since the Edinburgh Festival Fringe (EDFringe) exploded onto the scene in celebration of the end of World War II in 1947, it has absorbed the majority of the scholarly energy devoted to fringe studies. This is no wonder, as the EDFringe has long held the crown as the globe's most famous performing arts festival. The festival labels itself the "single greatest celebration of arts and culture on the planet."<sup>9</sup> To understand its scope, a look at the 2019 EDFringe annual review reports a line-up of over 3,500 shows with performers hailing from over 95 countries. That same year, over 600,000 tickets were purchased by Edinburgh residents alone, more than twice that of the city's population. The report calculates that if one were to view back-to-back performances of each of the festival's street shows that year (a fraction of the total festival), it would take a staggering 4.7 months to view them all in their entirety.<sup>10</sup> The festival, which was named the world's largest festival by the *Guinness Book of World Records* in 2009,<sup>11</sup>

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9. "What is the Fringe?" Edinburgh Festival Fringe, accessed August 29, 2021, <https://www.edfringe.com/experience/what-is-the-festival-fringe>.

10. "The Annual Review, 2019," Edinburgh Festival Fringe, accessed August 29, 2021, <https://edfringe.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/docs/society/Annual%20Review%202019.pdf>.

11. "Largest Performing Arts Festival," *Guinness Book of World Records*, 2009, <https://www.guinnessworldrecords.com/world-records/69577-largest-performing-arts-festival>. Guinness reports that the 2009 Edinburgh Fringe boasted 18,901 artists who performed 34,265 performances of 2,265 shows.

has been growing ever since, garnering a total number of news articles in excess of 20,993 in the year 2019 alone.<sup>12</sup> The scholarship honoring the legacy of the EDFringe is likewise seemingly endless and focuses on a myriad of angles including studies on the festival's business models, economic impact, contribution to the written canon of international plays, venue spaces, brand images, public relations, and media relations, to name a scant few.<sup>13</sup> As I relate later in this chapter, the volume of scholarship about non-Edinburgh festivals is much smaller. In terms of OIFF scholarship, almost nothing exists.

The dearth of Orlando Fringe scholarship is surprising given that the OIFF's status as the oldest and largest of the US fringes. But the Orlando Fringe is not just the child of a famous parent, for it has grown into a uniquely successful model of a performing arts organization that has managed for three full decades to act as an incubator for artists of all backgrounds who have a commitment to non-segregated diversity.

### Personal Introduction to the OIFF

As has been consistent throughout my life, my academic interests in this area of study were first fueled by passion for my involvement as a practitioner. Immediately after my introduction to the Fringe as an audience member, I signed up to become a volunteer. Then, in 1997, I was cast in a two-person play by David Henry Hwang

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12. "The Fringe Blueprint," Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2020, accessed September 20, 2021, <https://www.edfringe.com/about/about-us/blueprint>.

13. Specific examples of these are supplied later in this chapter.

entitled *Bondage*. The play dealt with racial and personal identity as navigated by a dominatrix and one of her repeat customers. The sell-out show was my first experience of professional collaboration. Unrestrained by venue or university affiliation, I got my first taste of creating art on my own terms. My participatory introduction to Fringe was a profoundly liberating story, a tale I would one day hear echoed by people whose own Fringe stories were woven, like mine, by the common threads of freedom, artists communing, submersion into diversity, and professional support never before experienced.

I was a student of theatre because I possessed a fervent love for the craft, but the necessary commitments I had to the University made my own exploration of the art impossible. My peers and I had to prioritize rigorous coursework, conservatory-style training, mandatory performance assignments, student teaching, and running-crew and box-office service commitments. This did not leave time or resources enough to create or produce work outside of academia. However, the Fringe offered a platform for my colleagues and me to mount productions of our choosing in an unjuried and structured organization that supplied an accessible audience base and a built-in marketing and production mode. This support poised us for success.

Fringe provided a technician, a schedule, and a venue. All we had to do was create a product that patrons wanted to see and build word-of-mouth to sell out our houses. All the while, we were surrounded by a mass of similarly passionate performers from Orlando, across the nation, and around the globe. While not performing, we were immersed in a staggeringly diverse world of puppeteers, storytellers, buskers, jugglers, singers, stand-up comics, improvisers, burlesque dancers, musicians, gypsy fringe-

circuit caravans, professionals, novices, theatrical train-wrecks, and aspiring practitioners who crossed all socio-ethnic, racial, gender, geographic, and age divides. We did not need to fit into an established theatre's season. We did not need deep pockets or investors. We did not need permission from our advisors. We did not have to apply for a non-profit license or build our own theatre. The cavalier's education earned from that experience was life-altering.

A few months after Fringe, I graduated and decided to move back to Louisiana. As I geared up to leave Orlando, I was struck by a deep sadness that I would be leaving the Fringe behind, so I rang the OIFF Producer Matt Wohl and asked if I could meet with him. I wanted to know what it would take to create a fringe. He didn't just pontificate; he opened file cabinets, handed over documents, showed me internal scheduling procedures, and broke down operations department by department. He also offered his phone number as a lifeline should I attempt the task of birthing a fringe and need a voice of reason or commiseration in times of duress.

A bona fide crystal ball would have shown my fringe future to unfold over a span of decades. I would create Louisiana's first fringe. I would be enticed away from its continuance to return to Orlando as OIFF assistant producer under Matt Wohl. I would take the helm as OIFF's first female producer. Ultimately, I would discover much later in life as a PhD student at Louisiana State University that shockingly little scholarship had been dedicated to the nation's oldest continually running fringe, and I would dedicate myself to reversing that.

## Examination of Sources

Sources used in this study include a wide variety of primary and secondary materials. The broader the focus, the more material is available. The more specialized the focus, the less there is to work with. For example, research connected to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe spans over seventy years and covers every subtopic imaginable. As focus narrows to the Orlando International Fringe Festival itself, resources become non-existent in terms of scholarship. My sources shift to primary materials, first-hand knowledge, and direct participant interviews. This examination starts with Edinburgh sources and moves from generalized to specialized sources. Each section begins with digital resources from official organizations and culminates in academic resources where available.

## Edinburgh Fringe Resources

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe has enjoyed significant scholarly attention for over seventy years and boasts highly detailed and accessible statistics, history, and operational analysis. As the global fringe community exists because of the Edinburgh festival, these inception sources help to position the Orlando Fringe (and many sister festivals) in the larger fringe network. I first address helpful resources to be found within the digital documents of the EDFringe's stewards. I follow with a sampling of influential scholarly sources.

The Fringe Society is as close as it gets to a governing body of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. While the Society resists the title of *governing body*, it identifies itself as a "custodian of the fringe's core values." It has existed since 1958 to act as a support system for festival participants, to assist local and visiting patrons as they navigate the



festival, and to promote fringe on a global scale. Two digital document sources can be found on the official Fringe Society website that provide a wealth of information and statistics of interest to fringe researchers: the “Blueprint” and the *Annual Fringe Review* series.

The guiding principles, mission, and founding ideals of the Edinburgh Fringe Festival are all outlined in a 48-page summary of what the organization labels the Blueprint. Within the Blueprint, one can find Edinburgh's Eight Commitments, many of which can be identified as guiding philosophies for the Orlando International Fringe Festival, as well. As an opener for the commitments, the Blueprint features the following poem which, aside from its Scottish slant, captures the spirit of the Orlando Fringe and world-fringe family.

Fringe stands for **F**reedom:  
The freedom to take part,  
Making a start  
Telling your story.  
Whoever you are.

It's for the **R**isk takers,  
Rule breakers, name makers,  
Artists and audience alike.  
A place to discover and  
To be discovered.

It's an **I**nternational showcase,  
Meeting place, creative space  
Where anything goes and  
The world comes to find it.  
A global stage made in Scotland.

An idea so **N**onsensical  
No one could explain it,  
Copy, own, predict or contain it.  
A complex design with human heart,  
Ever-changing and state of the art.

The Fringe is **G**round-breaking,  
Mischief-making, shaping conversations  
But never taking itself too seriously.  
Its birth was an act of defiance  
And it will never be shushed.

It begins and ends with **E**dinburgh:  
Its closes and taverns, venues in caverns  
And waiting in line for a show.  
That feeling of belonging  
In a crowd of perfect strangers.  
The Fringe that called Edinburgh home.<sup>14</sup>

While the above is decidedly unscholarly, it is representative of the whimsical nature of the world's first fringe management. The influencers of the first fringe festival crafted the Blueprint to articulate allegiance to a series of eight commitments to inform and guide decision-making. Though the commitments are treated with deference, the Fringe Society pointedly introduces them poetically, an act that takes its cue from the introductory poem itself by *never taking itself too seriously*. The Blueprint can and should be investigated as a great source for anyone wishing to learn more about the way in which US fringes address their own identity within the larger fringe network. I deal in depth with these commitments in Chapter 2.

The second resource available through the official Fringe Society website is its archive of Annual Reviews, which dates back to 2011. Each review contains statistics on annual economic impact, attendance figures, finance reports, development benchmarks, and a review of Society activities. The 2012 annual report documents the

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14. "The Fringe Blueprint," 2-3.

creation of the World Fringe Congress,<sup>15</sup> a first-ever initiative to unify the global fringe community. In its inaugural year, the “World Fringe Congress welcomed 76 delegates representing 47 fringe festivals from 16 countries on six continents and included a diverse program of panel discussions and networking events.”<sup>16</sup> Four years later, World Congress, the Canadian Association of Fringe Festivals, and The United States Association of Fringe Festivals would gather for the first time in history in Montreal, Canada. I was the moderator of the first panel discussion held.

#### Edinburgh Festival Fringe Scholarship

The mass of scholarship dedicated to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe is staggering. Even so, modern scholars researching the globe’s premier fringe acknowledge the fact that the Orlando Fringe is among the world’s inexplicably ignored festivals. “Many festivals have formed around the world in inspiration (of Edinburgh),” notes Karen Melody Holland in 2017, “In the United States, Orlando Fringe marks its 26th year...yet, as the Theatre Library Association recently stated: *Rarely have these festivals received dedicated attention from scholars and archivists.*”<sup>17</sup> Four years later, this statement remains true.

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15. “World Fringe Congress,” World Fringe, accessed September 1, 2021, <http://www.worldfringe.com/fringe-congress/>.

16. “2012 Annual Review,” The Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, 2012, [https://www.edfringe.com/uploads/docs/About\\_Us/FringeAnnualReview2012.pdf](https://www.edfringe.com/uploads/docs/About_Us/FringeAnnualReview2012.pdf).

17. Karen Melody Holland, “Overture and Beginners Please! A Call for Performing Arts Metadata at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe,” MA paper, (Carolina Digital Repository, University Libraries, University of North Carolina, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.17615/gkyf-zk83>.

Some of the most recent Edinburgh Festival Fringe studies demonstrate how diverse the scholarly attention is in relation to Edinburgh-specific fringe research. For example, Sophia Neilson's 2021 article "My Body is My Tool...and the Pen is Mine! : An Exploration of Feminist Visual Practices" investigates the Edinburgh Festival Fringe as a locus where the author researches feminist performance while using her own sketches as a mode of feminist anthropology.<sup>18</sup> Neilson identifies the festival as fertile ground for women to performatively and unabashedly reclaim themselves. "Selling loud and proud stories of women's empowerment and sexual liberation," she writes, "exemplified how feminist politics of agency and self-determination were endorsed within the practice of the (Edinburgh) Fringe."<sup>19</sup> Neilson's creative approach to feminist analysis of performance through hand-drawn illustration afforded her the chance to reclaim ownership of the spectator's gaze, a practice she identified as parallel to that of the women on stage who worked to reclaim themselves from the invasiveness of the heterosexual male's gaze.

Another study that places Edinburgh Festival Fringe at the center of feminist studies is Natalie Diddams's 2020 doctoral thesis entitled "Making Waves: Comedy, Humour and Laughter as Fourth Wave Feminisms." In it, Diddams identifies comedy as a mode of subverting hetero-normative philosophies and looks to three event-places, including the Women's Comedy Workshop in Bradford, UK, the online/offline interface

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18. Sophia Neilson, "My Body is My Tool" and the Pen is Mine! : An Exploration of Feminist Visual Practices," *Re:Think - a Journal of Creative Ethnography* 3, no. 1 (2021): 87-95, accessed September 1, 2021, <http://journals.ed.ac.uk/rethink/article/view/4304>.

19. Neilson, 3.

of *The Guilty Feminist*, and the Edinburgh Festival Fringe as hotspots for feminine comedy analysis. Diddams notes that beyond the act of celebrating the growth in numbers of women comedic performers, scholars should look to Edinburgh as a model of comedy's function within the feminist fourth wave. "This is 'comedy' as the name of a space where we can access radical diversity and difference," she argues, "and where we can start to build completely new forms of performance to hold a female experience of the world."<sup>20</sup> Diddams and Nielson both make use of fringe scholarship to interrogate conversations between fringe performance and deeper questions of identity.

Additional brief examples of the diversity of Edinburgh Festival Fringe scholarship include Sam Middlemiss's 2021 article, "The legal rights of workers and volunteers at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe,"<sup>21</sup> which exposes potential breaches in labor laws for Edinburgh Festival Fringe workers, and Kirstie Jamieson's scholarly call for expanded accessibility for the deaf and disabled at Edinburgh Festival Fringe (and elsewhere) in her 2020 publication "Negotiating privileged networks and exclusive mobilities: the case for a Deaf festival in Scotland's festival city."<sup>22</sup> Both studies

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20. Natalie Diddams, "Making Waves: Comedy, Humour and Laughter as Fourth Wave Feminisms," PhD thesis, (Manchester Metropolitan University's Research Repository, Manchester Metropolitan University, 2020), <https://e-space.mmu.ac.uk/626715/>, 122.

21. Sam Middlemiss, "The legal rights of workers and volunteers at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe," *International Journal of Law and Management* 63, no. 1 (2021), 51-64, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJLMA-03-2020-0082>.

22. Kirstie Jamieson and Louise Todd, "Negotiating privileged networks and exclusive mobilities: the case for a Deaf festival in Scotland's festival city," *Annals of Leisure Research*, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1080/11745398.2020.1809478>.

specialize in focused examples of characteristics that also (in a broader sense) drive Orlando Fringe operations such as accessibility and volunteer development.

While the aforementioned studies demonstrate the specificity of modern EDFringe sources, two early contributors to fringe studies are previous Edinburgh Festival Fringe Directors Alistair Moffat and Michael Dale. In 1978, prolific author and historian Alistair Moffat published his book, *The Edinburgh Fringe*,<sup>23</sup> just two years after he was appointed as an EDFringe administrator. He admits that because early EDFringe offices were leaky and prone to flooding, and because staff was very small in the early years, much of the early documents have been lost. His book focuses on the first three decades of the festival's history. In 1988, Moffat's EDFringe replacement, Michael Dale, published *Sore Throats and Overdrafts: An Illustrated story of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe*.<sup>24</sup> This book is not of central importance to this study, as I predominantly reference Moffat's early history of the Edinburgh Fringe, but it is a great resource for scholars interested in development of the Edinburgh Fringe after the 1980s.

One fringe scholar who deserves special note is Dr. Xela Ann Pollock Batchelder, known among fringe circles as "Dr. Fringe." For thirteen years, Dr. Batchelder managed Rocket Venue, an Edinburgh Festival Fringe venue.<sup>25</sup> Her

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23. Alistair Moffat, *The Edinburgh Fringe*, (London: Johnston & Bacon, 1978).

24. Michael Dale, *Sore throats & overdrafts: an illustrated story of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe*, (Edinburgh: Precedent Publications, 1988).

25. A sample Rocket Venue brochure can be found here  
<http://www.lqpr.co.uk/assets/pdf/RocketBrochure.pdf>.

scholarship is informed by her interaction with fringe in a myriad of capacities including performer, producer, playwright, educator, consultant, and founder. Batchelder has been engaged internationally as an expert on fringe studies for decades, leading talks such as her 2012 series WTF (What is Fringe), which addressed the history of the Asheville fringe and outlined the trajectory of the global fringe movement as it emerged from Edinburgh. Batchelder dedicated her 2006 dissertation, "The World's Largest Arts Festival, The Edinburgh Festival Fringe: Mechanics, Myth and Management," to the academic fringe canon.<sup>26</sup>

Batchelder's dissertation centers on myths surrounding the EDFringe and on what she refers to as the often maligned and misunderstood role of venue manager, a high-risk position which she identifies as vital to the functioning and flourishing of the Edinburgh Fringe. She examines the myth of the small audience for Edinburgh performance groups and the myth of instant fame resultant of discovery at EDFringe. One myth of special resonance to both Batchelder's study and mine is the myth that positions the EDFringe as a hub for new and edgy work. Batchelder rightly asserts that this myth is so deeply rooted that it has become globally representative of fringe festival identity.<sup>27</sup> She addresses this myth by probing various meanings of the word *fringe* as she investigates the qualities most attributed to festivals and theatrical styles associated

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26. Xela Batchelder, "The world's largest arts festival, The Edinburgh Festival Fringe: mechanics, myth and management," PhD diss., (Ohio LINK, Ohio State University, 2006), [http://rave.ohiolink.edu/etdc/view?acc\\_num=osu1149104422](http://rave.ohiolink.edu/etdc/view?acc_num=osu1149104422).

27. Batchelder, 111.

with the *fringe* label. In Chapter 2, I examine these meanings in relation to the OIFF's commitments.

Batchelder's research of venue managers delves into a private entrepreneurial role that is present but uncommon within the Orlando Fringe model. As is the case in most North American fringes, a central management staff oversees the procurement and administration of official venues. However, within the structure of the OIFF and others, satellite venues known as Bring Your Own Venues (BYOV), have



Figure 1. J.D. Sutton and Jim Braswell from OIFF 2016, Winner of the Best Drama award and Best Male Performer Award. This photo from "My Master, My Slave" rebuts the myth that fringe shows tend towards the absurd and comedic. Photo courtesy of OIFF Archives.

cropped up on the geographic fringes of the Fringe. Some of these venues are site-specific performance areas that house just one production. Others, such as The



Abbey<sup>28</sup> in downtown Orlando, act as autonomous extensions of the Fringe and house multiple performance groups who either did not make the official lottery or who choose for various reasons (such as the possibility of show-extensions) to opt for a non-official venue. The BYOV venues of Orlando Fringe most closely align with the venues Batchelder examines. It is interesting to consider the fact that prior to the OIFF's move from downtown Orlando, the dilapidation and tenuous conditions of the official venues may have increased the risk of inhabiting them, making the entrepreneurial BYOV models more attractive. Once the Orlando Fringe relocated to structurally and technically sound venues, the motivation for alignment with entrepreneurial models would have shifted since all official venues moved permanently into viable tech-ready spaces.

While Batchelder grounds her study in deep, probing research of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe and offers evidence of the abundance of general and specialized Edinburgh-based fringe scholarship, she too found an absolute absence of material devoted to her specific subject matter. This lack prompted her to lean partially on field surveys, her own fringe archives, and various official fringe websites when direct surveys went unanswered. Her personal archives include the "Batchelder Fringe Festival Collection" which contains a mass of articles, reviews, playbills, and promotional materials, and the "Xela Batchelder Collection of Fringe Festival Materials" which contains all the previous forms of materials plus DVDs and papers. Beyond this, she explains, "Because there is a lack of understanding of how the Fringe operates,

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28. You can take a virtual tour of this venue here: <https://abbeyorlando.com/>.

stories of how venue managers, actors, Fringe Society administrators and others have conducted themselves and accounts of their experiences often supply my best evidence.”<sup>29</sup> The lack of Orlando scholarship likewise makes it necessary to lean on the stories and histories of OIFF directors, volunteers, staff, press, and performers.

Another source for researchers interested in the development and early stages of the Edinburgh International Festival and Edinburgh Fringe Festival is Angela Bartie’s Book *The Edinburgh Festivals: Culture and Society in Post-war Britain*.<sup>30</sup> Bartie’s study is particularly helpful in setting the scene for the birth of the Edinburgh festivals as related to the backdrop of austerity and shortages brought about by World War II. She discusses the added tasks that artists and festival leaders had to contend with, such as battling strict rationing to acquire household goods for visiting patrons and artists.

Bartie’s book also illustrates the mixed reception that the Edinburgh International was first given. Fringe identity often ties itself to the fact that the original eight “fringe” performance groups had to set up as outsiders around the first Edinburgh International Festival.<sup>31</sup> However, Bartie points out that though the International Festival presented itself as elite, it was not wholly welcomed. Bartie cites thrift and restraint as representative of European post-war society, making lavish entertainment something that many war survivors looked down on.<sup>32</sup> Bartie’s scholarship exposes the fact that

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29. Batchelder, 23.

30. Angela Bartie, *The Edinburgh Festivals: Culture and Society in Post-war Britain*, (Edinburgh University Press, 2013).

31. For example, the United States Association of Fringe Festival mentions not being invited to participate in the International Festival by the second sentence of its “Fringe Story” webpage.

the International Festival and the Edinburgh Fringe shared similar struggles as they worked to establish themselves in the late 1940s.

Finally, I look to Ric Knowles's review essay entitled "Festivals: What Good Are They? What Are They Good at? The Case of Edinburgh 2017."<sup>33</sup> In this article, Knowles examines the 2017 manifestations of the Edinburgh International Festival and the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, and he echoes Batchelder in challenging the myth of either being alternative, edgy, or overt in offering or taking new directions. He asks what function festivals hold and gives searching reviews of festival offerings including original productions, shows, and immersive and devised installations. His searching leads him to question whether the festivals exist solely to cater to "depoliticized aesthetics, individual psychology, fluff and feathers, reverential productions, or reactionary politics."<sup>34</sup> Ultimately, Knowles identifies one production which leads him to the conclusion that the fringe can be useful: *DECLARATION: Rematriation*, an ongoing and morphing itinerant project by the indigenous company ARTICLE 11. The company's 2017 EDFringe incarnation culminated in an invitation to their audience to join them at the National Museum of Scotland, where they petitioned to have the remains of two native Beothuc people removed from the museum and returned to Mother Earth. Knowles's use of specific festival productions to support larger inquiries into event

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32. Bartie, 43.

33. Ric Knowles, "Festivals: What Good Are They? What Are They Good at? The Case of Edinburgh 2017," *Theatre Journal* 70, no. 3 (2018): 369-382.

34. Knowles, 382.

significance will be relevant to this study, especially in chapter six which examines the OIFF as locus for utopian constructs.

### Non-Edinburgh Fringe Sources

World Fringe is an organization created in 2012 by Holly Lombardo.<sup>35</sup> The organization lists member fringes, the month of their festivals, and links to their official websites. While other fringe associations track festival dates, World Fringe offers calendars showing all fringes active simultaneously within each month. The organization also hosts the bi-annual Fringe World Congress which, to date, has been held in Montreal, Edinburgh, and Adelaide. World Congress 2022 is scheduled to be hosted by the Orlando International Fringe. The organization offers guidelines for developing fringes, as well as a World Fringe blog.

Clarice Eckford, in a 2019 study of fringe spectator habits, notes that according to World Fringe, 249 fringes have sprung up globally since Edinburgh's pioneer fringe. "Of the 249 Fringe Festivals that are currently operating," she explains, "32 are members of the Canadian Association of Fringe Festivals (CAFF) that present uncensored, non-juried theatrical productions through a lottery application process with 100% of ticket revenues returned to the artists."<sup>36</sup> The OIFF is among those 32, along with nine other US fringes.<sup>37</sup>

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35. The official World Fringe website can be found at <http://www.worldfringe.com/>.

36. Clarice Eckford, "Interactions and exchanges: how 'Frequent Fringers' select shows at the Edmonton International Fringe Theatre Festival," MA thesis, (Royal Roads University, Canada, 2019).

37. The nine other US fringe festivals of CAFF include fringes in San Diego, San Francisco, Boulder, Elgin, Indianapolis, Tampa, Fort Meyers, Portland, and New York's FRIGID Fest.

CAFF's official website is an excellent source for information for researchers interested in member festivals.<sup>38</sup> The site includes a member directory which includes festival dates, location, contact information, member website links, application information, venue sizes, number of shows allowed for performing groups, and maximum show-lengths admitted to the programming roster.<sup>39</sup> It also offers resources for anyone interested in starting a fringe, a forum for artist complaints about member festivals, visa information for prospective performers, grant opportunities, and a touring lottery hub that allows artists to enter one lottery to be accepted into a minimum of five fringes. Because fringe festivals are in constant flux with some dying away and others newly forming, CAFF is a good resource for tracking active member festivals.<sup>40</sup>

The United States Association for Fringe Festivals (USAFF) was developed with the help of OIFF past Producer Beth Marshall, who served as USAFF vice president in its early years. The organization uses the same global calendar as World Fringe with the addition of a second calendar that tracks USAFF fringes only. While all Canadian fringes adhere to mandates to remain unjuried and to return 100% of artist proceeds back to the performers, the US fringes do not all function this way. Some operate under

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38. "About CAFF," Canadian Association of Fringe Festivals, Accessed September 3, 2021, <https://fringefestivals.com/about-caff/>. According to the "About Us" webpage of the official CAFF website, The mission of the Canadian Association of Fringe Festivals is to unite, support, empower and strengthen member festivals to cultivate and foster independent artistic exploration for artists and audiences across North America.

39. This information allows touring artists continually updated contact information and statistics to aid in determining which festivals may be good fits for their productions.

40. Since non-CAFF fringes are similarly always gaining and losing festivals, the official websites for World Fringe and USAFF are also good resources for keeping up with exactly which fringes are in current operation.

curation and/or require performers to split proceeds which made them ineligible to join CAFF. USAFF was initially created as a place for US fringe producers to share ideas and resources. It is also a good general source for explaining what fringe festivals are and offering the public some history on how fringe festivals came to be. USAFF also keeps an updated map of US fringes that allow viewers to see fringe locations and dates at a glance. The image on the next page is the USAFF fringe map as of July of 2021.

### Sources for the Orlando International Fringe

The official Orlando International Fringe website houses detailed information on the Festival's mission and operation.<sup>41</sup> It offers a comprehensive view of annual events, of which the Orlando International Fringe Theatre Festival is now just a compartmentalized part. Year-round programming and projects along with application documents for all open performance events are housed digitally within the site. There are robust web pages dedicated to artist and volunteer management, and there are web pages dedicated to OIFF accessibility initiatives.

The two main news publications for the Central Florida region, *The Orlando Weekly*<sup>42</sup> and *The Orlando Sentinel*,<sup>43</sup> have hundreds of articles that cover pre-Fringe

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41. The Orlando Fringe, The Orlando International Fringe Festival, accessed September 3, 2021, <https://orlandofringe.org/>.

42. *The Orlando Weekly*, Euclid Media Group, LLC, accessed September 3, 2021, <https://www.orlandoweekly.com/>.

43. *The Orlando Sentinel*, Tribune Publishing, accessed September 3, 2021, <https://www.orlandosentinel.com/>.

planning from 1991 to the present. Within the digital archives of both publications can be found Fringe programs, thousands of production reviews, promotional material,



Figure 2. USAFF fringe map.

editorials, and retrospectives, including a 25-part series of features published in the *Orlando Sentinel* for the Fringe's 25th anniversary by author Matt Palm.<sup>44</sup>

Because the Orlando Fringe hinges its mission and operations on an aim for diversity, I look to a diverse collection of sources to give the most complete overview of the Festival possible. Specifically, my documentary analysis includes such materials as all extant OIFF master programs, articles and show reviews from the *Orlando Sentinel* and *Orlando Weekly*, press releases, production stills, artist applications, tech contracts, best of Fest documents, practitioner "How To" manuals produced by Festival staff, and the OIFF Board of Directors governance policy manuals.

I also look to sources highlighting instances where the OIFF is in conversation with educators. Interest in the Orlando Fringe from this standpoint can be traced as far back as 1994, just two years after the Festival's birth. Laurel Williamson and Kevin Mulholland co-wrote "Faculty Development on the Cheap: A Cost-effective Approach to Building Intellectual, Instructional and Interactive Communities,"<sup>45</sup> in which they highlighted the Orlando International Fringe Festival as an affordable resource for educators in the arts and humanities. The document was produced by Orlando-based Valencia Community College to unveil a faculty development program designed to

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44. Matt Palm's whole series of year by year annual retrospective articles can be found here: <https://www.orlandosentinel.com/entertainment/arts-and-theater/os-orlando-fringe-festival-25-years-memories-20160322-storygallery.html>.

45. Laurel Williamson and Kevin Mulholland, 1994, "Faculty Development on the Cheap: A Cost-effective Approach to Building Intellectual, Instructional and Interactive Communities," Paper presented at the *Annual International Conference of the National Institute for Staff on Organizational Development on Teaching Excellence and Conference of Administrators*, Austin, Texas, May 22-25, 1994, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED382263.pdf>.



foster intellectual campus community enrichment. The initiative offered funding for Valencia professors interested in attending Orlando Fringe performances.

Unfortunately, although the Orlando International Fringe has been seen as a beneficial resource for university students, professors, and administration, this interest has yet to manifest in any detailed scholarly inquiry.

### Orlando Fringe Scholarship

To date, there is one published full-length scholarly work that is dedicated to the study of American fringe festivals and includes a developmental look at the Orlando International Fringe: a 2003 dissertation from Amy Lane entitled “The edges of fringe: Development and structure of the American Fringe Festival.”<sup>46</sup> Lane laments, “The fringe has not yet been taken seriously by most scholars, perhaps because of its chaotic, all-inclusive nature. Particularly in the United States, where fringe is a relatively new phenomenon, scholarly articles are almost non-existent.”<sup>47</sup> Eighteen years later, this remains true. Lane focuses her own study of fringe on the nation’s four oldest festivals: Seattle, Orlando, San Francisco, and Minneapolis. She also examines two US fringes which operate counter to the typical management styles, or *spirit*, of fringe: New York and Philadelphia.

Her inquiry scaffolds on scholar Susan Kenny Stevens’s life-cycle theory which delineates a non-profit organization’s growth into seven stages: idea stage, birth/start-

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46. Amy Lane, “The edges of fringe: Development and structure of the American Fringe Festival,” PhD diss., (Wayne State University, 2003).

47. Lane, 24.

up, growth, maturity, decline, turnaround, and terminal.<sup>48</sup> Her problematic conclusion is that while one might assume that an organization would labor to reach maturity (a stage that allows for pursuit of mission-based goals unencumbered by financial struggle and lack of resources), three of the nation's four pioneer fringes "purposely have never striven to reach the mature stage, choosing instead to remain more of a grassroots organization firmly entrenched in start-up mode."<sup>49</sup> Lane identifies Minneapolis as the only US fringe to reach maturity.

While I cannot vouch for the managerial philosophy of the Seattle or San Francisco fringes, my 25-year history with the Orlando International Fringe Festival affords me an intimate understanding of the Orlando Festival's growth. Lane twice infers within her study that the Orlando International Fringe Festival is not only stuck in the growth stage of development, but also twice suggests that this is result of a managerial desire to mirror the chaotic nature of fringe theatre in the administrative approach to festival production. I have the experiences of producing the Orlando Fringe personally, working two Fringes side by side with past Producers Matt Wohl and Chris Gibson, heading a restructuring initiative for the Fringe's board of directors, and conducting multiple interviews with all living current and past producers of the Orlando Fringe in group and individual settings. I can unequivocally state that if the OIFF's growth was

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48. Lane, 18. Lane further subdivides these lifestyle stages into "early" development which encompasses Stevens' first three levels, and "later-stage" development which chronologically follows Stevens's stages of growth through death.

49. Lane, 18.

ever stunted, it was never because OIFF management enjoyed the chaos of Fringe so much that they wished consciously to emulate it as leaders.

Lane's Peter Pan assessment of the OIFF cannot entirely be discounted, though. Regardless of her claim's validity as to *why* the OIFF was immature during her examination of it, she is correct in stating that the Festival had not reached maturity by 2003.<sup>50</sup> Lane's document was published the year the Festival was beginning to experience the final tremors that two years later would result in a permanent move to the Loch Haven Arts Complex. I argue that the itinerant qualities of the initial footprint of the Festival, as opposed to a love of chaos, was the main stumbling block for growth. It was the 2004-2005 move from downtown Orlando that ultimately advanced the OIFF to maturity. The hole that is left in Lane's scholarship exists simply because it has been seventeen years since a rigorous evaluation of the OIFF.

Outside of Lane's study lies a dearth of Orlando Fringe scholarship. A pair of thesis projects from University of Central Florida's theater department discuss productions the authors premiered at the OIFF. Aradhana Tiwar's "The Anatomy of a Production: The Analysis of the Directorial Journey Mounting 'Steel Magnolias for the Stage'"<sup>51</sup> and Jarrett Poore's "How Artists Can Capture Us: Educating About the Works

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50. Lane looks to Stevenson's maturity model to delineate mature entities as ones that are solidly established, operate without complication, and can boast a reputation for providing consistently high-quality output. By 2003, the OIFF was still suffering severe venue acquisition and management challenges which handicapped Fringe administration from expanding growth initiatives.

51. Aradhana Tiwar, "The Anatomy Of A Production: The Analysis Of The Directorial Journey Mounting "Steel Magnolias" For The Stage," MA thesis, (STARS, University of Central Florida, 2009), <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/etd/4145>.

of Stephen Sondheim Through Parody”<sup>52</sup> serve as case studies for thesis-productions developed at the OIFF. These studies illustrate the fact that the Orlando Fringe has historically served as a resource for the region’s college community.<sup>53</sup> However, neither document addresses the Orlando Fringe in detail.

### General Studies Sources

There are many lines of study that lie outside of fringe-related inquiry which offer fertile ground. *Festivalising! Theatrical Events, Politics and Culture* is a collection housing fourteen essays that discuss festivals worldwide using theoretical lenses.<sup>54</sup> Many essays within the compilation offer interesting analyses regarding this study. For example, Henri Schoenmakers’s “Festivals, Theatrical Events and Communicative Interactions” discusses festival impact. Useful here is the investigation of festivals as meta-events which require organizers to contend with varying degrees of perceived responsibility for smaller events within a larger cohesive structure. The Orlando Fringe is an event which houses a myriad of unaffiliated productions under its umbrella. Part of the essay’s conclusion asserts that affiliation, or participant buy-in, hinges on the

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52. Jarrett Poore, “How Artists Can Capture Us: Educating About the Works of Stephen Sondheim Through Parody,” MA thesis, (STARS, University of Central Florida, 2020). <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/etd2020/117/>.

53. For decades the OIFF has provided production opportunities for thesis projects, student-driven new works, and performance opportunities. OIFF also serves as a course-content generator at Rollins College, including a special topics Fringe Exploration course, and a course in computer-based programming design to help generate the OIFF master schedule.

54. Temple Hauptfleisch, Shulamith Lev-Aladgem, Jaqueline Martin, Willmar Sauter and Henri Schoenmakers, eds., *Festivalising! Theatrical Events, Politics and Culture*, Themes in Theater, Volume 3 (Brill, 2007).

density of the festival.<sup>55</sup> This assertion suggests that the more compact and condensed the festival is, the more its participants view it to be a united event. This informs my own analysis of OIFF location configurations, specifically regarding the operational shifts caused by the OIFF's move from downtown to Loch Haven Park, which I address in detail in Chapter 5.

Within the essay "Festivals as Eventifying Systems," author Temple Hauptfleisch dissects ways in which festivals interact with the myth that there is one festival/culture for all.<sup>56</sup> Certainly, the OIFF overtly and consistently aligns its identity and core values with diversity and inclusion. I am interested in how Hauptfleisch's interrogation of community ideals can be compared to utopia-leaning perceptions and ideals within OIFF operations, which is the focus of Chapter 6 of this study.

Along these lines, there is value to be found in Shulamith Lev-Aladgem's essay "The Israeli National Community Theatre Festival: The Real and The Imagined." In this essay, Lev-Aladgem examines community as constructed and imagined by nevertheless experienced as reality. Festivals, he argues, function as places where co-communities can envision themselves as equivalent in power, dominance, and

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55. Henri Schoenmakers, "Festivals, Theatrical Events and Communicative Interactions," in *Festivalising! Theatrical Events, Politics and Culture*, Themes in Theater, Volume 3, eds. Temple Hauptfleisch, Shulamith Lev-Aladgem, Jaqueline Martin, Willmar Sauter and Henri Schoenmakers (Brill, 2007), 27-37.

56. Temple Hauptfleisch, "Festivals as Eventifying Systems," in *Festivalising! Theatrical Events, Politics and Culture*, Themes in Theater, Volume 3, eds. Temple Hauptfleisch, Shulamith Lev-Aladgem, Jaqueline Martin, Willmar Sauter and Henri Schoenmakers (Brill, 2007), 41.

influence.<sup>57</sup> Here again, it is interesting to examine the OIFF's mission, values and commitments to artists and patrons with a similar lens.

Finally, I look to Wendy Clipper's essay "Burning Man," which the author positions as America's largest socially theatrical festival in existence. Clipper focuses on the potential for liberation as the driving force behind the festival, a potential she identifies as being made possible because of the carnival environment that participants are immersed in. Using the theories of Mikhail Bakhtin<sup>58</sup> as her launching point, she views the participatory elements of Burning Man as they intersect with both planned and unplanned performance within the festival. She identifies interactivity as the key to success at Burning Man, a festival environment which, like the Orlando Fringe (on a much smaller and more accessible scale), embraces comedy, satire, frivolity, and sexual playfulness.<sup>59</sup>

### Methodology

All these works comprise the background conversation that contextualizes my study. In terms of methodological models, however, I lean on two publications :

*Penumbra: The Premier Stage for African American Drama* by Macelle Mahala and *The*

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57. Shulamith Lev-Aladgem, "The Israeli National Community Theatre Festival: The Real and The Imagined," in *Festivalising! Theatrical Events, Politics and Culture*, Themes in Theater, Volume 3, eds. Temple Hauptfleisch, Shulamith Lev-Aladgem, Jaqueline Martin, Willmar Sauter and Henri Schoenmakers (Brill, 2007), 187-202.

58. The book *Rabelais and His World* by Russian theorist Mikhail Bakhtin introduces carnivalesque events as participatory, often satire-driven modes of communication and tradition.

59. Wendy Clipper, "Burning Man: Festival Culture in the United States - Festival Culture in a Global Perspective," in *Festivalising! Theatrical Events, Politics and Culture*, Themes in Theater, Volume 3, eds. Temple Hauptfleisch, Shulamith Lev-Aladgem, Jaqueline Martin, Willmar Sauter and Henri Schoenmakers (Brill, 2007), 219-241.

*Humana Festival: The History of New Plays at Actors Theatre of Louisville* by Jeffrey Ullom. Both works were created by individuals who were at one time ensconced in the theatres about which they wrote.

*The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Anthropology* explains the *emic* versus *etic* approaches to analysis as a distinction dependent on the researcher's relationship to the subject matter.<sup>60</sup> *Emic* relates to observation from within the culture while *etic* refers to observation from outside the culture. Mahala and Ullom both fall within the first of these categories. Both scholars worked within the institutions central to their scholarship. The emic approach as demonstrated in this study of the Orlando Fringe is similarly undeniable. I am now and have been a participant of the OIFF community for over 25 years.

With an emic approach comes great benefits and great challenges. The benefits specific to this research include my intimate personal history with the Orlando International Fringe Festival, made even more valuable because no detailed recorded history has existed until now. Benefits also include the great privilege of insider access to documents, records, and artifacts, as well as direct communication with the founders, directors, artists, and personnel most influential in the development of the Orlando Fringe. I carry within me a wealth of first-hand, insider's knowledge about the OIFF as it operated as a grass-roots organization before there was sufficient staff to record operational materials or properly archive the Festival's growth. My affiliation with the

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60. Till Mostowlansky and Andrea Rota, 2020, "Emic and etic," in *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Anthropology*, <http://doi.org/10.29164/20emicetic>.

Festival since the move to Loch Haven means that I have an intimate understanding of how profoundly the OIFF changed in scope and management as a result.

I acknowledge that one great challenge of an emic approach is that proximity to subject matter can undermine objectivity. For example, a particularly positive or particularly negative relationship can skew perceptions. An impartial observer is not influenced by immersion because they can more easily operate without bias. I admit that I am not indifferent. I believe the organization deserves a recorded place in history, and I am shocked it has taken almost 30 years to achieve one.

*Emic* and *etic*, however, are not mutually exclusive. As Till Mostowlansky points out, “Participants and observers can both be subjective and objective in their descriptions and analyses.” This balance is a core goal for how I handle this subject matter. In service of this fact, I use Mahala and Ullom as model participant-observers who successfully employ internal vantage points, while they also retain rigor and integrate viewpoints from outside the bubble of their organizations.

I first look to scholar Macelle Mahala as a guiding source. In her book on Saint Paul’s famous Penumbra Theatre, she describes a relationship with her subject matter similar to my own.<sup>61</sup> Like me, Mahala first encountered her focus of study as an enrapt audience member. However, her journey as a practitioner would lead her into joining the internal management of the organization and eventually her stepping back to take in *Penumbra* through a scholar’s lens. Like Mahala, my hook was a pure enjoyment-based

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61. Macelle Mahala, *Penumbra: The Premier Stage for African American Drama* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), xii.



intrigue. My initial curiosity has deepened over the decades into performance involvement, then management, and eventually into a scholar's investigation involving the organization's mission-based impact.

Mahala's seminal work focuses on our nation's most influential performance company dedicated to serving the needs of the African American community. It is a weighty scholarly study unapologetic about the fact that its author comes from within its inner sanctum. Mahala first encountered Penumbra as an audience member while on a high school field trip to see a production of *A Raisin in the Sun*. She eventually became part of the Penumbra company when she was awarded the August Wilson Fellowship in Dramaturgy and Literary Criticism and began contributing as a dramaturg for Penumbra. She assisted in the management of Penumbra's yearly symposia series where she facilitated post-show question and answer sessions for the theatre.<sup>62</sup> In her work, she labors to illustrate the collaborative root of Penumbra's success by using sources that include a diverse trove of materials of programs, dramaturge notes, interviews from performers, directors, patrons, board members, and administrative staff, along with information culled from grant reports, newspaper articles, essays, press releases, and production stills. I employ the same approach, using official programs, OIFF Board of Directors reports, newspaper articles, grant copy, and interviews from artists, practitioners, technicians, press, and all living past producers of the Festival. Like Mahala, I work to position my organization of focus within the larger theatrical community.

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62. Mahala, xii.

I emulate Mahala's book structure. Her study is loosely based on a chronological history of Penumbra, but her chapters are thematically based around topics which support her assertion that Penumbra is a leader among the communal practitioners contributing to African American theatre. I also provide a chronological overview of the Orlando Fringe while keeping thematic chapters which focus on core OIFF characteristics and operational shifts that are central to a fuller understanding of how and why the Festival operates as it does.

Jeffrey Ullom's publication shares much structurally and philosophically with Mahala's text, as Ullom also crafts his scholarship through the lens of an insider. Ullom, like me, was one of the lucky few who was awarded an apprenticeship with Actors Theatre of Louisville while it was still under the leadership of American Theatre heavyweight John Jory. While Actors Theatre operates year-round, as does the Orlando International Fringe, Ullom reins in his area of focus specifically to look at the organization's annual Humana Festival of New American Plays.<sup>63</sup> I proceed similarly by focusing only on the annual International Festival produced by the Fringe, leaving the Festival's general annual programming, outreach, Winter Mini-Fringe, and special events for future investigation.<sup>64</sup> Additionally, I follow Ullom's introductory chapter model by giving a necessary account of what led to the birth of my organization. In my case, I

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63. Jeffrey Ullom, *The Humana Festival: The History of New Plays at Actors Theatre of Louisville*, (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2008).

64. Though general annual programming is not the focus of this study, you may refer to the "Fringe Environmental Development Annual Schedule" in the appendices for a month-by-month view of all projects as they fall within the OIFF calendar.

follow the family tree back to the Edinburgh International Festival. Finally, I employ Mahala and Ullom's corresponding methods of using representative performances to illustrate larger themes within this study. Likewise, I spotlight specific shows such as The Oops Guys' "The Naked Guy" and "Disenchanted" to serve as case studies for how the Orlando Fringe balances its mission and management.

### Intervention

Within this study, I probe the specific ways in which this annual arts festival has taken root in its unlikely conservative theme-park environs, diverging from traditional production models to act as an incubator for a diverse artist pool that impacts the broader national and international artistic community. I also shed light on the many hidden and not-so-hidden factors precipitating the Orlando Fringe Festival's move from its original downtown footprint into the Loch Haven Arts Complex where it has resided over the past decade, a shift that marked the biggest turning point in the Orlando Fringe's history.

I labor to fill a gaping hole in scholarship by penning the first ever scholarly overview of the Orlando International Fringe Festival. I track the founding, trajectory, and growth of the OIFF with a specific focus on representative productions and turning points in festival management. On one front, this study introduces the OIFF as an influential character in non-traditional, income-generating theatre that has been hidden in the wings, a character whose time in the spotlight is past due. From an academic standpoint, I come, arms laden with an embarrassment of riches in untapped research opportunities for anyone interested in contributing meaningfully to the discussion on American theatre. The Orlando Fringe is a treasure trove for further investigation, open

for rich lines of inquiry in the fields of gender studies, queer theory, arts management, women's studies, and political art. Why is this study important now? As theatre companies across the globe are folding, many voices are speaking out in fear that theatre production is in a death spiral. For example, houses as diverse as Broadway theatres to historical little theatres have had to shutter in response to COVID, some forever.<sup>65</sup>

I want people to know about this model, in other words, because the other models of theatre production are failing. The stakes could not be higher. The most learned, diversely skilled, professional, passionate, and proactive practitioners are struggling to make a livable wage.<sup>66</sup> The Orlando International Fringe offers structures via volunteer base staffing and radically non-traditional arts management which can be studied as a tested model for sustainability.

To be clear, the Orlando Fringe is not perfect; it has never been accused of operating without flaw. Early on, the Festival's itinerant nature caused it to wax and wane as it was handicapped by a lack of reliable venues. While it is now nestled in an idyllic home that straddles the Lowdnes Shakespeare Center and the Orlando Repertory Theatre Complex in Loch Haven Park, it could conceivably retrogress if either host becomes unhospitable. Also, can an organization claim to successfully amplify

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65. All Broadway theatres were forced to go dark in March of 2020, with a nation-wide blackout following suit. Many theatres such as the historic Lake Charles Little theatre, Louisiana's second oldest theatre, are in danger of not having enough resources to reopen after the prolonged stretch of no income.

66. Even entertainers who, for purposes of remaining hireable in the face of unforeseen dry spells, have trained themselves in multiple disciplines and specialized areas within their disciplines, are faced with unemployment because the pandemic has shut down all in-person entertainment.

every voice if it has only ever been asked to amplify sympathetic voices? Though the Festival's ethos is utopia-leaning with a fervent focus on inclusivity, it can be argued that this mission-based diversity ambition is largely untested.

I highlight these and other questions while examining the OIFF. Despite these complications, however, the Festival has succeeded for decades in offering alternative modes of non-traditional production and offering performers of any background opportunities to showcase their work on a first-come basis. Specifically, the festival provides official artists a venue, tech support, and promotion, offering an infrastructure that puts the spotlight on previously under-resourced practitioners. By subverting the expected commercialist policy of crafting seasons on proven quality and/or taking a cut of the performer's income in return for production support, the OIFF (like roughly one-third of the US fringes)<sup>67</sup> returns all performer proceeds back to its artists. It also commits to remaining uncensored (any material admissible by law is allowed on Fringe stages), uncured (Festival administration does not dictate programming, a lottery-system does), and unjuried (proof of quality or success is not required, OIFF administration does not claim authority to judge the worth of a project).

Nearly 30 years after its inception, the OIFF has developed into a consistently successful model for innovative and creative arts management. In 2019 it gave back more than \$400,000 to its artists.<sup>68</sup> It featured 14 days of programming for over 230

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67. Festivals which do not abide by these agreements, such as the Philadelphia fringe, are known indecorously among the fringe circuit as "bastard fringes."

performance groups and showcased theatre, dance, storytelling, puppetry, improv, performance art, environmental theatre, drag, comedy, burlesque, children's programming, LGBTQ programming, and art for the disabled. This Festival, which ended up \$3,000 in debt after its inaugural year, made an economic impact of \$3.5 million in its 29th.<sup>69</sup> More importantly, the Orlando International Fringe has successfully created a safe place for tens of thousands of artists to create new and daring works regardless of their race, ideology, creed, socioeconomic standing, political affiliation, gender identity, age, or cultural background. In a time where the creative world waits to see what effect the current global pandemic will have on its survival, I posit that we can look to the OIFF as a model for non-commercial adaptability, resilience, and grit. Additionally, by investigating the OIFF's long history of helping artists birth fresh and uninhibited art, I illustrate how the festival has long acted as a training ground and educator for a great lineage of previously underserved groups and has done so while reversing the too-often-repeated habit of keeping groups insular and removed from one another.

### Project Scope

Since this dissertation is only an initial entry into OIFF studies, I keep my focus on big picture turning points. I do not (yet) offer an exhaustive, year-by-year history of

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68. Buddy Dyer, "Official Letters," 28th Annual Orlando International Fringe Festival Event Guide, Orlando International Fringe Festival, 2019, [https://issuu.com/orlandofringe/docs/2019\\_fringe\\_program-online5.6](https://issuu.com/orlandofringe/docs/2019_fringe_program-online5.6).

69. These statistics were published in the introduction to the official Orlando International Fringe Festival program of 2019.

the Fringe. I also restrict my focus to the two-week spring Fringe proper, largely leaving aside the organization's year-round programming. The OIFF's year-round offerings have grown considerably. A smaller four-day Orlando Winter Mini-Fest was founded in 2017 to stave off withdrawal pangs from artists and patrons who could not wait a full year between Central Florida Fringe experiences. Also outside of the scope of this study are the year-round Fringe production presentations that likewise kicked off in 2017. While the Mini-Fest manifests basically as a truncated version of the Spring Festival on a similar but smaller footprint, the Fringe Year Round includes a myriad of happenings including First Fringe Fridays, a free event which features independent theatre on the first Friday of every month, an annual Fringe Fundraiser food and performance event, one-off fully staged productions, and uniquely coined endurance fundraisers. All these offerings provide excellent sources for future study.

Also, outside of the scope of this study is the entirety of programming attached to the Festival. The Orlando International Fringe Festival has run continually from the early 1990s until the global halt of live events forced it to take a brief hiatus during what would have been its 2020 season. In a regular year, it averages more than 110 shows per Festival. The dizzying number of shows, practitioners, and production groups associated with the OIFF make it impossible to cover all within the confines of this study. Likewise, all contributors to the Fringe legacy who deserve a voice cannot possibly be given one within the bookends of this dissertation. This organization has been fueled by decades of blood, sweat, and nourishment from countless individuals who collectively willed the OIFF into being. I am pained to face the fact that some must go unrecognized. While I cannot amplify every deserving voice or feature every

laudable show, I spotlight shows and practitioners I believe to be representative of larger OIFF characteristics, growth, and themes, and I include identification of some of the most pivotal administrative decisions, such as the resolution to move the OIFF from its downtown birthplace to an established theatre complex.

### Chapter Progression

Within this beginning chapter, I introduce the OIFF as the offspring of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. I position it within the global fringe network and illustrate points of intersection and divergence between the OIFF and the Edinburgh and Canadian fringe models. I review sources for my research and address methodology and scope.

In Chapter 2, I expand on the question *What is the Fringe?* by analyzing characteristics of the OIFF through experiential, logistical, and ancestral lenses. I trace the Festival's roots back to the EDFringe to illustrate its place within the larger global fringe network, and I identify the founding principles and commitments that guide the Festival's aesthetic, ethos, and management.

Chapter 3 focuses inquiry into the specific ways in which the Orlando International Fringe Festival has designed, implemented, and continued to expand initiatives to support performers. I illustrate how these artist-centric approaches subvert traditional commercial theatre management styles. I subdivide representative examples into three categories: those that hinge on fortuity of geographic and fringe-circuit positioning, those that the OIFF have in common with much of the fringe global network, and those that are specific to the Orlando International Fringe.



Chapter 4 examines how much of the OIFF's success may be attributed to a long history of unconventional interaction with conventional players. Specifically, I explore the OIFF's unconventional introduction to the press which inspired robust media support that has continuously expanded over the OIFF's 30-year history. I trace a chronology of Festival administration through analysis of some of the OIFF's main leadership contributions. To track the expansion and growth of the Fringe, I use the beer truck scenario as a litmus for organizational health.<sup>70</sup>

Chapter 5 pinpoints the move of the Orlando Fringe from its original downtown Orlando footprint to its current home in the theatre complexes of Loch Haven Park as the impetus for complete operational restructuring. I explain how and why the OIFF was structured as a downtown event from the perspective of its founders, and I provide an historical account of how the Fringe was affected by the economy as related to vacancies and expansion downtown. I track the series of events which lead to a partial and then full move to Loch Haven, and I detail how each of the current venues operate and are configured. I then give multiple representative examples of how OIFF operations shifted entirely due to the move, including expansion of staff, changes in volunteer management, reallocation of administration duties, marketing, permitting, and shifts to the audience/performer experience.

Chapter 6 offers a summary of the history, ethos, and administration of the Orlando International Fringe Festival, previously unexplored in research publication

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70. I explain this system in detail in Chapter 4.

until now. Here I reflect on the OIFF's core commitments designed to guide management, support artists, and to create a cohesive aesthetic. I spotlight evidence of growth as well as areas of tension, specifically as related to the utopian-leanings of the Orlando International Fringe. While it is a worthwhile endeavor to undertake a detailed investigation of the problems currently threatening the survival of our struggling global theaters that are as diverse as American regional icons such as the Guthrie theatre, the Broadway stages of the Great White Way, and little and professional theaters worldwide, such an inquiry lies beyond the scope of the study. However, in this chapter I give examples of how the OIFF was founded and subsequently managed upon utopian ideals representative of Jill Dolan's utopian performative. I illustrate how the OIFF eschews reliance on traditional commercial structures, offering administrative interventions and a possible blueprint for sustainability and longevity in an environment plagued by uncertainty- an environment where many theatres and performance venues are facing extinction. I conclude by offering recommendations for further study, an undertaking that is vital and timely given the fragility of our current theatrical climate.

## CHAPTER 2. FRINGE IDENTITY

To the uninitiated, the question often comes up: what exactly *is* the Orlando International Fringe Festival? In the last chapter, I defined what “fringe theatre” literally refers to. Here, I capture a bit more of the character and defining features of the Fringe. Today, the OIFF is a theatre-heavy, two-week performing arts festival that houses multiple performance groups on over ten shared stages to provide audiences with continuous programming for over 117 hours. Multiplied by the ten venues, this equals over 1,117 hours of diverse programming.<sup>1</sup> While performing arts festivals abound worldwide, the Orlando International Fringe Festival is distinct from non-fringe festivals in that it gives all its ticket sales back to the creators of the shows and does not *curate* programming, meaning that it does not hand-select performances.

Though many international fringes are non-curated and follow similar sales models, the OIFF is the oldest continuously operating fringe in the United States of America, earning it the appellation “grandfather of America’s fringes.” It has grown to operate within walking proximity to a central outdoor performance space, which acts as a hub for audience members and performers to gather and commune, giving it a community feel which does not exist in other fringe footprints. The Fringe also stands out because it is housed in Orlando, a region that gravitates towards homogenized, theme park family entertainment designed to entice tourists on a massive scale.

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1. Appendix C shows a grid of daily performances during the 2021 Fringe. To understand the scope of programming, one must consider that because the OIFF was operating under COVID restrictions in 2021, this already lengthy schedule represents just half of what the Fringe would normally present during a regular year.

Orlando is not known as a hospitable home for experimental entertainment, unlike the nation's next most venerable fringe festival, which was founded in Seattle.<sup>2</sup> In this chapter, I ask twinned questions: *What sort of thing is a fringe festival?* And *What sort of thing is the Orlando International Fringe Festival?* My answer to these questions travels through experiential, logistical, historical, and ethical registers. I first try to encapsulate an on-the-ground sense of what going to the Festival is like before moving to an analysis of OIFF's logistical features. I then turn to the nature of "fringe" generally by relating the origin story of the first—and still model—fringe, the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. I continue this story with the OIFF's own birth narrative, and I conclude by describing the Festival's defining aesthetic and ethical commitments.

To describe the OIFF's surface features, however, fails to capture the experience of the Fringe. If you were to visit the 2019 Festival, you would enter a roar and current of creativity. The constant stream of volunteers, artists, and audience members resembles a day in the New Orleans French Quarter during Mardi Gras. Actors stroll by advertising the coming installments of their shows, painted on scantily clad bodies. Under a nearby tree, jugglers, and acrobats from separate performance groups throw swords and fire and even themselves into the air, playing off each other in impromptu games of one-upmanship. Stilt-walkers and boys in tutus sway past bar tents flooded with patrons stopping in for a drink to compare notes with strangers and get the inside

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2. Lane, 35. Amy Lane points out that unlike Orlando, Seattle fringe already had built-in audiences because it had a history of mainstream and experimental theatres. She attributes Seattle's instant success to the fact that the local community was already primed to support non-commercial theatre.

scoop on what shows they must work into their packed viewing schedules. Some patrons clutch color-coded spreadsheets they have created to maximize their viewing, others rely on word of mouth to direct them, and still others simply sit to take in the parade of actors, dancers, musicians, and comics working the crowds with flyers, enticements, and demonstrations of their talents.



Figure 3. OIFF's central green space.

The OIFF's central green space houses bustling beer and cocktail tents, an outdoor stage packed with live entertainment, and throngs of patrons and performers traveling back and forth between three art complexes that flank the lawn. A closer look at the imbibers reveals conservative, well-to-do patrons elbow-to-elbow with hippies, cross-dressers, mimes from Japan, Canadian tuba players, and octogenarians sipping beers in celebration of their recent sell-out singing show as they gaze out at children

playing on the lawn and dancing to a live salsa band. In an hour those kids will be dancing to swing music from the same stage. An hour later, they will be dancing to country music. Programming on the outdoor stages and within the hive-like conglomeration of indoor playing areas is diverse. It also showcases staggering talent, as well as what some would perceive to be artistic train-wrecks.

Just outside the green's fences, the Orlando Museum of Art beckons visual arts and performance patrons. It houses a lounge for performers and a handsomely outfitted space for volunteers, an army that donates more than 1,000 hours per festival to make the OIFF run. In the volunteer lounge, you will find teams of volunteers from corporate sponsors who delight in supplementing their financial contributions with spirited hands-on workers. You will also find families who make it an annual tradition to devote two weeks to the Fringe, and if you visit that volunteer lounge year after year, you will soon see that dozens of those volunteer faces consistently return, some for three full decades.



Figure 4. This image shows a 2021 sensory immersion fairy adventure at Kids Fringe in the Mennello Sculpture Garden. Image from the OIFF archive.



The Orlando Repertory Theatre on the other side of the green houses two theatrical venues, and the Lowndes Shakespeare Center Complex across from the museum utilizes every nook and cranny to house seven separate performance venues as well as a second beverage garden and a Kids Fringe site. As you make your way through the parking lot, you may pass Peevira's Scare-a-van, a Bring your Own Venue (BYOV) comprised of a white cargo van smeared in blood welcoming patrons to climb in the back through a rough-hewn tarp banner emblazoned with a scrawled advertisement for "Free Candy."<sup>3</sup> If you get in the van, rumor is that you will be driven around Orlando



Figure 5. This image is of Peevira's Scare-a-van, a site-specific mobile show, parked outside of the Lowndes Shakespeare Center before taking patrons on a cross-town driving show. Image from the OIFF archive.

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3. According to the OIFF BYOV application webpage, BYOVs are satellite performance spaces that house official Fringe shows which are not presented in official Fringe-managed venues.

by a crazed drag-queen who will force you to sing 1980s karaoke songs before she returns you to the walkway of Orlando Shakes, which is saturated with a-frame sandwich boards advertising shows that span a mind-boggling array of subject matter.

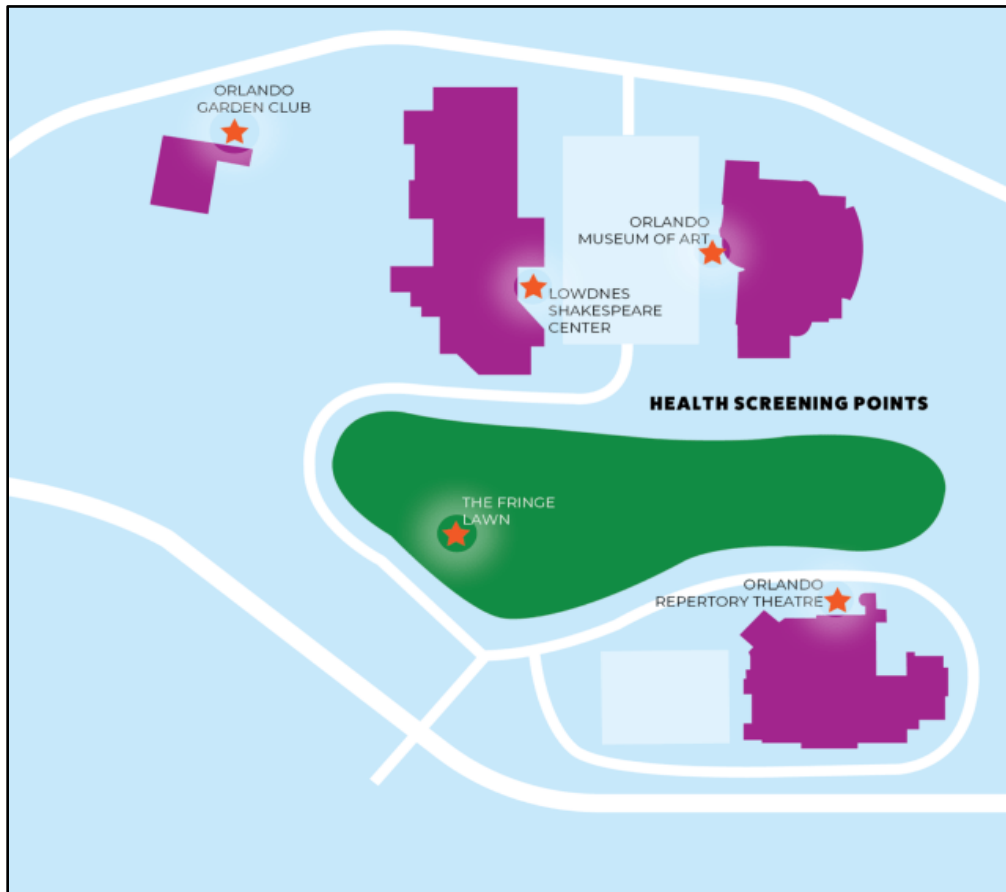


Figure 6. This image shows an overview map of the OIFF configuration for the 2021 Fringe in Loch Haven.

Inside the Shakes, throngs will line up early to secure limited seats to the hottest shows. In one venue, a large-scale gothic burlesque based on highbrow literature takes the stage. Next to it there may be a show about the children of the holocaust. And while a trailer-trash comedic poet is bringing his audience to tears in one venue, an audience in a venue flanking one side of him may be performing classical dance, while the audience in the venue flanking his other side may be comprised of a sell-out crowd cringing to take in a punk-rock necrophiliac as she makes love to her favorite corpse as



he beats out the sexual climax on a drum with one mobile arm jutting from his otherwise lifeless body as she slams into him swinging an overhead lantern. Dance, music, theatre, comedy, burlesque, poetry, family friendly programming, and theatre for only the very open-minded and brave all live together in one festival footprint.<sup>4</sup>

For many, the OIFF is akin to a family reunion. “We call the Fringe our Christmas,” explains past Associate Producer Genevieve Bernard.<sup>5</sup> It is a place where the region’s creatives gather annually as a family to share art, collaborate, promote each other, and commune. Additionally, creative brethren come in from all corners of the nation and distant countries across the globe. It offers the uncommon opportunity for professionals, touring performers, local talent, and absolute neophytes to share stages, ideas, resources, and experiences. While established theatres and lauded performance festivals such as Spoleto, the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, and Edinburgh International favor celebrity inclusion and seek out the cream of the crop to ensure quality and profit, the Fringe creates a level playing ground for any and all interested parties to try their hand at creating work for the stage.

An administratively protected characteristic of the OIFF is the Festival’s dedication to being both an international Festival, as well as one that supports the local community. This balance is achieved by virtue of the fact that half of its performance slots are dedicated to locals while the other half is reserved for groups hailing from

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4. Refer to the Appendices to read the OIFF’s “FRINGE First Time User Experience” document for an experiential take on encountering the Fringe as worded by OIFF staff.

5. Genevieve Bernard, interview by author, digital recording, Orlando, FL, August 2, 2020.

beyond Central Florida. The resultant programming manifests as a mix of national/international acts which tend to be highly practiced and feature diverse subject-matter, alongside shows by locals that regularly feature satiric portrayals of the Disney-ness or commercialism of life in a tourism hot-spot. In a 2016 interview, past Producer Matt Wohl noted that while the Festival's mix brings together artists from around the world, he has noticed that experimentation is generally reserved for the locals, while out-of-town artists don't risk as much, "We're only getting the honed circuit performers who know they are going to make their money back ten times over."<sup>6</sup> Wohl's observation highlights one way in which international and local practitioners operate differently within the same model.

Past Producer Chris Gibson points out that another main component to the Festival is that, unlike performance venues that create a divide between performers and audience, the Fringe blends spectators and performers, giving patrons the opportunity to see a show. "I don't know of any other scenario," he says, "where that is the case."<sup>7</sup> OIFF Technical Director Amy Hadley's explanation of the Fringe is more expansive as she considers the totality of the art that makes it to the Festival's many stages:

If you wanted to understand the gamut of experiences from turmoil to education, to growth- if you want to understand the human condition and what is primarily on our minds and in our hearts, the Fringe Festival will give you a pretty good overview of that. When you look at what is on the stages, you get such a wide array of what is actually ticking in everybody's brain from someone's personal concerns to global politics, to religion. It is like a blanket. It covers everything.<sup>8</sup>

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6. Matt Wohl, interview by author, digital recording, Orlando, FL, May 29, 2016.

7. Chris Gibson, interview by author, ZOOM recording, CITY, July 29, 2020.

8. Amy Hadley, interview by author, ZOOM recording, Orlando, FL, August 9, 2021.



Figure 7. Orlando-based singing group, The Downtowners, in 2019, doing a rendition of a Michael Jackson cover song. The group is composed of amateur singers aged 65 to 99. In 2014, they won the 2014 "Spirit of the Fringe" award.



Figure 8. The Downtowners two years later, in 2021, with signs celebrating the fact that they are still alive.

### What Makes a Festival a *Fringe* Festival?

To move from an experiential to an analytic understanding of the Fringe, it is necessary to consider the organization's underlying framework and operations. According to festival scholar Amy Lane, the fringe festival model is an anything-goes performing arts structure that sets itself apart from more traditional models. "In contrast to the institutional theatres," she notes, "fringe festivals are theatre events which celebrate risk-taking and accessibility in a carnival-like atmosphere."<sup>9</sup>

A portion of the *risk* to which Lane refers comes from the fact that performance groups can take aesthetic and thematic risks because they are not beholden to the selection committees or artistic agendas of a traditional theatre season or artistic director. In this way, practitioners are given license to take artistic risks. Also, while institutional theatre models engage in quality control of their productions, fringe administration "deliberately maintains a distance between themselves and the participating artists."<sup>10</sup> That is, within the fringe model, festival producers, though not completely cut off from production groups, systematically refrain from engaging with the artists regarding selection of content, comment on content improvement, or promotion based on perceived quality of content. This is a strong contrast to most festivals and theatres, which employ artistic directors or programming selection committees to carefully choose entertainment content that offers evidence of high quality. For instance, playwrights hoping to be featured in the Humana Festival of New American plays

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9. Lane, 3.

10. Lane, 14.

cannot even submit full manuscripts for consideration unless they are represented by literary agents. No such barriers exist in fringe festivals that abide by the Edinburgh or CAFF models.<sup>11</sup>

Lane's risk-taking is one of the central characteristics connecting US fringes to the wider global fringe network. It also engages fringe audiences. Because fringe programming allows participation from anyone, with no requirement for proven quality, the risk of show selection transfers from festival management to audience members. Spectators must decide for themselves what shows to patronize. Within the fringe model, patrons cannot rely on the safety net of a carefully vetted season. In other words, Lane infers that while a paying audience member may rightfully expect a venue such as The Orlando Shakespeare Festival to present high-quality work, a paying audience member of a fringe show understands that because anyone can win a spot on the stage, assumption of quality is no longer a given. In this way, patrons are activated to have more agency in personal show selection, making them more invested in the process.

The carnival-like atmosphere that Lane cites is a characteristic she attributes specifically to the Orlando Fringe, and to the Edmonton and Edinburgh fringes that inspired it. Like the Canadian and Scottish models, she points out that "Orlando's festival included parades, street performers, and a central festival ground and beer tent

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11. Two festivals which identify as fringe while ignoring the mandate for remaining unjuried are FringeNYC and Philadelphia Fringe.

where festival goers could mix and mingle in a myriad of free outdoor events.”<sup>12</sup> In all cases, the festivals poured out into the community. Just as Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin’s Carnival is described as a pageant “without a division into performers and spectators,” Orlando’s Fringe Central (which I discuss in detail in Chapters 3 and 5) developed into a site where performers and audience-members blend, carouse, and revel in the sensual and celebratory.<sup>13</sup> During the Fringe, socio-hierarchies dissolve and, just like Bakhtin’s envisioning of the *carnival sense of the world*, “All distance between people is suspended, and a special carnival category goes into effect: free and familiar contact among people.”<sup>14</sup> Fringe reviewer and practitioner Seth Kubersky acknowledged this Fringe-time subversion of social norms in our 2020 interview: “Personally, I am a very introverted and asocial person. The Fringe is the one time of year where I make eye contact.”<sup>15</sup> Fringe also provides time and space where eccentricity and sensuality are celebrated both off and on the stage.

While the unjuried aspect of fringe programming means that subject matter of its productions is solely in the hands of the artists and therefore cannot be dictated by fringe administration, fringe festival material tends to be satirical in tone. Attend some of the nation’s most popular non-fringe theatre festivals, such as the Oregon Shakespeare Festival or the Williamstown Theatre Festival, and you will see elite programming such

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12. Lane, 43.

13. Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics*, ed. Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 122.

14. Bakhtin, 123.

15. Seth Kubersky, interview by author, digital recording, Orlando, FL, August 2, 2020.



as the works of Shakespeare, classics, and Tony Award-winning plays. Go to the OIFF, and you can watch *Bitches of the Kingdom*, and *The Naked Guy*. Each of these shows holds top-grossing records with the Festival, and each are parodies. Although every Festival year offers a wide and diverse range of productions, shows that combine comic ridicule and biting social commentary predominate. Gentler parodies can be found, such as Jeff



Figure 9. Lady Cimorene of Orlando-based Victorian gothic OIFF performance group, Phantasmagoria. The group is known for melding the sensual and the terrifying, a nod to Bakhtin's carnivalistic mesalliances. Photo courtesy of J & K photography.

Jones' *The Animatronics*, a comedy imagining retired Disney robots as out-of-work roommates. Still other satires such as Michael Wanzie's *Lion Queen and the Naked Go-Go Cub* provoked such strong responses that previous Executive Director George

Wallace noted in a 2016 interview that the opening-night performance of the show was full of Disney lawyers.<sup>16</sup>

What, then, is the Fringe? It is the 1,000+ hours of entertainment spread over ten stages and two weeks. It is the unpredictable, grotesque-satirical, and diverse. It is Orlando-centered and international. It is the carnivalesque, the profane, the welcoming. All those things make “Fringe.” This fringe-ness, shared to some extent by all fringes, patterns itself in part after Canada’s Edmonton Fringe and in part after the world’s first fringe in Edinburgh. I turn now to an exploration of the history of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe (EDFringe) to ground the OIFF’s fringe-ness in the legacy of its inspiration. EDFringe formed in opposition to the perceived hierarchical elitism of the Edinburgh International Festival (EIF), which neglected to include a group of eight theatre troupes in a series of multi-genre performances programmed to celebrate the end of WWII. The story starts with the development of the EIF.

### Edinburgh International Festival

How do you reintroduce unity to a war-torn geography? How do you shift from an atrocity mindset to one seeking beauty and celebration? For the Edinburgh International Festival founder Lord Provost Sir John Falconer, Festival Director Rudolph Bing, Assistant Director Ian Hunter, the Edinburgh City Council, and the British Council—the answer was a surge of art. In the spring of 1947, it was decided that the Edinburgh International Festival would be created to coax the community back into the healing

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16. George Wallace, 2016 Administrators Interview by author, digital recording, Orlando, FL, May 29, 2016.



arena of music, performance, and inspiration. According to historian and author Alistair Moffat, organizers “hoped to make an impact on at least two sorts of people; the general public who would make up the audiences, and the community of performers who would entertain them.”<sup>17</sup> In other words, the venture was created not only to uplift the spirits of patrons, but it was also created with artist-centric benefits in mind.

At the time, most cultural centers in post-war Europe had been overtaken by Nazi invasion and then bombed by Allied forces, and so the walkable and relatively intact footprint of Edinburgh was chosen as a fresh destination for celebrity artists to commune and celebrate the war’s end.<sup>18</sup> As most producing teams aspire to do, the EIF administrators set out to fill their inaugural stages with the cream of the performance crop. The most lauded, celebrated, and esteemed performers were invited to participate. According to Amy Lane, the event was scheduled to be Europe’s first post-war international arts assembly and was pointedly designed to spotlight highbrow arts centering on classical and operatic music, ballet, and to a lesser degree, theatre.<sup>19</sup>

Among those invited were the Jouvett Theatre Company of Paris, famed English contralto Kathleen Ferrier, and internationally lauded conductor Bruno Walter, who was famously and powerfully reunited during the EIF with the surviving members of his Vienna

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17. Moffat, 16.

18. “A Festival of Stars,” Edinburgh International Festival, accessed September 7, 2021, <https://70years.eif.co.uk/history/#a-festival-of-stars>.

19. Lane, 4.

Philharmonic Orchestra. In Bruno's words, the festival's healing properties were self-evident:

It was of the utmost importance and most to be desired that all the ties which had been torn should be reunited...What you have seen here in Edinburgh is one of the most magnificent experiences since the war. Here, human relations have been renewed. There is no better way to counter evil forces which are active in our time than to emphasize the good forces which are always with us, who are only occupied with the positive elements of human culture.<sup>20</sup>

Many of the world's elite performers shared Bruno's sentiment, and audience members flooded the EIF's theatres to take in high art with the hope of regaining the sense of peace and beauty that the war had robbed from them.

However, the reception was not wholly welcoming. Just as Orlando, home of family- friendly entertainment and theme park commercialism, made for an unlikely home to the free-minded Orlando International Fringe Festival, the EIF was born into less than hospitable territory. As brought to attention by scholar Jennifer Attala in her study of the EIF, "It was truly an audacious venture to undertake in the home of the Church of Scotland, a powerful national body based in Edinburgh, with a history of Presbyterian opposition to theatre and festivity."<sup>21</sup> The frigid reception of the church found an echo in secular opposers of the festival, who felt it shockingly inappropriate to produce opulent performance events in a post-war landscape inhabited by a population

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20. "Bruno Walter," Edinburgh International Festival, accessed September 7, 2021, <https://70years.eif.co.uk/history/#bruno-walter>.

21. Jennifer Attala, "Performing the Festival - a study of the Edinburgh International Festival in the Twenty-First Century," PhD thesis, (University of Glasgow, 2012), 47.

still accustomed to ration books, diets of only essential foods, clothing coupons, and life among requisitioned hotels.

The war of opposing viewpoints was documented heavily in the local newspapers, and the *Scottish Evening Dispatch* and *The Scotsman* became a sparring ground between those who championed the EIF and their detractors who vehemently opposed the venture. Many found talk of entertainment unforgivably insensitive to local citizens who were still reeling from war shortages, death, and personal loss. Others felt it in poor taste to claim that a region with a history of overlooking the arts should be ordained a cultural destination spot. Among those incensed at the operating policies of the International Fest were poet and playwright Osborne Henry Mavor, known by the pseudonym James Bridie. Bridie's ill will may have been fueled by the fact that neither he nor his plays were included on the EIF roster, and by the fact that the entire International Festival lineup had very few Scottish contributors. Bridie was not the only Scottish artist angry with the development of the International Festival in Edinburgh.

According to scholar Angela Bartie, Scottish literary renaissance poet Hugh MacDiarmid penned a scathing installment in *The Scotsman* newspaper, stating that he found it ludicrous that a town historically known for treating the arts so poorly would take it upon itself to self-represent as an arts Mecca. He likened it to giving the entirety of a Masters-level course to a group of demented children.<sup>22</sup>

Many artists also felt that the EIF programming was elitist. The most vocal among these was the collective who had gathered to call themselves Glasgow United.

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22. Bartie, 52.

Glasgow United consisted of six Scottish theatre troupes and two visiting theatre groups from England who banded together to present self-produced theatrical ventures around the outskirts of the Edinburgh International Festival, in spite of having no place in the official inaugural 1947 EIF program.<sup>23</sup> The collective referred to themselves as Festival Adjuncts and they included Birmingham Repertory's Pilgrim Players, the Christine Orr Players, a Carnegie Trust Troupe, the Edinburgh College of Art Theatre Troupe, Edinburgh's People's Theatre, Glasgow Unity Theatre, Lanchester Marionette Theatre, and the Scottish Community Drama Association's Edinburgh branch.<sup>24</sup>

A year later, another Scottish playwright who had found himself cordially uninvited to the EIF, Robert Kemp, published an article in the local newspaper promoting satellite events available to audiences looking for programming that was happening in tandem with the larger festival. He noted a return of Glasgow United and an expansion of non-EIF theatrical programming. "Round the fringe of the official Festival drama," he writes, "there seems to be more private enterprise than before...I am afraid some of us are not going to be often at home during the evenings!"<sup>25</sup> With Kemp's simple utterance, the fringe officially got its name.

Annually, the group of uninvited performers grew until its popularity overshadowed the EIF in scope and duration, eventually taking over the whole of

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23. Bartie, 53.

24. Bruce Cannon, "Birth of the Fringe," *All Edinburgh Theater.com*, August 1, 2017, <https://www.alledinburghtheatre.com/birth-of-the-edinburgh-fringe-feature/>.

25. Lindsey Johnstone, "The Edinburgh Fringe through the years," *The Scotsman*, July 29, 2013, <https://www.scotsman.com/arts-and-culture/theatre-and-stage/edinburgh-fringe-through-years-1566301>.

Edinburgh for an entire month each summer. This “fringe festival” would operate organically with no central leadership or internal structure until 1951 when a group of local university students created a kind of fringe boarding house where performers could find inexpensive meals and safe and affordable housing during their run. Over the course of the next seven years, a group of fringe practitioners formed to discuss communal goals, a centralized box office was created, and the Festival Fringe Society was born. By 1981, what had begun as a group of eight itinerant theatre groups had grown to a festival of 494 performance groups, officially making the Edinburgh Fringe Festival the world’s largest performing arts festival in history, a title it has yet to lose.

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe, which sprung to life as a push-back against the elitism of the EIF, naturally held sacred the ideal of an all-are-welcome operations practice. While the Edinburgh International had sought out only stars, EDFringe performers were embraced regardless of background or proof of previous experience or success. The model proved to be profoundly appreciated by performers and patrons alike, and as the EDFringe developed, the divide between the two groups organically became blurred and, in some cases, dissolved. An avalanche of art featuring performances of every kind from all corners of the earth overtook Edinburgh entirely. Practitioners, eager to soak in the offerings of their global-brethren, became patrons themselves as they devoted some of their off-time to seeing shows.

Additionally, the interactive spirit of many of the performances created an environment where audience members often found themselves invited to participate in a performative manner previously unexperienced by most. Audiences morphed into performers, performers blended into audiences, and for the first time following an era of

war atrocity, genocide, terror, death, and domination, citizens were granted the absolute freedom to dictate what art they wished to patronize, craft, celebrate, and share. That bold, communal, and inclusive spirit which first animated the Edinburgh Festival Fringe has since become an unstoppable global phenomenon. Numerous artists and arts administrators exposed to the EDFringe in its infancy returned to their various countries and regions and toiled to create fringe festivals of their own. As new fringes popped up across the globe, those festivals in turn inspired still others to build up. While the exact path, development, and spread of the fringe population waxes and wanes and lies well beyond the scope of this study, the American roots of the Fringe come directly from the EDFringe and fringes of the Canadian circuit.

### Taking Root in America

The Orlando International Fringe Festival premiered with a ten-day event opening on April 24th, 1992.<sup>26</sup> Visionaries Terry Olson, Rick Kunst, and Andy Anthony were the driving forces behind the project. The group had originally come to Orlando as members of the SAK Theatre troupe for the opening of Disney's Epcot center, employing 60 full-time actors who specialized in scripted theatre stories for use as audience participatory street entertainment for the theme park. Kunst recalls the group traveling monthly to California to meet with the Disney Imagineers and says that all SAK members worked on Hollywood Boulevard, noting that Disney, MGM, is based on all their designs, performance structures, and theories. The group transitioned to the

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26. Throughout this section, I rely on interviews conducted with Terry Olson and Rick Kunst, particularly those on April 12, 2021 and August 1, 2020, as well as my own experience with the Festival. Additionally, I have run this history by both surviving past producers to verify accuracy.

creation of its own Orlando theatre venue when Epcot abruptly failed to renew their contract.<sup>27</sup>

The City of Orlando reached out to the company when a block of buildings became available. SAK moved in, shifting its production to comedy improvisation, and expanding programming to include a series of improvisation classes which were open to the public. SAK also had a branch of touring artists with a strong history of performing at Renaissance and Worlds Fairs. Part of the organization's festival touring expedition in the early 1980s included a trip led by Terry Olson to perform in the Edinburgh Fringe.<sup>28</sup>

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Figure 10. SAK and OIFF co-founder, Terry Olson, performing street theatre at EPCOT in the late 1980s. Photo courtesy of Olson.

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27. Rick Kunst, interview by author, ZOOM recording, Toronto, ON, April 12, 2021.

28. Terry Olsen, interview by author, digital recording, Orlando, FL, August 1, 2020.



visit happened just as the Edinburgh Fringe had shattered attendance and participant records, making it the globe's largest performing arts festival in history.

The experience made a strong impression on the troupe. They performed multiple shows, finding great success with one of their offerings and learning how *not* to fringe with multiple others. Exposure to EDFringe planted the seeds of interest within Olson. Those seeds began to take root a few years later when co-founder Rick Kunst



Figure 11. Members of SAK theatre performing at a Renaissance fair in the early 1990s, before the Fringe was founded. Courtesy of Terry Olson.

experienced the Edmonton Fringe Festival in Canada, and he suggested to Olson that SAK consider bringing a fringe festival to Orlando. Kunst attributes his own history with Edmonton Fringe to SAK performers being *discovered* by an Edmonton Fringe



producer. As he remembers it, SAK performers Paula Rossman, Gary Rorman, and Dan Hartigan were performing in Canada at the Vancouver 1986 World Expo when Rossman was approached by an Edmonton Fringe producer who felt SAK would do well at his festival. The producer explained that the group would not get paid for coming and would not be paid for travel, but they could make use of a gazebo with a large attached green space.

The group went, and the producers were correct; SAK was a hit at Edmonton. SAK became known as the *No Problem Players* because they built a reputation of being highly adaptable and easy to work with. For instance, Kunst says SAK became known for being flexible whenever schedules needed to be shifted or venues had to be changed.<sup>29</sup> During SAK's second year of touring, Kunst and his wife replaced Rossman and Rorman. Kunst said the Canadian tour would end up resulting in great contacts for prospective OIFF performance groups, as well as a strong network of fringe administrators who made themselves available for consultation needs.<sup>30</sup> The adaptable/easy to work with ethos found its way into the OIFF because it opened lines of communication with fringe producers and opened doors for information-sharing. After Kunst suggested developing a new fringe, Olson joined the SAK traveling performers on its next tour of the Canadian fringes to assess how to approach planning for the

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29. Kunst interview.

30. In the late 1980s, a circuit of Canadian fringe festivals began to develop, allowing performers to travel across Canada to produce shows in a succession of festivals. Today this has expanded into a North American Fringe Festival circuit with over thirty member festivals throughout Canada and the United States.

venture. This is when Kunst says the pair decided to bring on Andy Anthony as a third founding producer. Anthony also had extensive experience on the Canadian fringe circuit.

SAK eventually found itself reunited back in the States, high on the success of a whirlwind Canadian Fringe circuit tour and looking to map out the company's next big venture. But according to Olson, SAK was initially undecided on whether their new collective project should be to create an Orlando Renaissance Festival or an Orlando Fringe Festival. Kunst said that the company had a lot of experience performing for Renaissance festivals prior to working for Epcot. He also noted that Orlando was too hot for performing in Renaissance garb. Whether or not the heat had anything to do with the decision, the three agreed that SAK should create a fringe. Olson remembers, "Rick was a schmoozer, so he was a great artists relations kind of guy, Andy was too." Olson considered himself to more behind-the-scenes, "I was maybe more of the organizer and the *go out and get the money* person. But I was also the person at 2:00 in the morning sweeping the streets so we didn't have to pay for custodial."<sup>31</sup>

Olson, Kunst, and Anthony's initial plan to take a year or two to slowly coax a fringe into the Central Florida entertainment landscape was catapulted into a fast four-month venture when they sought production guidance from Canadian producer friends. The trio had reached out over the Thanksgiving holiday season of 1991 to get ideas for a relaxed timeline for production, but they were instead convinced that they had the proper network to expedite the project. By spring of 1992 the Orlando International

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31. Olson interview.

Fringe Festival was born.<sup>32</sup> Neither Olson nor Kunst recall the city of Orlando being slow to support the venture. Olson says they simply expressed their desire to infuse the downtown area with theatre and artists from around the world by creating temporary theatre spaces with indoor shows and an outdoor stage for free entertainment. Kunst added that by that time, SAK knew how best to handle city and state governments. “We had had enough experience with festivals by then,” he remembers, “that we knew we knew what the right buzz words were and what they needed to hear and didn’t talk about things like artistic freedom or anything like that.”<sup>33</sup>

The Festival kicked off with a parade down Church Street, the main thoroughfare of downtown Orlando.<sup>34</sup> The foundational structure of the Orlando International Fringe Festival was an amalgamation of Canadian fringe production models married with the guiding principles of the mother Fringe of Scotland. The Edinburgh Fringe operated with no central production team. It simply existed as an organic assemblage of separate performance groups all tasked with finding their own venues and managing their own technical needs. Conversely, Canada’s fringes provided companies with a venue, technicians, and equipment to cover basic sound and lighting. Having experienced both

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32. Nick Georgoudiou and Terry Olsen, “Terry Olsen,” June 19, 2017, in *To A Certain Degree*, produced by WPRK, podcast, mp3 audio, 1:19:35, <http://www.toacertaindegree.com/2017/07/05/terry-olson/>.

33. Kunst interview.

34. Matt Palm, “25 years of Orlando Fringe Festival memories: 1992, the 1<sup>st</sup> festival,” *Orlando Sentinel* (Orlando, FL), March 10, 2016, <https://www.orlandosentinel.com/entertainment/arts-and-theater/os-mjp-orlando-fringe-memories-1992-20160310-story.html>.

models, Kunst, Olson, and Anthony felt that Orlando was better suited for a Canadian management style.

SAK theatre was used as a first-year venue, and it was supplemented by three donated makeshift store-front theatre venues within walkable distance of each other. The inaugural footprint was rounded out by an outdoor stage located on Church Street and a Visual Fringe art gallery.<sup>35</sup> Kunst reveals that the initial plan for indoor theatre programming was for it to be sectioned into three groups, allotting approximately equal portions between local, national, and international performers. The purpose was, in his words, “to give us as a local theater hub, suddenly an influx of what theater is in all these different places, and it's meant to inspire, it's meant to create more shows.”<sup>36</sup> The manifestation of that plan did not result in three equal groups, although each group was represented. Of their 28 performing groups, thirteen were from the Central Florida area, three traveled in from other states, one came in from Puerto Rico, six came down from Canada, and the remaining five traveled from England.<sup>37</sup> This founding attempt to ensure open access while also creating geographical diversity in programming, is a representative example of how the Fringe built itself upon aesthetic and ethics-driven ideals. Many of those ideals hail directly from the eight commitments of the EDFringe

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35. One of the earliest Fringe mentions in the *Orlando Sentinel* newspaper, is an April 5, 1992 call for artists interested in exhibiting and selling original artwork during the inaugural Festival. The announcement states that all pieces had to use “fringe” in the concept or creation of the art. Though the Visual Fringe is still a part of the annual Festival, artists are no longer restricted by theme.

36. Kunst interview.

37. Olson interview.

which I introduced in Chapter 1, as part of the Festival's Blueprint publication. I examine them now in relation to their influence in OIFF management.

### Fringe Ethos and Character

The eight commitments reveal the deeper ties that bind the philosophies of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe to most of the fringes that credit it as progenitor. Here, I analyze the eight in conversation with Orlando Fringe's relationship to them to deepen understanding of how the OIFF and the Edinburgh Fringe align and diverge. I follow with the OIFF's public-facing founding principles as published on the Festival's official website.

The first commitment from the Edinburgh Fringe is to an "open" fringe and illustrates a vow to remain accessible, guaranteeing that anyone can attend and participate. The commitment states, "We believe that anyone should find a home on the Fringe, regardless of their gender, race, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, or background. We will work alongside partners to remove barriers and ensure the Fringe is open and accessible to anyone." Specifically, the society agrees to continuously increase opportunities for a diverse group of participants by maintaining a panel of advisors to help support artists from under-amplified groups. This practice is also championed and adhered to by the OIFF which also identifies itself as a safe space.<sup>38</sup> Currently the OIFF operates in partnership with an internally formed committee made up

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38. More on the OIFF's Safe Space policy can be found on the Festival's website here: <https://orlandofringe.org/may/>.

of Orlando Fringe staff, volunteers, performers, and outside community members whose goal it is to create awareness and inclusion for under-amplified voices.

The EDFringe's second commitment attempts to position it as the premier location for the discovery of talent. With an average of fifty to ninety countries helping to create the annual lineup in Edinburgh, the society dedicates itself to serving as a global confluence of the performing arts' most creative talent. The Blueprint promises to identify tour-appropriate shows and make them easily accessible to companies wishing to book them. While the Orlando International Fringe undoubtedly acts as an industry hub, it does so organically with no public-facing promotional commitment to this specific goal. That said, a lack of public commitment to this practice in no way prevents the Orlando Fringe from acting as a talent store. As a current Director for Banners at McNeese State University, I attend and sometimes bring staff to the OIFF annually to scout for shows to include in our spring cultural season. Past Orlando Fringe Producer Beth Marshall has backed numerous productions for Orlando-based tours. Producing managers regularly attend OIFF productions and enlist performers to remount shows outside of the Festival. An example of this can be found in Aradhana Tiwar's production thesis which names the Orlando Fringe as the place her production of *Steel/Magnolias* was "discovered" and solicited for a remount by the Orlando-based Vine Theatre.<sup>39</sup>

The third commitment of the EDFringe's Society promises to keep the Fringe affordable, which the Orlando International Fringe explicitly includes as an accessibility

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39. Tiwar, iii.

goal. Fringe includes free programming in every festival, and during the 2022 season, all paid ticketed events will cost under \$12.<sup>40</sup> Within the Blueprint, the EDFringe warns that the instant their festival becomes unaffordable for performers, the organization will cease to function. To guard against this, they aim to “address the costs of accommodation, travel, licensing, venue rental, and food and drink.”<sup>41</sup>

Edinburgh's fourth commitment to secure a new home for the fringe so that it may provide year-round assistance reads a little more like a help-wanted advertisement than a commitment. It identifies a goal of locating a physical space to house the Fringe Society year-round. Their call to action announces that they will “need assistance to identify suitable locations, raise the necessary funds and, most importantly, ensure our new home is fit for purposes for all stakeholders to benefit from. Just please don't buy us a toaster.”<sup>42</sup> If this commitment smacks as slightly self-serving, one element of it which does not, is its pledge to act as the host and binding agent for the Fringe World Congress. I point to the request for no toasters as another example of management broaching serious issues through a buffer of comedy. While Orlando Fringe does not make a commitment towards finding a permanent home, it is likely because it now has one. The OIFF offices are in the Orlando Shakespeare complex at Loch Haven Park.

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40. “Our Marquee Event,” The Orlando Fringe, accessed September 20, 2021, <https://orlandofringe.org/may/>.

41. “The Fringe Blueprint,” 15.

42. “The Fringe Blueprint,” 19.

Perhaps no commitment aligns the Orlando International Fringe's most invested developments with EDFringe more than the aim to nurture within its area youth a lifelong passion for the arts. The EDFringe identifies itself as an incubator for creative growth for its young people. If the OIFF took its cue from its parent fringe to make this a priority, it has more than run with it. Over the last five years, the Orlando Fringe, like the EDFringe, has actively sought input from, and inclusion of, their local schools, community groups, educators, and students from pre-K through college age. Specifically, the OIFF has launched a "Future Fringers" platform that trains students how to use the Fringe as a tool for creation and production, ensuring the cultivation of young performers to add to the next generation of culture stewards.<sup>43</sup>

The sixth and seventh Blueprint source commitments may be theoretically supported by the Orlando International Fringe, but given the OIFF's current operations, neither play an overtly influential role. Edinburgh's sixth agreement revolves around a goal to create a more vibrant street presence. In addition to the Scottish festival's more than 300 indoor venues, it also hosts two large bustling street performance spaces including the Royal Mile (High Street) and the Mound Precinct. These venues draw throngs of viewers and host a variety of performance types including buskers, registered performers who use the space to advertise their shows, living statues, circus and carnival style circle shows, spectacle shows, and a regulated number of bagpipe

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43. "Our Future is Bright: Welcome to Fringers of the Future," The Orlando Fringe, Accessed August 29, 2021, <https://orlandofringe.org/fringersofthefuture/>. Fringers of the Future is a program within the Orlando Fringe dedicated to helping middle and high school students perform within the annual festival. For these productions, the OIFF waves performer and application fees and provides specialized workshops geared towards connecting students to industry professionals.



performances which, though iconic to Scotland, are limited due to their overpowering volume. While the OIFF featured street performers when it was housed Downtown, its current footprint does not include them enough to warrant much attention. Commitment number seven, a commitment to the reduction of the EDFringe's carbon footprint, is likewise more robust than the OIFF's. While the Orlando Fringe provides recycling stations throughout the site and at the entrances of the lawn/vendor area, it does not have a carbon reduction plan to rival that of Edinburgh, who has partnered since 2010 with Creative Carbon Scotland to augment sustainability and limit its toll on the environment.

Finally, the eighth commitment is to spread the fringe story on a global scale. The Blueprint declares that the EDFringe has an exceptional story to tell as a festival that began with just eight pioneer performance groups, and it has expanded into not only the world's largest performing arts festival in history, but also the inspiration behind over 200 fringe festivals spanning the globe.<sup>44</sup> The Orlando International Fringe is an important member among the 200. Because the OIFF lost all archives in a 2002 storage fire, much of the Festival's first decade has gone undocumented. This study, like the eighth commitment, seeks to record and amplify the history and artistic legacy of the Fringe.

In summary, the eight commitments assist in defining what sort of thing a fringe festival is. Also, because the EDFringe is the pioneer fringe, and was the first to create standards and guiding principles, a comparison of values between it and the OIFF helps

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44. "The Fringe Blueprint," 34.

illustrate how far the apple has (or has not) fallen from the proverbial tree. A philosophical alignment between the two is unambiguous. None of the commitments of the EDFringe work in opposition to the OIFF's core values. However, to best understand what sort of thing the Orlando International Fringe Festival is autonomously, it is helpful to look beyond alliances with its inherited commitments to the founding principles it presents to its public.

### Ethical Registers of the OIFF

EDFringe has its eight commitments. The Orlando International Fringe Festival has its own set, which they display prominently on their website. These have formed the core of the Fringe's ethical orientation throughout its existence:

As the longest-running Fringe theatre festival in the United States, Orlando Fringe is founded on being:

- 100% Uncensored; you never know what artists will say or do. The artists have full control over their performance.
- 100% Unjuried; performers are chosen at random by a lottery, providing equity among artists.
- 100% Accessible; ticket prices range from FREE to \$12 which is a range that allows anyone from any walk of life to experience Fringe.
- 100% Inclusive; we are an environment where everyone is treated with love and kindness. We welcome anyone regardless of their age, gender, the color of your skin, religion, who you're attracted to, or anything else.
- 100% Of All Ticket Sales are returned to the artists giving artists monetary resources to continue creating art.<sup>45</sup>

In my separate interviews with co-founders Terry Olson and Rick Kunst, I was able to verify the credibility of these aesthetic and ethical keystones. This fivefold commitment has been central to the Orlando Fringe's identity since its inception. It also

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45. "Our Marquee Event."

echoes allegiance to the EDFringe's eight commitments while marking major departures from traditional performance venue management. It is important to note that a distinction between OIFF characteristics and the traits of other theatre venues and theatre festivals is very different from distinction between the OIFF and other *fringe* festivals. For example, the 100% commitments that guide the OIFF stand in contrast to the standard operations commonly found within most institutional theatre models, but they align the OIFF with most other fringes. A deeper look at the Festival's core 100% commitments helps to define the ethical registers that govern it. I begin with an analysis of the Orlando Fringe's relationship to censorship.

### 100% Uncensored

Censorship in theatre has arguably been an issue since our nation began chronicling the history of the American stage. By the late 1970s, there was enough fodder for discussion on the subject that Abe Laufé was able to publish *The Wicked Stage: A History of Theatre Censorship and Harassment in the United States*. Laufé launches his history of American censorship positing that *Ye Bare and Ye Cub*, 1665, reportedly the first play of the American colonies, was also the first American play to inspire public outrage and censorship.<sup>46</sup> If there is truth in this, our American stages have had to contend with censorship from birth, and the guardians of our nation's stages have had to grapple with where the boundaries of censorship should lie ever since.

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46. Abe Laufé, *The Wicked Stage: A History of Theatre Censorship and Harassment in the United States*, (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1978), 27.



Figure 12. This woman advertises a performance with body paint.

During a series of research interviews I conducted in 2019 and 2021, OIFF founders Terry Olson and Rick Kunst both confirmed that the Orlando Fringe was created with an allegiance to an uncensored environment. Aside from remaining solidly within the confines of the state and city legal requirements for appropriate stage material (e.g., no sex acts on stage), the founders made an early vow to restrain any forces wishing to suppress subject matter. This pledge has not altered since the OIFF's first years, even though nearby theatres have not always been so brave. As an

example, I personally witnessed censorship and nudity handled very differently by the Orlando Fringe Festival and the nearby University of Central Florida.

In 1994, while the Orlando Fringe was in its second year, UCF featured a production of Bernard Slade's murder mystery *Fatal Attraction*. I worked on the production, which was directed by Nicholas Rinaldi and called for the lead actress to rise, nude, from a jacuzzi. Though the play called for full-frontal nudity, we were advised that the theatre department had chosen to self-censor so as not to offend patrons. Instead of full nudity, the actress was costumed in bikini bottoms. After the opening weekend, one single patron submitted a letter of complaint because the actress was topless. It was an internal letter that was never sent to the press. A swift decision was made by UCF administration for the costume shop to add pasties to the actress' wardrobe. The leadership of the Orlando Fringe reacted very differently when it had to contend with a call for censorship of nudity.

In 2000, my first year on staff, the OIFF's commitment to non-censorship was famously tested when one of our venue sponsors expressed the desire to censor a show because of an aversion to nudity on stage. That year, Dennis Giacino and Fiely Matias of the "Oops Guys" produced their Orlando Fringe show which was aptly named *The Naked Guy*. As noted by *Orlando Sentinel* journalist, Elizabeth Maupin, in an article from May 2, the show featured a brief reveal of a fully nude homosexual male performer, which upset the owners of the rented venue where it was scheduled.<sup>47</sup> At the

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47. Elizabeth Maupin, "Crowd watches 'guy' go naked," *Orlando Sentinel* (Orlando, FL), May 2, 2000, <https://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/os-xpm-2000-05-02-0005020061-story.html>.

time the show was produced, the OIFF was still located in its original footprint in downtown Orlando. The Fringe's ten venues were, at that point, laboriously cobbled together from various dormant spaces within a 1.5-mile radius of the Fringe Central outdoor stage and beer tent. Not until all venues had been allocated, press releases had gone out, the full festival program had been published, and production materials had been printed and distributed, was it made known by Church Street Station, the property to which *The Naked Guy* had been assigned, that the venue's management was unwilling to support the OIFF's no-censorship mandate. Church Street demanded that the naked guy cover up.



Figure 13. Dennis Giacino and Fiely Matias, the Oops Guys, creators of *The Naked Guy*, which tested the OIFF's no-censorship mandate, and co-creators of *Bitches of the Kingdom* which toured after its OIFF premiere and became the Off-Broadway hit *Disenchanted*.

All eyes turned to Fringe management to see what would happen. The Festival had operated for the whole of its existence with a promise to fight against censorship, but until that moment, it had never been tested. Complicating matters was the fact that quite a few outspoken Fringe supporters voiced their suspicion that Church Street's

condemnation of *The Naked Guy* had more to do with an aversion to homosexuality than a problem with simple nudity.

The stakes were heightened further by the fact that Church Street was not simply the home to four of the Fringe's venues that year; the center was also considered to be an official Festival sponsor, as they were donating much of what would traditionally be charged in rental fees for use of their space on such a large scale. A refusal by Fringe to force artist compliance could cause the sponsor to pull out entirely, which would mean that the Festival would lose almost half its venues just days before opening.

Despite the potential loss, Fringe administration refused to censor the show. Before Church Street could retaliate, the initial location issue was partially solved when a hospitable comedy group agreed to swap venues with the "Oops Guys."<sup>48</sup> However, the heated issue had already gone public and attracted a flurry of press, which led to an alleged threat that the Orlando Police Department would shut down the show if the nudity was not cut, regardless of which stage it graced. The extra publicity also thrust the Fringe into the spotlight and brought a string of sold-out shows for the "Oops Guys," who briefly cut the show's nudity for fear of being arrested. In the end they decided to let it all hang out, making them an iconic part of OIFF lore. "A lot of people never heard about the Fringe before *The Naked Guy*," said Orlando Weekly critic Seth Kubersky, "then the police got involved and suddenly the Fringe was front page of the newspapers

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48. Roger Moore, "Naked Guy finds new venue." *Orlando Sentinel* (Orlando, FL), April 29, 2000. In an April 29, 2000 Orlando Sentinel article by Roger Moore, the journalist noted that the production which agreed to exchange venues to silence objections from the *Naked Guy* venue owners, was entitled *Beloved Sons presenting Another Pile of Skit*.



instead of the back page of the entertainment section.”<sup>49</sup> In an email exchange I had between *The Naked Guy* creators, Giacino and Matias, the two concurred, “We sort of became the unsuspecting poster boys of non-censorship in the arts,” which their play was all about. The controversy got them more media attention and allowed them to test boundaries more than they imagined possible. “We found ourselves on the Jim Phillips show on RealRadio 104.1 and being interviewed (our naked guy was actually naked in the interview!) by a now-famous Vinnie Politan on the local news station.”<sup>50</sup>

*The Naked Guy* eventually became known as the catalyst for a heated defense of the OIFF’s mission to remain an uncensored and unjuried festival. It signaled to its audience, its performers, its sponsors, and the press that even amid backlash, the OIFF would stand true to sharing its vow not to silence any voice.

### 100% Unjuried

As I have already discussed the unjuried commitment in Chapter 1, I will only briefly clarify here that the Fringe’s faithfulness to an unjuried model pre-dates its membership to the Canadian Association of Fringe Festivals. Founder Terry Olson noted in a 2020 interview I conducted with him that the OIFF was created with a belief that no Fringe representative should deem one performance group more worthy than any other, and it was designed to be unjuried from its first year.<sup>51</sup> The Orlando Fringe was small enough in its inaugural year to simply accept groups on a first-come basis. It

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49. Kubersky interview.

50. Dennis Giacino and Fiely Matias, email message to author. June 18, 2021.

51. Olson interview.



then had to shift to lottery programming. I track the history and growth of the lottery system employed by the OIFF in Chapter 3. The lottery system helps to ensure that acceptance to the Festival is random. Names are drawn and announced as an official OIFF live event that is open to the public.

### 100% Accessible

In the management of American theatrical venues, accessibility often refers to seating access regulations as determined by the federal government. In its published *Standards for Accessible Design*, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) calls for provisions to be made for individuals suffering mobility disabilities, that they may be granted access to purchase tickets for accessible seats at events open to the general public.<sup>52</sup> Eligible individuals include mobility device users such as those who use wheelchairs, individuals unable to traverse stairs, and those unable to travel long distances due to cardiac, circulatory, or arthritic conditions. The Orlando International Fringe Festival complies with all customary ADA regulations, and it has expanded accessibility efforts to include translation of select performances by American Sign Language translators. Nonetheless, the organization holds a much larger and much more inclusive view of what it means to commit itself to producing 100% accessible theatre than many of its peers publicly do.

To explain, the OIFF's breed of accessibility aligns more with the definition as set forth in the Oxford English Dictionary, identifying it as something capable of being easily

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52. United States, Department of Justice, *2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design* (Washington, D.C.: Dept. of Justice, 2010) [https://www.ada.gov/ticketing\\_2010.htm](https://www.ada.gov/ticketing_2010.htm).

used, seen, known, or experienced.<sup>53</sup> To this end, the Orlando Fringe not only provides accessible seating for those with disabilities, but they also consider ways to manage the festival so that the entertainment it provides may be experienced by the largest number of participants both on and off the stage, regardless of disability status. One example of this is the festival's commitment to remaining affordable. For patrons, this means that the Fringe commits to confining the price range of tickets from free to not more than \$12 each. In comparison, the average price of a ticket to see a regular-season Lowdnes Shakespeare Center production, housed in some of the same venues as Fringe, will cost between \$25 and \$72 for a single ticket, more than two to six times the cost of the Fringe's highest-priced shows.

The OIFF expanded accessibility efforts to overcome barriers newly emerged because of the global pandemic. June 4th through 18th, following the Fringe's 30th annual live festival, the OIFF created a DigiFringe initiative during which pre-recorded shows could be viewed by patrons across the globe, whether under quarantine or not. The DigiFringe lineup also bolstered accessibility by including shows from international artists who were prevented from participating in the live festival because of travel restrictions. Just like the in-person Fringe, Fringe buttons were sold to offset Festival production costs, making it possible to return 100% of ticket sales to the performers.

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53. Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. "Accessible."

According to *Orlando Weekly* journalist Seth Kubersky, shows could be rented for \$10 each, along with a \$2 “digital button” service fee.<sup>54</sup>

### 100% Inclusive

No patron can enter onto the Orlando International Fringe Festival outdoor lawn or walk into any of the three performance enclaves flanking Fringe Central without passing prominent signage clearly identifying the festival as a safe place for performers and patrons alike, regardless of gender identity, race, age, religious beliefs, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation, or mental/physical abilities. Inclusivity and diversity have been held aloft as central goals of the organization since its inception and feature prominently, consistently, and boldly within the OIFF’s grant verbiage, website and social media platforms, board of officers manual, official festival program, and even within its artist application forms.

As a result of thirty years of the OIFF’s consistent devotion to diversity (perhaps given weight by the \$4.5 million economic impact that the OIFF now boasts), the region’s political leaders now champion the Festival’s inclusivity as well. In the words of Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer, “The Orlando Fringe is for everyone . . . the connectivity of our community’s diverse cultural offerings to the health and vitality of the region cannot be overstated.” Orange County Mayor Jerry Demmings echoes this sentiment and aligns himself to the Fringe with the declaration, “It is my mission to create a community

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54. Seth Kubersky, “The first-ever DigiFringe offers a chance to see award-winning shows you missed - or want to see again,” *Orlando Weekly* (Orlando, FL), June 9, 2021, <https://www.orlandoweekly.com/orlando/the-first-ever-digifringe-offers-a-chance-to-stream-award-winning-shows-you-missed-or-want-to-see-again/Content?oid=29460366>.

culture of innovation, collaboration, and inclusion. Festivals like the Orlando International Fringe Festival foster a quality of life and climate that are the hallmarks of a diverse and thriving arts community.” Finally, in her welcome letter for the 2021 Fringe, Orange County Commissioner Emily Bonilla reiterates the festival’s own inclusion welcome signage by saying, “. . . I’m thrilled to invite you to an event that demonstrates how much of a melting-pot Orlando is . . . this event unites local, national, and international artists with the diverse Central Florida community, home to an inclusive, accessible, and safe space, we welcome you!”<sup>55</sup> After thirty years of branding, it appears that inclusivity has become a hallmark of the Orlando Fringe both internally and as perceived from the community.

#### 100% of All Ticket Sales go Back to the Artist

One practice sacredly guarded by the Canadian Association of Fringe Festivals (CAFF) and the United States Association of Fringe Festivals (USAFF) is the tradition of giving 100% of ticket revenue back to fringe artists. So fervent is the fringe community about this that fringe festivals which *do* take a cut of the proceeds are known indecorously among producers and performers of the fringe circuit as “Bastard Fringes.” Fringe NYC and the Philadelphia Fringe Festival are some of the few examples of festivals that call themselves fringes, while taking a portion of artist proceeds and maintaining control over who may perform. Orlando, conversely, was founded on a commitment to uphold a strict policy of returning artist income. While many traditional

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55. “Welcome Letters,” The Orlando Fringe, accessed September 8, 2021, <https://orlandofringe.org/may/welcome/>.

models involve production houses taking a cut of proceeds, the Orlando Fringe does not. Because of this practice, the OIFF was able to give back a sum of more than \$446,227 to local, national, and international artists in 2019.

How then does a fringe survive financially? Grants, fundraisers, memberships, and sponsorships combine to provide funding for staff, venues, tech, and infrastructure. In the case of the OIFF, a unique part of the financial puzzle is buttons.<sup>56</sup> Prior to purchasing a ticket to any Fringe-sanctioned performance, patrons must first purchase an official OIFF button. The button is then worn by the patron for the run of the festival



Figure 14. The first button design for the inaugural Orlando International Fringe Festival. Courtesy, the OIFF.

and signals to ticket-sellers that the patron is eligible to purchase individual show tickets. An audience member attempting to enter a venue sans button will politely be asked to step aside and will not be given entrance to the space until in possession of a button. While most Fringe-goers understand that this allows the Fringe to operate while giving back undivided proceeds to the artists, there are some patrons who balk at the

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56. Refer to Appendix K to view a collection of OIFF buttons throughout the Festival's thirty years.

idea of paying a fee on top of the ticket price, especially those who travel to the Fringe specifically to see one show. To help combat issues, the Fringe works with local media to publish "How to Fringe" materials.<sup>57</sup> While buttons do not cover all operating expenses for the Festival, they help to offset expenses including rental fees for venues, theatre equipment costs, sound and light expenses, and the design and printing of the official Fringe program. In 1992, Fringe buttons were \$2 apiece. Each performance group was then responsible for setting their own ticket price as long as it fell under the maximum dollar amount sanctioned by the OIFF. The first year, the ticket price was capped at \$7. Buttons now cost \$10 and individual tickets are capped at \$12.

Scrutiny of the Orlando Fringe's strict adherence to remaining uncensored, unjuried, accessible, and inclusive illustrates how each of these agreements exist in symbiotic support of the policy of giving back 100% of artist proceeds. Fringe management understands that an imbalance on any of these fronts could put the entire operational structure and mission at risk. For example, if the Fringe were redesigned to take a cut of performer income, it would naturally create an environment where the Festival would then benefit more from higher-grossing artists. In this scenario, curation and jurying would be the natural way to ensure higher income. This model would also make higher ticket prices more attractive, and so accessibility would take a back seat to profit, with censorship a natural byproduct.

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57. Matthew J. Palm and Wesley Alden, "Orlando Fringe Festival - How to Fringe Like a pro (Ep. 26)," May 18, 2018, in *Orlando Sentinel Conversations*, produced by *Orlando Sentinel*, podcast, mp3 audio, 23:27, <https://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/conversations-podcast/os-orlando-fringe-festival-how-to-fringe-podcast-ep-26-20180508-htmlstory.html>. This 2018 Podcast from Orlando Sentinel's Matt Palm is just one example of materials designed to guide patrons in navigating the OIFF.

So, what is the Fringe? It's creative immersion. It's an open platform for artists to perform no matter their background or experience. It's the heir to an upstart group of performers uninvited to an elite festival. And it's a producing agency motivated by a deeply felt sense of interlocking commitments. In the next chapter I ask how the success of the artist has been a driving force behind the Festival throughout its 30-year history.



Figure 15. Festival attendees wait in line for a performance.



### CHAPTER 3. ARTIST-CENTRIC

In the last chapter, I analyzed the internal components of fringe identity, tracing the Orlando International Fringe's lineage back to Edinburgh. In this chapter, I uncover some of the OIFF's main operational structures that enable its distinctive artist-centric production model. Some of these structures set it apart in comparison to traditional theatre models, while I identify others as unique even among the global network of affiliated fringe festivals. Traditional performance production models are broadly known for favoring the success of the producing organization (venue, investors, etc.) over that of the artists. These models can be found in repertory and professional theatres the world over, where artists essentially are employed as commodities to help deliver an end-production designed to put money into the producing organization. For example, the Orlando Shakespeare Theatre (OST) pays their artists weekly wages based on venue size, but it shares no profit from productions with performers or practitioners. Though the OST and OIFF operate within the same theatres, they work with diametrically opposed business models. The fringe in general, and the OIFF by extension, toils to reverse the traditional model by placing the artist's success at the center of policy development and operations. This artist-centric practice prioritizes performer needs to a degree generally not experienced by non-star practitioners.<sup>1</sup> It levels the playing field among seasoned and novice artists, which results in an

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1. While many theatre practitioners deserve the title of artist, I refer here specifically to the creators and performers of performance productions.



artistically hospitable environment that embraces diversity and dismantles the divides between contributors. The invitation for success is open to all artists in equal measure.

I have worked intimately with professional and community-driven arts organizations as varied as film festivals, professional theatres, theme park attractions, literary festivals, dinner theatres, dance studios, roadhouses, music productions, film, performance training troupes, and television. I have never encountered an organization that so mindfully employs measure of the artist's success as a litmus to its own success. Not until I traveled to Canada to facilitate a panel during the historical 2016 one-time convergence of the Canadian Association of Fringe Festivals (CAFF), the United States Association of Fringe Festivals (USAFF), and World Congress Fringe, did I ever sit around a table with producers and arts management leaders who gathered specifically to share strategies for putting more money in the pockets of their artists, even at the expense of their own expansion.<sup>2</sup> The myriad opportunities that fringe producers identified to meet such goals extended to taking calculated hits such as reducing the number of festival venues in order to give artists more saturated audiences. It struck me that the conversations about prioritization of artists which occurred within fringe management were not mirrored in any other management environment I had encountered. It is important to note that this panel discussion was no fluke.

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2. "2016 Fringe World Congress to Take Place in Montréal November 2016 Hosted by the Festival St-Ambroise Fringe de Montréal," Edinburgh Festival Fringe, accessed September 20, 2021, <https://www.edfringe.com/learn/news-and-events/2016-fringe-world-congress-to-take-place-in-montreal-november-2016-hosted-by-the-festival-st-ambroise-fringe-de-montreal>.

During the bi-annual 2020 World Congress Fringe conference initiated by the International Fringe Festival Association, the entire third day of programming fell under the theme “A Portrait of the Fringe Artist: How We Can Create Opportunities, Develop Audiences, and Ease the Experience of the Creative People Our Fringes Depend On.”<sup>3</sup> The fact that an entire day was devoted to this topic highlights how important artist support is to the global fringe community. Chief among the five speakers chosen to lead lectures that day was Orlando International Fringe Festival Executive Director Alauna Friskics. The conference's choice of Friskics as a keynote speaker stands as evidence that the OIFF holds a reputation for being a leader in artist support. I would further argue that the impetus for this focus on the artist was a driving force within the OIFF even before the first actor hit its stages in 1992, in part because the founders were themselves performers.

In the early 1990s, Olson, Kunst, and Anthony prepared for the development of their Fringe not by sitting around an arts admin desk pontificating but by taking to the North American fringe circuit as performers to gain an internal view of its management as compared to the Edinburgh model they first experienced. They found the main difference between the two models to lie in performer support. Edinburgh Fringe began as an excluded group of eight theatre troupes who found their own venues on the geographical outskirts of the Edinburgh International Festival. They were autonomous.

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3. World Fringe Congress 2020, Conference program, World Fringe Congress, Adelaide, Australia, February 14, 2020, <https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn%3Aaaid%3Aascds%3AUS%3A5c57833e-13e1-4e2b-aaed-09656895382c#pageNum=4>.

They had their own playing spaces and made arrangements for their own technical support. This organic hands-off model survives to this day, and though the Edinburgh Fringe Society has continued to grow since it came together in the early 1950s, the group does not set rules, does not offer or manage venues, and does not provide technical support.

The CAFF model diverges most notably from the EDFringe in that it largely operates with central managing teams who provide venues, tech, and centralized promotional platforms designed to form the basis from which individual groups could launch their own extended promotion. The OIFF founders had experienced both the Canadian and UK models as performers. The CAFF model won. Thirty years later, the administration-led support of fringe artists remains at the heart of OIFF operations. In one tier, the organizers borrowed from the larger fringe network. The second tier has been built upon by a succession of OIFF leaders who contributed to its expansion in ways unique to Orlando. The third tier has been helped along by a number of forces outside the power of its leaders who have been savvy enough to highlight what I term *happy accidents* as artist perks. We begin with this latter tier.

#### Tier One: The Happy Accidents

Orlando is the most visited destination in the United States of America, boasting a record-breaking 75 million visitors in 2018 and bringing in just under \$330,000,000 in tourist development taxes in 2019.<sup>4</sup> The Central Florida region is known globally as the

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4. "Organizational Highlights," Quarterly report, Visit Orlando, Orlando, Florida, July 2019, [https://assets.simpleviewinc.com/simpleview/image/upload/v1/clients/orlandofl/vo\\_2019\\_qtr2\\_board\\_highlights\\_10244470-9823-4c96-9506-26a8a0b76b6a.pdf](https://assets.simpleviewinc.com/simpleview/image/upload/v1/clients/orlandofl/vo_2019_qtr2_board_highlights_10244470-9823-4c96-9506-26a8a0b76b6a.pdf).

theme park capital of the world for its wealth of recreational activities, over 600 miles of beaches, and its many attractions and resorts. This family-friendly vacation haven makes for an unlikely home to the sometimes raw and always diverse-leaning theatre of the OIFF (more on that to come), but it reigns supreme as a prime tourist destination. Location is one of the happy accidents that affords Orlando Fringe the opportunity to cater to their artists, because the location offers an attractive vacation spot.

For many of the artists coming to the Orlando Fringe from beyond Central Florida, a trip to the Festival guarantees a pleasant venture. Regardless of how lucrative a Fringe show is or is not, the ability to vacation while in the region makes it possible for the performer to experience the endeavor as successful if they are inclined to view it as a working vacation. “That’s why the tourist part of Orlando is helpful,” explained Beth Marshall in a 2016 interview of past OIFF administrators, “because you can have fun. You can go to the beach, you can go to the parks, you can do things for free. Somebody is going to get you in-so if you’re not selling well, you can change your thought (process) and say, I’m having a vacation-it’s a perspective shift.”<sup>5</sup> The happy accident of proximity to a wealth of travel treasures augments the Orlando Fringe experience for many participants.

While the OIFF is not responsible for creating the traveler’s paradise it was born into, it does cash in on those advantages by proactively weaving them into the visiting artist’s experience, creating perks no other fringe festival can boast. For instance, the OIFF administration creates Fringe-hosted excursions for visiting artists to area theme

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5. Beth Marshall, interview by author, digital recording, Orlando, FL, May 29, 2016.

parks and outdoor destinations- like Wekiva Springs, where local artists act as hosts and tour guides. Such curated excursions reframe the artist experience as a personal, hospitable venture that strengthens networks and bonds between local and visiting guests. Similarly, Central Florida weather is an enticement for performers hailing from less temperate climates. While OIFF leadership does not control the weather, producers have embraced and touted it as yet another perk for artists. Pioneer Fringe dates spanned from late April to early May when temperatures generally ranged from an average high of 80 degrees to an average low of 60 degrees. Though the dates have since shifted to include Memorial Day, the founders scheduled their initial Festival to coincide with some of Orlando's most ideal weather. Terry Olson notes that this was appreciated by the out-of-towners, pointing out that "coming to Florida from what's a messy spring or still winter in other parts of the world was something that our artists liked."<sup>6</sup> Between the balmy weather and the tourist draw, a Fringe-gig with Orlando International brings with it a lot to potentially be happy about.

The OIFF's proximity to the theme parks, tourist haunts, resorts, and attractions also serves as a boon to many of the region's local artists, but for completely opposite reasons. Fringe gives residents a break from the all-pervasive vacation industry and offers artists a chance to perform on their own terms. Disney, known world-round as the happiest place on earth, is the behemoth working home to an extremely large community of performers. According to Sherman's Travel, it is the globe's largest theme park, sprawling beyond the confines of more than 26,000 acres (an area roughly the

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6. Olsen interview.

size of San Francisco). In 2019 the park reported a workforce of 77,000 employees.<sup>7</sup> Disney draws in dancers, improv artists, street performers, musicians, acrobats, comedians, and singers from across the globe with the enticement of a steady job, regular work schedules, benefits, and regular pay. For many, these advantages come at the expense of creative autonomy. Chase Padgett is an alumnus of the University of Central Florida. He premiered his first solo show, *6 Guitars*, at the Orlando Fringe Festival and went on to enjoy a sold-out tour of North America. The actor, musician, and writer credits the Fringe with helping him launch his successful career and discussed theme park employment with me, in contrast to Fringe performance opportunities.<sup>8</sup> “The parks give lots of stability,” he says, “but you don’t get to really create much in those shows.” Padgett worked for Disney and Universal Studios as a comedian and actor before success on the fringe circuit helped lead him to artistic autonomy: “They [theme parks] are fun and rewarding in their own way,” he admits, “but I wouldn’t call it artistically fulfilling. Fringe, however, gives an outlet to ANY creative to make ANYTHING. *6 Guitars* wouldn’t have ever happened at the parks, but Fringe gave it a cradle to be born in.” Padgett is one of thousands of creatives who look to theme parks to help pay the bills but have to look elsewhere for creative autonomy.

Though the number of theme park performers is in constant flux, journalist and culture critic Seth Kubersky reports that pre-COVID, Disney was employing almost 900

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7. “4,000 more Disney theme park division employees are losing their jobs,” *Tampa Bay Times* (Tampa, Florida), November 26, 2020, <https://www.tampabay.com/news/business/2020/11/26/4000-more-disney-theme-park-division-employees-are-losing-their-jobs/>

8. Chase Padgett, email message to author, September 1, 2021.

Actors Equity members for general operations.<sup>9</sup> He estimates that Universal employs more than 200 non-union actors, a number that more-than triples during Halloween. Widen the scope to consider that Disney and Universal are just two of more than a hundred Orlando attractions, including giants such as SeaWorld and Legoland, and the result is a high concentration of actors, dancers, comedians, and musicians, many of whom harbor artistic aspirations beyond repetition of theme-park shows, performed hourly before visiting tourists.

Orlando Shakes Artistic Director Jim Helsinger addressed the need for theme park talent from a local theatre perspective in an interview with *Orlando Sentinel's* Matt Palm, asserting, "It is so important to our existence to have a wonderful pool of fantastic actors living here in Orlando."<sup>10</sup> Past OIFF Producer Chris Gibson echoed the vitality of park artists in an interview I conducted with him: "People talk about how odd it is that something like the Fringe Festival exists in a town that's known for its theme parks." He noted, however, that theme talent is part of what makes the Fringe successful. "That's actually part of the reason it works," he insisted, "because all of these talented artists are employed by Disney and Universal. They need a creative outlet, and the Fringe

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9. In addition to being one of the main theatre reviewers of OIFF shows annually, Kubersky is a nationally recognized contributing author to such publications as *The Unofficial Guide to Universal Orlando*, *The Unofficial Guide to Disney*, *The Unofficial Guide to Las Vegas*, and *The Intrepid Traveler's Universal Orlando: The Ultimate Guide to the Ultimate Theme Parks*. Kubersky's travel commentary has been featured by *Attractions Magazine*, *USA Today*, Virgin Airlines' "Voyeur", and Jim Hill Media.

10. Matt Palm, "Disney-union actor dispute could ultimately hurt Orlando theaters," *Orlando Sentinel* (Orlando, Florida) July 15, 2020, <https://www.orlandosentinel.com/entertainment/arts-and-theater/os-et-disney-actors-union-repercussions-20200715-hkma2uynhrfpnmtbgumhkcqecy-story.html>.

provides that.”<sup>11</sup> OIFF founder Rick Kunst also expressed in our interview that the presence of theme park performers quelled any concern he had about having access to enough talent to kickstart the Fringe. “Starting out,” he said, “we obviously didn’t have an established giant festival to attract artists, but we had frickin’ Disney, right? Disney had people that came from everywhere and had all this theatre experience.” He explained that it was a comfort knowing that a large and passionate group of skilled performers were accessible: “We potentially had this giant pool of people to pull from that was steeped in theatre and musical theatre.”<sup>12</sup>

The less cheery side of the theme-performance community includes a contingency that views theme parks as places where artists endure abuses, where Mickey Mouse is known as “The Rat,” and where park-work is viewed as a place where talents are dispassionately commodified. Jobs With Justice is a union rights organization dedicated to advancing workers’ rights and fighting for economic justice. In 2018, the 34-year-old organization helped Disneyland and Disney World employees to win their campaign to raise minimum pay to a livable wage. According to spokesperson Joel Mendelson, Wages at Disney world are 68% lower than the national average.<sup>13</sup> The park has a history of treating workers poorly. For example, Fortune Magazine reported that in 2017, the Department of Labor demanded Disney pay back \$3.8 million

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11. Gibson interview.

12. Kunst interview.

13. Joel Mendelson, “Disney World is Anything But Magical for its Employees,” Jobs With Justice, December 5, 2017, <https://www.jwj.org/disney-world-is-anything-but-magical-for-its-employees>.



to Florida employees because the theme park had violated wage laws by deducting costume fees from their paychecks. Disney was also fined for failing to properly pay employees overtime, and for paying many of its workers less than Florida's \$7.25 minimum wage.<sup>14</sup> The questionable treatment of theme park employees is concerning to supporters of the arts. Journalist Matt Palm predicted in an *Orlando Sentinel* article that an exodus of theme park performers would do more than deplete attraction visitors' experience: "If fewer professional performers have reason to call Central Florida home, the area's arts fans are going to lose out, too."<sup>15</sup>

Another example of the dark side of the relationship between artists and attractions are the creatives who become happily drawn into the parks by the lure of steady work only to find that they are more expendable than anticipated. Once deemed no longer useful, their contracts are simply discontinued, and they find themselves without meaningful employment. For example, OIFF past Assistant Producer and current Outreach Coordinator Genevieve Bernard moved to Orlando to choreograph for Disney. She explains that she was let go with no warning. "Suddenly they were like, we're done with you, we're done with it all," she remembers, "So then I was left having just moved to Orlando, knowing nothing of arts in Central Florida."<sup>16</sup> Bernard's

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14. Jennifer Calfas, "Disney Is Going to Pay \$3.8 Million to Employees Who Were Charged for Their Costumes," *Fortune Magazine*, March 17, 2017, <https://fortune.com/2017/03/17/disney-labor-department-costumes-employees-charged/>.

15. Matt Palm, "Disney-union actor dispute could ultimately hurt Orlando theaters," *Orlando Sentinel* (Orlando, Florida) July 15, 2020, <https://www.orlandosentinel.com/entertainment/arts-and-theater/os-et-disney-actors-union-repercussions-20200715-hkma2uynhrfpnmtbgumhkcqecy-story.html>.

16. Bernard interview.

experience echoes the experiences of Fringe founders Olson, Anthony, and Kunst of SAK Theatre, who were similarly let go only to forge a new identity that eventually led to the birth of the Orlando International Fringe Festival.

Just as the Edinburgh Fringe rose up in rebellion to the Edinburgh International Festival's dismissive elitism, the Orlando International Fringe Festival rose up in the face of being scrapped to create platforms hospitable to any artist with the desire to take the stage. Thirty years later, the Orlando Fringe continues to be a welcoming arena for artists who yearn for freedom to showcase their talents and wish to enjoy being unrestrained by the programming and rules of the attractions. Whether the Fringe's proximity to the attractions is viewed as a benefit for locals, who can annually take shelter in the OIFF from an omnipresent vacation industry or viewed as an incentive to entice out-of-town artists to the Fringe for lagniappe vacation opportunities, the happy accident of proximity to the many attractions of Central Florida is taken advantage of to increase the Orlando Fringe Festival's artist-centric feel.

One final example within the happy accident tier centers on the advantageous positioning of the OIFF in relation to the touring fringe circuits. Though the touring circuits are organic, amorphous, and apt to shift as other fringe festivals rise and fall or existing fringes modify their dates, Orlando is viewed as the start to what is loosely viewed as a fringe season for anyone wishing to take their show on the road to tour some of the larger fringes in the US or Canada. Prior to April, there is a large gap in nearby fringe production. The existing schedule for the OIFF brings general Festival programming to a close on the Sunday before Memorial Day. In the closing days, ticket

sales are calculated from the full Festival run, and the top-grossing show from each venue is given “Patron’s Pick” status and one final production slot on Memorial Day.

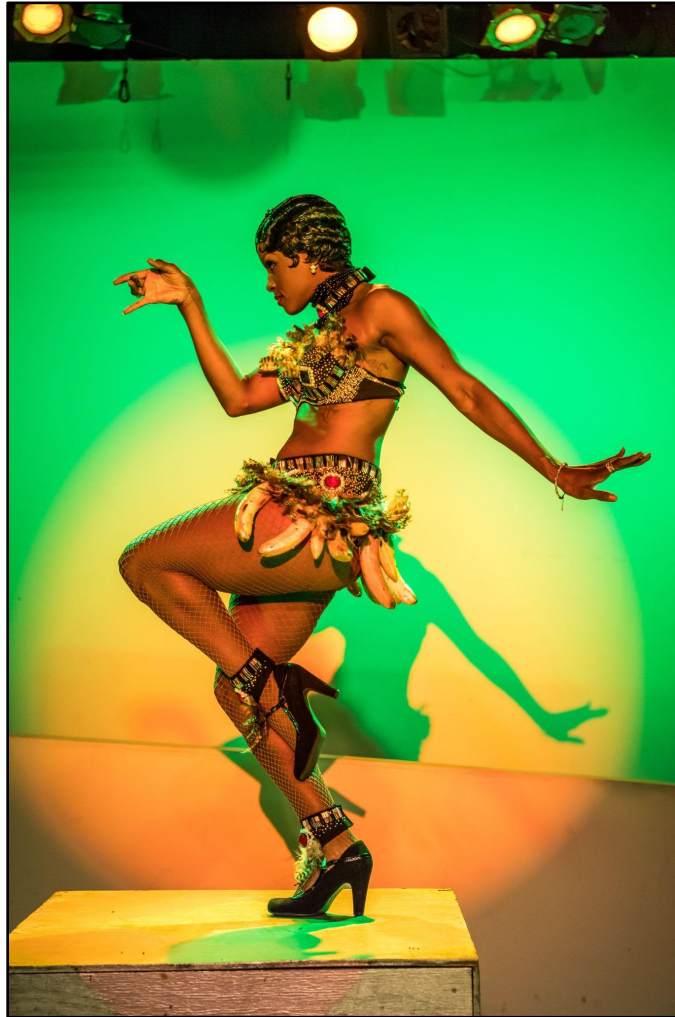


Figure 16. Orlando-based performer, Tymisha Harris in *Josephine Baker: Burlesque Cabaret Dream Play*, which launched in Orlando and has toured the North American circuit. Photo credit: Roberto Gonzalez

Other artists wishing to “fringe-hop” on a tour of the bigger US fringes can go directly to the Cincinnati Fringe, which opens that same week in June and provides a generally smooth chronology of American fringes. Artists wishing to take to the Canadian circuit can lobby to remain in Orlando to do hold-over shows and then head to the Montreal Fringe, which kicks off the first week in July and then funnels into a similar succession

of Canadian fringes. Only a handful of artists native to Central Florida continue on to tour their shows each year, while the majority simply go back to their day jobs and then do the fringe again the following year. However, most national and international artists continue forward, some even riding the fringe circuits indefinitely.

The auspicious spot Orlando Fringe enjoys as the spring calendar leader of the major North American circuits has a positive draw for national and international artists. The circuit-savvy performers see this early Fringe as a perk, a supportive environment that can propel them into a sustainable circuit tour. “I’ve loved opening things in Orlando,” explained touring performer Chase Padgett, “It’s a supportive fest that wants you to succeed. Very fertile soil to start a seed of a show.”<sup>17</sup> Past Producer Beth Marshall explains that artists gravitate to Orlando “...because enough of them see the festival as not just lucrative, but a place to launch, a place to start. And we are so perfectly placed strategically in the lineup.”<sup>18</sup> Over the decades, Marshall and other Fringe administrators have edged OIFF dates further into spring so that the OIFF culminates just prior to the beginning of other national and Canadian festivals. This has helped to embed the Orlando Fringe into a symbiotically beneficial relationship with performers.

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17. Padgett email.

18. Marshall interview.

## Tier Two: Common Fringe Perks

Another tier of artist-centric traits relevant to the OIFF are considered common to most fringe models, especially those from North America. These examples unite the Festival in kinship to our neighboring fringes and add cohesiveness to the fringe artist experience while working to keep artists well provided for. The following representative practices include a commitment to furnishing robust technical assistance, for creating a platform for unified show promotion, and for nurturing relationships between artists and the local community with the aim of creating housing opportunities for visiting artists.

Fringe experiences in the CAFF model tend to offer generous tech support packages that cover all basic production needs including venue management, lighting needs, and sound provisions. For example, stage dimensions and stage-plots are given to performers ahead of time to ensure that their shows are designed to work in their assigned venues. This is customary of other fringes too. Such standardization not only makes things easier on performers by allowing them to arrive in their venues properly staged and with set pieces appropriate to the space, but it also benefits the festivals because there is less time lost during the tightly scheduled tech rehearsals due to restaging snafus brought on by misunderstood spatial constraints.

Even in the early and lean years, the OIFF did not shirk on providing quality tech support for its performers. While volunteers provide the lion's share of the workforce during the festival, it has been the practice of the OIFF since its inception to allot budgetary support to hire highly skilled and experienced venue technicians. This support helps the seasoned artists to bring forth technically polished work, and it is

exceptionally helpful and educational for fledgling artists. The OIFF's technical assistance is one of the key modes of remaining artist-centric, and it offers artists access to lighting and sound equipment and expert operation professionals which many performers would not be able to provide for themselves.

The OIFF's technical support began as a collective of venue techs under the management of Cap Spence and his then assistant, OIFF legend Dave Funderburk. After OIFF's inaugural year, Cap turned the Fringe over to Dave Funderburk to pursue a career as a staging supervisor for Super Bowl halftime shows. Funderburk served as technical director for the Fringe for more than a third of the Festival's lifespan to date. Since the Festival moved to Loch Haven, it has remained under the management of Technical Director Amy Hadley, who had worked on the Fringe shows of friends in an unofficial capacity since the late 1990s, while employed at area theme parks. In 2004, she was hired to run the Margeson Theatre for Orlando Shakes. When the OIFF fully moved to Loch Haven in 2005, the OIFF's Technical Director Rob Jones asked her to also run that venue for the Fringe, which she did for two years. In 2007, Jones retired, and Hadley took the position.

While at the helm, Hadley launched an initiative to further extend the Festival's support for artists. Central to this initiative was a series of thorough venue-by-venue video walk-throughs in which she offers highly detailed tech specs and space management tips. This not only helps groups decide which venues are most viable for their specific shows; it also helps the artist to plan and design their pieces for maximum efficiency within their chosen spaces. Specifically, performers are given stage dimensions, proximity from stage to audience seating, wing space and location of

entrances and exits. They are given an overview of pre-programmed warm and cool upstage and downstage lighting areas which they can then incorporate into their own lighting designs. Because spaces are shared and used with fast turnaround times, these directives ensure that performing groups do not create technical needs that are unattainable and ensures that they are armed ahead of time with the information they need to arrive prepared for their pre-Fest technical rehearsals.

In addition to walk-throughs, the tech team inserts duplicated video training segments into each venue overview designed to help performers succeed in working the high-traffic communal spaces. Artists at Orlando Fringe and in most comparable fringes of the nearby circuits can expect a one-to-three-hour dedicated technical rehearsal in their venue. Visiting artist tech rehearsals typically happen as close to the festival start date to cut down on time the artist must spend in Orlando. Artists are given prohibited items lists and are advised to keep strict adherence to run time limitations. OIFF policy is to abruptly shut down shows in danger of encroaching on the next performer's load-in time, a policy that is enforced by its tech crews. Because shows run back to back in each of the venues, it is the charge of each venue tech to keep precise management of the rapid set-up and breakdown of each show.

The artistic freedom afforded to OIFF performance groups is largely made possible because of an incredible feat of management and discipline on the part of the Fringe's contracted technicians. To illustrate how much responsibility lies on OIFF's technical team, I offer the example of what a traditional non-fringe technical rehearsal process consists of. For ease of comparison, I take the University of Central Florida's Stage Management Manual—the guide for its productions—as an example of the

traditional tech rehearsal model.<sup>19</sup> Though productions involve a large and variable number of technicians, for the sake of relating the UCF process to OIFF technicians, I focus exclusively on schedule items related to light and sound technicians.

UCF production crews are traditionally called to a dry tech on the Friday before opening week. Dry tech is done without actors and is a time when sound and light technicians rehearse a play's cues to achieve proper light and sound levels. Prior to this, designers will have designed "looks" for each lighting cue, and technicians will have hung lighting instruments and created color schemes. Dry tech often lasts multiple hours. Regular tech/wet tech is a technical rehearsal conducted the following day with actors on stage. During this process, the show is run from the top and action is stopped by the stage manager each time a technician needs to fix a cue. Having personally served as an actor for more than ten UCF productions, I can attest to the fact that these rehearsals can easily last up to six hours. Sunday, another full wet tech is scheduled with actors, giving the production team another run through of the show to fix technical issues. The Monday prior to opening night, a tech/dress rehearsal is conducted where actors perform in costume and technicians run through the whole show, stopping and starting if needed. UCF then schedules tech/dress rehearsals Tuesday and Wednesday, and then shows open Thursday. Within this traditional theatre scenario, it is customary for one technician to be assigned to the running of lighting cues, and

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19. Theater UCF Stage Management Handbook 2019-2020, University of Central Florida, July 2019, [https://performingarts.cah.ucf.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/20/2020/10/2019-stage\\_management\\_handbook.pdf](https://performingarts.cah.ucf.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/20/2020/10/2019-stage_management_handbook.pdf).



another for running of sound cues. Thus, technicians in the traditional model have a full six days of devoted rehearsals to perfect their work for one single show.

Fringe technicians bear a staggeringly heavy load in comparison. One single technician is assigned to each official venue for the Orlando International Fringe Festival. Each technician has one single technical rehearsal for each show, giving them three hours as opposed to six days to set levels and to learn and perfect cues. Each technician operates both sound and lights, doing the work traditionally assigned to two individuals. This feat is then multiplied by the fact that the technician must accomplish this for an average of eight separate productions that share their venue. Once this pre-Festival task is complete, the technician will run each show an average of seven times each over the course of two weeks, in back-to-back succession, with only forty minutes between each show to break down one show and reset for the next.

While all North American fringes supply technical support for their artists, OIFF Technical Director Amy Hadley explains the artist-centric focus of tech management in Orlando: “We’re one of the only fringes where you have one tech, and that tech stays with you through the entire process.” Hadley admits that she asks a lot of her technicians but points out that the constancy of one tech is vital to proper support of the artists, asserting, “It is important to me because they (performers) need that sense of continuity. The same technician that techs your show will be running it. Every time.”<sup>20</sup> Hadley refers to the job as a very specific animal because it requires an intense ability to troubleshoot, multitask, and to consistently be the calmest person in the room. In an

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20. Hadley interview.

industry often dominated by males, it stood out to me how often in our interview Hadley referred to her technicians with feminine pronouns. A look at the OIFF venue techs of 2021 reveals that five of the eight were women. Hadley also noted that she enjoys a great deal of retention with her technicians. In her fourteen years as TD for Fringe, she confirmed that many have been there as long as she has, and reports that some of her newer techs have been with her at least five years. This illustrates how committed the team is to the greater purpose.

The successful flow of the extremely vigorous OIFF schedule depends on hundreds of shows running on time and without issue. Fringe techs manage all of this in support of the artists who need only concern themselves with their own performances. This high level of support is, within traditional models, generally only enjoyed by moneyed self-managed artists or artists employed into larger established theatres. The Fringe offers equal technical support to all.

#### Artist Billeting

Fringes labor to serve their locals. They also benefit from the inclusion of visiting artists. In order to create a diverse national and international presence on the artist roster, the OIFF has to consider how visiting artists will contend with housing issues. Groups traveling to Orlando generally stay a minimum of fourteen days, including their intro tech rehearsal and the full Festival run. Fourteen days of lodging in Orlando is an expensive undertaking.<sup>21</sup> Though performers could opt for a truncated show run and

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21. A fourteen day stay at the nearest hotel to the OIFF, the Comfort Suites Downtown, averages around \$2,782 total according to the hotel's booking webpage.

avoid staying and performing for the full two-week Festival, doing so would cut short their ability to build up and cash in on word-of-mouth advertising which is a major driving force in OIFF ticket sales. Groups looking to save money could also opt to bring in solo shows or productions which could run with a very small cast, but the lengthy stay still becomes cost-prohibitive for many artists.

While on the touring road themselves in the nineties, the OIFF founders gained a visceral respect for the financial challenges caused by having to find lodging for travelling performers. You cannot afford to tour if you have to pay all your show proceeds directly to a hotelier. This understanding caused the founders to adopt a circuit tradition of billeting. From year one, billeting has been an artist-centric “perk” for performers visiting the Orlando Fringe and has since become an intimate if grassroots affair, with performers being invited into the homes of friends of the producers and even those of the producers themselves. Billeting got its start as a sort of Festival-sanctioned tradition of couch surfing. Once assigned to the Festival, artist groups were invited to discuss their exact housing needs with the producers. Arrival and departure dates would be communicated as well as the specific number of rooms needed. Whenever possible, the OIFF staff would then connect the group to a local, willing host who would then open their homes for the entirety of the visit. The financial impact that a spare room or spare couch made on what an artist could rake in at the end of a festival was sometimes enough to either make or break a production.

As the OIFF grew in size and stature, billeting became an expanding issue for the Fringe as more and more national and international performers were drawn to Orlando. As a result of this growth, billeting became a more structured and robust

undertaking. The billeting process grew into a task allocated to the Festival producer. Formalized surveys were created to make sure that artists were matched appropriately. In the survey used in 2016, for instance, prospective billetters were asked whether they had previously housed people for the Fringe, and if so, who those artists were. They were asked if they had just one room or more and asked to identify if the room available was inside their main house, part of a guest house/mother-in-law suite, or some other configuration of space. The OIFF survey also inquired about bathroom access, seeking information on whether the artists would have a private or shared bathroom. To avoid any possible allergy issues, billetters were asked if they had pets. While billetters are not required or expected to provide transportation, most visiting performers would arrive without cars, therefore prospective hosts were asked if they would be willing to give rides whenever possible. They were asked if they lived near a bus stop or if they had a bike they could lend the performer. In addition to these general questions, the OIFF administration began to understand that the more they worked to cultivate the pairing of billetters and billettees, the more mutually beneficial the experience would be for all parties. In a 2016 interview, the Director Michael Marinaccio expressed his allegiance to facilitating fortuitous bonds. "I approach the whole process like I'm a matchmaker," he explains. "I try to be as thorough and hands-on as possible so I can create the perfect match. If I do my job right, I will make everything easier for next year because the artists and the billetters will have fallen in love and will obviously stay with each other next year. Putting in extra work up front means less work next year."<sup>22</sup> In order to create the

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22. Mike Marinaccio, interview by author, digital recording, Orlando, FL, May 29, 2016.

perfect match, housing surveys got more detailed, looking more and more like an application for online dating. Individuals found themselves answering more personal questions such as whether they had preferences in age, gender, or type of performer. Billetters were asked if they had any particular desire for a dancer as opposed to a theatre practitioner, or a singer versus a poet. Smoking preferences were noted as were requests for artists from a particular country or state of origin.

Parallel surveys were gathered from each group seeking free housing, and OIFF staff dedicated themselves to finding perfect fits. Though billeting remained a “free” service in terms of monetary exchange, the OIFF found that incentivizing the process helped to ensure that boarding offers had less of a chance of falling through. The OIFF then began offering All Access Passes to community members in exchange for their living space, allowing them to attend any non-sold-out show free of charge. As a result, artists benefit, and the supporting community feels a deeper sense of inclusion.

### Tier Three: Artist-Centric Practices Unique to the OIFF

Of the artist-centric practices and initiatives that are particularly representative of the Orlando International Fringe, a final subdivision may be made for operational practices entirely unique to the OIFF (or at least that were started with the OIFF before expanding into the larger network). Such practices may be found within the larger fringe community but hold special prominence and focus within the OIFF, often because of connection to the personal driving interests of specific producers and Orlando Fringe administrators. An example of this is the creation of a button system to allow for undiminished artist proceeds.

One of the most direct ways the OIFF stays true to its mission to support the artist and prioritize artist prosperity is to give back 100% of ticket sales to the artists.<sup>23</sup> This is accomplished, in part, by implementation of a button system which founder Terry Olson says the OIFF helped to popularize.<sup>24</sup> Patrons of indoor Fringe shows must purchase a button, which then allows them to buy individual ticket shows. The button revenue helps to support the Fringe, ticket revenue goes directly to the performance groups. Olson credits the Orlando Fringe as the first large scale fringe to come out of the gate using buttons as a continued initiative to help fund operations without the need for taking a cut of artists' proceeds. Not only does this endow the artist with the obvious perk of making maximum revenue; it also helps bring visibility to the Festival by providing an army of patrons who travel throughout the surrounding area for two weeks essentially wearing promotional material. It is difficult to overlook the mass of Fringe buttons seen in local shops, restaurants, pubs, and cafes every year during the last fourteen days of May.

#### Protected Performance Slots for Minorities

To be truly artist-centric and offer performance opportunities for all performers, it must be acknowledged that there is an imbalance in representation for certain underserved groups.<sup>25</sup> The OIFF aims to correct the imbalance. During the OIFF's

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23. For statistics on artist disbursement from 2017 through 2021, refer to Appendix M. This is also an excellent resource for attendance, profits, and growth statistics.

24. Images of official Fringe buttons for each year of the Festival may be found in Appendix K.

25. In an interview with Beth Marshall, the past producer noted that the largest issue in diversity equilibrium has been a comparative lack in people of color.

inaugural year, it was decided that though the Festival would not be curated or adjudicated and that artists would be welcome without restriction, provisions must be made to ensure that the Fringe lineup be resolutely diverse. To accomplish this, the founders set aside protected performance slots specifically to create cultural inclusivity.

In the Festival's pioneer years, this simply entailed holding slots aside for under-represented groups while the rest of the artists slots were filled on a first-come basis. When the festival grew to a size necessitating a lottery system to manage artist applications, this system shifted to its current incarnation wherein applicants self-populate separate lottery tiers (based on venue size). The lottery then accommodates performers with adherence to geographical quotas that allot 50% of the spaces for locals, 25% for national acts outside of the Central Florida region, and 25% dedicated to International performers. The founders' diversity set-asides have since grown into what is known as the Amplified Voices Lottery. This lottery happens prior to the main lottery and reserves 30% of OIFF spots to qualifying groups. To qualify, producers or creators of the production (not simply cast members) must hail from a marginalized community which the Fringe identifies as "groups of persons at risk of being subjected to discrimination due to personal characteristics such as race, gender, ethnicity, age, religion/beliefs, health status, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity."<sup>26</sup> The Amplified Voices Lottery aims to create a protected climate of inclusivity, equity, accessibility, and diversity.

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26. "Festival Managed," The Orlando Fringe, accessed September 12, 2021, <https://orlandofringe.org/artists/festival-managed/>.

## Unified Auditions

While most Fringe shows have historically been internally cast by the individual production companies assigned to the official line-up, the OIFF has since created a Unified Auditions initiative to extend support to its artists, particularly to the local performers, directors, and producers. While the Orlando Fringe does not aid in the casting or selection process, it provides a space for the event and acts as host. Auditions are generally held twice near the end of January and are run similarly to American college theatre conference auditions. Performers are required to submit a headshot and resume and are invited to present a one-minute comedic monologue and a contrasting one-minute dramatic monologue, and they have the option to include a one-minute acapella song and any dance numbers or specialty acts they feel may help showcase their talents. The Fringe gathers each participant's contact information and disburses it to the practitioners looking to cast. While the Unified Auditions predominantly served local artists, a COVID-induced shift to video-auditioning has opened the event to potentially benefit out-of-town artists as well.

## Fringe Central

After interviewing eight OIFF producers, artists, performers, volunteers, circuit veterans, staff, press, and sponsors, I found that one of the most mentioned Orlando-oriented and OFF-specific Fringe treasures is Fringe Central. From its inception, the Orlando Fringe footprint has been designed around a core hub housing an outdoor entertainment area, beer tent, a communal gathering space, and food and merchandise vendors. This hub is known as Fringe Central. Until the move to Loch Haven Park, Fringe Central was located either on Church Street or a few blocks north near Wall



Street Plaza. After the move, Fringe Central took over the large lawn separating the Orlando Repertory Complex from the lot shared by the Orlando Shakespeare complex and the Orlando Museum of Art. The space, also referred to in its Loch Haven incarnation as “the lawn of fabulousness,” is an important contributor to the energy, culture, and functionality of the Fringe. Though its location and core components have changed over the years, it remains one of the defining features of the OIFF, and much of what it

accomplishes loops back to create yet another artist-centric asset. Specifically, artists benefit because the space creates a contained communal domain for networking, marketing, and celebration.



Figure 17. Ben Singer, touring OIFF Artist from Modern Robot of Greensboro, NC Performing songs from his show At the Crossroads: Music for Faust on the Lawn, 2017. Courtesy of Ben Singer.

### Networking in Fringe Central

A powerful artist-centric perk of Fringe Central is the fact that it provides a specific geographical locale for fringe participants to mingle with each other. This mingling, while seemingly casual from an outside observer’s vantagepoint, is a vital

form of networking which can help a fringe artist connect to people and resources. To understand how important Fringe Central is, it may be beneficial to consider how other fringes struggle without a central gathering spot to give the festival a sense of cohesion. I will use the New Orleans Fringe Festival as an example. NOLA Fringe hit the Crescent City in 2008, dissolved after the fall of 2014, and then morphed the following year into a new entity called “faux/real [a chain of events].” The NOLA Fringe, which ended its run with a staggering 46 venues, was unquestionably born into a city accustomed to embracing outside-the-box entertainment.<sup>27</sup>

While the factors which brought NOLA Fringe to a close are outside the scope of this study, I would argue that the lack of a festival center served to handicap the organization. NOLA Fringe ran similarly to the OIFF in its early years by operating with a mix of independent venues. While the Marigny Opera House, Mardi-Gras Zone, and the Shadowbox Theatre served as some of NOLA Fringe’s prime venues, there was no major established central hub for the festival. The 46 venues which the festival boasted were not only spread beyond a comfortable walking distance, but they were also spread across multiple neighborhoods, such as Bywater and Marigny, which flank the Esplanade border of the French Quarter and the Central City neighborhood, which bypasses the opposite Canal Street border of the Quarter by over a mile. The walk would not only take patrons through dangerous parts of town, but it would also take them an hour to get from one part of the footprint to the other. The audience experience

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27. For a full article on the dissolving of the New Orleans Fringe Festival, visit the Times Picayune’s nola.com article of December 8, 2015: [https://www.nola.com/entertainment\\_life/arts/article\\_e6bf79af-3482-542a-86a6-f0b78e9e4960.html](https://www.nola.com/entertainment_life/arts/article_e6bf79af-3482-542a-86a6-f0b78e9e4960.html).

for a patron wishing to take in multiple back-to-back shows, a customary practice for most fringe-goers, would likely require multiple cross-city trips by automobile or public transportation, unless the patron self-relegated to just one portion of the festival footprint. Between shows, NOLA Fringe patrons could pop into any of hundreds of nearby pubs or restaurants, but the communal feel that is central to most festivals would be wholly absent because no central area is available.

Conversely, the OIFF's Fringe Central provides a place for fringe-goers to share the experience of the festival. It allows audience members to commune, and it serves mightily in facilitating networking among the artists as well as patrons, sponsors, and Fringe staff and administration. Traveling performers who hobnob there sometimes arrange to help each other transport set pieces, share props, pitch each other's shows after curtain calls, or even hitch rides with each other or caravan to the next fringe festival together. Performers who take advantage of Fringe Central to schmooze and make contacts regularly return to the OIFF in following years having forged collaborative partnerships and artistic ventures with each other.

The lawn also serves to further break the wall between artist and spectator. The same kind of mentality that leads some theatregoers to wait outside a Broadway theatre in hopes of meeting cast members, leads to patrons finding delight in having access to performers at Fringe Central. Audience members are afforded the opportunity to respond to an artist's work, to thank them, share reactions, ask questions, and even buy their favorite performer a drink. OIFF co-founder, Rick Kunst explains it thus:

The hub creates a personal connection with the audience. The audience goes there, and they go, *Oh my God, that's that guy we just saw writhing on the floor, I remember him or that's the woman that did that show.* It is a really smart model, to create that connection with the audience, because once the audience owns it,

once they experience more than just watching, they have a connection to it, a visceral connection. They're hooked. They're there forever.<sup>28</sup>

The networking leads to more engaged and invested patrons which leads to more people attending shows.

Some artists also find this interaction with patrons mutually beneficial as they get live feedback, learn how different regions favor different types of entertainment, and even learn how to mold returning productions to find greater success. For example, OIFF administrator Paula Whigham points out that the buzz about nudity at the Orlando Fringe has specifically molded shows because performers listen to what draws customer, “I know groups that have traveled from other countries and their show in other countries has no nudity, but they added a nipple for Orlando Fringe because that sells tickets here.”<sup>29</sup> The lawn acts as a place for performers to gain feedback. It becomes a workshopping venture. Mump and Smoot, a famous Canadian clown duo with whom Kunst collaborated, told him during the OIFF’s first years that it didn’t matter to them how good or bad the festival was. It was valuable just for the hang and the chance to workshop a show. Having a physical location like the lawn that offers open access and open communication between practitioners and patrons helps deepen the workshop aspect for performers.

This interactive space similarly adds value for sponsors, who enjoy feeling intimately engaged with the organization they are helping to support. Savvy OIFF staff

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28. Judging by the statistics in Appendix D, Kunst may not be far off. Of the patrons surveyed in 2021, the average number of years each individual had attended the Fringe was just over 16 years.

29. Paula Whigham, interview by author, digital recording, Orlando, FL, August 1, 2020.

recognize value in these types of interactions. Paula Whigham, who is director of OIFF sponsor relations, often circulates through the lawn giving out drink tickets to sponsors, providing party pod tents for them, and introducing them to performers. She understands that if the actors and sponsors mingle, sponsors are more likely to feel invested in the Orlando Fringe and are more likely to sign on as a returning sponsor. I have personally witnessed this approach lead to the signing of sponsor contracts in the beer tent. While this practice may seem solely geared to making the sponsors feel valued, that value translates into real dollars, which in turn support the operations of the Festival, further protecting the OIFF's policy of returning 100% of ticket sales back to performers.

### Marketing in Fringe Central

To promote their shows, Fringe performance groups distribute show flyers advertising their productions, hang posters, create a-frame signs, purchase ads in the program, do occasional television or radio interviews, and take to social media to promote their shows. But no form of advertising is more effective at drawing Fringe crowds than word of mouth. Fringe Central is where audience members unwind, imbibe, and share opinions on shows they have seen. This gathering gives artists the perfect location to vie for audience support, to entice patrons to see their shows, to show off their bodies, their skills, and their charm. Artists who are seasoned from fringe touring often view time spent at Fringe Central as part of their jobs, some schedule "lawn time" as they would schedule a meeting or a performance. While other fringes that lack a central hub only offer in-person promotion outside theatre venues, the lawn lets

performers expand their captive pre-show audience interaction beyond venue waiting lines into the much more Dionysian realm of the lawn.



Figure 18. OIFF Performers handing out flyers on the lawn for their show. Courtesy of the OIFF archive.

### Celebrating in Fringe Central

In her introduction to *Festivalising! Theatrical Events, Politics and Culture*, Vicki Ann Cremona notes that a festival is a “public event that is inserted into a particular cultural context which bestows upon it the qualities by which it is perceived and



identified.”<sup>30</sup> The hallmark qualities and identity of the OIFF have always been mission-driven, with an aim to bring together diverse communities in a spirit of communal celebration. Fringe Central is where the success of its devotion to and celebration of inclusivity are unabashedly on display. The outdoor stage, the beer tent, the bar tent, the party pods, and the dining areas of the lawn invariably house a mix of people more varied than most individuals usually encounter in any other environment outside of Fringe. It is a raucous, carnivalesque space that acts as a binding agent between artists and patrons, and the celebratory energy it produces floods back into the venues when audience members return to the theatres for their next show. It is an infectious, circular current that runs throughout the Festival.



Figure 19. Artists mingle with the crowd in Fringe Central

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30. Vicki Ann Cremona, “The Festivalising Process,” in *Festivalising! Theatrical Events, Politics and Culture*, Themes in Theater, Volume 3, eds. Temple Hauptfleisch, Shulamith Lev-Aladgem, Jaqueline Martin, Willmar Sauter and Henri Schoenmakers (Netherlands: Brill, 2007), 5-13.

Fringe Central contributes meaningfully to the culture and identity of the OIFF. This festive locale impacts the collective Fringe experience. Space is important. Cremona backs up this sentiment, noting that “the spatial dimension of the festival is an essential factor, as it assumes liminal qualities of celebration.”<sup>31</sup> These liminal qualities as related to the lawn, beer tent, and party pods are transition areas for OIFF patrons and performers, a place to gather, celebrate, and commune between immersion experiences. Cremona explains that festivals which encompass multiple spaces “engender a whole range of activities besides the actual performances themselves, and in all cases, areas for meeting, discussion and relaxation, appear as essential to festival culture.”<sup>32</sup> This carries special weight for OIFF participants because the diversity of OIFFF programming often thrusts individuals into starkly contrasting and often intense performance environments that benefit from a communal transition area.

In an interview I conducted with Fringe performer and Central Florida artist Sam Hazel, he explains, “I’ve seen many shows at the Fringe that stood me on my ear to the point that I wasn’t sure I could refresh my point of view enough to see something 180 degrees opposite.”<sup>33</sup> Hazel addresses the lawn as a vital locale for processing and synthesizing, “...but wandering there in the park, in the dark, it seems easier to process

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31. Cremona, 9.

32. Cremona, 8.

33. Sam Hazel, interview by author, Orlando, FL, May 2018. Hazel has performed for the OIFF for a span of over twenty years.



with all these diverse people milling around fresh with energy from performing in or seeing a show. That open space is our common bond for discussion.” The lawn of the OIFF bridges radically different experiences and gives Fringe participants time to process. This benefits both patron and performer because it cleanses the palate, making it possible for more art to be digested.

The design of festival spaces can also feed into direct support of purpose or mission. For example, Cremona cites the communal stages of the International Fajr Theatre Festival in Iran and the Festival of the Arts in Adelaide as designated spaces where local citizens can witness a convergence of productions from other countries. Because both festivals are dedicated to bringing together international art and artists, the shared performance spaces themselves became locales for illustrating to the locals the mission of the festivals. The OIFF lawn functions similarly. The Orlando International Fringe operates on a mission of diversity and inclusion. The lawn is the place where this focus can be physically witnessed and taken in. A spectator can walk into the Festival’s green space and observe human representation of the commingling of subsets of the community. Orlando Fringe icon Michael Wanzie explains how rare that commingling is. “I honestly don’t know of any other situation I have ever been in in my entire life, and I’m 63, where I ever felt such a kinship, a camaraderie with so many divergent people, people that I never associate with in any other situation,” he marvels. “There’s no way in hell you’re going to get the divergence of people anywhere else that you get at Fringe.” Sam Hazel mirrors this sentiment: “When you look at the lawn, you see that diversity doesn’t mean conflict. The park doesn’t belong to anyone and yet all of us belong there, sharing what we have seen and heard and felt. Performer and patron. Together.” He

sums it up in relation to Fringe ethos, explaining, “The Fringe is supposed to be an avalanche of style, purpose and integrity. And that lawn is the meeting place of the culture clash that is Fringe.”<sup>34</sup>

The sentiments of these Fringe performers do not simply identify the central hub as an enjoyable place to be; they position it as representative of the mission which has fueled OIFF operations since its inception. The safe space that the OIFF provides for this divergence of people is what makes the Fringe so hospitable to performers of every walk of life. Performers at the Fringe therefore do not work in silos. They converge, commingle, and share communal spaces outside of their performance venues with audience members and with fellow practitioners alike. They embody the Fringe ethos in the process. Add to this the representative support structures mentioned within this chapter such as feats of highly managed technical support, protected artist proceeds, artist billeting, and a chance to escape *from* or escape *to* the vacation industry, and the OIFF reveals itself to be firmly structured around artist-centricity. This structure was put into place by the Orlando Fringe’s founders and subsequently became the responsibility of the succession of OIFF administrators that followed. I address this administrative history in the next chapter.

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34. Hazel interview.

## CHAPTER 4. HISTORY OF FRINGE ADMINISTRATION

In 1998, I produced my own fringe festival. Inspired by performing at the OIFF, I somehow mounted a three-day, two-venue fringe in tiny Covington, Louisiana. The festival was modeled after the OIFF, employing billeting to house performers and the use of buttons to ensure a 100% return of proceeds to artists. Covington Fringe featured local and national performers, outdoor stages, art vendors, buskers, food tents, and a beer truck sponsored by the local Abita Brewing Company. At the time, it was the fifth fringe festival in the US.<sup>1</sup>

The biggest gain from the venture, and one that applies directly to my perspective within this study, was the sink-or-swim education it gave me as sole administrator in charge of press, marketing, merchandise, venue acquisition, program design, show scheduling, fundraising, artist contracts, vendor management, tech hiring, and sponsor relations. The strain of having to manage all aspects of the festival taught me that if I wanted growth, I would need to bring in more leaders. I explain more on this below. In short, the Covington experience gave me a taste of what it was like to be the only administrator in charge. I have since learned that this state has a name: a low *beer truck scenario* score, a state that defines and challenges many neophyte fringes, including the OIFF.

In the previous chapter, I identified the structures and values that keep the OIFF focused on its artists' success. In this chapter, I turn to the Festival's administrators, the

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1. Richard Boyd, "Fringe Festival Set for Covington," *Times-Picayune* (New Orleans, LA), January 31, 1999.

people charged with realizing and preserving the Fringe's artist-centric values while also keeping the Festival thriving, popular, and fiscally solvent. Specifically, I track how the Festival's administrative model has shifted through a narrative and analysis of the Fringe's producers from 1992 to the present. This trajectory follows the OIFF from its grassroots beginning with a micro-staff, to its current state as a year-round operation with a full staff and budget of \$1.7 million dollars.<sup>2</sup>

As the OIFF grew larger and more complicated, its successive producers have had to innovate and alter the Festival's administrative structures, balancing these logistical challenges with fidelity to the Festival's core values. I keep the focus on a broad overview in this chapter. In the next chapter, I zero in on a more detailed analysis of a key moment in Fringe history—the move to Loch Haven Park. For now, though, I establish the first comprehensive narrative of OIFF's leadership.

A note before I begin: this history by necessity has features of a memoir. Like Macelle Mahala in her study of Penumbra Theatre, I cannot rely on interpretation of past historical accounts of the organization for which I once worked. No such histories exist. I employ direct, primary sources—and that by necessity includes myself as former producer. The information here largely comes from the main players as they recount their own histories, pitfalls, and challenges. Within this overview, Fringe leaders also comment on their interactions, collaborations, and occasional tensions with each other, with the board of directors, and with Festival growth. Additionally, I have passed this

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2. Alauna Friskics, interview by author, ZOOM recording, Orlando, FL, August 13, 2021.



Figure 20. This image shows what is left of the additional platform stage structures which were built by Danny Hanemann for the festival, about twenty years prior to this image being taken.

document to all living past producers to ensure that the information here is unbiased, fair, and as authentic as possible.

### The Beer Truck Scenario and How it Relates to the OIFF

Before examining the leadership chronology, I start with identification of an issue all past OIFF leaders have had to grapple with: *the beer truck scenario*. The *beer truck scenario* is a litmus test for how secure your organization or project is. The scenario goes by many names including the *bus factor*, the *bread truck scenario*, and the *hit by a bus factor*. The premise is that central to any main project (such as the management of the Orlando International Fringe Festival) are certain individuals who internally carry so much undisclosed operational knowledge that if they were struck by a beer truck (or hit by a bus) and unable to contribute further, the entire project would stall or die. An organization enjoys more stability when it would ostensibly require a large number of

employees to be struck before it deteriorated. If you have a beer truck scenario (BTS) factor of just one, that means only one person would have to be lost for the venture to fold. The Covington Fringe, for example, featured a BTS of one: me. If your BTS factor were five, at least five people would need to disappear before the organization was in danger of failing. To understand BTS as one of the biggest recurring challenges facing the OIFF, it is helpful to understand that the beer truck scenario factor for the Orlando International Fringe Festival has remained debilitatingly low throughout much of the Festival's history.<sup>3</sup>

This BTS litmus first came about in reference to software developers whose collaborative ventures were at high risk of failure because involved individuals often designed integral code components that were known only to the creator.<sup>4</sup> The team would therefore be unable to manage, alter, or fix those components if the designer was lost, rendering the entirety of the software useless. This meant that if one collaborator was hit by a truck, the project would implode. While this sustainability lens is most often employed in the field of software development, it is most certainly an appropriate mode of gauging the stability of a myriad of non-computer-based work environments, notably those of non-profit organizations such as the OIFF that survive on a very small employee base.<sup>5</sup> Scholars and business leaders alike have touted the utility of the BTS.

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3. As Appendix I illustrates, the OIFF was managed by just three producers in its first year, two producers in year two and year three, and one producer in year four.

4. Valerio Cosentino, Javier Luis Canovas Izquierdo, and Jordi Cabot, "Assessing the bus factor of Git repositories," *2015 IEEE 22nd International Conference on Software Analysis, Evolution, and Reengineering (SANER)*, 2015, 499-503, doi: 10.1109/SANER.2015.7081864.

Writing about higher education, for instance, Yvette Marsh uses BTS (the bus factor, as she puts it) to unearth systemic flaws in college and university administration, namely the fact that employees are often allowed to retire without any procedure for the transference of institutional knowledge. In a speech to other business leaders, entrepreneur Anthony R. Reed advocates creating mitigation plans for beer truck scenarios. Such plans, he explains, “should include identifying the triggers, actions to be taken, and individuals responsible for addressing the risk.” Backup plans like this, he argues, can counter people’s tendency to avoid and therefore ignore risk. Without mitigation plans, organizations leave themselves with no ready solutions in the face of calamity and a high level of operational anxiety.<sup>6</sup>

“No ready solutions” and “high anxiety” unfortunately often characterize fringe operations. In 2016, I moderated the first collaborative conference discussion held between a collective of CAFF, USAFF, and Fringe World Congress leaders. Judging by the roundtable discussions held at the conference, the riskiness of a low BTS factor haunts fringe festivals the world over and is a risk of which the global administrative fringe network is painfully aware. In fact, the *beer truck scenario* is a concept I first encountered at one of these discussions in 2016. Blunt conversations occurred over the

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5. Sonya Yvette Marsh, “Retention of Institutional Memory Via Knowledge Management: Perceptions Regarding the Effectiveness of Corporate Approaches Applied in Higher Education,” PhD Dissertation, (Louisiana State University, 2016), 13. Yvette Marsh found that higher education organizations were often ill prepared for loss of key employees. She cites low BTS issues as a danger because employees in Academia are often allowed to retire without rigorous procedures for the transference of knowledge.

6. Anthony R. Reed, “The achievement equation: personal and professional project management,” (paper presentation, PMI® Global Congress, Denver, CO, October 19, 2008).

fact that our festivals were so plagued by a low BTS commonality, that if a meteor were to strike the building we were sitting in, it would most likely cause every fringe to disappear from the face of the earth.

Of course, no fringe theatre sets out to hobble itself with a low BTS. Early in a fringe's organizational life, a low BTS can benefit from a smaller overhead cost as well as a singularity of vision. Fringes with low BTS are freer to follow their mission, ethos, and aesthetic without dilution. With growth of leadership, more individuals would be available to share labor, but also voices would need to be heard. The gains made from additional administration could come at the expense of clarity of purpose. Few fringes had a choice in the matter. The majority expressed being unable to hire on more help, and a few even admitted that they were running their fringes full-time and receiving no pay.

While the group did well in recognizing the shared BTS factor problem, it failed to follow Reed's directive to create mitigation plans. Instead, the discussion functioned more as an exercise in acknowledgment and commiseration. The takeaway from the BTS conversation was simply that the BTS struggle was real. I assert that it is one of the biggest obstacles the OIFF has had to overcome. Before tracking the Festival's BTS and administrative history, I will first discuss the key personnel among the Orlando Fringe ranks and explain why tracking them is a complicated endeavor.

### Main Leadership Overview and The Problem of Titles

Prior to my analysis of the OIFF's administration history, it is necessary to identify one of the confusing aspects of the Festival's leadership chronology rooted in the



Fringe's ambiguous relationship to leadership titles. The fact is that Fringe administrative titles, and their corresponding job descriptions/duties, have never remained constant, so tracking leadership is a daunting task. For example, the Festival was run by three co-producers (Olson, Anthony, and Kunst) in year one, which dropped down to two co-producers (Olson and Anthony) in years two through three. In 1995, the fourth year of the Fringe, Terry Olson produced the festival by himself. In 1997, Andy Anthony returned for a while, and was later joined by Matt Wohl, who came on as the Festival's first associate producer/volunteer coordinator.<sup>7</sup> In 1998, the structure stayed the same, but in the Fringe's seventh year, Matt Wohl served alone as producer.



Figure 21. This photograph is from my personal collection and shows members of CAFF, USAFF and World Fringe Congress on the steps of le Conseil des Arts de Montréal in 2016.

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7. Wohl explained in one of my interviews with him that the OIFF didn't have the budget to take him on as associate producer that year, so they also gave him the job of volunteer coordinator so that they could afford to hire him. This is the reasoning behind the one time use of the associate producer/volunteer coordinator title.

The structure shifted back to a producer and associate producer team in 2000, with Wohl as producer and with me as associate producer. In 2001, I took over Wohl's position and the job title was changed to executive producer/artistic director; Chris Gibson served as my associate producer. In 2002, Chris Gibson took my place and his title switched to Festival producer, and Alauna Friskics (then McMillan) was brought in as associate producer/financial manager. In 2003 and 2004, Chris Gibson remained Festival producer and Beth Marshall stood in as associate producer. Rob Ward was hired on as Festival business manager in 2004, which was also the year that the new position of executive director was created and filled by Edward DeAguillerra, who was fired within the year. In 2005, Gibson left, and Beth Marshall moved into his spot, changing the title to producing artistic director. She remained in this position until 2011, when she left, and Mike Marinaccio took over under the title Festival producer.

Marshall was sole administrator in her first year. In 2008 through 2010, Genevieve Bernard was her associate producer. In 2011, the associate producer was temporarily removed. Mike Marinaccio worked with George Wallace who was general manager until Wallace was promoted to executive director in 2014. Marinaccio remained Festival producer until 2020 when his role was filled by Lindsay Taylor, and the title changed to theatre producer. In 2017, within Marinaccio's tenure, George Wallace resigned and Alauna Friskics was named executive director.

Also, after 2011, new paid staff positions were finally added. 2012 saw the addition of Nicole Ledbetter as office manager. In 2015 Tommi Pritchett was hired as Fringe's first full-time development coordinator AND Paula Whigham as first full-time sponsorship coordinator. In 2016 Brian Sikorski was hired as the Festival's first full-time

marketing coordinator. Finally, in 2019, the position of education coordinator was added and filled by Genevieve Bernard.

In considering this dizzying trajectory of leadership, it is also important to consider that an even more complex web of volunteers have waxed and waned through the decades, including a volunteer board of directors. In 1995 the Orlando International Fringe Festival was officially incorporated as a 501(c)3, nonprofit, making Fringe leadership answerable to its volunteer board. While a comprehensive inquiry into how general Festival volunteers and the board of directors affect the OIFF might make for fascinating dissertation fodder, it is outside the scope of this project. However, I do mention representative instances of volunteer support, board backing, and board-related conflicts as they relate to administration shifts.

If an overview of Fringe leadership roles reads as confusing, that's because it is. The constant shifts in administrative titles, and the fact that the previous paragraph is the first published attempt at a complete outline of these shifts means there is much work to do in mapping the trajectory of OIFF leadership. Why the inconsistency in titles? In some cases, titles were crafted by the administrators themselves. For instance, Beth Marshall confirmed in one of our 2021 interviews that she created her own title of *producing artistic director* because she believed it offered diversity, giving her better leverage within a wider pool of practitioners. "I hated the title of executive director, or managing director, or executive producer because I never was just a producer of the

Festival.”<sup>8</sup> It is understandable that Marshall balked at the restrictive title; she ran the Fringe in her first year at the helm with only contracted assistance.

In other cases, leadership titles were altered at the board of director’s behest. For example, I was contractually hired in 2000 as Festival producer. However, Jim Shanks who was board president at the time, felt that the title should be altered to executive director. As we were working to expand corporate sponsorship, Shanks felt that a title with the word *executive* in it might garner more response from prospective funders. My title was changed to executive producer/artistic director. As another example, the board of directors hired Alauna Friskics in 2002 at a time when the executive committee had identified fiduciary health as its most vital need. As a result, they changed her job title from associate producer to associate producer/financial manager.

Another issue complicating the tracking of OIFF staff, specific to expansion, came up in my 2021 interview with past Fringe administrator George Wallace, who explained that titles were often “gifted” to people in volunteer positions to reward loyalty and aid in retention/buy-in. “God bless anyone looking at a Fringe program trying to track actual paid festival staff,” Wallace warned. There are many people with titles who are not on the payroll. His most memorable example of this issue comes from his tenure in partnership with past Producer Mike Marinaccio, who he said one day sent Wallace a 2011 program blurb with personnel listings. The document identified Vadim Malkin as Visual Fringe producer, then listed an army of Visual Fringe support staff. Wallace

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8. Marshall is alluding to the fact that the position had expanded beyond the International Festival to include, for example, diverse year-round entertainment programming, outreach, event design, practitioner training, community support efforts, and dedicated training for next generation performers.

recalls being taken aback: “I remember getting the list and it said Vadim, Visual Fringe producer. And then there were like eight people under him as associate Visual Fringe producers, and I’m thinking, what, he has *eight* people under him?” Wallace ran payroll at the time. He knew OIFF staff was not that big. From an outside perspective, it would appear that the OIFF had just increased its beer truck score exponentially when in fact, it had not.



Figure 22. Photo taken on the Outdoor stage at Fringe 2021 during a Past Producers Panel. From left to right are Michael Marinaccio, me, Terry Olson, Matt Wohl, and Beth Marshall. Photo from my personal archive.

### Orlando Fringe Growth and Development

My approach to tracking the growth and development of the administrative side of the Orlando International Fringe involves a chronological overview of the administrative actions and overall leadership legacy of the Fringe’s main leaders. I do not delve deeply into the leadership of individuals who spent less than a year with the Festival. I use the BTS factor to characterize and analyze some of the Orlando Fringe’s

growing pains. I further break the history of the Festival into three BTS phases. Phase one (1992-2004) is when the BTS factor was lowest, and the Festival's stability and continuance were most precarious. Phase two (2005-2011) marks a dedication to fixing BTS factor problems, such as relocating the Festival and diversifying staff. Phase three (2012-2021) highlights a growth phase where focus shifts to continuing staff expansion, growing annual programming, and infusing operations with a refreshed dedication to fostering diversity both on the stages and behind the scenes, especially in relation to the BIPOC community. I begin with phase one, the white-knuckle phase.

#### Phase One: White-Knuckle Beer Truck Scenario Factor of One

For its first decade, the Orlando International Fringe Festival survived on a white-knuckle beer truck scenario factor of one. During the early years the major contributing factor to this was that the Festival was so understaffed that all aspects of the Fringe had to be managed by just one or two employees. The three most dire instances of this included the fourth Fringe, in 1995, when Terry Olson served as sole producer, 1999 when Matt Wohl produced the ninth Fringe alone, and as late as 2005, when Beth Marshal carried the Festival without an assistant.

Each time new leadership took the helm, the incoming director would have to reinvent the wheel because it was never within the realm of possibility for the previous administrator to both keep the festival alive (taking on multiple jobs to do so) and in tandem take the time to properly document work, create meaningful standard operations manuals, cross-train, succession-plan, or even simply keep others informed about where operational information could be found. This resulted in a one step forward,



two steps back scenario when leadership changed hands, which I explain in detail within the chronology of producers in this chapter.



Figure 23. This image, courtesy of Terry Olson, is of OIFF co-founder, Andy Anthony, taken in 1992.

### *The Founders*

In my 2016 interview with Fringe founder Terry Olson, he recounted a story about a vision he had regarding the birth of the Orlando Fringe. It came to him during an arts administration conference where participants were led on a guided-visualization exercise that was designed to help them envision their projects more fully. What Olson envisioned reads like a cartoon storyboard. It centered around a man floating above a fractured community. He looked down and he saw that all the people of the land were clustered in groups of others who looked just like them. None of the groups communicated with each other. Nobody interacted, nobody collaborated. Then the man floated down and created stages where anyone was welcome, and all were invited to take part. Suddenly the groups began to blend into each other, people stopped isolating

themselves into groups. Eventually the people learned to celebrate each other. They created a more unified community, more tolerant, and more synergetic. The man stayed until he knew his creation was strong until one day, rather like Mary Poppins, he lifted back into the air and flew away, leaving his creation in the hands of others.



Figure 24. Fringe co-founder Rick Kunst, from his personal archive.

Fanciful as this vision sounds, it illustrates useful things that the BTS factor registers. Namely, the wish to create something that could survive the danger of falling apart after the departure of its creator. The aforementioned *hands of others* would eventually manifest to include a lineage of producers and directors including Matt Wohl, Chris Gibson, Alauna Friskics, Beth Marshall, Mike Marinaccio, George Wallace, Lindsay Taylor, and me. By the time the Festival turned twenty-six years old, its full-time paid staff expanded to include Paula Whigham, as director of corporate sponsorship, Lisa Hardt as development director, Brian Sikorski as marketing director, and



Genevieve Bernard, as education director. Until the budget grew enough to support staff expansion, however, the Fringe existed with a dangerously low BTS score. One way that the founders balanced the Fringe's small staff BTS issues was to pointedly create community buy-in that would directly result in tangible support of the Fringe. I offer press relations as a prime example.



Figure 25. OIFF's press "briefing" invitation.

The Orlando International Fringe Festival's relationship with the press has been integral to the Festival's success from the start. A creative introduction helped set the stage for a symbiotic relationship. Fringe founders Kunst, Anthony, and Olson wanted to unveil the Fringe to the media in a way that would stand out, spark interest, and set the proper tone by sending a notice of a "press briefing" printed on the derriere of a pair of Fruit of the Loom whitey-tighty men's' *briefs* adorned with red fringe. While Central

Florida press receive endless press-releases, none had previously had them delivered by way of a pair of underwear.

The media was intrigued. Columnist Bob Morris of the *Orlando Sentinel* delighted in the unconventional move and took immediate interest in the fledgling festival, devoting himself to the publication of an inordinately robust collection of supportive articles during the 1992 inaugural year.

Also, quick to provide coverage and support was the *Orlando Weekly*, widely known for its annual “Best of Orlando” special edition that highlights readers’ picks for categories such as arts and culture, food and drink, and music and nightlife to name a few. *Orlando Weekly* journalist and longtime Fringe supporter Seth Kubersky talked about the symbiosis of the Festival’s relationship to the press in a 2020 interview with me. He explained that as a reviewer, he stops all other work and devotes each and every day of the Festival towards seeing an average of 75-80 productions annually. He publishes fifty reviews during the two weeks of programming and publishes coverage articles. In terms of reciprocation, he explains; “As a critic, the Fringe is extremely supportive of me just because my paper literally could not financially afford to pay for a ticket for every show I see.”<sup>9</sup>

Members of the press, such as Kubersky, are offered a VIP All Access pass, which not only allows free admission but also lets them enter any show without a previously secured ticket. Kubersky noted that even if the tickets were all free, and he had to purchase a ticket in advance and schedule all his shows, he wouldn't be able to

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9. Kubersky interview.

offer as much coverage: “The only way I am able to see and review as many shows as I do is by literally bouncing from one show straight to the next.”<sup>10</sup>

Decades after the founders deliberately hooked the press, evidence of the devotion that resulted can be seen in *Orlando Sentinel* journalist and long-time supporter, Matt Palm, who crafted year-by-year overview projects in honor of the Fringe’s 20th and 25th anniversaries, giving highlights of each year of the OIFF’s existence.<sup>11</sup> Prior to this study, and the OIFF 25th anniversary exhibit created by Genevieve Bernard and George Wallace, Palm’s project was the closest thing the OIFF had to a recorded history.

In terms of the BTS benefit, the OIFF’s symbiotic relationship with the media at least ensured that the Fringe would enjoy an enviable level of press coverage and support, which would lead to stability for the organization. However, the devotion of the press is not enough to raise a BTS factor. The founders needed manpower, and the Festival did not have the budget to support it. In fact, Olson, Kunst, and Anthony worked free of charge. The team of three founders was reduced to two after the first year because Rick Kunst left two days after the inaugural festival with a feminist-socialist theatre company from England named Sensible Footwear. He helped the group buy a

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10. Seth Kubersky is an *Orlando Weekly* journalist and critic. He also has a long history with the Festival outside his writing. Kubersky has produced and directed five OIFF shows. In one of our interviews, he told me that the Fringe once gave him what he referred to as a “quasi-official title of video consultant” so that they could give him a VIP All Access pass in exchange for some video editing he helped them with. Here, again, is another example of how the tracking of OIFF paid staff is difficult in the face of “gifted” official titles.

11. Matt Palm, “The whole series: 25 years of Orlando Fringe Festival memories,” *Orlando Sentinel* (Orlando, FL), March 22, 2016, <https://www.orlandosentinel.com/entertainment/arts-and-theater/os-orlando-fringe-festival-25-years-memories-20160322-storygallery.html>.

van to drive to Canada, where he met up with and was hired for six years to tour with Mump and Smoot, an adult horror clown duo from Canada.

Olson and Anthony produced Festivals two through three. In year four (1995), however, Olson found himself alone at the helm with a BTS factor of just himself, far from the vision he had of floating off to leave the Fringe in capable hands. The Founder era was coming to a close. Olson was not interested in running another Festival by himself. According to Matt Wohl, Olson began divesting himself and moving on to other projects, and Anthony signed on to Produce in 1996 through 1998 even though he was often out of state during this time with his wife, a traveling nurse. While Matt served as associate producer during those years, much of the workload was actually carried by him. “Most of the time, Andy was in San Diego, so he was not really here,” Wohl remembers. “It’s hard enough to run a fringe when you live here, as you know. But from across-country, it gets really difficult.”<sup>12</sup> Anthony could contribute remotely, but Wohl was the only physical leadership presence. Wohl ended up being the first true manifestation of the *capable hands* of Olson’s vision, outside of the other founders.

#### *Organizational Shifts During the Tenure of Matt Wohl*

Matt Wohl Moved to Orlando from his hometown of Burlington, Vermont, and began taking classes as an improv comedy performer with SAK Comedy Lab, created by Fringe founders Olson, Anthony, Kunst and others. Wohl was trained as a creative and professional writer, with interests in screenwriting and film. He got his first Fringe leadership responsibilities in 1995, when he was enlisted to help organize the annual

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12. Wohl interview.

Festival Preview Party, where press and patrons are given a sneak-peek at the roster line-up as groups perform back-to-back snippets of their shows.

In 1997, Wohl returned after a year's hiatus from Orlando and became associate producer with Anthony, who was predominantly working remotely while his wife practiced as a traveling nurse. That first year, for the fringe to justify paying him, Wohl recalls taking on three positions adding volunteer coordinator to his title and another position which he has since forgotten: "I had like three titles that year just to sort of pull it all together."<sup>13</sup>

Anthony and Wohl collaborated again in 1998 and, after a loss of office space, the official Fringe office became Wohl's front porch at 501 Christor Place, which he outfitted with as many makeshift workstations as possible. That porch would eventually house an uncommonly large portion of Fringe leaders. Wohl explains "501 Christor Place is an historic home in Fringe Lore...there were Fringe people there, I think, for about 12 years, different cadres of people. John Valines was there after I left and Alauna was there when I left. And Mike Marinaccio ended up living there. So, you can actually track the history of the fringe through 501 Christor Place."<sup>14</sup> The Fringe office eventually relocated to a downtown building shared by SAK Theatre and the Central Florida Theater Alliance, the new project run by Olson. When Wohl took over later in 1988, it marked a turning point in Fringe history, as it was the first time the festival had a

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13. This multiplicity of titles, half forgotten, is a good example of the complexity involved in attempting to faithfully track OIFF administrative growth.

14. Wohl interview.

full-time professional year-round staff person. Wohl produced the Fringe for two years solo and then hired me on to co-produce in the Festival's tenth year.

During his tenure, Wohl took pains to avoid any hint of adjudicating between productions, declining to suggest specific shows to see, even to friends or patrons who asked him what they should watch. Wohl also left a legacy of toiling to strengthen volunteerism for the Fringe. Because he served as a volunteer coordinator his first year, he stepped into his producer position with a deep understanding of volunteer needs, noting how they are vital to the OIFF's survival. "They are really sort of the tires, they're where the rubber meets the road." Wohl pointed out that the Fringe is a theory without volunteers, stating that "Once you add volunteers, you have a festival, but before you have the volunteers, it's just an idea."<sup>15</sup> Wohl acknowledges that his history as volunteer coordinator greatly impacted his leadership ethos, also noting that because the majority of the Fringe's manpower is volunteer-based, the volunteer collective is vital to survival and should be treated as such. In other words, if the administration is existing on a BTS factor of one, it must prioritize the nurturing of a symbiotic volunteer/staff relationship.

Wohl also experienced first-hand some of the festival's early logistical nightmares, including the administrative task of scheduling under the pre-tech system. The process involved cutting out small pieces of paper, color coded to match each venue, for each performance of every individual show. The papers were then cut according to show length. For example, a one-hour show would be one inch, and a 90-minute show would be an inch and a half. A 40-minute window was placed between the

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15. Wohl interview.

productions to allow for a strict show turnover based on a 15-minute load-out of the outgoing show's set and props, and a 25-minute load-in and placement of set and props for the incoming show. The papers were then taped to a giant board that was delineated by festival date, venue, and time.

The process was daunting. In 1999, for instance, Wohl had to contend with 450 slips of paper to account for all the show slots that needed to be scheduled for the 66 individual indoor performance groups that year.<sup>16</sup> It was a project that took weeks to complete, complicated by the fact that the Fringe's non-curated, unjuried ethos had to be upheld within the act of scheduling. This meant that each show was to be given an equal number of hot, warm, and cool timeslots based on prime performance time. What made this even more convoluted was that the diversity of shows meant that "prime" time differed from show to show. For example, shows with racy content historically sold best in late-night slots, while children's shows did best on weekends during the day. I personally recall a show with a cast of senior citizens who preferred to be done with their shows early enough to avoid having to drive at night. Yet another complication arose from shows with cast members who were also in other Fringe shows. These are just a few examples of a host of intricacies that made the scheduling task complex. All these things had to be considered while also maximizing stage times within each of the venues.

In a 2016 interview I conducted with Wohl and Paula Whigham, current director of corporate sponsorship, the pair recounted some of the pitfalls of the scheduling

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16. Palm "The whole series."

system.<sup>17</sup> One year, the entire schedule was painstakingly created only for Wohl to discover, after completion, that the 40-minute turnover times had been accidentally omitted. Whigham remembered a year when the schedule had been completed and then the board was knocked over, with a majority of the papers falling off. In both cases, the weeks' worth of work that had gone into the process was lost, and the venture started over.

Ultimately, the entire task of creating “fairness” within the schedules was the responsibility of the producer who had to balance show content with target audiences to maintain equity while allotting time-slot assignments. In 1999, that meant Wohl had to know the content and company needs of all 66 shows, including dates of availability for performers with conflicts, arrival and departure dates for out-of-town guests, double-casting issues, and preferred performance times. The first few weeks I began working with Wohl, I recall being surprised at how much time and effort went into the process, and how it depended on a vast amount of information known only to the producer, a BTS danger-zone. I would soon learn that this was just a microcosm of the behind-the-scenes complexity of running a two-week, ten-day, ten-venue Fringe, which seemed to succeed largely because of the institutional knowledge of just one overworked individual.

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17. Whigham has been with the Fringe in a variety of paid and unpaid positions since 1995. Her roles have included such positions as volunteer coordinator and office manager.



### *Operational Shifts During My Tenure*

The task of assessing one's own tenure is daunting. Happily, I can benefit from Amy Lane's work from her 2003 Dissertation, *The Edges of the Fringe: Development and Structure of the American Fringe Festival*. In her overview of the OIFF, she summarized my time as a producer by emphasizing a commitment to three guiding objectives: "To formalize internal systems, to organize and record finances, and to establish a more efficiently structured board of trustees."<sup>18</sup> While I concur that board management and the formalization of internal structures, (such as an upgrade to our scheduling system), were main areas of focus during my tenure, I have to credit then Board President Jim Shanks with gifting the Fringe his personal financial assistant in overhauling our financial operations. Though it may have seemed to Lane that I was heading this initiative, the board had taken control of the books.

Another of Lane's claims that I counter is the assertion that the previous administration had engendered a rowdy reputation, one which I had to labor to correct. Lane states, "In the early years, the Orlando fringe was seen as essentially a chaotic, free-for-all party - and the festival administration clearly mirrored this in their management style."<sup>19</sup> She maintains that Assistant Director Chris Gibson and I were responsible for bringing maturity to OIFF administration. Although one might reasonably assume that administration of a *fringe* organization would be chaotic or prone to

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18. Lane, 94.

19. Lane, 94.

Bacchic behavior, Lane's assertion about earlier administration could not be further from the truth.

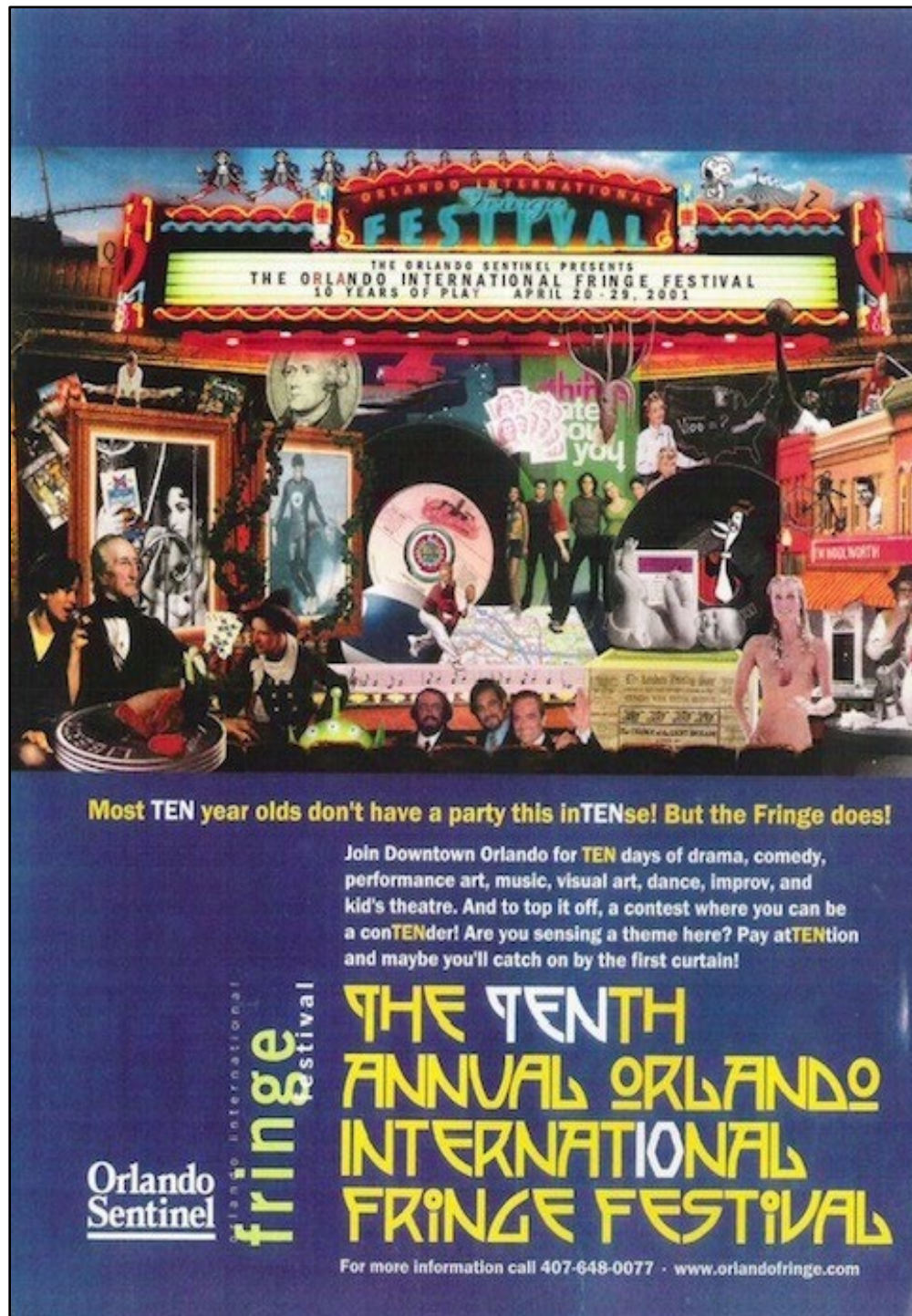


Figure 26. The 10th anniversary program cover I commissioned for the official Fringe 2001 program which was a special feature insert in the *Orlando Sentinel* newspaper. Image from the OIFF archive.

The founders who ran the Fringe during the early years were Minnesota-based Christian evangelical street performers.<sup>20</sup> Co-founder Kunst referred to Olson and Anthony as kind and accommodating "good Christian men" who wouldn't ever refuse a request for a refund from an audience member who had been offended by show content, even though the Festival took pains to make transparent any sensitive material in the shows with warnings in the programs.<sup>21</sup> Also, as a patron of the Fringe during those early years, I can personally attest to the fact that it was widely known that SAK Theatre and the Orlando Fringe Festival were founded and run by the same faith-conscious leadership team.

That said, at no point was it necessary for me or my Associate Producer Chris Gibson, to "reconcile the gap between the festival's administration and its perceived image," as Lane suggests.<sup>22</sup> If there was work to be done in healing administrative tensions, it was directly related to the board/staff relationship. Lane is correct in stating that an early agenda item of mine was to overhaul the board of trustees. I share the story of my uncomfortable introduction to the board because I viscerally remember it as a textbook illustration of how a low BTS factor can strain an organization to the breaking point.

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20. "Our History," SAK Comedy Lab, accessed September 13, 2021, <https://www.sakcomedylab.com/about>.

21. Kunst interview.

22. Lane, 95.

I met the board of directors in late February of 2000 when I was barely two weeks into my job as associate producer under Matt Wohl. I was dressed in Doc Martens and overalls that day because we were scheduled for grueling labor in some of the more dilapidated venues we were using for the Festival. I recall that Wohl and I were covered in dust, sweat, and a film of vermin excrement, when he suddenly turned to me and asked me what time it was. My answer caused him to throw down the lumber he'd been dragging towards the door and tell me to order some pizzas. He explained that we had a board meeting in half an hour.

I was horrified. Accustomed to wearing a suit for such meetings, I instead had to meet my board, for the first time, with rat feces in my hair. Matt's response was hard to forget: "If they have a problem with it, *fuck* 'em. We were doing our job; they need to do theirs." The meeting that ensued was so tense that as I sat there still smelling the rodent urine on my boots, I was convinced that an actual fist fight was going to erupt.

The board was attempting to require certain formalized weekly reporting of duties, while Wohl was strained to the point of rage, in true low-BTS fashion, because he had been carrying the workload of at least three positions for five years. Wohl was frustrated at the board for creating more work instead of offering more support. The board was angry because they did not understand how the Fringe was one beer truck away from imploding due to nine years of overworking their staff. If Wohl had rightfully walked out that day, never to return, I would have been shocked if the Fringe could have survived.

Volunteers and board members could have stepped in and tried to divide duties with me, but no functional systems for transference of knowledge were in place. Tasks

such as artist management, development, program design, show scheduling, tech contracts, press, permitting, merchandise management, grant writing, fundraiser production, vendor acquisition, venue acquisition, management of volunteers, and removing soiled mattresses from condemned buildings so they could be converted into theatres took immediate precedence for Wohl and the overworked producers before him. Creating succession plans or even mapping timelines of duties was not possible under the weight of those duties. It seemed analogous to asking a person fleeing a burning house to sit down at a desk and jot down a standard operating procedure plan for the next person contending with the inferno.

That day when I met the board was the first time I truly understood how vulnerable the Fringe was. The public view of the early OIFF was clouded by the magic of its function as a community builder. In the eyes of many, the Festival stood strong as an unmatched, open-armed champion of the arts that flourished on passion and good will. While it is my opinion that these perceived admirable qualities are legitimate, so is the fact that behind the scenes there was a lot of suffering because a low-BTS system like the Fringe's is not sustainable. Eventually workers in that kind of crucible will burn out.

Matt Wohl resigned after the Festival that year, though his dedication to the Fringe would draw him back years later as a consultant, supporter, and advocate. He has since served for three years, driving up from his home in Miami at the time, each month, to serve on the Fringe's board of directors.<sup>23</sup> He also inspired me to focus my

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23. Wohl served on the OIFF Board of Directors from 2015 to 2018.

first administrative actions as producer on improving board functionality and board relations.

The first thing I did to accomplish this was to bring in founder Terry Olson to facilitate a board retreat. We did a lot of listening. We found that the contentious communication prevalent at previous OIFF board meetings stemmed from two things: a desperate need for the board to better understand the complexities and enormity of the work-strain put on Fringe administrators, and a need for direct accountability measures to ensure members either facilitated meaningful financial contributions to the Fringe or provided blue-collar working support to lessen the BTS strain. Committees were formed, expectations were articulated clearly, and new members were enlisted to help fortify our weak areas such as grant-writing and corporate sponsorships. I was surprised, during my short tenure, to witness how dramatically the board/staff symbiosis improved.

Another of the major shifts that occurred during my tenure involved a complete overhaul of the scheduling of performers. The system I inherited for accomplishing this was grassroots and grueling, and it consumed a massive amount of time and energy. We needed a better approach. The solution came about through a connection with the press. One of the Festival's early supporters was *Orlando Sentinel's* Elizabeth Maupin, who had reviewed shows and provided feature coverage for the OIFF from the Festival's inception. Maupin knew of the logistical challenges facing Fringe admin, and she had an intimate understanding of how difficult scheduling can be. She introduced me to her husband, Jay Yellen, a professor of mathematics at Rollins College who specialized in graph theory and operations research.



Together, we worked to create a needs-list for a program that would automate the Fringe schedule. Each performance group would provide hot, warm, and cool times for their show based on their own assessment of their show's content and target audiences. The program then would account for variables such as the number of shows in each venue, the length of their run, the number of performances they signed up for, and any blackout dates where performers could not attend. Yellen then took this gathered information to his upper-level Rollins College students where they devoted course-time to creating the Festival's first automated scheduling program, which they then gifted to the Orlando Fringe.

The scheduling process graduated from a system that consumed over a hundred man hours and hinged on one human's understanding of an entire lineup to a much more efficient process that could be created instantly and would only require minimal tweaking. My successor, Chris Gibson, continued to help fine-tune the program after I left. He points out that the program was not only a help to producers, it was also mindfully developed to be performer centric. "Part of the reason we did it was not just to be efficient, but to be as fair as possible...to give the artists an even shake when it came down to good slots," Gibson reflects. "It was really out of the intention of giving a fair shot to everybody."<sup>24</sup>

The system's major benefit was not so much its math-based efficiency; it was that the system proved instantly usable by anyone. The BTS connected specifically to scheduling went from a factor of just one, dependent on the producer's understanding of

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24. Chris Gibson, interview by author, ZOOM recording, Orlando, FL, July 29, 2020.

a multitude of variables that nobody else had the time or access to understand, to a BTS of many, including artists who helped to make the process more accurate by providing their own input on target times. The system also gave added legitimacy to the Festival's mission to uphold fairness. I recall getting feedback from artists that year who were grateful for the transparency of the process. Whigham, who experienced scheduling under both systems, pointed out to me how tempting it was for producers to schedule shows they knew would be high-quality into slots they knew would be highly attended. She refers to the Fringe ethos of fairness when she explained that "*unjuried* means completely unbiased in scheduling as well." She observed that it is hard to be unbiased when you have strong feelings about so many of the performers in productions. The scheduling program helped raise the BTS factor for at least one of its main pre-Festival functions and strengthened the Fringe's ties to its commitment to treating all performers fairly. When I left the Festival in the capable hands of Chris Gibson the following year to devote myself to graduate school, Gibson continued to work intimately with Jay Yellen to improve the scheduling program.

Though I ceased to be on the payroll by 2002, I have been tied to the Festival ever since. Over the past two decades I have had the privilege of researching the Festival, of collaborating with its leadership, of attending and hosting a panel for the historical first-ever convergence of CAFF, USAFF, and Fringe World Congress, of participating in past producer panels and roundtable discussions for the Orlando Fringe, of acting as a contributing sponsor to the Festival, and of attending the Festival annually to scout talent for Banners at McNeese State University, a Southwest Louisiana arts organization that I currently run.



### *Operational Shifts During the Tenure of Chris Gibson*

Chris Gibson was a classically trained actor from Zeleinope, Pennsylvania, who studied at the American Musical and Dramatic Academy in New York. He moved to Florida and studied acting at the University of South Florida in 1997. In 2020, Gibson came to a position of leadership with the OIFF by way of introduction to the Festival as a Fringe performer. His inaugural show was a 2000 Mad Cow Theatre production based on Oscar Wilde's poem *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*.



Figure 27. This photo of Chris Gibson was taken in 2003, during the 12th annual Fringe. Courtesy of the OIFF archives.

While *The Naked Guy* was causing the Festival to defend its non-censorship policy, Gibson was at an across-town venue having his first experience as an OIFF performer. In a 2020 interview, he described the allure of the Festival, “Just from an audience member's perspective, it is an all-you-can-eat buffet of entertainment in a way

that you won't find anywhere else."<sup>25</sup> For Gibson, his first experience moved him to inquire about being more involved with the Festival. Months later, I would suggest to the board of directors that he be hired as my assistant producer. The board approved. After one year of collaboration, he took full leadership when I left to pursue my MFA degree.

Gibson was instrumental in helping the Orlando International Festival survive one of its biggest losses, a fire that destroyed the Fringe's storage space in the Old Bryan Hotel on 330 West Church Street. The fire decimated the majority of the Orlando Fringe's belongings including all venue a-frame signage, all fencing, the Fringe Central master schedule board, office materials, podiums, merchandise, stanchions, risers, physical archives, and all the colored air tubing that was iconic to Fringe. In his first year as producer, Gibson was tasked with hosting extra fundraisers to generate enough money to replace all that had been lost. Gibson and Associate Producer Alauna Friskics (then McMillan) kept the Festival afloat.

Gibson acknowledged in an interview I held with him that his tenure came at a time when the board of directors was incredibly active and passionately engaged with growing the Festival. Perhaps the most important administrative shift that occurred while Gibson was at the helm was when he made the first moves towards dislodging the Festival from the downtown Orlando footprint. (I address the circumstances of this move in detail in the following chapter.) As the economy improved and downtown Orlando started to revive, the act of finding dormant venues downtown became exceedingly difficult. Gibson knew that the Festival had to move but was not being supported by a

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25. Gibson interview.

board that staunchly opposed the relocation. In an effort to keep the board happy and protect the Festival by ensuring that it had enough viable venues, he moved half of the Festival's venues to Loch Haven Park in 2004.

2004 was also the year Eduard DeAguilera was appointed as the Fringe's first full-time, paid executive director (ED). Gibson explains that the board of directors created the ED position to dedicate efforts towards fundraising, sponsorship acquisition, and financial management. By 2004 Rob Ward had also been hired part time to act as office manager, a position that Sara Wood had held the year prior. The expansion of part-time staff should have increased the BTS factor profoundly, but the year proved disastrous, when, at the close of the festival, all but Gibson and his second-year Associate Producer Beth Marshall, were fired.

As reported by Steve Schneider in a July 29, 2004, article entitled "Fringe Fallout" that ran in the *Orlando Weekly*, DeAguilera was fired from his position on July 19th, with five months remaining on his one-year contract.<sup>26</sup> The ousted director was reportedly terminated because of a discovery of unexpected shortages in the annual budget. According to the news article, DeAguilera claimed that the board of directors requested that he work one month without pay and raise a supplemental \$10,000 to cover his salary if he wished to stay on with the Festival. DeAguilera further claimed that the tensions were due to the fact that the OIFF was blindsided by the discovery of a

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26. Steve Schneider, "Fringe Fallout," *Orlando Weekly* (Orlando, FL), July 29, 2004, <https://www.orlandoweekly.com/orlando/fringe-fallout/Content?oid=2259937>.

\$40,000 hold-over debt, a debt that he and Ward claimed was incurred prior to their tenure.

In the article, DeAguilera insisted that he was not “conferenced” enough and was critical of the board, saying, “There are members who have no idea of how a not-for-profit and a theatre organization run. They have no clue how people collect money for non-for-profits.” Journalist Schneider reported that the board of directors had little to say on the matter, aside from the fact that they had made necessary staff changes and were moving forward. He also stated that unnamed sources close to the Festival denied DeAguilera’s claims, stating that he was fired for not raising the funds he was hired to raise.

Seventeen years after the fact, I asked Gibson about DeAguilera’s performance. Gibson remarked, “He didn’t do much of anything beyond taking a hell of a salary. Money we didn’t have and he didn’t raise.”<sup>27</sup> He elaborated by saying that he mostly just sat around holding court at the Festival while ignoring his duties in development and fundraising. Ultimately, DeAguilera’s removal precipitated a shift for Beth Marshall from a volunteer support position to a spot on the payroll as Gibson’s associate producer. In 2005, Beth Marshall would take on the Fringe’s main leadership role.

#### Phase Two: BTS Expansion

Phase one of the OIFF’s growth was marked by moving from the planning stage to actualization, entrance into an extended period of surviving with limited resources. This phase also saw creation of systems to help support the Fringe as it relied heavily

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27. Gibson interview.

on a BTS factor hovering around one, systems such as strong press relations, and the creation of a devoted volunteer base. Phase two is marked by an incentive for creating a global reputation within the fringe network and a focused dedication to fixing BTS score problems. This latter task was made possible by an expansion of OIFF staff, namely the addition of a dedicated director of operations. Phase two begins with the Beth Marshall leadership era. It ends with a beer truck.

### *Operational Shifts During the Tenure of Beth Marshall*

During the time Beth Marshall headed the leadership of the OIFF, she had already produced, directed, performed, and volunteered for the Festival for nearly a decade. With a BFA in Theatre and a BS in Math, minoring in women's studies, Marshall moved to Orlando from Paducah, Kentucky, after being cast in a Florida-filmed movie and a play produced by the Orlando Civic Theatre. As a member of Kansas City performance ensemble called Big Bang Buffet, Marshall performed in stage plays and touring theatre shows, and she served as a casting director for the southeast Broadway tour of *RENT*. She toured multiple award-winning Fringe shows prior to joining the OIFF staff in 2003.

Her entrance into the Fringe world followed a path from patron, to artist, to volunteer, to associate Kids Fringe producer, to associate producer, ending in producing artistic director. In the mid-1990s, Marshall spent a couple of years as a producer and performer. One fateful evening she was thrust into volunteerism when then-producer, Terry Olson, had to abandon his post as a fill-in beer pourer in the Fringe Central beer tent. As Marshall tells it, he got an emergency call on his radio, turned to Beth Marshall who happened to be standing next to him and said “Hey, can you handle this for a

minute?”<sup>28</sup> Marshall, who had never poured a beer in her life, jumped right in. Years later, with producer Chris Gibson at the helm, she found herself visiting the OIFF office regularly to act as a sounding board for Gibson, who eventually asked her to be volunteer associate producer of the Kids Fringe. After the split-footprint 2004 Fringe, Gibson moved on, and Beth became the Festival’s producer from 2005 to 2011.

Marshall claims that members of the Fringe community often misattribute to her the full 2005 relocation of the Fringe from downtown to Loch Haven Park. She insists that the credit should go her predecessor. “That ball was already set in motion by Gibby,” she told me in our first interview, “I just pushed it over the hill.” She also refers to the 2004 split as a “one size fits all, fits nobody move,”<sup>29</sup> which made it clear that the Fringe needed all official venues to be in one location.

Marshall’s tenure saw her remedying the Festival’s other beer truck scenario problems by expanding staff. This did not happen until year five of her leadership. In fact, she operated without even an associate producer her first year. However, once the Fringe was fully relocated, the role of Fringe producer changed drastically. The arduous and all-consuming task of venue acquisition and management was simply no longer a part of the job. Marshall was able to funnel more working hours into securing more and larger corporate sponsors. This led to the ability to create more paid staff. By 2008, she brought on Genevieve Bernard as associate producer until 2010.

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28. Marshall interview.

29. Marshall interview.

Bernard first encountered the Fringe after moving to Orlando from Pennsylvania to work as a dance choreographer and practitioner on a project for Disney. Like the OIFF founders, she found herself indecorously let go from Disney when the park decided not to continue with the project for which she'd been hired. She saw an ad for Fringe and decided to create a dance show to enter the lottery. Her show got in and Bernard immediately fell in love. After multiple years producing, choreographing, and performing in Fringe shows, she applied for the position of associate producer and was hired. In an interview I conducted with Bernard, she recalls that in her first few years the burden of the Festival largely fell on her and Marshall, making the loss of either one of them a dangerous BTS factor of one.

Under Marshall, the team moved the Festival from April to May, which made it easier for the Fringe to seamlessly commandeer the theatrical venues of Orlando Shakespeare and the Rep Theatre, since the new schedule fell after the end of the regional theatrical season. Marshall noted in an interview with me that this date shift further benefited the Fringe because it closed the gap which once fell between the Orlando Fringe Festival and the fringe touring circuit. This reworked schedule made the OIFF more attractive to seasoned touring artists because they could kick off their show in Orlando and either move directly to Canada or to some of the more lucrative US festivals.

In 2009 and 2010, George Wallace joined the team in a part time, year-round capacity as development director. Bernard points to Wallace's arrival as a shift in growth: "With Wallace, we grew a little, as funding and the ability to bring in more

people expanded, the Festival grew.”<sup>30</sup> Specifically, many of the fiduciary duties, such as grant writing and reporting, moved into the hands of Wallace. This gave Marshall the ability to shift her efforts to strengthening the OIFF’s international reputation.

Marshall lobbied hard to convince the board to allocate the necessary resources to allow her to travel, with the aim of making the OIFF more vital to the larger international fringe community. She labored to bring a focused dedication to improving international involvement, which she viewed as sorely lacking post-9/11. Marshall cites her biggest accomplishment as getting the international artists back at the Festival, and she acknowledged in my interview with her that there was push-back from the board of directors, “And the doing of that came from fighting, literally fighting with the board of directors to fund me to be able to be at every CAF conference, every USAF conference, every other festival I could...so that I could convince these artists to come to Orlando.”<sup>31</sup> Her success in this venture led to her serving two years as vice president for the Canadian Association of Fringe Festivals. It also saw her become a contributing founder of the United States Association of Fringe Festivals. The strain of her relationship with the board never subsided, however, and would eventually culminate in a contentious dissolution of contract during the final week of the annual International Fringe Festival, 2011. This was the same year George Wallace’s position had grown into a full-time position as director of operations.

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30. Seth Kubersky and Genevieve Bernard, interview by author, digital recording, Orlando, FL, August 2, 2020.

31. Marshall interview.



The split was framed by rumors that the board of directors alleged that Marshall, who was actively backing shows featured in the Festival, was breaching conflict of interest standards by investing her own money in Fringe productions and by helping to underwrite groups to tour beyond Orlando. Marshall has since expressed the opinion that the Fringe in her time was too worried about perception of conflict of interest, saying that, “The fact of the matter is that by investing in our artists to go elsewhere, we get other artists. It did not ultimately help *me* in the organization, but it helped *us* as an organization.”<sup>32</sup>

Regardless of the parting of ways, Marshall bounced back. She returned in 2014 to help produce Fringe hoodies in honor of Trayvon Martin, a Florida teen who had been shot and killed in Florida. She was also a Visual Fringe sponsor in 2012. She performed in Festival shows from 2012 through 2015 and sponsored the inaugural year of Winter Mini-Fringe. She currently helps to organize an OIFF Producers Group, joined by me, Terry Olson, Rick Kunst, Matt Wohl, Chris Gibson, Mike Marinaccio, Lindsay Taylor, and George Wallace. The group is presently collaborating to help fund Festival events and to sponsor and develop an ongoing artist mentorship award for performers wishing to expand their production-run into the fringe touring circuit and beyond.

*Operational Shifts During the Tenure of George Wallace and Mike Marinaccio and How the OIFF Survived the Beer Truck of 2011*

A little-known fact about Wallace is that he comes from a health and human services background, moving from Boston to Orlando to serve as senior manager for

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32. Marshall interview.

Quest in 2003. While brand new to his job at Quest, he noticed a Fringe poster on the wall and mentioned to his boss, Sue Wood, that it looked cool. She suggested he volunteer. When Wallace pointed out that volunteering would be hard as he'd just started his job there at Quest, he recalls her saying, "Well, I'm your boss. You should volunteer."<sup>33</sup> That marked the first of multiple years Wallace would volunteer. In 2006, he was named volunteer coordinator, a role he would keep for three years and one that still required year-round part time work, paying less than \$500.<sup>34</sup>

From that point forward, Wallace was with the OIFF in some form of a paid position until 2016. He was named director of development in 2009, associate director of development in 2010, director of operations in 2011, general manager in 2012, and would end his Fringe career in the position of executive director for three consecutive years. Wallace noted in one of our interviews that the elevation of titles did not greatly alter his duties: "The executive director title came in 2014, but I really wasn't doing anything different than I was doing when I was the operations, or general manager." He referred to himself simply as *the businessperson* during his tenure, which would include him being in a high leadership position when the proverbial beer truck finally hit the Orlando Fringe.

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33. Wallace interview.

34. In our interview, Wallace joked that it is dangerous to win the Fringe's Volunteer of the Year award, because that means you will inevitably end up being appointed as volunteer coordinator, pointing to himself and his predecessor as proof of the phenomenon.

### *The Beer Truck Strikes*

Because the Fringe's severance with Beth Marshall happened without forewarning, and especially because it happened during Fringe, it was the closest thing to a literal beer-truck scenario disaster that the OIFF had experienced before or since. Marshall had been the face of the Festival for seven years. The fact that the Festival survived her loss seems proof that the Fringe had finally reached a level of maturity that elevated it to a BTS factor of at least two.

When Marshall's spot in Fringe administration became vacant, Wallace was in a place of equal leadership, lateral to Beth. Wallace had not been informed that the board had decided to discontinue Marshall's contract. When I asked Wallace to tell me about the encounter, he responded that he had blocked out a lot of 2011-2012 Fringe because his experience with most of the board of directors was so awful. Wallace estimated that he took on about 90% of Marshall's work after she left, but received no compensation for the almost doubling of duties which expanded from all fiduciary tasks and general management, to suddenly including all artist-relations tasks including management of performer-communication, running of applications and the Fringe lottery, taking over committee responsibilities that Marshall had previously manned for CAFF and USAFF, and navigating the chaos of Marshall abruptly being removed as the face of the Festival.

Perhaps because of the shock of having found himself alone at the helm during Fringe 2011, he spent his years as executive director expanding and strengthening OIFF staff. Wallace hired Paula Whigham, who began volunteering with the Fringe in 1995, as a direct helper for co-founder, Terry Olson. Whigham carried with her a vast depth of institutional knowledge. She had moved through the ranks as assistant

volunteer coordinator (an unpaid position) and volunteer coordinator (paid), as well as various support roles that shifted and morphed as she remained working for the Festival through the tenures of Terry Olson, Andy Anthony, Matt Wohl, me, and Chris Gibson.

He also hired Tommi Pritchett as development coordinator because, as he explained in our interview, “We were getting more money and we were becoming more of a year-round arts organization.”<sup>35</sup> He gives credit to the entire Fringe team for the growth, citing 2012, Mike Marinaccio’s first year as festival producer, as the Festival’s biggest year of growth.<sup>36</sup> As staff expanded, the administrative structure which had leaned unevenly towards the authority of the producer for decades, began to shift into more of a balance of power.

Wallace pointed out that it took the Fringe years to find equilibrium within the leadership structure between the producer and (in Wallace’s words) “the ED, or general manager, *or whatever you want to call it.*”<sup>37</sup> Wallace attributed this in part to the fact that the Fringe had operated for so long with the producer serving as the public-facing leader of OIFF staff. When the second *business* position became solidified and morphed through various titles such as director of operations, general manager, and executive director, a growing portion of the business side of Fringe duties and responsibilities began to fall away from the producer. For example, the Fringe producer

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35. Wallace interview.

36. According to Matt Palm’s *Orlando Sentinel* retrospective, the Fringe broke \$250,000 in earnings for the first time in its history.

37. I point out again, that even those in leadership positions within the OIFF express ambivalence and haziness about the titles given in different years to administrators.

was no longer in charge of such things as grants, sponsorships, or venue acquisition. To build his own leadership position, Wallace had to work hard to secure grants and new funding to create a salary for the position that was comparable to that of the producer.

This major shift made the producer position much more artistically oriented, and it profoundly altered the BTS factor by virtue of the fact that the producer not only had an assistant in the role of associate producer, but he also had an office manager, a director of development, and an executive director to handle business and operations. The fact that the Fringe lost Marshall without imploding, and then went on to embrace a hard-won delineation of power and duties, marked the first time in Fringe history that the Festival proved that not only could it survive the beer truck, but it could also learn from the experience and make itself stronger by developing an expanding paid team of professionals. Mike Marinaccio was part of that developing team.

#### *Operational Shifts During the Tenure of Mike Marinaccio*

Marinaccio was born in New York and earned his BFA in theatre from the University of Central Florida. By the time Marinaccio was hired to replace Marshall, he was a veteran OIFF participant, having performed, volunteered, presented, and directed for the Festival for decades. Like me, Marinaccio first experienced practical production freedom beyond the bounds of graduate school through interaction with the OIFF. "It's where I found my artistic voice and learned my craft," he told me, "and it afforded me

opportunities I wouldn't have had elsewhere.”<sup>38</sup> Because he had already performed, produced, and directed dozens of Fringe and local new-works shows, he had an intimate understanding of artists’ needs and how the Orlando Fringe operated. In a conversation we had in 2021, he explained that he was also able to access the OIFF producer files and the producer email account, which he referred to as the *holy grail*, a resource that made it possible for him to piece together timelines and guidelines that he worked to improve upon throughout his tenure.

His initial focus with the Festival was to strengthen diversity by promoting the event as not just a place for those with a palate for racy programming. In an interview with Orlando Sentinel journalist, Matt Palm, he expressed the desire to tweak people’s perception of the Festival and “to make sure that potential patrons knew of the diverse offerings beyond the ribald and risqué.”<sup>39</sup> In this aim, he restructured the annual preview party by breaking the event into two acts. The first act was reserved for shows suitable for all ages, and the second was devoted to the more adult offerings in the lineup. With help from Genevieve Bernard, whom he convinced to come on as Kids Fringe producer his first year, Marinaccio relocated Kids Fringe from an outdoor stage on the lawn to Mennello Museum’s sculpture garden. As a result, Kids Fringe began to form its own identity and attendance rocketed to more than 10,000 visitors. Soon after he

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38. Seth Kubersky, “Exclusive: First Interview with new Orlando Festival Fringe Producer Michael Marinaccio,” *The Gist, Orlando Weekly*, October 26, 2011, <https://www.orlandoweekly.com/Blogs/archives/2011/10/26/exclusive-first-interview-with-new-orlando-fringe-festival-producer-michael-marinaccio>.

39. Matt Palm, “25 years of Orlando Fringe Festival memories: 2012, the 21st festival,” *Orlando Sentinel*, May 10, 2016, <https://www.orlandosentinel.com/entertainment/arts-and-theater/os-orlando-fringe-memories-2012-20160510-story.html>.

formalized the family-friendly side of the Fringe, the Fringe started to get big founders like Disney.

Marinaccio also expanded the number of venues to include Theatre Downtown and The Venue, both within a mile of Fringe Central. *Orlando Sentinel* reporter Matt Palm admits that he "...had some fun when The Venue, owned by frequent Fringe performer Blue Star, was designated the Black Venue under the Fringe's color-coding system." In his column, he wrote, "The Black venue will be Blue's Venue...not to be confused with the Blue Venue, which is the Shakes' Studio B. I'm just saying, make sure you know where you're going before you hit the beer tent too hard."<sup>40</sup> The additional venues meant that the Fringe line-up could increase from 80 to 100 staged productions. By 2013, attendance for the Festival reached nearly 50,000, and year-round programming began. George Wallace, who was on staff as executive director, worked in tandem with Marinaccio. By 2015, the pair had helped increase a return of funds to artists in the amount of \$371,153 over the span of the Festival's ten-day run.

Though Marinaccio mindfully worked to expand the Festival and to give focus to some of the Festival's non-risqué offerings, he retained a devotion to the Fringe's founding mission to protect the unjuried quality of the lottery. About this, he noted in a 2016 producer's round-table interview, "I am not the arbiter of what art is valid and what art isn't. I don't think any of us are qualified to be that person. All we can say is what art we like, and what art speaks to us, and what it does for us. And that's fine. But it's much

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40. Matt Palm, "25 years of Fringe Festival memories: 2013, the 22<sup>nd</sup> festival," *Orlando Sentinel* (Orlando, FL), May 12, 2016, <https://www.orlandosentinel.com/entertainment/arts-and-theater/os-orlando-fringe-memories-2013-20160512-story.html>.

better to let the audience decide.”<sup>41</sup> While Marinaccio maintained the 100% unjuried mandate, he did focus administrative efforts on expanding Marshall’s dedication towards improving international involvement.

Marinaccio traveled the Canadian Fringe circuit and visited fringes across the globe to advocate for the Festival and to encourage international artists to attend the OIFF. His background as a performer/practitioner focused his efforts on giving Fringe participants a personal touch. He told me in a 2020 interview that through his extensive fringe touring experience and in his communication with Fringe performers who tour, he discovered that few of the fringe festivals outside of Orlando featured direct contact with lead administration. He made it his mission to ensure that he personally visited every group during their OIFF tech rehearsals. Support of the artists, from a performer’s mindset, marked Marinaccio’s management approach. Eventually, the passion for the craft led him to step down from his position at the end of the 2019 Fringe, to pursue performance and production full-time. Marinaccio and Wallace’s long partnership helped the Fringe gear up to its third phase of development.

### Phase Three: Into the Future

While phase one of the OIFF’s development was marked by an era of grassroots living and a struggle for survival with a BTS factor of one, phase two saw a growth in stability, specifically because of the physical move into permanent venues, survival of the beer truck, and an expansion of paid staff. The OIFF’s third phase tracks the Fringe

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41. George Wallace, Matt Wohl, Genevieve Bernard, Paula Whigham and Mike Marinaccio, interview by author, digital recording, Orlando, FL, May 29, 2016.



through an expansion of year-round programming, an activated initiative to incorporate BTS planning in daily Fringe operations, and a strong commitment to expanding diversity and accessibility initiatives. Phase three also sees a shift in administrative leadership. Specifically, the administrative hierarchy, which for decades had placed the Festival producer far above all other staff in measure of authority, had settled into a structure placing the executive director in highest authority, under the board of directors.

### *Operational Shifts During the Tenure of Alauna Friskics*

Alauna Friskics' entrance into OIFF administration came as a result of first experiencing the Festival as a volunteer. She came down from Batesville, Arkansas, on spring break during her senior year in college to visit her parents who were annual Fringe volunteers. On day one of the 1998 Fringe, she was introduced to then volunteer coordinator, Paula Whigham. She recalls working every hour of the Festival: "I got up each morning, was dropped off at Fringe, and I would literally be there until 2:00, 3:00, 4:00 each morning...I volunteered more hours than anyone that year, I was just soaking it up and of course, fell in love."<sup>42</sup> Friskics graduated a month later with a degree in Arts Management, moved back to Orlando, and became roommates with Producer Matt Wohl, about the time that the OIFF offices were moved to the front porch of the home they shared.

Friskics became volunteer coordinator in 1999. Her observation about the rate of pay that she received for her long and hard hours of work drives home how bare the

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42. Friskics interview.

Fringe coffers were in the late 1990s. “I was paid \$400, and I worked all year,” she remembers. “At one point I did the math because I tracked my hours and thought it would be fun to go back and see, and it worked out to about 3 cents per hour.”<sup>43</sup> Her experience points again to how precarious the OIFF’s survival was during those early years. For Orlando Fringe, low BTS in the early years was made even more problematic by the fact that it could not pay a reasonable rate to the workers it leaned upon for its continuance. It depended on the allegiance of contributors, who were strained to the breaking point. I certainly found this to be true during my own tenure as producer. I recall doing the math during Festival week myself and realizing that as executive producer/artistic director, I was making \$3 an hour before taxes.

Whether Friskics would have burned out after another year with the OIFF is unknown. She was offered a scholarship to pursue her master’s degree in Chicago and left Orlando after 1999. She returned during my tenure with OIFF management in 2000 and 2001 as a producer for the Chicago-based improvisation troupe, Mission Improvable. The following year, as I returned to Graduate School, she returned to Orlando and was hired on as an associate producer and independent contractor to assist Chris Gibson, who at that point had taken over my position. She recalls her raise in salary. “I was making 400 dollars a week. So, moving up in the world.”

In our interview, Friskics pointed out that though she was brought on in 2002 as associate producer, the board of directors hired her predominantly to focus on securing

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43. Friskics interview.

sponsorships. Her background in arts management poised her to be particularly skilled in this. The problem was that she found that the OIFF books were in desperate need of an overhaul, and she did not feel she could pursue donors until she restructured. Prior to Friskics, none of the previous producers had backgrounds in business. Additionally, the board of directors had previously handled accounts through a volunteer treasurer, and so there was an internal remove from financial record-keeping. When Friskics stepped in, she digitized the books and brought on a presenting sponsor and several very small donations from area restaurants. She also took on production responsibilities as needed and worked with Producer Chris Gibson to navigate the loss of the Festival's entire storage contents, which burned in the 2002 fire that destroyed the Old Bryan Hotel. From the perspective of the public and the press, Alauna helped launch the Fringe to success in the face of destruction.<sup>44</sup> Alauna was shocked to find that the executive committee of the board of directors did not agree, abruptly letting her go immediately following the Festival because they felt she did not deliver enough new sponsorship dollars.

Fortunately for the Fringe, the apparent snub did not dissuade her from applying for and accepting the role of executive director in 2017. Friskics' immediate actions directly addressed the acknowledgement of BTS factor risks, for which she systematically designed action plans. Specifically, she discovered that the staff was

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44. Steve Schneider, "Fringe and purge," *Orlando Weekly* (Orlando, FL), May 23, 2002, <https://www.orlandoweekly.com/orlando/fringe-and-purge/Content?oid=2261366>. Steve Schneider credits Alauna (then McMillan) with delivering an exceptionally successful Fringe, despite the year's challenges and fire-related losses.

largely working independently of each other, with no formalized lines of communication between different departments. In an interview I conducted with her, she explained, “When I came in, I did a reorg and defined roles. I found that everyone was operating in a silo. Kids Fringe, Visual Fringe, the Outdoor Stage, everyone did their own thing and there was no real overarching cohesive knowledge of what everyone was doing.”<sup>45</sup> Friskics also found that all-hands production meetings were only being held the last two Saturdays prior to the Fringe’s opening festival day. This not only led to confusion and lack of clarity; it also detracted from the Festival in more concrete ways, such as unnecessary financial loss due to multiple people ordering the same supplies.

Three years after Friskics came on as ED, Marinaccio was replaced by New Jersey native Lindsay Taylor, a former media-arts student who had been working at Disney for seven years. Lindsay’s introduction to the Fringe came as a result of studying comedy improvisation under an iconic Fringe performer by the name of Chase Padgett.<sup>46</sup> He encouraged her to get involved with the Fringe. She wrote her first play, a rap musical entitled “*Lil Women*,” which was accepted in the Orlando Fringe lottery and turned out to be an award-winning hit, which she toured across the North American fringe circuit in Canada and the United States.

When Mike Marinaccio stepped down after the 2019 Fringe, his position was already being redesigned by Friskics who was working to balance administrative duties.

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45. Friskics interview.

46. Padgett’s first solo Fringe show, *6 Guitars*, won multiple “Best of Festival” awards, and toured to sold-out houses across Canada and the US.

Friskics had absorbed the oversight of all general Festival administration, volunteers, lawn food, and beverages. She delineated to the producer the tasks of overseeing OIFF performers, staff and operations for the outdoor stage, Kids Fringe, Visual Fringe, technical theatre elements, and all artistic Festival aspects.

Taylor's two administrative focus areas while working with Friskics have been accessibility expansion and the newly created Inclusive Diversity, Accessibility Committee (IDA), which gathers community members monthly to discuss areas where the Fringe could improve. IDA helped create an initiative to revamp and rename the diversity lottery, which had been operating as a protected set of three show slots reserved within the Festival schedule lineup for groups that identified themselves as members of under-represented communities. This was rebranded as the Amplified Voices Lottery and the number of slots was raised from three in total to 30% of all available artist slots.

An example of accessibility expansion was an increase of American Sign Language-interpreted shows. Prior to 2020 the Fringe was averaging around six interpreted shows. In 2020 twenty performances were interpreted into sign language. Those twenty shows were scheduled internally. Previously, ASL interpreters had only been made available by request. ASL interpreters also translated the opening and closing ceremonies that year, a first in OIFF history. These representative examples of growth also serve to illustrate how far beyond a BTS threat the Fringe has grown. Instead of fighting to find venues, and struggling to survive, the Festival has reached a state of health that allows it to revive more of its core values of inclusivity and accessibility.

## Conclusion

When I directly asked Friskics to address the OIFF's BTS factor score she reported that the Fringe is no longer in danger, stating, "If anyone left abruptly, we would easily be able to carry on."<sup>47</sup> Her evidence for this assessment lies in her direct restructuring of operations. Specifically, all OIFF files have been migrated to one shared cloud drive that was set up with formalized naming conventions that makes it easy to find information. Additionally, she began holding weekly meetings with all staff beginning five months before the Festival. Finally, she had created procedural manuals and documents to help guide organization.

Paula Whigham, current director of corporate sponsorship, attests to the accuracy of Friskics' assertions of organizational health. She estimated the OIFF's BTS factor to be "at least 20," explaining that the loss of staff at this point would not be detrimental. She noted in our interview that she has a "What to Do if Paula Whigham Dies" file. She claims that all major Fringe staff have their own versions of that file. She also questions whether the Fringe was ever in danger, stating that *Father Fringe* (Terry Olson) would have stepped in to save the day if a beer truck ever wiped-out Fringe leadership.<sup>48</sup> Lindsay Taylor maintains that the Orlando Fringe is no longer endangered by the BTS factor. "Our year-round staff is still pretty small," she says, "but if any one of us left, we could figure it out without it dying."<sup>49</sup> She referenced cloud-based data files to

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47. Friskics interview.

48. Whigham interview.

49. Lindsay Taylor, interview by author, ZOOM recording, Orlando, FL, August 24, 2021.

support her opinion; “I know all their [staff-members] timelines, too, which is good and helpful in case they get hit by a truck.”<sup>50</sup>

Perhaps one of the most profound measures of how far the Orlando International Fringe Festival has come since its white-knuckle BTS factor of one day is how well it has weathered the global shutdown due to COVID-19. Though the Fringe cancelled all in-person components of their 2020 season, no Fringe employees were furloughed or let go. In an interview with previous Associate Producer and current Head of Education Genevieve Bernard, she remembered being impressed by how the crisis was handled. She recalled going into lockdown prior to the Fringe being canceled and working remotely, operating as if the team would be moving forward until it was determined that the Festival would lose more money by trying to continue. At that time, Friskics gathered the staff and explained that she had presented the board with seventeen different scenarios for organizational survival, told them they would be paid and not lose their jobs. COVID-19 forced proof of growth by illustrating that the Orlando Fringe, which clung for more than a decade to a BTS factor so low that the loss of one person would have sunk it, to illustrating that it could lose an entire year without folding.

The OIFF now boasts a full-time staff of five: executive director, development coordinator, marketing director, director of corporate sponsorship, and theatre producer.

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50. Taylor interview.

In addition, they have a year-round part-time education coordinator. Behind the scenes, Friskics is currently lobbying to add, operations manager to the full-time staff.<sup>51</sup>

Seasonal paid hourly employees, who come on board in October, include the associate producer, volunteer coordinator, box office manager, and operations manager.

contracted employees, who also come on in the fall, include the Festival technical director, Kids Fringe producer, Visual Fringe producer, and outdoor stage producer. All positions are now paid.

During the Festival, the technical director also oversees the hiring, scheduling, and management of approximately ten indoor venue techs as well as techs for the outdoor stage. The OIFF lawn has a staff of its own, including a coordinator for outdoor events, an outdoor stage producer and assistant producer team, a lawn and recycling manager, a first aid tech, a beverage manager, a pair of head bartenders, and a team of about five additional bartenders. The OIFF Kids Fringe staff has likewise grown from its bare-bones beginnings. Kids Fringe now has its own producer and assistant producer as well as a Kids Fringe stage manager. Visual Fringe has a team of three assistant producers under the direction of one head Visual Fringe producer. The entire organization utilizes one lead photographer with a team of three assistants as well as a social media team of four and what has grown into a seven-member Intern team. The OIFF is nothing if not inclusive, as they even list their pets as staff members with the titles executive barker, production pooch, development doggo, chief financial feline, lead ZOOM crasher, and accounting cutie.

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51. Friskics interview.



The OIFF's increased BTS score may have come at the expense of one singular leadership voice, but it has not detracted from the Festival's core commitments and founding principles. Conversely, the Festival's stability allows for a balance of responsibilities which in turn frees up time and resources for OIFF staff to create new ways to expand accessibility and inclusivity, as is evidenced in this administrative history and the Festival's new motions towards black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) inclusion and expansion of diversity initiatives. In the following chapter, I delve into a more detailed account of the biggest transition in the Orlando Fringe's history: the administrative shift to Loch Haven Park.

This macro-level investigation of the OIFF offers an overview of how the Fringe's trajectory morphed and transformed during the administrative tenures of some of its main leaders to move it from a survival stage into a stage of growth. By following the evolution of the Fringe from its early days that were marked by an itinerant white-knuckle BTS factor of one, to its current multi-staff model housed in permanent venues, it seems evident that Terry Olson has finally gotten the happy ending he visualized for the man who floated down to create a celebration of unity, inclusion, and art. In my final interview with him, Olson was excitedly talking about FusionFest, his free four-year-old downtown festival created to celebrate Orlando's more than 110 different cultures. He said he was not surprised by how the Orlando Fringe has grown, it is precisely what he'd imagined.<sup>52</sup> Like Mary Poppins, he stayed until he knew his creation was strong enough, now he seems to have floated off to a new festival family who needs him.

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52. Olson interview.

## CHAPTER 5. FESTIVAL LOCATIONS

Seven months before the OIFF splintered and moved all but a handful of its venues out of downtown, *Orlando Sentinel* journalist Elizabeth Maupin published an article stating that faulty air conditioning, dilapidated venues, and double-booking issues were likely to cause the Festival to consider relocation.<sup>1</sup> She was correct. 2003 was the last year that the OIFF would house all its venues downtown. The move happened in two phases starting in 2004, with the footprint split between Loch Haven, a 45-acre cultural park, and downtown Orlando. Then, in 2005, the Fringe abandoned downtown entirely. The relocation of the OIFF, I argue, constitutes the most consequential juncture in the Fringe's history. It transformed practically every feature of Fringe operation and experience: producers' duties, tech support, box office management and staffing, volunteer needs, performers' experiences, audience experiences, security, marketing, and (no joke) the average Fringe-goer's interaction with rats.<sup>2</sup> In this chapter, then, I complement Chapter 4's macro-level historical narrative about administration with a focused account of this shift. After establishing how the original downtown footprint was designed, I address how and why the Fringe moved. I follow

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1. Elizabeth Maupin, "Downtown Likely to Lose a Large Part of Fringe Fest," *Orlando Sentinel* (Orlando, FL), September 30, 2003, <https://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/os-xpm-2003-09-30-0309300079-story.html>. Theatre critic Elizabeth Maupin wrote the first public article addressing downtown Orlando's potential loss of the Fringe on September 30th, 2003. In the article, she addresses the plan for the bulk of the OIFF's venues to move to Loch Haven while the SAK Comedy Lab hub, Mad Cow Theatre venue, and the Studio Theatre were to remain in operation with a two-and-a-half-mile divide between them.

2. Owing to dilapidated buildings being used for venues, no fewer than seven of the research interviews that I conducted featured rats, ants, and other vermin as part of the aesthetic of the downtown Fringe.

with a description of the current Loch Haven Park footprint, and I close with representative examples of how the move changed Festival operations.

### The Downtown Footprint

According to co-founder Rick Kunst, at the time of the OIFF's birth, part of the founders' original mission involved positioning the Fringe downtown to help revive the city's struggling downtown area.<sup>3</sup> While Orlando has long been famous for drawing tourists from around the globe, the lion's share of these visitors have historically gravitated to the region's family theme parks, which do not offer convenient access to downtown.<sup>4</sup> As a case in point, road distance between downtown Orlando and Walt Disney World is over 24 miles, a distance which Olson felt dissuaded most theme park vacationers from venturing into town. The OIFF founders felt that a ten-day arts festival could entice tourists to explore beyond the Kissimmee-area theme parks. They felt that the Fringe would give tourists access to affordable entertainment and would expose them to a more balanced experience of Central Florida. Likewise, it would give locals a reason to spend time (and money) downtown. To ensure that Fringe patrons interacted with as many downtown businesses as possible, the founders enlisted downtown business owners at venues such as coffee shops, bars, and restaurants to offer specials for patrons wearing a Fringe button. Fringe-goers were encouraged to

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3. I rely heavily on interviews I conducted with co-founders Terry Olson and Terry Olson for this section. Co-founder Andy Anthony is deceased.

4. Richard Bilbao, "Disney, Universal see bumps in Orlando theme park attendance," *Orlando Business Journal* (Orlando, FL), May 17, 2018, <https://www.bizjournals.com/orlando/news/2018/05/17/disney-universal-see-bumps-in-orlando-theme-park.html>. An example of the traffic seen by Orlando theme parks is recorded in the *Orlando Business Journal* which reports that in 2017 alone, Disney's four main attractions drew almost 56 million guests.

patronize these businesses as they traveled on foot from theatre venue to theatre venue.

Founder Olson stated that requirements for Fringe venues themselves included a playing area of approximately thirty feet by twenty feet facing an area that could provide for approximately 100 folding chairs to be set up without severely obstructed views of the stage. As venues were not already outfitted for theatrical sound and lighting, appropriate space for lighting trees, speakers, and a tech area for light and sound boards had to be available. The pioneer layout of the inaugural OIFF included an outdoor stage on Church Street, a visual art gallery, and four indoor venues: the old McCrory's located at 101 South Orange Avenue; 125 South Orange Avenue, which delayed opening as a restaurant specifically so that it could be used as an OIFF venue; an empty storefront at 56 East Pine Street; and 45 East Church Street, home of SAK Theatre lab. SAK Theatre remained a staple, but new venues had to be acquired each following year that the Fringe remained downtown.<sup>5</sup>

The process of Fringe venue acquisition involved taking physical inventory of vacant downtown storefronts and pursuing those that would collectively fall within a walkable distance from an outdoor stage so that prospective patrons could travel to multiple shows on foot. In a 2021 interview with Terry Olson, the Fringe founder explained that the initial footprint's design sought to make every venue visible from another venue. This would ensure a cohesiveness of the layout. The founders wanted

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5. Matt Palm Orlando Sentinel article March 10, 2016



Figure 28. Pictured here is the downtown Orlando SAK Comedy Lab being used in 2003 as the Red Fringe Venue. Fringe co-founders Olson, Anthony, and Kunst were also founding members of SAK. Image courtesy of the OIFF archive.



Figure 29. This is the 2003 Purple Venue housed in the Studio Theatre next to SAK. These images were taken after the 2002 Fringe storage fire that destroyed the Festival's iconic colored tubes. Image courtesy of the OIFF archive.



to avoid the sprawl of other fringe festivals, such as the NOLA Fringe. They also wanted the Festival to be eye-catching. Vicki Ann Cremona, in *Festivalizing*, notes, “The visibility of a festival is determined by the extent to which it spills out onto the community and communal areas that surround its space.”<sup>6</sup> Olson specifically wanted the Fringe to overflow into the city with color. To this end, he conceived a visual design plan that would not only make it easy for Fringe patrons to identify the particular venues they were looking for but would also cue the surrounding community to take notice of the Fringe.



Figure 30. This image shows 2004 Fringe performers hawking their shows at Church Street Market, an example of how the OIFF spilled into the area when it was downtown. The man with the boycott sign is handing out flyers for the show he is warning people against.

In our interview, Kunst explained that it was Terry Olson who proposed that the venues be named by color, with A-frame signs and podiums of the same hue, and it was he who suggested that they be outfitted in large, color-coordinated air tubes. For instance, one of the mainstage indoor theatre venues would be named the green venue and would be wrapped in bright green air tubes to make it identifiable at a glance. From that venue, patrons could look into the cityscape and see orange air tubes wrapped around the entryway to the orange venue, purple air tubes enveloping the purple venue, and so on. Olson said that he wanted a bold physical presence so that passersby would be intrigued, inquire as to what was going on, and become interested enough to become patrons and/or spread word about the big, colorful entertainment festival which had taken over downtown Orlando. Kunst, who at the time of our interview had spent four years as a student of visual arts, alluded to the tubes as a great art installation piece, an excellent way of self-identifying, and he noted that the design worked brilliantly because it immediately gave a carnivalesque visibility to the Fringe. Without the color-coded venues and the conspicuous bright tubes, the burgeoning festival could easily have gone unseen by the community, specifically because the venues were simple abandoned storefronts without any of the signage usually found at traditional performance venues.

Past Producer Matt Wohl was involved with the Fringe for most of its downtown years and remembers being on a constant hunt for viable space in abandoned restaurants, warehouses, and empty storefronts that could be converted into theater spaces. Many of those spaces were in poor condition. "On West Church Street," Wohl recalls, "there were these abandoned buildings that were condemned. And somehow,

and I don't even know how, but somehow, we got permission to use them for the Festival, even though they were condemned.”<sup>7</sup> Wohl remembered many individuals balking at the idea of repurposing condemned structures for mass entertainment. Community members’ skepticism about the prudence of using condemned spaces would be validated in the coming years.



Figure 31. This image, courtesy of OIFF archives, shows the iconic tubes identifying the Green and Blue venues at the corner of Central Boulevard and Church Street during the Festival's 1992 inaugural year.

Some of the selected venues were so dilapidated that they required extensive cleaning and repair. As I can attest from having the experience of producing the Festival while it was still downtown, venue acquisition took up a staggering amount of pre-event management hours. Because the Fringe was guided by a mission to treat all artists fairly and with equal support, venues had to be as equal as possible. It was our task as

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7. Wohl interview.



Fringe organizers to create comparable working conditions for performers in spaces that varied greatly in terms of initial cleanliness and habitability. While the SAK Theatre space remained a constant venue and guaranteed that its performers would have fully functional tech capabilities, the other venues were often plagued by technical and structural difficulties such as faulty electrics, plumbing issues, sound bleed, vermin, and temperature regulation problems. Given that the Fringe was also suffering from a dangerously low BTS score, the venue problems meant that producers like me had wear a host of professional hats, from electrician to exterminator, in addition to the core logistical tasks.

### The Move that Changed Everything

Though the OIFF would not relocate to Loch Haven until 2005, venue problems had become such an issue by the culmination of the 1996 Festival that Fringe founder Terry Olson organized a public community meeting to brainstorm ways to help. Figure 33 is a clipping from the *Orlando Sentinel* advertising the meeting. The Festival that year suffered from a last-minute loss of three venues that had become non-viable after all promotional materials, Fringe maps, and Fringe programs had already been printed.

As a performer that year, I witnessed patrons and performers reporting infestations of rats and many patrons complaining about missing shows when they showed up to venues only to find they had been relocated. One audience member was even taken to the hospital and treated for heat exhaustion in the same venue where one of the performers reportedly passed out backstage due to the heat. I recall in that same year the Festival was also forced to shift its layout because of city work. Fringe Central moved from Church Street to the old courthouse six blocks north because of

construction congestion as the City of Orlando blocked off walkways and streets to create bus lanes for their new Lymmo public transit system. 1996 also went down in history as the Festival's wettest year. It rained nonstop for six of the ten days and attendance plummeted from eighty thousand to under twenty-seven thousand.<sup>8</sup>

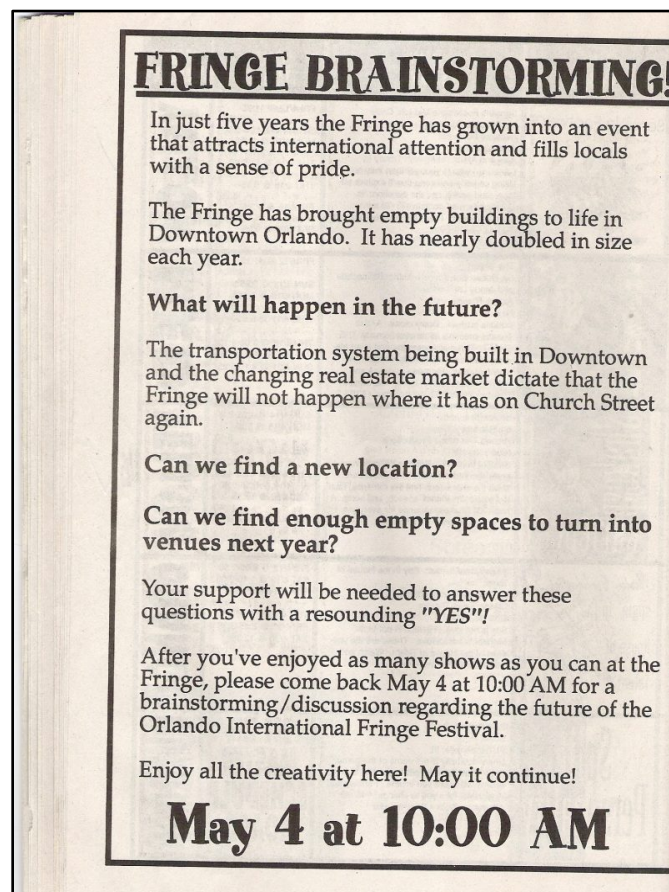


Figure 32. A clipping of the original call for patron input about Fringe venue solutions.

Festival organizers began to feel that for the Fringe to remain viable it would need to be housed in stable venues, preferably ones that could accommodate indoor queues for patrons waiting for shows in comfort no matter the weather conditions. As

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8. Wohl interview.

the economy began to improve in 1996, venue options continued to dwindle. Regardless of the OIFF's difficulties that year, and despite public efforts to get community feedback on protecting the Fringe, no action was taken to abandon downtown. Two suggested alternate locations were the theatres encircling Loch Haven Park and the unused downtown lots under Interstate 4, long inhabited by encampments of individuals experiencing homelessness. Interestingly, Loch Haven Park had been suggested eight years prior to the eventual relocation.

Venue issues continued to mount over the nine years while the Festival remained downtown. In 1999, heat and vermin were constant problems for patrons, performers, and technicians.<sup>9</sup> In 2000 and 2001, Fringe Central was moved to Heritage Square across from the Orlando History Center, although most the Festival's indoor venues were more than a mile away, shuttered inside the enclosed Church Street Station Exchange. Although indoor venues meant that patrons would not have to wait in the heat or rain for shows, the space proved to be problematic because the Exchange had been designed for retail shops. Multiple venues had no enclosed ceilings. This caused some of the worst sound-bleed issues in the Fringe's history. As these challenges continued to build in 2002 and 2003, Producer Chris Gibson began to feel that the benefits of remaining downtown were far outweighed by the strain that venue acquisition put on the Festival.<sup>10</sup>

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9. Wohl interview.

10. Gibson interview.

The economy had been steadily picking up, and as a result, restaurants, bars, boutiques, business offices, and coffee shops began to fill the once plentiful vacant buildings that the Fringe relied on. In an interview with Matt Wohl, the past producer stated that the Fringe rarely had the option of using venues more than once because the spaces almost invariably got leased after the Fringe fixed them up. Whether or not the revival of the downtown storefronts can be attributed to the Fringe, the strain that the lack of reliable space had on the OIFF began to reach the breaking point in 2002, when the Old Bryan Hotel located at 330 West Church Street burned down, taking with it most of the Festival's physical property.<sup>11</sup> The structure, which is an example of Wohl's aforementioned condemned buildings that the OIFF was given inexplicable access to, was a central storage space for the Festival. The 1920s era hotel-turned-boardinghouse had been shuttered for four years prior to the fire, as it was unsafe for human dwelling.

In 2003, while Gibson worked to keep the OIFF afloat after the fire, he also started sitting down with members of the Loch Haven Cultural Park to discuss relocation possibilities. As Gibson was aware, the Loch Haven Cultural Park, managed by the City of Orlando Parks Department, was (and still is) home to the Lowndes Shakespeare Center, the Orlando Science Center, the Orlando Garden Club, the Jr. Achievement building, the Orlando Repertory Theatre, the Orlando Museum of Art, the Orlando Fire

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11. Susan Jacobson, "Fire damages relic of old Orlando," *Orlando Sentinel* (Orlando, FL), March 24, 2002, <https://www.orlandosentinelrelic.com/news/os-xpm-2002-03-24-0203240129-story.html>.

Museum, the Mennello Museum of American Art, and the Orlando Ballet.<sup>12</sup> He knew that a complex so robust could provide many venues for the OIFF. What he did not know was that the park, which was designed by Lloyd Hoover Galiher in 1956, was proposed to the city in a 72-page document that justified the center's 45-acre development with an ethos much aligned with that of the Fringe. Galiher conceived of the complex as a "place where all would be welcome," a place for those who were "starved for cultural advantages" to gather for music, social activities, and "dramatic features in both outdoor settings and special buildings in the park."<sup>13</sup> Though Loch Haven seemed to have literally been made for the Fringe, there was resistance to the move.

The following year, in 2003, Gibson was deeper into negotiations for a departure from downtown. According to past Producer Beth Marshall, however, the OIFF Board of Directors objected to the move on the grounds that it would kill the Fringe's mission to help create a vibrant downtown.<sup>14</sup> Gibson recalls that the OIFF Board at the time was an "incredibly engaged and active" balance of white- and blue-collar volunteers.<sup>15</sup> During his tenure they shouldered much of the business management because they

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12. "Loch Haven Park," City of Orlando, accessed September 22, 2021, <https://www.orlando.gov/Parks-the-Environment/Directory/Loch-Haven-Park>.

13. Lloyd Hoover Galiher, "Report and Recommendations for the Development of Loch Haven Park," Loch Haven Park Board, February 13, 1956, <https://orlandomemory.info/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Loch-Haven-Report-pdf.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2et-j--NHr4PIB6W0xUZaXTraCLg-ZDiN7PFBHjwun7yvLdVEUSytcU3Y>

14. Marshall interview.

15. Gibson interview.



were beginning to recognize that the low BTS factor was stunting Festival growth. Because the board members had no history in theatre or event production, however, they were more concerned with sponsor-opposition to the move.<sup>16</sup>

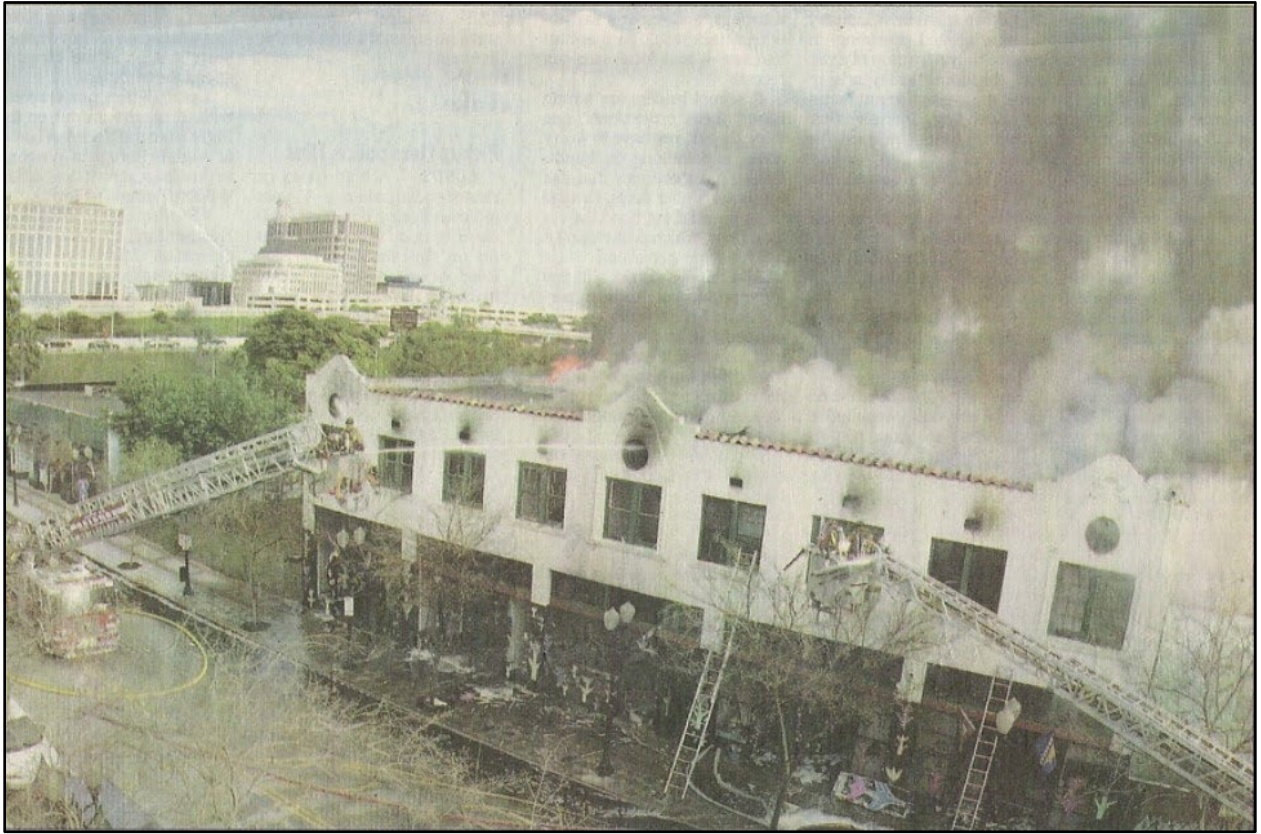


Figure 33. This image shows firefighters trying to put out the 2002 blaze that destroyed all the Festival/s venue supplies along with financial records and most of its historical documents. From the OIFF archives.

Gibson held the Festival downtown that year but recalls that during the first week of the run, the Pink venue, located on Church Street, had to be abandoned when the air conditioning went completely out and all performers were moved into a new hastily configured space.<sup>17</sup> Fringe reviewer Seth Kubersky remembers the Pink venue as "a

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16. A move from downtown would put an end to the long-standing financial backing of the Downtown Development Board.

really awful ramshackle space on the west side of downtown where there were rats literally running across the stage.”<sup>18</sup> Days after the venue was dismantled and evacuated, the Brown venue flooded, and all productions located there had no choice but to be moved into the previously abandoned Pink venue. Fringe producer and performer Michael Wanzie recalls being one of the performers relegated to the Pink venue with his show *Bingo Queen*. “It was suffocating in the space,” Wanzie recalled, “and this building was old and dilapidated, and they’d brought in a portable air conditioner that was just drawing hot air.” He remembers being backstage waiting for a slow venue manager to signal her tech to start his delayed show. “I was dying,” Wanzie said, “with my makeup running off my face just waiting to start the damn show. Then suddenly, I scream because a rat ran right across my feet and then ran across the stage to the other side. I screamed, then the whole audience screamed, and then she starts the show.”<sup>19</sup>

Also, that year, a local radio station was allowed by Church Street management to schedule a large rock concert on an outdoor stage just feet from indoor Fringe venues. The unfortunate shows in the Church Street venues, such as a Canadian troupe’s production of Euripides’ *Medea*, had to compete with rock and roll. Fringe patrons complained that they were unable to hear performers over the blaring music. Wanzie remembers being present for one of those shows and stated that when he

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17. Gibson interview.

18. Kubersky interview.

19. Michael Wanzie, interview by author, digital recording, Orlando, FL, August 2, 2020.

attempted to exit the venue after the performance, the door was blocked by concert staging that had been installed too close to the building. This series of events marked the first real fracture in the sustainability of the downtown model.

Gibson recognized that the venue issues were no longer sustainable and lobbied with the board of directors to sanction at least a partial move for Fringe 2004. He succeeded in getting the board to agree to a compromise. The Festival would abandon all venues that had to be outfitted or renovated and would retain venues only at SAK Theatre, Mad Cow Theatre, and the Theatre Garage's Studio Theatre on Amelia.<sup>20</sup> All other venues would be moved to the Orlando Rep and Shakespeare Center at Loch

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20. Gibson interview.





Figure 34. In this 2004 Fringe archive photo, a venue entrance is under the left archway, and a concert stage is where the photographer of this picture stands. The close proximity of the stage and venue made sound-bleeds a problem.

Haven. Beth Marshall called the compromise a “Made to fit all but fits nobody” move that over-stretched resources, manpower, and patrons. For example, the entire volunteer base had to be split in two, creating a need for more volunteers. Patrons could not schedule back-to-back shows without having to cut back on viewing times because of travel between downtown and Loch Haven. Artists who were performing in multiple shows created more scheduling difficulties because they sometimes had to travel across town to get to their next performance. When Gibson left and Marshall took over in 2005, she moved the Festival entirely to the Loch Haven complex. The Fringe has remained there ever since. She acknowledges that the move was heavily contested and cites the main push-back from performers and audience members as centering on a fear that the Fringe would lose its bohemian feel if moved to a theatre complex.

In a 2003 *Orlando Sentinel* article announcing development of a partial relocation plan, journalist Elizabeth Maupin noted the conflicting views of the OIFF community. “I like it grungy,” said Fringe patron Mark Nicholas in the article, “I like going into a vacated building and wondering what it was before. However, the spaces that Fringe has been able to get lately have not been fun grunge; they’ve been port-a-potty grunge. And the only way to truly show the value [of having the Fringe downtown] and to flex our cultural muscle is to move.”<sup>21</sup>

Conversely, Maupin noted that the Downtown Development Board, a longtime financial and logistical backer of the Festival, felt the move would cause the Fringe to lose heart and soul. She also reported feedback from Barry and Denny Meneghelli, who travelled annually from Port St. John for the Fringe, when they stated they enjoyed the downtown location because they could park their car at their hotel and never need it again as they attended late night shows and explored various downtown restaurants for dining options.<sup>22</sup>

Founder Olson also admitted in a 2021 interview that he loved the grittiness of being downtown and loved the energy of people around who were not part of the Festival. He admitted, however, that he also understood the mounting challenges that the downtown model faced. Michael Wanzie voiced an opposing view when I asked him in our interview about his take on the move. He scoffed at the old-school group he hears sitting around the beer tent bemoaning how sanitized the Festival is now that it is

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21. Maupin, “Downtown Likely to Lose.”

22. Maupin, “Downtown Likely to Lose.”

in proper theatres. “Yeah. I don’t share that opinion in any way, shape or form,” he says. “Give me air conditioning and a cushion seat. Thank you very much.”<sup>23</sup> No formal poll has been created to gather statistics on how many Fringe participants prefer the downtown footprint versus the Loch Haven footprint. I can report, however, that sixteen years after the move the issue is still talked about during the Festival. This history of the move and the preceding representative samples of divergent viewpoints may be put into better context through an examination of the current footprint model.

### Loch Haven Park Complex

Most OIFF venues in the Loch Haven complex are now housed in permanent performance spaces. Some require reconfiguration by use of pipe and drape, but most venues are fixed with lighting grids and sound equipment already installed. While details of each of the performance spaces employed may seem at first to be of little consequence, they illustrate a complete departure from the production restrictions and challenges of many of the Festival’s downtown venues. Downtown venues typically had to be *transformed* into theatrical spaces each year; Loch Haven venues simply *are* theatrical spaces year-round. They also emphasize the Festival’s

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23. Wanzie interview.



Figure 35. Voci Dance created a performance with artist, Doug Rhodehamel, known for his paper bag mushrooms. The company set up a performance area in the trees near the beer tent, borrowing power from a food truck. Photo courtesy of Matthew Simantov.

current ability to play host to a more diverse lineup of performances, some of which would not have been able to be staged in the smaller downtown venues. As an example, spectacle shows such as the 2016 *Varietease: Carnivale* employed two-story set pieces, a rig for aerial performers, and a stage large enough to hold stilt walkers.

Because the current venues are so diverse, Fringe administration entirely changed the way it manages venue spaces for artists. Instead of charging all productions a uniform application fee and laboring to make all venues comparable, the

OIFF currently charges a small application fee to be submitted into a three-tier lottery

<b>TIER 1-</b> max 75 min	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>GOLD</b>	\$825	\$1,025	\$1,225	\$1,425
<b>ORANGE</b>	\$1,225	\$1,425	\$1,625	\$1,825
<b>SILVER</b>	\$1,225	\$1,425	\$1,625	\$1,825
<b>TIER 2-</b> max 75 min	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>BROWN</b>	\$625	\$725	\$825	\$925
<b>GREEN</b>	\$625	\$725	\$825	\$925
<b>PINK</b>	\$625	\$725	\$825	\$925
<b>YELLOW</b>	\$725	\$825	\$925	\$1,025
<b>TIER 3-</b> max 60 min	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>BLUE</b>	\$500	\$550	\$600	\$650
<b>PURPLE</b>	\$475	\$525	\$575	\$625
<b>RED</b>	\$475	\$525	\$575	\$625

Figure 36. This image from the OIFF archive shows the 2021 fee structure as delineated by tier (occupancy) and number of shows.



based on how many patrons can be seated in the venue.<sup>24</sup> The tiers are additionally allocated so that 50% of the slots are open only to Central Florida performance groups, 25% are reserved for national companies, and 25% go to international groups. This entire lottery process takes place after the Amplified Voices Lottery, which awards 30% of all Festival slots to under-represented groups. Those in under-represented groups who do not get a spot the first time are then re-entered into the general lottery, giving them two chances at being chosen. Once performers are accepted, remaining artist fees are determined based on the number of performances you request in your application. Each group may select between four and seven shows.

Although the Festival is constantly altering the periphery of its footprint with the loss or addition of site-specific and “Bring Your Own Venue” playing areas, the Loch Haven performance spaces remain relatively static. The following descriptions represent the list of venues employed for Fringe 2021 and help to further demonstrate how the Orlando International Fringe has positioned itself to give platform to productions ranging from spectacle pieces to the most intimate one-person shows, with none of the structural challenges that plagued the downtown Fringe.<sup>25</sup>

### *The Shakes*

Most performance venues are housed within the John and Rita Lowndes Shakespeare Center. The complex, located

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24. “Festival Managed.”

25. Throughout this section, I rely heavily on information from Technical Director Amy Hadley as gathered in our 6pm, Monday, August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021 ZOOM interview, as well as her “Online Venue Tours” video series which can be viewed at <https://orlandofringe.org/artists/festival-managed/>.



Figure 37. This OIFF photo shows the front entrance to the John & Rita Lowndes Shakespeare Center, known by locals as The Shakes.

at 812 East Rollins Street, is also home to the year-round offices of the Orlando Fringe. During the Festival, the complex holds five to seven mainstage venues, a Visual Fringe Art Display, and the OIFF's official box office. The rear courtyard features a beer and wine garden as well as kiosks for merchandise and button sales. The mainstage venues housed here are as follows:

- Margeson Theatre (The Orange Venue): Orange is one of the largest venues in this complex. This three-quarter thrust theatre (meaning that the playing space is surrounded by the audience on three sides) has a seating capacity of 320. The OIFF suggests this venue for spectacle shows, large musicals, dance shows, productions requiring a vaulted overhead, shows produced by veteran Fringe

performers, and shows that guarantee a large audience. Because this is such a large house and because there is a larger distance between the stage and semi-circular back row, the Festival advises against this space for one-person shows, intimate dramas, or first-time Fringe performers. This theatre marks one of the largest departures from early Fringe venues because of its vaulted ceiling, raked seating, and an audience occupancy that is more than triple the average of the downtown spaces.<sup>26</sup>

- Goldman Theatre (Yellow Venue): This performance space holds a 125-seat maximum. It features a mock-proscenium style theatre with a raked audience and raised stage.<sup>27</sup> This space is suggested for any performers with small to medium productions. Yellow venue is accessed from outside through double-door entrances, but because the doors are of standard seven-foot height, large scenery productions are inappropriate for the space. Because this space is used traditionally as a rehearsal hall and restructured during Festival time, and because it holds a modest audience, this and the Mandell Studio are most reminiscent of early-era Fringe venues.
- Mandell Studio Theatre (Pink Venue): Like Yellow, this venue is a space OIFF promotes for use by small to medium-sized shows. The proscenium space houses a slightly raised proscenium-style stage with a single bank of 100 seats

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26. A raked stage or audience is designed on an upward slope to maximize visibility.

27. Proscenium theatres are identified as being framed by a window or archway through which the audience looks.



built into tiered risers. This venue's outstanding feature is a white, trackless upstage wall often used for projections.

- The Santos Dantin Theatre (Blue Venue): First-time Fringe performers with one-person or micro-cast shows are often scheduled into this 60-seat venue. Blue is a black-box studio which OIFF transforms into a mock-three-quarter thrust with raised seating and a 20x20-foot Masonite floor playing area. This space is promoted as inappropriate for dance but does have a piano option, making it usable for one- or two-person music-based shows. Though this space is smaller than any of the downtown venues, this and the McLaughlin Studio add to the diversity and accessibility of the Loch Haven footprint because they provide low-risk production opportunities requiring an investment of as little as \$525.

- McLaughlin Studio (Red Venue): This venue is the only playing space located upstairs. Like the Blue venue, it houses a 60-person maximum capacity. Because the space has no piano, it is usually the home to one-person shows and micro-cast non-musical performances. While the Orlando Shakes uses the space as a rehearsal hall, the OIFF employs pipe and drape to confine the area and configure it into a mock-proscenium space with a riser bank for the audience and the stage kept at zero deck (flat) on a sprung Masonite floor.

### *The Rep*

The second Loch Haven complex employed by the Orlando International Fringe Festival to house venues is the Orlando Repertory Theatre. The Orlando Rep fluctuates between housing two to three venues. The 2021 setup included one large and one small venue. They are as follows:

- Edyth Bush Theatre (Silver Venue): This is the Rep's most expansive theatre with seating for 300 patrons. Like the Orlando Shakes Orange Venue, those encouraged to use it tend towards either Fringe shows with large sets, large casts, or a large patron following. This is where big musicals and dance shows are funneled as the space features sprung floors and a vaulted loft.



Figure 38. This OIFF image shows the Orlando Repertory Theatre, known by locals as The Rep.

Silver is equipped with a cyclorama which OIFF techs move to eight feet off the stage wall to create a rear crossing and rear projection options.<sup>28</sup> This space also has mezzanine access options for performers. The seating capacity for the Edyth

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28. A cyclorama is an expansive seamless screen that forms a constructed upstage border.

Bush combined with that of the Margeson is 620, providing the capacity of more than six early-year OIFF venues as per co-founder Olson's initial capacity goals.

- Orlando Rep Black Box (The Green Venue): Green is housed in the Rep's black-box theatre which is hard-configured into a three-quarter thrust stage. The playing area is on zero deck, and the house holds 100 seats on three tiered risers. Though Green's sister venue, Silver, is home of half the Festival's large musicals, Green has no piano rental option and is only recommended for small to medium shows. The capacity makes it similar to that of downtown venues, but it requires no construction of seating, stage, or tech scaffolding.

#### *Orlando Museum of Art*

The SunTrust Auditorium (The Gold Venue) is the only performance venue housed in the Orlando Museum of Art, located across the parking lot from Orlando Shakes. It is a 230-seat venue with a small, shell-shaped wooden stage and a motorized projection screen, making it a good space for small shows wishing to make use of multimedia elements. This venue, like early-era downtown venues, requires the installation of additional lights.



Figure 39. This OIFF image shows the Orlando Museum of Art, known by locals as OMA.

### *The Green*

Loch Haven Park is a large green space situated between the theatre complexes. This is where the outdoor stage, beverage tents, lounges, sponsor tents, food vendors, and Fringe Central are located. Kids Fringe, Visual Fringe, and volunteer lounges take up space in the adjacent Orlando Museum of Art, satellite rooms of the Lowdnes Shakespeare Center, and the Mennello statue park across the street from the complex. The entire Loch Haven cultural center footprint is contained within a 45-acre span surrounded by three manicured lakes with walking trails and bridges that feed into the surrounding residential areas. All official Fringe venues are contained within the cultural center, while Bring Your Own Venue (BYOV), satellite performance spaces secured by individual performers, are not required to remain on site. Examples of these venues include local pubs, Central Florida performance centers, and even janitor closets and nearby hotel bathrooms. The configuration allows outside performance spaces to be utilized with autonomy, while the permanent theatre venues listed above



are managed by OIFF staff and ensure diverse stage layout options for a wide array of performance types.

Some BYOV spaces are specific to individual shows and can range in configurations from the back of a rental van to wooded glades in local parks. The image in Figure 42 shows restaurant, bar, and entertainment space HÄOS on Church Street, an example of a BYOV that hosts multiple OIFF productions during the Festival.



Figure 40. Photo compliments of Blue Star.

### How the Move Altered Operations

As I have mentioned, whether the Loch Haven move was good for the Festival remains a point of (minor) contention among past and current producers, performers, and attendees. What is indisputable, however, is that the move altered the structure,

operations, and the aesthetic of the Festival. To this end, I offer representative examples of location-influenced shifts. I begin with the subject of visibility, which scholar Vicki Ann Cremona identifies as contingent upon how much of the event spills out into the public. Following that, I discuss changes in box office management, restructuring of the audience/performer experience, and transformation of administration tasks.

### *Shifts in Visibility*

In a video interview with John Cameron in the Edinburgh International Festival's interactive 70-Year History website, Cameron recounts his introduction to the inaugural festival as he experienced it at age sixteen in the company of his father. Cameron recalled being struck by the festival's profusion of brightly colored flags, and he remembers his father (a World War I veteran) saying that the flags of the festival marked the first time he'd seen that kind of presence in Edinburgh and the first time he'd felt that energy since the War's liberation celebration in Antwerp.<sup>29</sup> These flags of celebration were a visual signal to Edinburgh residents in the same manner that the Orlando International Fringe Festival's brightly colored tubes and color-coordinated venue A-frame signs sent similar signals to Orlando residents. In both cases, one did not have to be a festival participant to be aware of activity.

Prior to the move to Loch Haven, the OIFF spent twelve years in various configurations in the downtown area. For those twelve years the Fringe's venues and patrons were interspersed among non-festival venues and individuals. This allowed the

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29. John Cameron's video can be viewed here: <https://70years.eif.co.uk/history/#plotting-a-new-world-festival>.

Festival to attract the attention of the community, hypothetically expanding its audience, or at least its visibility. Fringe administrators transformed downtown aesthetically by virtue of its tubes, banners, signage, and stages. It also altered the interaction of people within the city with the increase of foot traffic throughout downtown. While it is impossible to assert exactly how much the Fringe alone increased downtown traffic, the OIFF reported attendance of 25,000 to 30,000 in just its second year.<sup>30</sup> The influx of visitors had an impact that would have been difficult to ignore. In an interview with Terry Olson, the founder recalls that a survey of downtown business owners revealed that they experienced a 20-30% increase in business during the ten days of the Festival.<sup>31</sup>

The move to Loch Haven Park created a reconfiguration of public visibility and business interaction. The Fringe's new location created a more insular physical presence. Official venues condensed within three freestanding buildings that shared two parking lots, with a third parking area directly across Mills Avenue. The restructuring of the Festival footprint meant that artists, volunteers, staff, and performers no longer had to travel city blocks to get to other Festival locales. This also meant that Fringe-goers did not encounter businesses outside of Fringe venues unless they purposely went off-site to do so.

Festival scholar Vicky Ann Cremona observes that once a festival moves indoors, it can become less visible. "In the case of the theatre building," she writes, "the

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30. "30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary," The Orlando Fringe, accessed September 23, 2021, <https://orlandofringe.org/history/>. Attendance and income statistics can be found in the Orlando Fringe History timeline digitally housed at this site.

31. Olson interview.

site itself can actually contribute to the opaqueness of the festival for the city's inhabitants."<sup>32</sup> Though the lawn area of the Loch Haven complex houses a vibrant Fringe Central outfitted with vendors, stages, and tents, the seclusion of the area makes it easy to miss from the road as well as from any nearby non-Festival locations. Also, while the entrances of the complex buildings become festooned with show posters and flyers during the Fringe, the buildings themselves create an opaqueness within the larger community, because passers-by cannot see them from any of the roads that flank the complex. The interaction of "outsiders", which founder Terry Olson found valuable in terms of Festival visibility, was effectively eradicated due to the relocation.

### *Box Office and Security Shifts*

While the concentration of venues reduced its visibility, it also eliminated the Festival's need for multiple box offices. Because the downtown venues were so spread apart, it was not feasible in the OIFF's early years for patrons to use a centralized box office. This meant that tickets had to be sold at each of the venues. This practice doubled the number of volunteers needed to manage venues as ticket takers and ticket sellers had to be present at each. This also meant Fringe venue box office volunteers had the responsibility of transferring sometimes large amounts of money between the venues and the designated money room, which was manned at the time by Fringe board members.

In an interview with Paula Whigham who was volunteer coordinator when the Festival was downtown, she recalled vast differences in proceeds management before

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32. Cremona, 8.



the move. “I remember looking down the streets of Orlando seeing teenaged volunteers in Fringe shirts at two in the morning carrying big bags of money from venues.”<sup>33</sup> Money would be delivered to a counting room where banks were totaled, and two days later artists could come and pick up their cash. Now the box office is centralized, credit card and pre-sale options are available, and she says that most performers are set up for direct deposit. All these advancements were made once the Fringe moved, its staff was expanded, and this growth and easement became possible. In the downtown years, pre-sales could only happen at Fringe Central for a limited time until tickets were physically moved to the venues. This meant that additional volunteers were needed to deliver tickets and banks to the venues. The fact that many of the venues were housed in previously abandoned buildings also meant that money had to be carried through some questionable areas. As a result, the Fringe had a need for a robust security team.

When the Fringe moved to Loch Haven Park, all venues were housed inside buildings near each other. It was no longer necessary for Fringe-goers or volunteers to traverse city blocks. It also became more viable to sell tickets from one location. A central box office was created in the lower lobby of the Lowdnes Shakespeare Center in 2005, the first year that the Festival was housed entirely at Loch Haven.<sup>34</sup> This shift made it possible to cut the number of volunteers required to operate each of the venues. Whigham noted that this one shift created a massive impact on volunteer management. “We could focus more on what volunteers had a passion to do,” she

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33. Whigham interview.

34. Marshall interview.

reflected, “rather than what we needed them to do.”<sup>35</sup> For instance, volunteers with a love for visual art could be assigned to Visual Fringe. Volunteers who enjoyed working with kids could be given shifts at Kids Fringe. The relocation made this possible.

### *Administrative Task Shifts*

While volunteer and box office management were transformed by the transition to Loch Haven, the biggest shift in operations was to the duties and responsibilities of OIFF leadership in relation to venue management. The OIFF began as a grassroots organization with a shoestring budget. Though it had SAK theatre, and later the Studio Theatre and Mad Cow Theatre, all other venues had to be either donated, or extremely affordable. Approximately six months prior to the Festival, downtown producers had to begin hunting spaces. This required us to physically walk the streets, peer through windows of shuttered businesses, look through cracks in doors, and sometimes climb over boarded storefronts to try to get an idea of which spaces could hold a proper stage-to-audience configuration.

Once a viable space was identified, OIFF producers approached realtors and venue owners to ask for temporary use of their property. Proposed benefits to venue owners included the value of having sometimes long-dormant spaces cleaned and tidied both before and after the Festival. In some cases, this undertaking was comparatively unimposing. In other cases, however, getting a space performance-ready took efforts of mammoth proportions. For instance, vermin often had to be unhoused, leaks had to be mended, and grime that had accumulated for considerable stretches of

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35. Whigham interview.

time had to be scoured. In either case, a common challenge which haunted OIFF management was the fact that even when venue owners were open to the unconventional temporary rentals or donations of space that the Fringe required, they often did not want to sign off on an occupancy agreement with us until the last moment, hoping that a permanent tenant would come in for a long-term lease.

Last-minute venue deals often threw OIFF administration into a tailspin. Specifically, most printed Festival material could not be created until venues were secured. For example, the Fringe program, show tickets, press maps, assignment of shows to venues, volunteer schedules, show flyers, and posters were held in limbo until all performance addresses were known. Other examples of tasks that could not progress until realtor agreements were signed included venue cleaning, repairs, installation of audience risers, the running of sound and lights, pipe-and-drape installation, fire-marshal authorization, and permitting. This bottleneck of progress often heightened stress by condensing the pre-Festival workload for downtown producers. If the OIFF's BTS factor was higher, these responsibilities could be shared and delegated, making last-minute accomplishment of tasks tenable. Instead, the one or two Fringe producers running the Festival in the downtown years had to orchestrate all tasks.

To understand the conditions of many of the early-year Fringe venues, it is important to note that many of the venues that were repurposed for the Festival had lain dormant for months or, in some cases, years.<sup>36</sup> Because of this, some of the buildings

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36. Not all OIFF downtown venues were dilapidated. In addition to the three small theatre spaces that became annual fixtures in the Fringe, some venues such as the ones housed in the Church Street

were in a profound state of neglect and sometimes condemned. Producer tasks in the downtown era lay well outside what one might expect during a traditional theatre setup. Not only did staff have to outfit venues to provide proper tech and comfortably hold performers and audience members; they regularly had to contend with rodents, roaches, dilapidation, and a multitude of hazards. As a pre-move producer, I can attest to the fact that in the early days of the Festival, venue procurement, cleaning, and outfitting took months of grueling, hot, and unpleasant work.

Past Producer Matt Wohl recounted a story representative of the kinds of challenges we encountered before the OIFF had permanent venues. Initial preparation of derelict spaces consisted of more than just superficial cleaning. Producers often had to clear spaces of large amounts of debris and garbage. While working on one of the downtown venues we built from a dormant space, Wohl remembers grabbing a styrofoam cooler with an upside-down lid when he heard a slosh. “I was naive and dumb,” he recalls, “and so I just lifted the lid up. It was someone’s toilet who had been staying in the space.”<sup>37</sup> Wohl and I agreed that since the Festival moved to Loch Haven, it is safe to assume that no OIFF Producer has ever had the task of moving styrofoam containers of human excrement that had been baking in a draftless, boarded-up building.

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Exchange, were placed into spaces that had only recently been vacated, making Festival preparation an easier task.

37. Wohl interview.

When I was producer, I had a similarly unforgettable experience one early morning in 2001 at the dilapidated Old Bryan Hotel. Administrative duties back then required a dizzying mix of blue- and white-collar work, often heightened by the necessity to switch from one to the other within the space of hours. I was scheduled that day to do a 7am sunrise television interview to promote the Fringe. I was the only staff person at the time, when a call came through the night before that the Fringe needed to move some podiums and A-frame signs so that a sister theatre group could move scenery out in our shared storage space by morning, I had to make both things happen.

I recall dressing for television from the waist-up and throwing on a pair of baggy jeans and sneakers that I planned to exchange for a business skirt and heels once I tossed the signage into place. I reached Old Bryan at dawn, in an area of town where it was common to encounter individuals at all hours offering to sell drugs. The street was not empty even at that early hour, and there was what appeared to be illegal activity happening all around me as I unlocked the hotel. I rushed in to make quick work of my task so I could get to the studio in time to film my promo spot. When I was nearly finished, I grabbed the last A-frame sign, only to discover it had been the roof of a rat's nest. The rat raced to the nearest hole it saw, which was the cuff of my pants, and ran up my leg. I screamed (people passed by outside not even glancing in) as I beat at the rat huddled in my jeans until I thought to undo my belt, drop my pants, and let it scurry off. Less than 45 minutes later, I was coiffed and sitting across town in a television news studio being interviewed for the morning show.

For me, and the other downtown producers, leadership of the OIFF was a vacillation between physical labor, venue issues which manifested both before and

during the Festival, and the wearing of many hats, because all Festival needs had to either be performed or delegated by just one or two individuals. Past Producer Chris Gibson noted in our interview that once the hard venue work was done and artists were scheduled, housed, and provided for, it was then necessary to manage the Festival itself. “Generally, it meant getting to the Festival at about 9:00 in the morning and working until 3:00 or 4:00 in the morning for ten days.” He described the day-to-day experience, “Your phone is constantly ringing with someone saying, ‘This venue is on fire,’ or ‘This venue is flooding.’ So, it is a thrilling and terrifying time. Running it is a life changing experience.”<sup>38</sup> This particular experience as described by Gibson, especially the portion connected to the rats, fires, floods, and the adrenaline of being responsible for all managerial aspects of the OIFF, changed when the Fringe moved. When Beth Marshall stepped into the leadership role for the 2005 Festival that was housed entirely on the Loch Haven grounds, the months of work that previous producers dedicated to venue acquisition could be entirely reallocated to expanding staff, modernizing ticketing systems, and Festival growth.

Many factors have ushered the Orlando International Fringe Festival from its lean years of scraping to survive a low BTS Factor to its status as a permanently housed organization with a strong budget and a growing support staff. However, I present the Festival’s move from downtown Orlando to the Loch Haven Complex as the biggest transition we made that had the widest impact on the administrative approach to Festival management. As we grew, we gained some things at the expense of others.

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38. Gibson interview.

We lost visibility and comingling with downtown businesses and unaffiliated passersby. We also lost the administrative burden of having to manage sometimes untenable venue challenges, which in turn created the opportunity to gain staff and sustainability. This let us revitalize our focus on mission-based initiatives, such as the inclusion of BIPOC consultant committees and administrative action plans to ensure stability and longevity while retaining accessibility, inclusion, and artist-support mechanisms.

I have introduced the Orlando International Fringe as a Festival with a history leading back to the Edinburgh International Festival and Edinburgh Festival Fringe. I have given an overview illustrating how and why the OIFF was founded. I have traced the Fringe's trajectory through a macro-level analysis of Festival administration. Finally, I have provided a micro-level inquiry of the shift in location that most profoundly altered management of the Fringe. I conclude now with a focus on the Festival's utopian aims. I investigate representative examples of how the OIFF appears to operate in harmony with its mission, while I also examine some of the tensions that challenge the Festival's goals.

## CHAPTER 6. OIFF: AIMING FOR UTOPIA

In her essay “Performance, Utopia, and the ‘Utopian Performative,’” scholar Jill Dolan considers ways in which live performance can draw spectators and artists into shared experiences of utopian performatives, which she defines as “small but profound moments in which performance calls attention to the audience,” flashes of communion that “lift everyone slightly above the present, into a hopeful feeling of what the world might be like if every moment of our lives were as emotionally voluminous, generous, aesthetically striking, and intersubjectively intense.”<sup>1</sup> She risks sentimentality to proclaim a belief that live performance “can articulate a common future, one that’s more just and equitable,” an ideal *potential* future where “we can all participate more equally, with more chances to live fully and contribute to the making of culture.”<sup>2</sup> Within her treatise she points to personal experiences in the theatre where engagement between spectators and artists offer glimpses of brief transformative utopian moments that are “if not expressly political then usefully emotional, expressions of what utopia may feel like.”<sup>3</sup> Dolan likens what she calls *utopian performativity* to what anthropologist Victor Turner refers to as *communitas*, a “direct, immediate and total confrontation of human identities,” which offer flashes of “lucid mutual understanding on the existential level.”<sup>4</sup>

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1. Jill Dolan, “Performance, Utopia, and the ‘Utopian Performative,’” *Theater Journal* 53, no. 3 (October 2001): 455-479.

2. Dolan, 455.

3. Dolan, 456.

4. Dolan, 473.



These moments, which are fleeting affective-imaginative experiences, lend themselves to a collective experience of identity, an ethereal solidarity that Dolan says “converts strangers into community,” one that can “actively move individuals to learn how to better interact with each other.”<sup>5</sup>

Utopia and perfection are very different things. The Oxford English Dictionary cites Sir Thomas More's 1516 book *Utopia* as the first publication of the word, where it was employed as the name of a fictional island “governed on a perfect political and social system.” The word is defined as “an imagined place or state of things in which everything is perfect,” and the impossibility of landing on the shores of such an unblemished world is explicitly present in the word’s literal translation from Greek, which is “no-place.”<sup>6</sup> As I established in my introduction and gave ample evidence throughout this study, the Fringe is not perfect. I argue, though, that the OIFF was founded and built upon utopian ideals, and that it *imagines* itself and strives to be the type of utopia that Jill Dolan describes.

In this concluding chapter, I reflect on my analysis of the defining characteristics of the OIFF, my recounting of the Orlando Fringe’s organizational and administrative history, and the transformative move it made from its downtown Orlando footprint to the Loch Haven complex. I consider these in relation to Dolan’s utopian performative, identifying examples of when the OIFF appears to operate in utopian harmony, as well as instances where the Fringe seems to have missed the mark. Specifically, I revisit the

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5. Dolan, 475.

6. Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. “Utopia.”

OIFF's founding commitments as a kind of utopian roadmap designed to guide its participants to a proactive state, a state Dolan argues can allow "theatre and performance (to) create citizens and engage democracy as a participatory forum in which ideas and possibilities for social equity and justice are shared."<sup>7</sup> The concept of utopia is not new to the Fringe or this study of it, it can be glimpsed in flashes throughout the Fringe community and is spoken, with different vocabulary, in its founding principles.

### A Utopian Birth

Dolan admits that her expectations of theatre are high. "I go to theatre and performance," she writes, "to hear stories that order, for a moment, my incoherent longings, that engage the complexity of personal and cultural relationships, and that critique the assumptions of a social system that I find sorely lacking."<sup>8</sup> This yearning to right systems found to be lacking is a sentiment that I argue reverberates in the OIFF co-founders' motivation for creating the Festival. It manifests from Olson's visualization of the man floating above a fractured community, and in his drive to create a communal area where all could come together, regardless of perceived differences, to literally perform their new unity upon communal stages. Just like the Edinburgh Fringe that rose to answer back to the exclusionary Edinburgh International Festival, so too did the OIFF when its founding members were rendered obsolete by Epcot. In both cases, artists were impassioned to create a model for inclusion based on belief in a system that

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7. Dolan, 456.

8. Dolan, 456.

offered community (*communitas*) for all. Hierarchies of class and stardom were subverted by structures of inclusion, structures that were designed not only to welcome, but to instigate active participation. For example, artists were not simply invited to become members of the organization, they were invited to perform. Spectators were not just asked to witness; they were given the opportunity to become participant-observers.



Figure 41. This image features OIFF performers and patrons mingling on the communal lawn at Loch Haven at the 19th annual Festival. Courtesy of the Orlando Fringe archive.

In both the case of the OIFF and Edinburgh Fringe, displaced creatives incited festivals to provide sites of belonging not just for themselves, but (by mandate in their founding principles) for all interested in participating. Policies pointedly crafted to urge equality, participation, and inclusion were put in place where traditional/commercialist theatre organizations normally would operate on financially driven templates. Though provisions were made for the benefit of all, a reflection on Festival operations reveals a decidedly artist-centric focus. Also, a reflection on OIFF leadership chronology shows that many of the Orlando Fringe administrators were performers themselves, including

all three founders. This factor contributed to the continued strength and development of Festival qualities that acted to support, raise up, and bring success to the Fringe's artists. I turn now to the founding principles.

### Uncensored Utopia

As I referenced in Chapter 1, scholar Henri Schoenmakers identifies festivals as meta-events that require organizers to contend with fluctuating degrees of perceived responsibility for smaller events within their larger cohesive structures.<sup>9</sup> As is the case with each of the OIFF's mandates, the commitment to guarding against censorship requires the festival to contend not only with itself, but with a multitude of individuals and production companies that operate independent of the Festival. Matters of content are not under the jurisdiction of Fringe administration, however, the Fringe must protect over 100 artist groups. Protection from censorship is an example of this. A reflection on the OIFF's history shows that the most publicized instance of this stewardship came when *The Naked Guy* was embroiled in issues over nudity. The venue owners wanted the show to remove the nudity from the production as it attempted to exercise artistic control over one of the Fringe's production companies. History shows that when tested, the Festival was not only true to its promise to combat instances of censorship, but it was also willing to uphold its commitment even when it could have lost the sponsor connected to the dispute. If the utopian ideal rests in part on a democratic right to freedom of expression, then *The Naked Guy* helped to illustrate to the community that the Fringe would not allow voices to be silenced.

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9. Schoenmakers, 28.

## Unjuried Utopia

While adherence to the uncensored mandate shows itself to be unblemished, the Festival's commitment against curation is decidedly more complicated. On its face, the Orlando International Fringe Festival is 100% unjuried. If *unjuried* means that all submissions are welcome, then this holds inarguably true of the Festival. There is no appointed Fringe staff person tasked with procuring shows. There is no selection committee empowered to pick and choose festival lineup participants. Performers of any background, from anywhere in the world are invited to throw their proverbial hat in the ring. While traditional festival and theatre models rely almost entirely on selecting performers and shows designed to bring in the most audience traffic, the OIFF employs its programming lottery as a safeguard to create the utopian "just and equitable" community that Dolan champions, one that offers more opportunities to "contribute to the making of culture."<sup>10</sup> Where traditional models would require performers to be vetted through their accumulation of past successes, the Fringe requires no proof of talent. All one must do to win a chance at performing at the OIFF is to apply for the Fringe lottery.

Behind the scenes, however, lies a history of mild interference mostly manifested through personal invitations from Festival producers. Explanation of this requires a look back to the first Fringe. The come-one-come-all invitation to local and international artists was established and adhered to from the Fringe's pioneer 1992 Festival. Initial interest from local established theatre groups and the wealth of talent present in the theme parks meant that the OIFF would have a good foundation. However, OIFF

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10. Dolan, 455.

founders naturally wanted to ensure a quality and robust first line-up. For the Fringe to tout itself as an international Festival meant that they needed guaranteed participation from quality international performers. Co-founder Kunst admits to devoting concerted effort to entice members of the fringe network that he and SAK had created during its tours of the EDFringe and Canadian circuit. To draw national and international artists to a festival that had never existed before, it would take personal invitations. That is when Kunst offered to use his fringe contacts to fill gaps by soliciting artists. “For three years,” he remembers, “I became a Fringe fixer because I knew everybody.”<sup>11</sup> He was able to call groups such as Mump & Smoot to grow the Festival. At the time, the OIFF was still small enough to operate on a first-come basis, and there is no evidence to suggest that inclusion of those groups bumped anyone else off the roster. However, the unjuried quality was not free from tensions.

When Beth Marshall fought with the board to fund her travel to other fringes in the early 2000s, the heart of her argument was that the Fringe needed to learn from others, mentor smaller festivals, and to increase its global involvement, especially after 9-11 caused attendance to plummet.<sup>12</sup> Marshall reengaged the process of seeking out and inviting performers to the Orlando Festival. Marshall specifically did so to augment international attendance. Her predecessor Mike Marinaccio extended invitations specifically to help grow the OIFF BIPOC community. In 2016 when I moderated a

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11. Kunst interview.

12. Marshall interview.





Figure 42. This image courtesy of the OIFF, is a 2012 performance of Kirikou and the Sorceress, an African folktale by the Orlando School of Cultural Dance, recruited by Mike Marinaccio in response to seeing how dreadful Fringe diversity numbers were.

panel for USAFF, CAFF, and World Fringe Congress, I recall many festival administrators admitting that though they claim to be unjuried, they do labor to fill holes

by targeting artists. Matt Wohl refers to this as one of the Fringe's *dirty little secrets*.<sup>13</sup> He says that it is a matter of survival, something he witnessed OIFF co-founders do also. "They would encourage their friends and stuff," Wohl recalls, "so it *is* first come, first served, but it is like the pigs in *Animal Farm* - all animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others."<sup>14</sup>

Tensions arise because the Festival presents itself as unjuried, but by virtue of solicitation efforts, it leans towards curation. Longtime OIFF staff person Paula Whigham disagrees with the practice of seeking out productions. "It is my opinion that unjuried means completely unbiased."<sup>15</sup> Marinaccio points out that show *quality* ultimately curates the Festival, arguing, "Cream rises to the top. The bad goes away, or it comes back stronger." He notes also that even though a level of administrative curation goes into the recruitment of artists, the lottery ultimately enforces equality. "At the end of the day," he maintains, "the lottery comes along and absolves us of all our sins."<sup>16</sup> While I argue that the system is not interfered with enough to entirely discredit the Festival's utopian claim of *operating as an unjuried producing organization*, the OIFF's lineup is not entirely random. In the words of Marinaccio, "We run the most curated uncured festivals in the world."<sup>17</sup>

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13. Wallace, Wohl, Bernard, Whigham, and Marinaccio interview.

14. Wallace, Wohl, Bernard, Whigham, and Marinaccio interview.

15. Whigham interview.

16. Marinaccio interview.

17. Wallace, Wohl, Bernard, Whigham, and Marinaccio interview.



## Utopian Accessibility

Whether manifested as equal opportunities for the disabled or expressed through a commitment to keeping the Festival affordable for patrons and practitioners (discussed in Chapter 2), accessibility has been a founding principle since the OIFF's inception. It is difficult to gauge how near or far from perfect the Fringe's accessibility systems are, but one can look to policies and participant surveys to get an idea at least of how they are perceived. A reflection on the OIFF's accessibility initiatives discussed in Chapter 5 illustrates that staff, committees, and surveys are employed to stay engaged with accessibility growth.

In the traditional sense of accessibility for disabled members of the community, OIFF admin expresses awareness that the OIFF is missing the mark unless it continues to increase efforts. Lindsey Taylor says she is one of the staff-people devoted to making it part of her job to expand accessibility efforts. She notes continuous progress, stating that the OIFF not only increased ASL translations of shows but incorporated audio description of shows for the first time in 2021. As discussed in Chapter 4, however, the OIFF take on accessibility is itself unconventional, including a dedication to low admission prices and even including internal practices that raise accessibility of staff to performers. Having interviewed OIFF producers, managers, and performers, the consensus is that the OIFF is dedicated both philosophically and through practice to increasing access for all members of its community. It is also agreed that the Festival has a long way to go.

## Utopian Inclusivity

For all the internal structuring put into place to ensure diversity and amplification for at-risk voices, one could argue that there are gaping holes in representation. While all are *invited* to the OIFF table, not all are *present*. In our first interview, Beth Marshall noted that since that the Fringe seems to have achieved success in creating a community that embraces its LGBTQ members (the OIFF is known on the circuit as being the *gayest fringe in the world*), it now needs to shift focus to mend its lack of BIPOC involvement.<sup>18</sup> Marinaccio echoes that sentiment, admitting that the OIFF is far too white from its board members to its volunteers, performers, and patrons.<sup>19</sup> The disparity is one that Alauna Friskics is aware of and actively working to address through consulting committees, as mentioned in Chapter 5.

Other perspectives seemingly absent in the Orlando Fringe community are those that challenge Fringe ethos. During my own time as a volunteer, a performer, an assistant producer, and as executive director, there were no apparent instances of an individual or organization being refused the chance to vie for a spot in the Fringe lineup because of beliefs held in conflict with the philosophies of inclusion that the OIFF brands itself with. Was the organization ever asked to tolerate intolerance? I interviewed all the Festival's past and current producers to find out. Like me, the Fringe's founding father, Terry Olson, could recall no instances of this being an issue, at least from performing artists. Beth Marshall, concurred, adding that the only real presence of

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18. Marshall interview.

19. Marinaccio interview.

intolerant voices came from individuals who were not involved in trying to win a performance slot, but rather showed up to the Fringe to occasionally protest various productions whose subject matter conflicted with their own moral compasses.

The OIFF's antidote to this lay in strict adherence to a rating system for all program shows. Marshall explained, "There's been a real open transparency of the maturity ratings. Those ratings are determined by the artist and set in the guidelines...so there's no question. So if you're not drinking the Kool-Aid, or not open to drinking it, you're not."<sup>20</sup> In other words, just as the Motion Picture Association created a film rating system in the late 1960s to assist in identifying a film's suitability based on maturity level, the Fringe implemented a rating system, set by artist groups through use of a Festival-sanctioned rubric, to help patrons identify whether a show's subject matter would be a good fit.

While none of the OIFF's producers could recall a time when their lineup was specifically challenged with viewpoints antagonistic to the Fringe's allegiance to tolerance, or diversity, I was interested in what their stance would be if they had been confronted with this issue while running the Festival. Marshall's position was clear. "The Orlando International Fringe is not a place for hate," she asserts. "No group inciting hate will be supported."<sup>21</sup> Matt Wohl admits that it would be painful for him to welcome antagonistic voices, it would be his duty to remain inclusive.<sup>22</sup>

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20. Marshall interview.

21. Marshall interview.

22. Wohl interview.



Figure 43. The 2021 image, courtesy of Steve Schneider, captures the exhaustion known as “Fringe-Fried” that is sometimes experienced by Fringe volunteers, administrators, performers, and even patrons as the Festival draws to a close.

Marinaccio said that though Orlando had no history of issues, he knew of a performer by the name of Sean Neely who had performed at the Chicago Fringe in a 2017 one-man storytelling show, *Virtuous Pedophile*, which centered on the questions; *Are pedophiles who resist acting on their desires sympathetic?* and *Can liberals accept pedophilia as a legitimate sexuality?* George Wallace of the OIFF said he saw the show: “He’s honestly a brilliant actor. None of it is real but he plays the character well. It was

creepy as fuck.”<sup>23</sup> According to Marinaccio, fringe lore is that the actor reportedly stayed “in character” while off-stage at the festival, causing Chicago Fringe to deal with serious repercussions. When I asked Chicago Fringe Director Anne Cauley to explain this, she said that Neely participated in a general-festival storytelling event as his celibate pedophile character which she said was “weird because people hadn’t opted into the experience.”<sup>24</sup> In previous years, Neely performed similar shows featuring a racist and a serial rapist. Ultimately, Chicago defended the work. In an article in *DNAinfo*, Cauley said, “We do not allow illegal activity in our festival, but that doesn’t mean illegal behavior can’t be represented in our shows.”<sup>25</sup> Cauley suggested that those offended by the show simply refrain from seeing it, pointing to the festival’s commitment to uncensored and unjuried art. Minnesota Fringe took a different stance and barred the performer entrance to their festival. Neely responded by suing the festival. His attorney, Ochen Kaylan, contended, “The Fringe prides itself on being uncensored and uncensored. It’s not. That’s false advertising.”<sup>26</sup>

Marinaccio pointed out that the show itself may be protected by a commitment against censorship, but when the performer enters the community spaces of the festival

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23. Wallace interview.

24. Anne Cauley, Producer of the Chicago Fringe Festival, email to author, September 22, 2021.

25. Alex Nitkin, “‘Virtuous Pedophile’ Play Sparks Backlash Against Fringe Fest in Jeff Park,” *DNAinfo* (Chicago, IL), August 7, 2017, <https://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/20170807/jefferson-park/chicago-fringe-festival-virtuous-pedophile-backlash-jefferson-park/>.

26. Samantha Malone, “Community to protest theater performance portraying pedophiles in sympathetic light,” *RARE Chicago* (Chicago, IL), September 6, 2017, <https://rare.us/local/chicago/community-to-protest-theater-performance-portraying-pedophiles-in-sympathetic-light/>.

enacting a pedophile, the issue is no longer one of censorship. “My model was always to say that once the doors close on your show, it is your show as long as it is legal and you’re not breaking fire code,” said Marinaccio, “But bring that shit out on my lawn, walk around pretending to be a pedophile around Kids Fringe, and there is going to be a problem. Inclusivity at my Fringe ends there.”<sup>27</sup>

The ethos of the Fringe mandates an unwavering acceptance of all viewpoints. Arguably, this would prove problematic, however, if a voice which was opposed to equality, intolerant of sexual fluidity, or fueled by hate were to rise up seeking amplification within the utopian-leaning bubble of the Fringe. Ultimately, it is difficult to say whether the Orlando International Fringe Festival is steadfast in its mission to uphold tolerance because so far, the Fringe has managed to survive thirty years without that philosophy being put in check.

#### Recommendations for Future Work

Aside from introducing a venerable organization long overdue a place in academic inquiry, one of my greatest hopes for this research is for it to spark interest in the OIFF and to inform future research. Because no full-length analysis dedicated solely to the OIFF has been published prior to this study, there are immeasurable opportunities for possible research paths. These paths range from general studies to specialized inquiries.

In contesting the lack of research devoted to fringes in America and worldwide, I join scholars like Amy Lane, Karen Moody Holland, and Xela Batchelder. With more

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27. Marinaccio interview.



Figure 44. This image (courtesy of Martin Dockery) is of Vanessa Quesnelle and Dockery who met on the fringe circuit, toured the circuit for years, married, and had a child who toured with them at six months old. Fringe families like this are not uncommon.



Figure 45. Image below is of Eliadora, daughter of Vanessa Quesnelle and Martin Dockery, courtesy of her parents. Eliadora is a true fringe baby, she was conceived at the EDFringe and went on two fringe circuit tours by the age of three.

than 200 fringes in operation, many have yet to be investigated. Therefore, introductory studies and historical overviews (like this one) likely offer jumping-off points for more than 100 dissertation opportunities. These general studies could focus on any individual or collective of currently running fringes like Orlando that have yet to receive scholarly attention. Conversely, these general studies could also be focused on fringes like NOLA Fringe, the Covington Fringe, or the Seattle Fringe, which shuttered, went on hiatus, or rebranded.

Scholars interested in more specialized approaches could take their cue from Natalie Diddams and Sophia Nielson (highlighted in Chapter 1), who both place fringe festivals and fringe performance at the center of feminist studies. Performance analysis of the OIFF through this lens offers fresh fodder annually. Diddams specifically points to comedy as a tool for subverting heteronormativity, identifying comedy's function as offering a safe place to let go of rigidity and welcome diversity. I have yet to attend the OIFF when the Festival line-up did not contain multiple shows in which comedy was used in similar fashion. Likewise, OIFF shows regularly spotlight questions of gender, identity, sexuality, equality, and themes that make the Festival fertile soil for Queer studies.

Specific to the Orlando International Fringe Festival, I also think a deserving area of research could be tied to the female leadership in the OIFF who have negotiated positions of influence in an industry with the reputation for being male dominated. As an example, Amy Hadley has been technical director for the OIFF going on fifteen years. I personally have worked in professional theatres, community theatres, and educational theatres for more than thirty years. In those thirty years, I have only ever encountered



one other female technical director, a practitioner whom I personally assisted in hiring. I believe study would show that men have historically dominated leadership positions not only in traditional and commercial theatre environments, but in fringes as well. As Beth Marshall said to me, “The Fringe is a big boys’ club. They may be cool, they may be liberal, they may be talented *AF*, but they are a boys club.”<sup>28</sup> The OIFF diverges from this norm. I submit that the OIFF could be researched in relation to professional equity.

While my personal study tracked Fringe administration and investigated how the OIFF model shifted during the tenure of its leadership chronology, I would invite more specialized inquiry into Festival management. Just as Sam Middlemiss delved into the legal rights of volunteers and staff of the EDFringe, a similar look at OIFF workers could be interesting, especially as it relates to the volunteer board of directors. I have offered representative examples of how it appeared that the OIFF Board sometimes advanced and sometimes hamstrung the Festival. I believe there is much left to be said about the history and development of the board of men and women who serve as volunteer custodians of the non-profit that manages the International Festival and its annual programming. I am interested in further inquiry into the reverberation of volunteer board arts administration. The OIFF seems to have developed with a swinging pendulum in relation to board/staff health, with some Fringe leadership singing the praises of the board, while others had such challenging interactions that they report the board caused them to block out large portions of multiple years (like George Wallace), were blindsided with being let-go (like Alauna Friskics in 2002), or like Beth Marshall, who reports to

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28. Marshall interview.

have felt so “gob smacked” by being forced into an early exit from the Festival that ten years after the fact she says she still has “a *lot* of healing to do.”<sup>29</sup>

Another story I was only able to introduce but that deserves devoted inquiry is the structure, function, and management of the technical aspects of the Orlando Fringe’s International Festival. Xela Batchelder was the first in the field to scrutinize the entrepreneurial venue managers of the EDFringe. Batchelder places the festival’s venue managers central to the festival’s success and growth, and yet before her study, these driven risk-takers went entirely ignored by the legion of scholars who have devoted research to the mother fringe. I similarly would argue that a respectable portion of the success of the OIFF, from both the audience and the performer perspective, is resultant of the feats of discipline, skill, and management of the Fringe’s technical team. The OIFF is atypical of other fringe festivals in that it requires technicians to rehearse and run every show in their given venue for the entirety of the two-week festival.<sup>30</sup> I believe the impact of the OIFF’s model is deserving of investigation.

As the Orlando Fringe has overcome the hurdle of low BTS issues and continues to expand its year-round presence, there’s also need for investigation into the Festival’s increasing programming. The Orlando Fringe Winter Mini-Fest is not a *fringe* in the CAFF sense of the word because it is a curated festival. It nevertheless serves functionally as a smaller version of the OIFF, promotes itself as a less overwhelming way for people to introduce themselves to a festival which shares similarities to the

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29. Marshall interview.

30. Hadley interview.

OIFF, and adheres to the mandates of remaining uncensored, accessible, and inclusive. For four days each December, the festival offers a “smaller and easier to experience version of Fringe for new patrons that may have been unsure about attending the May festival,” a mix of “award-winning shows from the Festival in May,” new work from celebrated OIFF artists, and artists that have “never performed in Orlando that (Fringe administrators) have discovered while touring other Fringe festivals around the world.”<sup>31</sup>

Fringe Year-Round also offers untapped inquiry subjects, including an annual performative fundraiser that commonly invites patrons to immerse themselves in costumed interplay, a stand-alone full theatrical production commonly produced in either fall or winter, and endurance fundraisers that feature Fringe staff testing their grit as they withstand “multi-hour stamina events” which are live-streamed for entertainment as they earn money for the Fringe.<sup>32</sup> This latter subject could also be part of a larger study on unconventional business practices as traced through the fundraising and sponsorship initiatives of the OIFF. Though the Festival’s budget now exceeds one million dollars, the unconventional nature of the Festival finds its way into creative interaction with funders.

Finally, though I touched lightly on Mikhail Bakhtin’s theories of the *carnavalesque*, and the *carnival sense of the world*, I believe that a full theoretical analysis of the functioning, ethos, and aesthetic of the OIFF through these lenses would

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31. “Orlando Winter Mini-Fest,” The Orlando Fringe, accessed September 23, 2021, <https://orlandofringe.org/wmf/2021-2/>.

32. “More Than Festivals,” The Orlando Fringe, accessed September 23, 2021, <https://orlandofringe.org/year-round/>.

be a fruitful undertaking. A multitude of questions could be asked. How are social hierarchies subverted by the Fringe performer? How do threshold situations turn formalized social interaction into free interaction between participants and performers? How do the grotesque and the sublime conjoin and interact in new works of the OIFF? I believe there are innumerable ways to approach the Fringe through approaches ranging from theoretical to aesthetic. In short, the field of inquiry is wide open.

### A Final Word

Like Dolan, I am aware that “community and theatre, like utopia, can be coercive” and that “nothing is outside of ideology, and that nothing is ever, truly perfect.”<sup>33</sup> I also believe my insider vantage-point of the Orlando Fringe lends itself as proof of my ability to see past romanticism; evidenced in my hours spent dusted in grime toiling to transform squalid spaces into stages, and my years struggling (and watching my colleagues struggle) to balance the considerable weight and strain of being an administrator handicapped by a low BTS factor. I believe I am joined by a collective of volunteers, producers, performers, and patrons who have likewise encountered enough flaws within the Festival to understand that this utopian-leaning entity is imperfect yet remain devoted to its causes.

Dolan argues that theatre and performance should “create citizens and engage democracy” in what she calls “a participatory forum in which ideas and possibilities for social justice are shared.”<sup>34</sup> If this is the litmus to gauge utopian success, then I say the

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33. Dolan, 479.

34. Dolan, 456.

Orlando International Fringe Festival has succeeded. Certainly, the OIFF has created a community of citizens. This is undeniably evident in the statistics presented in Appendix M that show pre-COVID attendance for the annual event to be more than 70,000, a number including more than 400 volunteers, over 1,000 venue performers, and more than 400 outdoor stage performers.



Figure 46. Fringe staff, volunteers, and performers as they take over Loch Haven Park to promote Fringe 2007. Courtesy of the OIFF.

Statistics also support the fact that the community demonstrates devotion through the fact that it enjoys a high retention rate. A look back at the audience surveys of 2016 in Appendix D reminds us that audience members report having attended an average of just over 16 years, further scrutiny of the surveys shows many patrons who have been with Fringe since the first years. As someone who has followed the OIFF for

decades, I can attest to the fact that the performers of the community have staying power too. Local and international artists can often be seen yearly, giving Fringe-goers impetus to call the Festival a family reunion or family holiday. The cohesiveness of the Fringe community can also be seen in its workers. As discussed in Chapter 4, Technical Director Hadley reminds us that most of her techs have been there for as long as she has, nearly 15 years. Finally, a return to the Chapter 4 chronology of Fringe administration shows that most of the members of Fringe leadership return to support the community, even in the face of being let go from their positions or dislodging on their own accord.

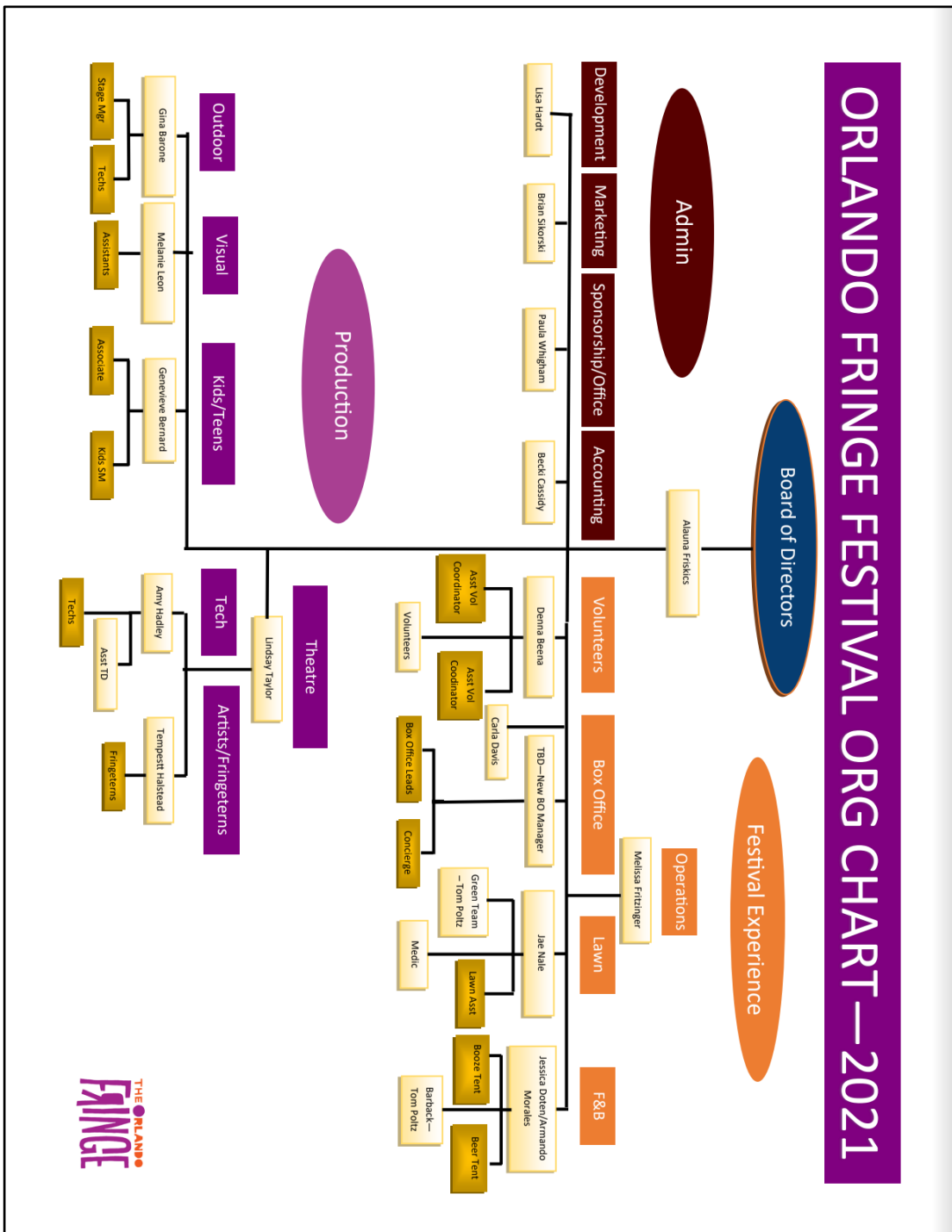
As evidenced in the OIFF's founding commitments, social justice and equality are actively employed to bring Fringe's communities together. Each and every Festival stage represents a locus for this, a tangible space made available to all with a story to tell. Again, this exists not just in theory; these are defined and tangible spaces that are amplified by sound systems and illuminated by lighting instruments. While the unjuried function of programming means that subject matter fluctuates, the simple fact that the spaces are accessible to any willing participant illustrates support of a collective conversation where every voice is given a chance at amplification. The inclusivity at the heart of the OIFF community has more structure than simple ethos. For instance, it is the job of Fringe administrators to uphold the OIFF's commandments through employment of systems that can be monitored and evaluated, such as diversity initiatives and programming lotteries. Just as utopia is an unattainable no-place, the Fringe has never neared perfection.

Still, I remain resolute in my belief that the Orlando International Fringe Festival stands 30-years strong as an example of how fringes, festivals, and live performance have the power to every so often rise as beacons of utopian aspiration. The Orlando Fringe offers fleeting yet powerful reminders that every single voice matters, and that there is a community welcoming them. This community is willing to perform massive feats of discipline and management to provide light and sound for their stages, willing to endure painfully low BTS factors until the organization could stand on its own, willing to lose leadership reigns (sometimes indecorously) and yet return to support the Fringe community through sponsorship and support, willing to take a gamble and lay down money to see a show with no guarantee of quality. This Festival which subverts the operational structures of traditional commercial theatre has been forced to redesign and reimagine itself as it relocated, has overcome BTS challenges that could easily have cut short its life, and has continued to expand its initiatives to create an inclusive and diverse community dedicated to celebrating life through art. In the words of the mother fringe's Fringe Society: Here's to the uninvited....No matter who you are or where you come from, everyone is welcome on the Fringe."<sup>35</sup>

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35. Blueprint.

## APPENDIX A. 2021 OIFF ORGANIZATIONAL CHART





## APPENDIX B. 2021 MARKETING OVERVIEW

### 2021 ORLANDO FRINGE MARKETING REPORT

	FACEBOOK	TWITTER	INSTAGRAM	EMAIL
2021	17,134	9,270	6,594	22,070
2020	15,289	9,485	4,623	18,115
2019	13,575	9,426	3,903	20,324
2018	12,290	9,479	2,954	15,058
2017	11,159	9,017	2,350	17,213
2016	9,343	8,200	1,418	16,543

TOP LOCAL CITIES BY REACH	TOP NON-LOCAL CITIES BY REACH	TOP NON-FLORIDA CITIES BY REACH	TOP COUNTRIES BY REACH
Orlando Winter Garden Winter Park Kissimmee Clermont Oviedo Altamonte Springs Sanford Apopka Saint Cloud Ocoee Casselberry Lake Mary Goldenrod Lake Buena Vista Celebration Poinciana Buenaventura Lakes Hunters Creek	Deltona Winter Springs Four Corners Lake Butler Daytona Beach Tampa DeLand Port Orange Maitland Longwood Oromond Beach Jacksonville Eustis New Smyrna Beach Wekiva Springs Davenport St. Petersburg Leesburg Lakeland	New York, NY Los Angeles, CA Chicago, IL Atlanta, GA Melbourne, VIC, Australia Toronto, ON, Canada Philadelphia, PA Houston, TX Toronto, ON, Canada London, UK Washington D.C Winnipeg, MB, Canada Seattle, WA Austin, TX Oppdal, Norway Boston, MA Columbus, OH Vancouver, BC, Canada San Antonio, TX	United States Canada United Kingdom Australia Japan Norway Germany Puerto Rico Brazil Mexico India France Italy South Africa Netherlands Phillippines Thailand Spain Belgium

#### WEBSITE OVERVIEW

USERS	45,565
SESSIONS	82,289
PAGEVIEWS	195,444
PAGES / SESSION	2.38%

#### AUDIENCE BY AGE

13-17	0.1%
18-24	3.4%
35-44	24%
45-54	31.2%
55-64	22.5%
65+	11.9%
	6.9%

#### AUDIENCE BY GENDER

MALE	45%
FEMALE	53%
NONBINARY	2%

## 2021 ORLANDO FRINGE MARKETING REPORT

### TOTAL

	IMPRESSIONS	ENGAGEMENT
<b>2021</b>	<b>7,406,501</b>	<b>197,804 (2.8%)</b>
<b>2020</b>	653,931	61,915 (9.5%)
<b>2019</b>	10,611,440	204,352 (1.93%)
<b>2018</b>	4,195,908	73,355 (1.75%)
<b>2017</b>	1,979,832	9,017 (0.05%)

### PAID CONTENT

	IMPRESSIONS	ENGAGEMENT
<b>2021</b>	<b>4,512,883</b>	<b>111,793 (2.5%)</b>
<b>2020</b>	853	30 (0.3%)
<b>2019</b>	7,284,589	113,843 (1.56%)
<b>2018</b>	634,162	10,083 (1.59%)

### ORGANIC CONTENT

	IMPRESSIONS	ENGAGEMENT
<b>2021</b>	<b>2,893,618</b>	<b>86,011 (3%)</b>
<b>2020</b>	653,078	61,885 (9.5%)
<b>2019</b>	3,326,851	90,509 (2.72%)
<b>2018</b>	3,561,746	63,272 (1.78%)

### TOP FACEBOOK POSTS

Arden Patrons Pick  
Oscar Wilde Patrons Pick  
Coffee & Cedar Patrons Pick  
Hexed Patrons Pick  
Rosegold Patrons Pick

### TOP TWEETS

Closing Ceremonies & Awards  
Veteran Producer Award  
Fucking Men Patrons Pick  
Sold Out Entire Festival Update  
Digital Fringe Gallery is open

### TOP INSTAGRAM POSTS

Button Giveaway  
A little drizzle doesn't stop us  
Beautiful night at Fringe  
Fringe Terms  
Walls of Pho Hoa

### TOP PAID POST

30 Second Spot  
ASL Interpreting at Fringe  
Party Pods  
Experience: Guy in Tutu  
Experience: Aerialist  
Fringe is Back: Guy in Tutu  
Experience: African Dancers  
G to OMG: Guy in Tutu  
Fringe is Back: Wendy

### PAID AD CAMPAIGN LOCATIONS BY ENGAGEMENT

Definition.com  
CNN Entertainment  
TriviaBoss.com  
KeepInFit.net  
CNN Business  
The Delite  
Dailyboard  
CNN US  
GamersNet  
CNN Travel  
CNN  
People.com  
NSN  
Maternity Week  
NYPost.com  
CNN Videos  
NYPost News  
People Entertainment

### HASHTAGS

1,267 #OFringe30  
1,477 #orlandofringe  
306 #orlandofringe2021  
84 #OFringe2021

### SENT MESSAGES

467 Tweets & DMs  
706 Facebook Posts  
659 Instagram Posts  
69 LinkedIn Posts

### RECEIVED MESSAGES

796 Tweets & DMs  
1,859 Facebook Posts  
1,374 Instagram Comments

# 2021 ORLANDO FRINGE MARKETING REPORT

## RADIO / PODCASTS

Monsters in the Morning 104.1 (On-Air conversation during the festival)  
The Jim Colbert Show (On-Air conversation - Artists in studio)  
WMFE 90.7  
Orlando Sentinel Conversations (Fringe Festival Preview)  
The Ted Show (Holly and Grumms - Pack Animals)

## TELEVISION

WESH 2 (CFLVA Requiem)  
WOFL FOX 35 (Theatre Group Gumbo, Desingated Debators, Alauna, and Lindsay)  
WKMG News 6 & Click Orlando (Cole NeSmith Talks Fringe)  
WESH 2 (Ribbon Cutting)  
CFNews 13 (Alauna & Bennet Caffee - Bipolar Artist)  
CFNews13 (Lindsay & DK)  
WKMG News 6 & Click Orlando (Cole NeSmith Talks Fringe)

## A CORPORATE TIME WITH TOM AND DAN – REAL RADIO 104.1 & ONLINE

iHeart Radio (3,000 average) 104.1 5am-6am (5,000 average) 104.1 7pm-8pm (8,000 average)  
3,473+ 5/6 Michael Wanzie  
3,897+ 5/17 Alchemist of Dreams & BeeJay Clinton  
3,574+ 5/18 Darth's and Droids & Arden w/Ginger Minj  
3,992+ 5/19 Bruce Costella & Donald Rupe  
3,388+ 5/20 Shakespeare's Reservoir Dogs & ExeroMENTAL  
4,018+ 5/21 Ryan Adam Wells & Jamie Brickhouse

## PRINT / ONLINE


Orlando Weekly (Cover story )  
Watermark (Coverage of Festival in paper. Published reviews and audience awards)  
Orlando Sentinel (Reviews and many front-page stories and daily "Fringe Binge" on page 2, plus video stories)  
Orlando Arts Magazine (In-depth article)  
AAA Going Places Magazine (What to do in Orlando)  
Playground Magazine (Story about Kids Fringe and ad for Summer Camp)  
Pulptown (Hosted numerous articles about Fringe to 13,000)  
YELP Elite Newsletter (Three newsletters with offer of a free Fringe button)  
Freeline Media (Festival stories and reviews)  
Bungalower (Numerous event listings and weekly picks)  
Orlando Date Night Guide (Tips + Best Shows for Couples)  
Orlando Magazine  
Broadway World  
Visit Orlando (Event listing)  
Orlando At Play (Event listing)



**Anthony Mauss**  
May 6 · 📍  
Orlando Fringe is a truly remarkable experience. I am excited by this opportunity to be part of it. Thank you Orlando Story Club Danielle Ziss HaAri Hogan Logan Anderson Elizabeth Brendal Horn and Bobby Wesley for allowing me to work with you. Come see what we have created... Buy tickets now... (please)  
<https://fb.me/SJGU58Gu>


**Brendan Bourke** @B\_BourkeSports  
Discovered via keyword "orlando fringe"  
Will pay for someone to go to the Orlando Fringe Festival with me and see at least 3 shows

May 24, 2021 ☐

**Orlando Magazine**  
@OrlandoMag  
Here comes @OrlandoFringe! This longtime favorite festival returns—a little smaller, but no less colorful and outrageous. Full story below:  
  
The Fringe Festival Celebrates 30 Years - Orlando Magazine  
Tyminski Harris as Josephine Baker in JoAnn & Grace. (TELENOVELA BRISCOE)  
Let's Be grateful. It's back. Not exactly back to normal—this is, after all, the...  
[orlandomagazine.com](http://orlandomagazine.com)  
2:27 PM · May 12, 2021 · Twitter Web App


**Lauren Rouse**  
@rouselauren  
just bought @rwriter88 and I tickets to an @OrlandoFringe show called #theadcannor, aka smutty fan fiction and a burlesque show all in one. i am absolutely giddy about this  
9:30 PM · May 11, 2021 · Twitter Web App


**Adrienne Meeks**  
@GayJenNicole  
Replying to @OrlandoFringe  
The 500 List was fantastic! I laughed. I cried. I fell in love with everyone there.

**Karl Kennedy**  
@kktartwork2020  
Some of my abstract painting I'll be selling at the @OrlandoFringe on the 19th #art #abstractart #gayartist #brightcolors #newartists  
  
4:59 PM · May 13, 2021 from Orlando, FL · Twitter for Android

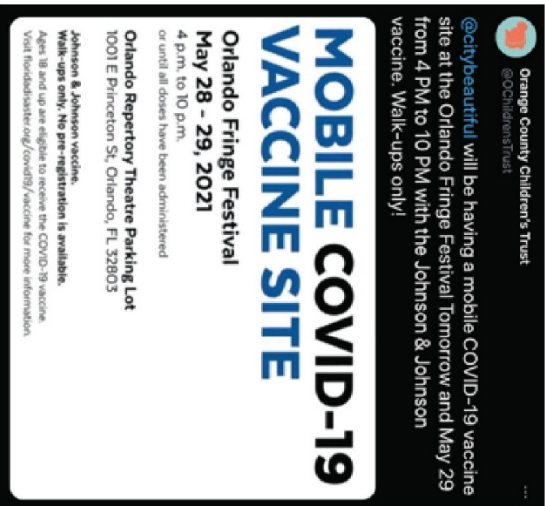
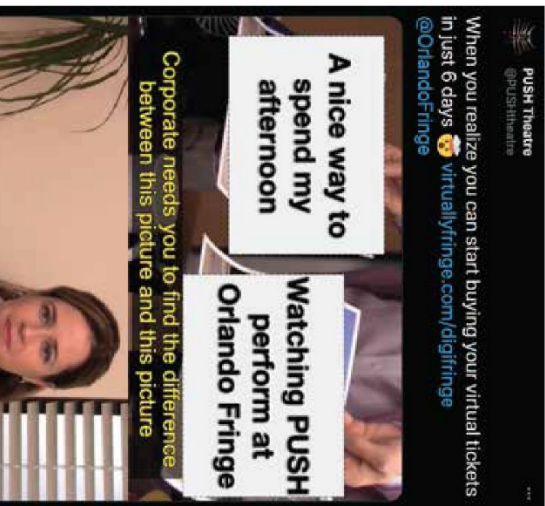
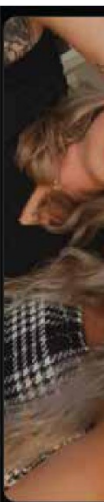
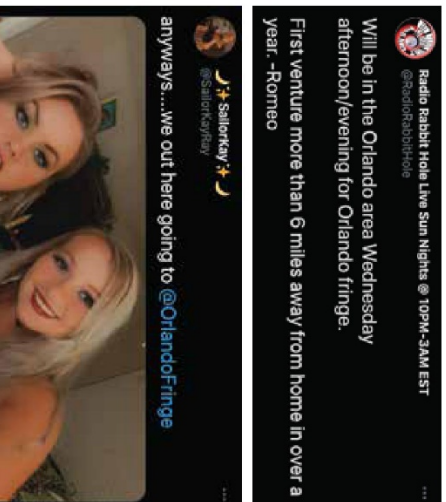
**Shannon Heaton**  
@QChawkeyeINFL  
Making the short hop Saturday for two @OrlandoFringe productions. Supporting my close friends. Might next time hit more. There looked to be a number of great options; kinda wish I'd not waited. Next time....

**Allison Maerid**  
@allinat8  
Replying to @TheGingerMinj @bgunnam and @OrlandoFringe  
Arden was so fun last night! Your whole cast is spectacular 🌟

**Eric Pinder**  
@epinderhockeypguy  
After a show, I thought I'd get a crepe, but I ran into five people I knew and had to hug and chat. So instead, I downed a beer before the next show. It's @OrlandoFringe  


**another horror guy**  
@domenich  
YASSSSSSS @TheGingerMinj ON #AllStars6 🙌  
So excited to see her in Arden at @OrlandoFringe this weekend. 🖤  


## orlando fringe 2021 social media and marketing report





## orlando fringe 2021 social media and marketing report

**Paula Klier**  
@bejaysweetcorn  
3 plays in 32 hours after the live-theatre void a/k/a March 2020-May 2021. Thanks, @OrlandoFringe  
My heart is full. 🍀  
Goodnight all. 🌙



**Sarah Wissig** @sarahwissig May 31  
Fringe is love. Fringe is weirdness. Fringe is creativity. Fringe is experimentation. Fringe is openness. Fringe is unbridled joy. And if you didn't go, you missed the fuck out. But there's always next year! #OrFringe2021



**Chant Lewis** is with Paul Strickland and 40 others.  
June 1  
My Orlando Fringe this year

- Saw 21 different shows
- 3 of those I saw twice (Jodie in Grace, Alchemist of Dreams, The 800 List)
- And 1 of them, Nathan Mosher is filmed, 7 times (including his press review, missed one public performance) and his show on the pay what you can stage
- 2 of them ASD, interpreted by Signing Students
- 2 Artist Outings to Welles Springs and Lake Hobden
- 1 daytime pool party with chosen family
- 7 pieces of ART purchased at VISUAL FRINGE
- Lots of artist merchandise

Too many to count performances on the outdoor stage and pay what you can shows in the Showcase Courtyard (hope that courtyard stage becomes permanent!)

Participated in press previews and both the opening and closing ceremonies

Ate food from at least 7 vendors ... for this year, the jerk chicken tacos from the Caribbean truck

Saw a frango of old friends (see what I did there for those in the know) and made a plethora of new ones

Probably had too many beers and cocktails on the lawn (and budos for the MockTails available ... it was a great choice for a flavorful mid day libation that helped me pace myself) and from my favorite bartender, Joe Blesner-Folsom who was always on the ready with the correct beverage for the time of day

Expressed gratitude to the technicians and volunteers, who are often overlooked

Depended in the middle the FRINGE is making to better serve their mission of inclusivity and accessibility, through ASD, interpreters shows, audio descriptions and cultivating volunteer opportunities for people of all abilities

Basked in love. Gave hugs and received them

Honored with an award

Consider myself lucky

And Gratitude!

WHA FRINGE!

#OrFringe2021

PS If you were tagged in this post you were connected to some of favorite shows, interactions and/or moments from this year's fringe. I was limited to 50 ... it was a struggle but am thankful to consider you part of my extended Framily.

**907 WMFE**  
@wmfeorlando  
Congrats are in order for @wmfeorlando's own @Nicole\_Creston and her company who won best drama at this year's @OrlandoFringe!

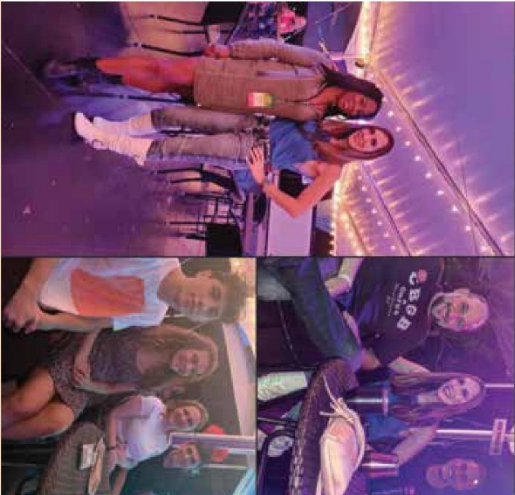


**Sheryl Carbonell** is with Erin Lane.  
June 1

As 'Orlando Fringe 2021' comes to a close I am proud to say that our documentary, 'THE POWER OF CREATIVITY: FINDING INDEPENDENCE', episode 3 featuring Erin Lane was part of the inaugural 'Visual Fringe Mini Film Festival' - a new Orlando International Fringe theatre festival component. Glad to be making history with this girl and with our film team.

Thanks to our entire team of artists who are a part of our films' series, and to our co-director, editor and cinematographer, *Sheryl Carbonell*.

Thanks to our friends who came out to support our film! It was a fun night. *Orlando Fringe*







Downloaded from <http://ajph.org/> on November 10, 2015





Susan Mitchell  
May 29, 2020  
Orlando Fringe

Fringe day 10 did not disappoint. Well, no day at Fringe is a disappointment, but two of this day's offerings were truly special. I saw a predictable one-woman show, "The Good Girl Follows the Rules," but that doesn't protect her from dancing, singing, monologuing, poetry and disappointment. This very ordinary story becomes an extraordinary one thanks to Swilyn Cherry's humor and charm. As she snails flies, meets satons, and ponders her own strengths, you can't help but cheer her on.

Rosagood is a much different one-woman story. Donna Kay Whitcomb's character has found the courage to speak at her AA meeting. What starts as a painful but ordinary backstory evolves into a terrifying tale worthy of Stephen King. With this truly glib story-teller, it's easy to believe that the terrifying events actually happened. Moreover, you can believe they may have. I have now experienced 10 straight days of inspiration theater. I have laughed, and cried, and silently sang along with all kinds of music. I've hugged long-lost friends and had a couple of really good margaritas.

Orlando Fringe lasts for three more days, but it will have to go on without me. After 32 shows, I've reached my limit. But I can hardly wait if next year.



Jeff Revell  
Commented on the post by Orlando Fringe: Fringe whenever you are Orlando Fringe is going digital...  
May 19, 2020

I saw three shows on the platform. I hope DigFringe is here to stay!

View Thread

Danny Garcia  
May 29, 2020

Ok Orlando Fringe patrons.. may I just say  
AIN'T DONE BAD is just wow!

John Ladd McDonald  
May 31, 2020

Shelly, I feel, Lynn, Aimee, Kearns, Thom, Margaret, and anyone else who love my posts about Orlando Fringe but have never been able to be there in person, this is your chance to see what all the fuss is about. While watching on a computer (or if you're really techno capable a TV) is not the same as being in a live audience, you have a chance to see all the shows that are presented here before I have a full list of shows being presented. I will be happy to make personalized recommendations if private. Just ask.



The NEW online DigFringe will take place June 4-18 and will have recorded performances by artists from all over the world.

ADD IT

DigFringe brings Fringe to patrons anywhere in the world. It is a new digital theatre offering from Orlando Fringe that provides recordings of the shows presented at the Orlando International Fringe Theatre Festival. This year

Joseph Atchafala  
May 29, 2020  
Orlando Fringe

Orlando Fringe is on the today. Get your tickets, don't say I didn't warn you about!



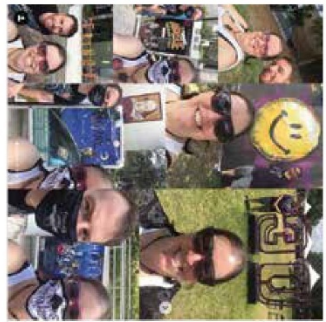
Susan Mitchell  
Commented on the post by Orlando Fringe: Well first "When Doves in Their Favourite and Blue" from the...  
May 27, 2020

I'm with you. I've seen 26 shows so far, many of them fabulous, a couple 'eh' but still worth ten bucks to see. And every single show made me happy that Fringe is alive and well. Thank you everyone... staff, sponsors, volunteers, actors, writers, producers, franchisers, bartenders, table-servers, cardboard seatrains....

## Orlando Fringe 2021 social media and marketing report







**Post:** **Posters**  
 Caption: **Posters**  
 Text: **Posters**  
 Comments: **Posters**  
 Likes: **Posters**



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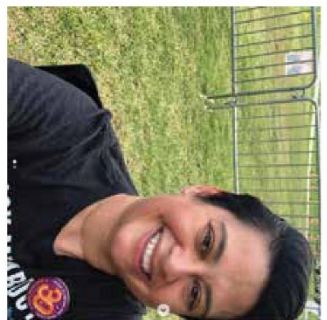
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## APPENDIX C. 2021 OIFF DIGITAL PROGRAM SCHEDULE

May 18	7:00 PM	<b>Orlando Fringe Presents: National/International Teaser Show and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony</b>	Orlando Fringe	Orange	Variety	13 & Up	120	\$15
May 19	5:00 PM	<b>box.</b>	boxperiodproductions	The Abbey	Theatre	All Ages	60	\$12
May 19	6:00 PM	<b>The Wizard of Loch Haven Park</b>	Confessions of a Lost Opera Diary	White wall in front of the Shakes	Drama, Immersive, Musical	13 & Up	40	\$10
May 19	6:15 PM	<b>Girly Girl</b>	The Euphoria Project	Gold	Drag, LGBT Themes, Solo-Show, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 19	6:15 PM	<b>God Hates Figs</b>	Dusty Bibles Studios Productions	Yellow	Comedy, Drama, Storytelling, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 19	6:45 PM	<b>Arden</b>	In the Wings	Silver	Comedy, Drag, LGBT Themes, Musical	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 19	6:50 PM	<b>Drunk Magic</b>	Colin Smith	The Abbey	Comedy, Magic	13 & Up	55	\$12
May 19	7:00 PM	<b>7 Deadly Sins</b>	Emotions Dance Inc	Pink	Dance	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 19	7:00 PM	<b>The Impossible Club</b>	Mental Multitrack	Green	Comedy, Drama, Musical, Theatre	7 & Up	60	\$12
May 19	7:00 PM	<b>You'll Figure It out...Eventually</b>	Jessica Fernando	Blue	Comedy, Solo-Show, Storytelling, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 19	7:30 PM	<b>The Little Merman from The Black Lagoon</b>	Christian Kely	Haos on Church	Comedy, LGBT, Parody, Puppetry	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 19	8:00 PM	<b>What? The Dickens!</b>	Don't Panic Theater Company	Yellow	Comedy, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$10
May 19	8:15 PM	<b>Fucking Men</b>	Unseen Images Theatre	Gold	Comedy, Drama, LGBT Themes, Theatre	18 & Up	90	\$12
May 19	8:30 PM	<b>We Got Love</b>	Brett McMahon	The Abbey	Burlesque, Cabaret, LGBT Themes, Musical	18 & Up	75	\$12

May 19	8:45 PM	<b>Celebration Theatre Co Presents: HEXED, A Femme Rock Musical</b>	Celebration Theatre Company	Silver	Musical, Theatre	13 & Up	90	\$12
May 19	8:45 PM	<b>Cross Country: A Self-Help Musical Performance</b>	Portals Theatre	Pink	Comedy, Improv, Theatre, Variety	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 19	8:45 PM	<b>visABILITY</b>	Movement Theater	Green	Dance, Immersive, Theatre	All Ages	60	\$12
May 19	9:30 PM	<b>Corset and Cuties - Delicious</b>	Corsets & Cuties, LLC	Haos on Church	Burlesque	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 19	9:45 PM	<b>Darth and Droids</b>	The Present Company	Yellow	Comedy, Theatre	7 & Up	60	\$10
May 19	10:00 PM	<b>Coffee and Cedar</b>	DH Cermeno Inc	Blue	Drama	All Ages	60	\$10
May 19	10:30 PM	<b>Selling Out - The Musical</b>	NCG Theatricals	Pink	Musical	18 & Up	60	\$10
May 19	10:30 PM	<b>Slut Like Me</b>	Logan Donahoo	Green	Comedy, Solo-Show, Stand Up	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 19	10:40 PM	<b>Tombmates</b>	Bikini Katie Productions	The Abbey	Comedy	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 20	5:00 PM	<b>Happily Ever After Dark</b>	The Viera Studio for Performing Arts	The Abbey	Cabaret, Comedy, LGBT Themes, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$10
May 20	5:30 PM	<b>The Day the Sky Fell</b>	Cypress Creek HS	Green	Drama, Theatre	All Ages	40	\$5
May 20	5:30 PM	<b>The Little Mermaid from The Black Lagoon</b>	Christian Kelly	Haos on Church	Comedy, LGBT, Parody, Puppetry	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 20	6:00 PM	<b>The Wizard of Loch Haven Park</b>	Confessions of a Lost Opera Diary	white van in front of the Church	Drama, Immersive, Musical	13 & Up	40	\$10
May 20	6:30 PM	<b>A Note to Follow Sober</b>	Now or Never Endeavours	Blue	Solo-Show	13 & Up	55	\$12
May 20	6:30 PM	<b>An Adele Horror Story</b>	11th Hour Productions	OMA entrance	Comedy, LGBT, Parody, Musical	18 & Up	75	\$11
May 20	6:30 PM	<b>Selling Out - The Musical</b>	NCG Theatricals	Pink	Musical	18 & Up	60	\$10
May 20	6:45 PM	<b>Spotlight</b>	Lake Howell High School	Yellow	Comedy, Drama, Theatre	18 & Up	50	\$6

May 20	6:50 PM	<b>DKTV: LIVE!...(not a Zoom Call)</b>	DK Live Productions	The Abbey	Comedy	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 20	7:00 PM	<b>Cupid and Psyche</b>	Excellent Adventure Productions	Gold	Comedy, Musical, Theatre	7 & Up	90	\$12
May 20	7:00 PM	<b>The Frogpig and Friends Variety Hour</b>	Joel Swanson Productions	Silver	Comedy, Puppetry, Variety	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 20	7:00 PM	<b>Smooch</b>	Gromalot Theatre Factory	Orange	Comedy, Physical, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 20	7:15 PM	<b>EXPERIMENTAL</b>	Spellbound, Inc	Red	Magic	13 & Up	60	\$7
May 20	7:15 PM	<b>Slut Like Me</b>	Logan Donahoo	Green	Comedy, Solo-Show, Stand Up	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 20	7:30 PM	<b>Always Now</b>	Michelina Moen	Haos on Church	Dance, Improv	7 & Up	60	\$12
May 20	8:00 PM	<b>Rosegold</b>	Donna Kay Yarborough	Blue	Solo-Show	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 20	8:00 PM	<b>The Infinite Conversation</b>	Sumner Mormeneo	the Grove at Mead	Magic, Physical, Solo-Show, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 20	8:00 PM	<b>The Wizard of Loch Haven Park</b>	Confessions of a Lost Opera Diary	Crime was in front of the Shakes	Drama, Immersive, Musical	13 & Up	40	\$10
May 20	8:30 PM	<b>Seen</b>	Terapia Di Danza	Yellow	Dance, Immersive, Physical, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 20	8:30 PM	<b>Tombmates</b>	Bikini Katie Productions	The Abbey	Comedy	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 20	9:00 PM	<b>Ain't Done Bad</b>	Jakob Kar and Co	Silver	Dance, Drama, LGBT Themes, Physical	13 & Up	55	\$12
May 20	9:00 PM	<b>Requiem</b>	Opera del Sol	Orange	Drama, Musical	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 20	9:00 PM	<b>visABILITY</b>	Movement Theater	Green	Dance, Immersive, Theatre	All Ages	60	\$12
May 20	9:30 PM	<b>Girly Girl</b>	The Euphoria Project	Gold	Drag, LGBT Themes, Solo-Show, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 20	9:30 PM	<b>Nathan Mosher Is Injured: A Show about a Breakup, Breakdown, and a Breakthrough</b>	Nathan Mosher	Blue	Musical, Spoken Word, Stand Up, Storytelling	18 & Up	60	\$12

May 20	9:30 PM	ONE NIGHT ONLY in the HÄOS aka LALA LOUNGE	Blue LaLa Entertainment	Haos on Church	Burlesque, Cabaret, Dance, Musical, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 20	10:00 PM	#Headcanon	Sole Orlando	Pink	Burlesque	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 20	10:10 PM	Shakespeare's Reservoir Dogs	Hardly Working Promotions	The Abbey	Drama	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 20	10:15 PM	MIND EATER	Theatre Group GUMBO	Yellow	Comedy, Drama, Physical, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 21	5:00 PM	DKTV: LIVE!...(not a Zoom Call)	DK Live Productions	The Abbey	Comedy	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 21	5:45 PM	Cross Country: A Self-Help Musical Performance	Portals Theatre	Pink	Comedy, Improv, Theatre, Variety	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 21	6:00 PM	THRIVE	Downtown Arts District	Blue	Storytelling	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 21	6:00 PM	The Wizard of Loch Haven Park	Confessions of a Lost Opera Diary	White wall in front of the Shakes OMA entrance	Drama, Immersive, Musical	13 & Up	40	\$10
May 21	6:30 PM	An Adele Horror Story	11th Hour Productions	Green	Comedy, LGBT, Parody, Musical	18 & Up	75	\$11
May 21	6:45 PM	FRIGORIFIC: a play by ear	Lorelei Zarifian	Green	Comedy, Solo-Show, Storytelling, Theatre	13 & Up	65	\$10
May 21	6:50 PM	Happily Ever After Dark	The Viera Studio for Performing Arts	The Abbey	Cabaret, Comedy, LGBT Themes, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$10
May 21	7:00 PM	Alchemist of Dreams	The Imagination House	Orange	Burlesque, Dance, Storytelling, Theatre	13 & Up	55	\$12
May 21	7:00 PM	AWAY, NOW - The World's Most Desired Destination	Paul Strickland	Yellow	Comedy, Variety	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 21	7:00 PM	Celebration Theatre Co Presents: HEXED, A Femme Rock Musical	Celebration Theatre Company	Silver	Musical, Theatre	13 & Up	90	\$12
May 21	7:00 PM	The Infinite Conversation	Sumner Mormeneo	The Grove at Mead Gardens	Magic, Physical, Solo-Show, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 21	7:15 PM	Cupid and Psyche	Excellent Adventure Productions	Gold	Comedy, Musical, Theatre	7 & Up	90	\$12
May 21	7:30 PM	Coffee and Cedar	DH Cermeno Inc	Blue	Drama	All Ages	60	\$10



May 21	7:30 PM	<b>Selling Out - The Musical</b>	NCG Theatricals	Pink	Musical	18 & Up	60	\$10
May 21	8:00 PM	<b>The Wizard of Loch Haven Park</b>	Confessions of a Lost Opera Diary	White wall in front of the Statue	Drama, Immersive, Musical	13 & Up	40	\$10
May 21	8:30 PM	<b>Shakespeare's Reservoir Dogs</b>	Hardly Working Promotions	The Abbey	Drama	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 21	8:45 PM	<b>Kidnapping Amy</b>	Misneach Players	Yellow	Comedy	All Ages	60	\$10
May 21	8:45 PM	<b>Slut Like Me</b>	Logan Donahoo	Green	Comedy, Solo-Show, Stand Up	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 21	9:00 PM	<b>Mrs. Bliss's Titanic Adventure</b>	Bridget Bean	Blue	Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 21	9:00 PM	<b>Oscar Wilde and Jesus Christ Walk into a Gay Bar</b>	Renaissance Theatre Company	Orange	Musical	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 21	9:00 PM	<b>The Infinite Conversation</b>	Sumner Mormeneo	The Grove at Mead Gardens	Magic, Physical, Solo-Show, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 21	9:15 PM	<b>ExperiMENTAL</b>	Spellbound, Inc	Red	Magic	13 & Up	60	\$7
May 21	9:15 PM	<b>Tired Old Whore</b>	Ba'aser Presents	Purple	Comedy, Drag, Solo-Show, Storytelling	18 & Up	55	\$12
May 21	9:30 PM	<b>Arden</b>	In the Wings	Silver	Comedy, Drag, LGBT Themes, Musical	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 21	9:45 PM	<b>IT ALL STARTED AT THE RADISSON INN</b>	Wanzie Presents & D Squared Productions	Gold	Comedy, LGBT Themes, Drama, Theatre	18 & Up	75	\$12
May 21	10:10 PM	<b>box.</b>	boxperiodproductions	The Abbey	Theatre	All Ages	60	\$12
May 21	10:30 PM	<b>A Note to Follow Sober</b>	Now or Never Endeavours	Blue	Solo-Show	13 & Up	55	\$12
May 21	10:30 PM	<b>Fringin &amp; Flagons</b>	Indigo Chameleon	Yellow	Comedy, Immersive, Improv, Storytelling	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 21	11:00 PM	<b>The 500 List</b>	Ryan Adam Wells	Pink	Musical, Storytelling	13 & up	70	\$12
May 21	11:40 PM	<b>Drunk Magic</b>	Colin Smith	The Abbey	Comedy, Magic	13 & Up	55	\$12

May 21	11:59 PM	<b>Orlando Fringe Presents: Tonight at Midnight</b>	Orlando Fringe	Orange	Variety	18 & Up	90	\$10
May 22	11:30 AM	<b>box.</b>	boxperiodproductions	The Abbey	Theatre	All Ages	60	\$12
May 22	11:30 AM	<b>Cross Country: A Self-Help Musical Performance</b>	Portals Theatre	Pink	Comedy, Improv, Theatre, Variety	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	NOON	<b>Girly Girl</b>	The Euphoria Project	Gold	Drag, LGBT Themes, Solo-Show, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	12:15 PM	<b>God Hates Figs</b>	Dusty Bibles Studios Productions	Yellow	Comedy, Drama, Storytelling, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	12:30 PM	<b>Mrs. Bliss's Titanic Adventure</b>	Bridget Bean	Blue	Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	1:00 PM	<b>FRIGORIFIC: a play by ear</b>	Lorelei Zarifian	Green	Comedy, Solo-Show, Storytelling, Theatre	13 & Up	65	\$10
May 22	1:10 PM	<b>Shakespeare's Reservoir Dogs</b>	Hardly Working Promotions	The Abbey	Drama	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	1:15 PM	<b>Designated Debaters</b>	Kyle's Company	Purple	Comedy, Improv, Parody/Spoof	13 & Up	50	\$12
May 22	2:00 PM	<b>AWAY, NOW - The World's Most Desired Destination</b>	Paul Strickland	Yellow	Comedy, Variety	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	2:00 PM	<b>Rosegold</b>	Donna Kay Yarborough	Blue	Solo-Show	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	2:00 PM	<b>SEEGER</b>	Randi Noojin	Gold	Musical, Solo-Show, Story Telling	13 & Up	70	\$12
May 22	2:30 PM	<b>The Frogpig and Friends Variety Hour</b>	Joel Swanson Productions	Silver	Comedy, Puppetry, Variety	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	2:50 PM	<b>Tombmates</b>	Bikini Katie Productions	The Abbey	Comedy	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	3:00 PM	<b>La Divina: The Last Interview of Maria Callas</b>	Shelly Cooper	Green	Musical, Solo-Show	13 & Up	60	\$10
May 22	3:00 PM	<b>ONE NIGHT ONLY in the HÅOS aka LALA LOUNGE</b>	Blue LaLa Entertainment	Haos on Church	Burlesque, Cabaret, Dance, Musical, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	3:00 PM	<b>Smooch</b>	Gromalot Theatre Factory	Orange	Comedy, Physical, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12

May 22	3:00 PM	<b>The 500 List</b>	Ryan Adam Wells	Pink	Musical, Storytelling	13 & up	70	\$12
May 22	3:30 PM	<b>You'll Figure It out...Eventually</b>	Jessica Fernando	Blue	Comedy, Solo-Show, Storytelling, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	3:45 PM	<b>Seen</b>	Terapia Di Danza	Yellow	Dance, Immersive, Physical, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	4:30 PM	<b>Celebration Theatre Co Presents: HEXED, A Femme Rock Musical</b>	Celebration Theatre Company	Silver	Musical, Theatre	13 & Up	90	\$12
May 22	4:30 PM	<b>Happily Ever After Dark</b>	The Viera Studio for Performing Arts	The Abbey	Cabaret, Comedy, LGBT Themes, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$10
May 22	4:45 PM	<b>IT ALL STARTED AT THE RADISSON INN</b>	Wanzie Presents & D Squared Productions	Gold	Comedy, LGBT Themes, Drama, Theatre	18 & Up	75	\$12
May 22	5:00 PM	<b>Alchemist of Dreams</b>	The Imagination House	Orange	Burlesque, Dance, Storytelling, Theatre	13 & Up	55	\$12
May 22	5:00 PM	<b>Confessions of a Flirt</b>	Springer Music Studio	Pink	Musical, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	5:00 PM	<b>The Little Merman from The Black Lagoon</b>	Christian Kely	Haos on Church	Comedy, LGBT, Parody, Puppetry	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	5:30 PM	<b>MIND EATER</b>	Theatre Group GUMBO	Yellow	Comedy, Drama, Physical, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	5:30 PM	<b>My First Miracle</b>	My First Miracle	Blue	Solo-Show	13 & Up	60	\$10
May 22	5:45 PM	<b>ExperiMENTAL</b>	Spellbound, Inc	Red	Magic	13 & Up	60	\$7
May 22	6:00 PM	<b>An Adele Horror Story</b>	11th Hour Productions	OMA entrance white wall in front of the Chateau	Comedy, LGBT, Parody, Musical	18 & Up	75	\$11
May 22	6:00 PM	<b>The Wizard of Loch Haven Park</b>	Confessions of a Lost Opera Diary		Drama, Immersive, Musical	13 & Up	40	\$10
May 22	7:00 PM	<b>Nathan Mosher Is Injured: A Show about a Breakup, Breakdown, and a Breakthrough</b>	Nathan Mosher	Blue	Musical, Spoken Word, Stand Up, Storytelling	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	6:30 PM	<b>Slut Like Me</b>	Logan Donahoo	Green	Comedy, Solo-Show, Stand Up	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	7:00 PM	<b>Dogtanic</b>	BC Theatricals	Gold	Solo-Show, Stand Up, Storytelling, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12

May 22	7:10 PM	<b>DKTV: LIVE!...(not a Zoom Call)</b>	DK Live Productions	The Abbey	Comedy	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	7:15 PM	<b>7 Deadly Sins</b>	Emotions Dance Inc	Pink	Dance	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	7:15 PM	<b>JUDAS</b>	That One Guy Productions	Red	Comedy, LGBT Themes, Solo-Show, Stand-up	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	7:30 PM	<b>Josie &amp; Grace</b>	Dynamite Lunchbox	Silver	Cabaret, Drama, Musical, Theatre	13 & Up	75	\$12
May 22	7:30 PM	<b>ONE NIGHT ONLY in the HAOS aka LALA LOUNGE</b>	Blue LaLa Entertainment	Haos on Church	Burlesque, Cabaret, Dance, Musical, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	7:30 PM	<b>Oscar Wilde and Jesus Christ Walk into a Gay Bar</b>	Renaissance Theatre Company	Orange	Musical	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	7:45 PM	<b>Darth and Droids</b>	The Present Company	Yellow	Comedy, Theatre	7 & Up	60	\$10
May 22	8:00 PM	<b>The Wizard of Loch Haven Park</b>	Confessions of a Lost Opera Diary	White wall in front of the Chapel	Drama, Immersive, Musical	13 & Up	40	\$10
May 22	8:30 PM	<b>Sareth Ney Presents "Stories on Sunset"</b>	A Quarter and a Dream Pictures	Blue	Comedy, LGBT Themes, Stand Up, Stand-up	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	8:45 PM	<b>Dangerous When Wet: A Tale of Booze, Sex and My Mother</b>	redBrick agency	Green	Solo-Show	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	8:50 PM	<b>Drunk Magic</b>	Colin Smith	The Abbey	Comedy, Magic	13 & Up	55	\$12
May 22	9:00 PM	<b>An Adele Horror Story</b>	11th Hour Productions	OMA entrance	Comedy, LGBT, Parody, Musical	18 & Up	75	\$11
May 22	9:00 PM	<b>Cupid and Psyche</b>	Excellent Adventure Productions	Gold	Comedy, Musical, Theatre	7 & Up	90	\$12
May 22	9:30 PM	<b>Requiem</b>	Opera del Sol	Orange	Drama, Musical	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	9:30 PM	<b>What? The Dickens!</b>	Don't Panic Theater Company	Yellow	Comedy, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$10
May 22	9:45 PM	<b>Arden</b>	In the Wings	Silver	Comedy, Drag, LGBT Themes, Musical	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 22	10:30 PM	<b>visABILITY</b>	Movement Theater	Green	Dance, Immersive, Theatre	All Ages	60	\$12

May 22	10:40 PM	<b>We Got Love</b>	Brett McMahon	The Abbey	Burlesque, Cabaret, LGBT Themes, Musical	18 & Up	75	\$12
May 22	10:45 PM	<b>Tired Old Whore</b>	Ba'aser Presents	Purple	Comedy, Drag, Solo-Show, Storytelling	18 & Up	55	\$12
May 22	11:59 PM	<b>Orlando Fringe Presents: Tonight at Midnight</b>	Orlando Fringe	Orange	Variety	18 & Up	90	\$10
May 23	11:30 AM	<b>Happily Ever After Dark</b>	The Viera Studio for Performing Arts	The Abbey	Cabaret, Comedy, LGBT Themes, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$10
May 23	11:30 AM	<b>Nathan Mosher Is Injured: A Show about a Breakup, Breakdown, and a Breakthrough</b>	Nathan Mosher	Blue	Musical, Spoken Word, Stand Up, Storytelling	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 23	NOON	<b>The Wizard of Loch Haven Park</b>	Confessions of a Lost Opera Diary	White wall in front of the Shakes	Drama, Immersive, Musical	13 & Up	40	\$10
May 23	12:30 PM	<b>Spotlight</b>	Lake Howell High School	Yellow	Comedy, Drama, Theatre	18 & Up	50	\$6
May 23	1:00 PM	<b>La Divina: The Last Interview of Maria Callas</b>	Shelly Cooper	Green	Musical, Solo-Show	13 & Up	60	\$10
May 23	1:00 PM	<b>My First Miracle</b>	My First Miracle	Blue	Solo-Show	13 & Up	60	\$10
May 23	1:10 PM	<b>box.</b>	boxperiodproductions	The Abbey	Theatre	All Ages	60	\$12
May 23	1:30 PM	<b>Josie &amp; Grace</b>	Dynamite Lunchbox	Silver	Cabaret, Drama, Musical, Theatre	13 & Up	75	\$12
May 23	1:30 PM	<b>JUDAS</b>	That One Guy Productions	Red	Comedy, LGBT Themes, Solo-Show, Storytelling	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 23	1:30 PM	<b>Oscar Wilde and Jesus Christ Walk into a Gay Bar</b>	Renaissance Theatre Company	Orange	Musical	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 23	2:00 PM	<b>#Headcanon</b>	Sole Orlando	Pink	Burlesque	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 23	2:15 PM	<b>Fringin &amp; Flagons</b>	Indigo Chameleon	Yellow	Comedy, Immersive, Improv, Storytelling	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 23	2:30 PM	<b>Coffee and Cedar</b>	DH Cermeno Inc	Blue	Drama	All Ages	60	\$10
May 23	2:30 PM	<b>Girly Girl</b>	The Euphoria Project	Gold	Drag, LGBT Themes, Solo-Show, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12

May 23	2:45 PM	<b>FRIGORIFIC: a play by ear</b>	Lorelei Zarifian	Green	Comedy, Solo-Show, Storytelling, Theatre	13 & Up	65	\$10
May 23	2:50 PM	<b>Drunk Magic</b>	Colin Smith	The Abbey	Comedy, Magic	13 & Up	55	\$12
May 23	3:30 PM	<b>Alchemist of Dreams</b>	The Imagination House	Orange	Burlesque, Dance, Storytelling, Theatre	13 & Up	55	\$12
May 23	3:45 PM	<b>Celebration Theatre Co Presents: HEXED, A Femme Rock Musical</b>	Celebration Theatre Company	Silver	Musical, Theatre	13 & Up	90	\$12
May 23	3:45 PM	<b>Selling Out - The Musical</b>	NCG Theatricals	Pink	Musical	18 & Up	60	\$10
May 23	4:00 PM	<b>A Note to Follow Sober</b>	Now or Never Endeavours	Blue	Solo-Show	13 & Up	55	\$12
May 23	4:00 PM	<b>MIND EATER</b>	Theatre Group GUMBO	Yellow	Comedy, Drama, Physical, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 23	4:30 PM	<b>Dogtanic</b>	BC Theatricals	Gold	Solo-Show, Stand Up, Storytelling, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 23	4:30 PM	<b>Tombmates</b>	Bikini Katie Productions	The Abbey	Comedy	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 23	5:00 PM	<b>ExperiMENTAL</b>	Spellbound, Inc	Red	Magic	13 & Up	60	\$7
May 23	5:15 PM	<b>The Impossible Club</b>	Mental Multitrack	Green	Comedy, Drama, Musical, Theatre	7 & Up	60	\$12
May 23	5:30 PM	<b>Smooch</b>	Gromalot Theatre Factory	Orange	Comedy, Physical, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 23	5:45 PM	<b>God Hates Figs</b>	Dusty Bibles Studios Productions	Yellow	Comedy, Drama, Storytelling, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 23	6:00 PM	<b>7 Deadly Sins</b>	Emotions Dance Inc	Pink	Dance	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 23	6:00 PM	<b>THRIVE</b>	Downtown Arts District	Blue	Storytelling	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 23	6:00 PM	<b>The Wizard of Loch Haven Park</b>	Confessions of a Lost Opera Diary	White wall in front of the Shakes	Drama, Immersive, Musical	13 & Up	40	\$10
May 23	6:45 PM	<b>Arden</b>	In the Wings	Silver	Comedy, Drag, LGBT Themes, Musical	13 & Up	60	\$12

May 23	7:00 PM	<b>Dangerous When Wet: A Tale of Booze, Sex and My Mother</b>	redBrick agency	Green	Solo-Show	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 23	7:00 PM	<b>IT ALL STARTED AT THE RADISSON INN</b>	Wanzie Presents & D Squared Productions	Gold	Comedy, LGBT Themes, Drama, Theatre	18 & Up	75	\$12
May 23	7:10 PM	<b>We Got Love</b>	Brett McMahon	The Abbey	Burlesque, Cabaret, LGBT Themes, Musical	18 & Up	75	\$12
May 23	7:30 PM	<b>Mrs. Bliss's Titanic Adventure</b>	Bridget Bean	Blue	Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 23	7:30 PM	<b>Requiem</b>	Opera del Sol	Orange	Drama, Musical	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 23	7:45 PM	<b>Confessions of a Flirt</b>	Springer Music Studio	Pink	Musical, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 23	8:00 PM	<b>What? The Dickens!</b>	Don't Panic Theater Company	Yellow	Comedy, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$10
May 23	8:45 PM	<b>The Frogpig and Friends Variety Hour</b>	Joel Swanson Productions	Silver	Comedy, Puppetry, Variety	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 23	8:50 PM	<b>Shakespeare's Reservoir Dogs</b>	Hardly Working Promotions	The Abbey	Drama	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 23	9:00 PM	<b>You'll Figure It out...Eventually</b>	Jessica Fernando	Blue	Comedy, Solo-Show, Storytelling, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 23	9:15 PM	<b>Fucking Men</b>	Unseen Images Theatre	Gold	Comedy, Drama, LGBT Themes, Theatre	18 & Up	90	\$12
May 23	9:30 PM	<b>Tired Old Whore</b>	Ba'aser Presents	Purple	Comedy, Drag, Solo-Show, Storytelling	18 & Up	55	\$12
May 23	9:45 PM	<b>Darth and Droids</b>	The Present Company	Yellow	Comedy, Theatre	7 & Up	60	\$10
May 23	10:40 PM	<b>DKTV: LIVE!...(not a Zoom Call)</b>	DK Live Productions	The Abbey	Comedy	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 24	6:00 PM	<b>The Day the Sky Fell</b>	Cypress Creek HS	Green	Drama, Theatre	All Ages	40	\$5
May 24	6:00 PM	<b>The Sack: A Play on Superheroes</b>	Airtight Theatre	Red	Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$10
May 24	6:15 PM	<b>Fringin &amp; Flagons</b>	Indigo Chameleon	Yellow	Comedy, Immersive, Improv, Storytelling	13 & Up	60	\$12



May 24	6:15 PM	<b>Fucking Men</b>	Unseen Images Theatre	Gold	Comedy, Drama, LGBT Themes, Theatre	18 & Up	90	\$12
May 24	6:15 PM	<b>The 500 List</b>	Ryan Adam Wells	Pink	Musical, Storytelling	13 & up	70	\$12
May 24	6:45 PM	<b>Rosegold</b>	Donna Kay Yarborough	Blue	Solo-Show	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 24	7:00 PM	<b>Ain't Done Bad</b>	Jakob Kar and Co	Silver	Dance, Drama, LGBT Themes, Physical	13 & Up	55	\$12
May 24	7:30 PM	<b>JUDAS</b>	That One Guy Productions	Red	Comedy, LGBT Themes, Solo-Show, Storytelling	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 24	7:45 PM	<b>FRIGORIFIC: a play by ear</b>	Lorelei Zarifian	Green	Comedy, Solo-Show, Storytelling, Theatre	13 & Up	65	\$10
May 24	8:00 PM	<b>AWAY, NOW - The World's Most Desired Destination</b>	Paul Strickland	Yellow	Comedy, Variety	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 24	8:15 PM	<b>#Headcanon</b>	Sole Orlando	Pink	Burlesque	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 24	8:15 PM	<b>Coffee and Cedar</b>	DH Cermeno Inc	Blue	Drama	All Ages	60	\$10
May 24	8:45 PM	<b>Cupid and Psyche</b>	Excellent Adventure Productions	Gold	Comedy, Musical, Theatre	7 & Up	90	\$12
May 24	9:00 PM	<b>Arden</b>	In the Wings	Silver	Comedy, Drag, LGBT Themes, Musical	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 24	9:45 PM	<b>Darth and Droids</b>	The Present Company	Yellow	Comedy, Theatre	7 & Up	60	\$10
May 24	10:00 PM	<b>Cross Country: A Self-Help Musical Performance</b>	Portals Theatre	Pink	Comedy, Improv, Theatre, Variety	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 25	6:15 PM	<b>What? The Dickens!</b>	Don't Panic Theater Company	Yellow	Comedy, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$10
May 25	6:30 PM	<b>Designated Debaters</b>	Kyle's Company	Purple	Comedy, Improv, Parody/Spoof	13 & Up	50	\$12
May 25	6:45 PM	<b>JUDAS</b>	That One Guy Productions	Red	Comedy, LGBT Themes, Solo-Show, Storytelling	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 25	6:45 PM	<b>Sareth Ney Presents "Stories on Sunset"</b>	A Quarter and a Dream Pictures	Blue	Comedy, LGBT Themes, Stand Up, Storytelling	18 & Up	60	\$12

May 25	7:00 PM	<b>Dogtanic</b>	BC Theatricals	Gold	Solo-Show, Stand Up, Storytelling, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 25	7:00 PM	<b>Josie &amp; Grace</b>	Dynamite Lunchbox	Silver	Cabaret, Drama, Musical, Theatre	13 & Up	75	\$12
May 25	7:30 PM	<b>The Little Mermaid from The Black Lagoon</b>	Christian Kelly	Haos on Church	Comedy, LGBT, Parody, Puppetry	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 25	7:30 PM	<b>Requiem</b>	Opera del Sol	Orange	Drama, Musical	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 25	8:00 PM	<b>Seen</b>	Terapia Di Danza	Yellow	Dance, Immersive, Physical, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 25	8:15 PM	<b>My First Miracle</b>	My First Miracle	Blue	Solo-Show	13 & Up	60	\$10
May 25	8:15 PM	<b>Selling Out - The Musical</b>	NCG Theatricals	Pink	Musical	18 & Up	60	\$10
May 25	8:15 PM	<b>The Sack: A Play on Superheroes</b>	Airtight Theatre	Red	Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$10
May 25	9:00 PM	<b>IT ALL STARTED AT THE RADISSON INN</b>	Wanzie Presents & D Squared Productions	Gold	Comedy, LGBT Themes, Drama, Theatre	18 & Up	75	\$12
May 25	9:15 PM	<b>The Frogpig and Friends Variety Hour</b>	Joel Swanson Productions	Silver	Comedy, Puppetry, Variety	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 25	9:30 PM	<b>The Impossible Club</b>	Mental Multitrack	Green	Comedy, Drama, Musical, Theatre	7 & Up	60	\$12
May 25	9:30 PM	<b>Oscar Wilde and Jesus Christ Walk into a Gay Bar</b>	Renaissance Theatre Company	Orange	Musical	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 25	9:45 PM	<b>ExperiMENTAL</b>	Spellbound, Inc	Red	Magic	13 & Up	60	\$7
May 25	9:45 PM	<b>Kidnapping Amy</b>	Misneach Players	Yellow	Comedy	All Ages	60	\$10
May 25	9:45 PM	<b>Nathan Mosher Is Injured: A Show about a Breakup, Breakdown, and a Breakthrough</b>	Nathan Mosher	Blue	Musical, Spoken Word, Stand Up, Storytelling	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 25	10:00 PM	<b>Confessions of a Flirt</b>	Springer Music Studio	Pink	Musical, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 26	5:30 PM	<b>Always Now</b>	Michelina Moen	Haos on Church	Dance, Improv	7 & Up	60	\$12

May 26	6:00 PM	<b>The Wizard of Loch Haven Park</b>	Confessions of a Lost Opera Diary	front of the side loading	Drama, Immersive, Musical	13 & Up	40	\$10
May 26	6:15 PM	<b>The Day the Sky Fell</b>	Cypress Creek HS	Green	Drama, Theatre	All Ages	40	\$5
May 26	6:30 PM	<b>Celebration Theatre Co Presents: HEXED, A Femme Rock Musical</b>	Celebration Theatre Company	Silver	Musical, Theatre	13 & Up	90	\$12
May 26	6:45 PM	<b>MIND EATER</b>	Theatre Group GUMBO	Yellow	Comedy, Drama, Physical, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 26	7:00 PM	<b>Nathan Mosher Is Injured: A Show about a Breakup, Breakdown, and a Breakthrough</b>	Nathan Mosher	Blue	Musical, Spoken Word, Stand Up, Storytelling	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 26	7:15 PM	<b>SEEGER</b>	Randi Noojin	Gold	Musical, Solo-Show, Story Telling	13 & Up	70	\$12
May 26	7:30 PM	<b>ONE NIGHT ONLY in the HÅOS aka LALA LOUNGE</b>	Blue LaLa Entertainment	Haos on Church	Burlesque, Cabaret, Dance, Musical, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 26	7:30 PM	<b>Smooch</b>	Gromalot Theatre Factory	Orange	Comedy, Physical, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 26	8:00 PM	<b>7 Deadly Sins</b>	Emotions Dance Inc	Pink	Dance	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 26	8:00 PM	<b>La Divina: The Last Interview of Maria Callas</b>	Shelly Cooper	Green	Musical, Solo-Show	13 & Up	60	\$10
May 26	8:30 PM	<b>A Note to Follow Sober</b>	Now or Never Endeavours	Blue	Solo-Show	13 & Up	55	\$12
May 26	8:30 PM	<b>AWAY, NOW - The World's Most Desired Destination</b>	Paul Strickland	Yellow	Comedy, Variety	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 26	8:30 PM	<b>The Sack: A Play on Superheroes</b>	Airtight Theatre	Red	Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$10
May 26	9:00 PM	<b>Ain't Done Bad</b>	Jakob Kar and Co	Silver	Dance, Drama, LGBT Themes, Physical	13 & Up	55	\$12
May 26	9:30 PM	<b>Alchemist of Dreams</b>	The Imagination House	Orange	Burlesque, Dance, Storytelling, Theatre	13 & Up	55	\$12
May 26	9:30 PM	<b>Corset and Cuties - Delicious</b>	Corsets & Cuties, LLC	Haos on Church	Burlesque	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 26	9:30 PM	<b>Fucking Men</b>	Unseen Images Theatre	Gold	Comedy, Drama, LGBT Themes, Theatre	18 & Up	90	\$12

May 26	9:45 PM	#Headcanon	Sole Orlando	Pink	Burlesque	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 26	9:45 PM	The Impossible Club	Mental Multitrack	Green	Comedy, Drama, Musical, Theatre	7 & Up	60	\$12
May 26	10:00 PM	Coffee and Cedar	DH Cermeno Inc	Blue	Drama	All Ages	60	\$10
May 26	10:00 PM	Good Girl Gone Single	Good Girl Gone Single, LLC	Red	Comedy, Drama, Solo-Show, Spoken Word	18 & Up	45	\$12
May 26	10:15 PM	God Hates Figs	Dusty Bibles Studios Productions	Yellow	Comedy, Drama, Storytelling, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 26	11:59 PM	Orlando Fringe Presents: Flashlight Cabaret	Orlando Fringe	Orange	Variety	18 & Up	90	\$10
May 27	6:00 PM	IT ALL STARTED AT THE RADISSON INN	Wanzie Presents & D Squared Productions	Gold	Comedy, LGBT Themes, Drama, Theatre	18 & Up	75	\$12
May 27	6:00 PM	The Wizard of Loch Haven Park	Confessions of a Lost Opera Diary	White wall in front of the Shakes	Drama, Immersive, Musical	13 & Up	40	\$10
May 27	6:15 PM	FRIGORIFIC: a play by ear	Lorelei Zarifian	Green	Comedy, Solo-Show, Storytelling, Theatre	13 & Up	65	\$10
May 27	6:15 PM	Rosegold	Donna Kay Yarborough	Blue	Solo-Show	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 27	6:30 PM	An Adele Horror Story	11th Hour Productions	OMA entrance	Comedy, LGBT, Parody, Musical	18 & Up	75	\$11
May 27	6:30 PM	Kidnapping Amy	Misneach Players	Yellow	Comedy	All Ages	60	\$10
May 27	6:50 PM	DKTV: LIVE!...(not a Zoom Call)	DK Live Productions	The Abbey	Comedy	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 27	7:00 PM	Josie & Grace	Dynamite Lunchbox	Silver	Cabaret, Drama, Musical, Theatre	13 & Up	75	\$12
May 27	7:00 PM	Requiem	Opera del Sol	Orange	Drama, Musical	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 27	7:00 PM	Selling Out - The Musical	NCG Theatricals	Pink	Musical	18 & Up	60	\$10
May 27	7:00 PM	The Infinite Conversation	Sumner Mormeneo	The Grove at Mead Gardens	Magic, Physical, Solo-Show, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$12

May 27	7:30 PM	<b>The Little Merman from The Black Lagoon</b>	Christian Keltly	Haos on Church	Comedy, LGBT, Parody, Puppetry	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 27	7:45 PM	<b>Mrs. Bliss's Titanic Adventure</b>	Bridget Bean	Blue	Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 27	8:00 PM	<b>The Wizard of Loch Haven Park</b>	Confessions of a Lost Opera Diary	White wall in front of the Shakes	Drama, Immersive, Musical	13 & Up	40	\$10
May 27	8:15 PM	<b>Darth and Droids</b>	The Present Company	Yellow	Comedy, Theatre	7 & Up	60	\$10
May 27	8:15 PM	<b>SEEGER</b>	Randi Noojin	Gold	Musical, Solo-Show, Story Telling	13 & Up	70	\$12
May 27	8:15 PM	<b>Slut Like Me</b>	Logan Donahoo	Green	Comedy, Solo-Show, Stand Up	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 27	8:30 PM	<b>Happily Ever After Dark</b>	The Viera Studio for Performing Arts	The Abbey	Cabaret, Comedy, LGBT Themes, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$10
May 27	8:45 PM	<b>Tired Old Whore</b>	Ba'aser Presents	Purple	Comedy, Drag, Solo-Show, Storytelling	18 & Up	55	\$12
May 27	9:00 PM	<b>Alchemist of Dreams</b>	The Imagination House	Orange	Burlesque, Dance, Storytelling, Theatre	13 & Up	55	\$12
May 27	9:00 PM	<b>The Infinite Conversation</b>	Sumner Mormeneo	the Grove at Mead Gardens	Magic, Physical, Solo-Show, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 27	9:15 PM	<b>Celebration Theatre Co Presents: HEXED, A Femme Rock Musical</b>	Celebration Theatre Company	Silver	Musical, Theatre	13 & Up	90	\$12
May 27	9:15 PM	<b>Coffee and Cedar</b>	DH Cermeno Inc	Blue	Drama	All Ages	60	\$10
May 27	9:30 PM	<b>Corset and Cuties - Delicious</b>	Corsets & Cuties, LLC	Haos on Church	Burlesque	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 27	10:00 PM	<b>Dangerous When Wet: A Tale of Booze, Sex and My Mother</b>	redBrick agency	Green	Solo-Show	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 27	10:00 PM	<b>Fringin &amp; Flagons</b>	Indigo Chameleon	Yellow	Comedy, Immersive, Improv, Storytelling	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 27	10:10 PM	<b>Tombmates</b>	Bikini Katie Productions	The Abbey	Comedy	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 27	10:30 PM	<b>Dogtanic</b>	BC Theatricals	Gold	Solo-Show, Stand Up, Storytelling, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12

May 27	10:30 PM	<b>The 500 List</b>	Ryan Adam Wells	Pink	Musical, Storytelling	13 & up	70	\$12
May 27	10:45 PM	<b>You'll Figure It out...Eventually</b>	Jessica Fernando	Blue	Comedy, Solo-Show, Storytelling, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 27	11:40 PM	<b>Shakespeare's Reservoir Dogs</b>	Hardly Working Promotions	The Abbey	Drama	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 28	5:00 PM	<b>We Got Love</b>	Brett McMahon	The Abbey	Burlesque, Cabaret, LGBT Themes, Musical	18 & Up	75	\$12
May 28	5:45 PM	<b>Confessions of a Flirt</b>	Springer Music Studio	Pink	Musical, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 28	5:45 PM	<b>Good Girl Gone Single</b>	Good Girl Gone Single, LLC	Red	Comedy, Drama, Solo-Show, Spoken Word	18 & Up	45	\$12
May 28	5:45 PM	<b>visABILITY</b>	Movement Theater	Green	Dance, Immersive, Theatre	All Ages	60	\$12
May 28	6:00 PM	<b>Fringin &amp; Flagons</b>	Indigo Chameleon	Yellow	Comedy, Immersive, Improv, Storytelling	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 28	6:00 PM	<b>The Wizard of Loch Haven Park</b>	Confessions of a Lost Opera Diary	white wall in front of the stage	Drama, Immersive, Musical	13 & Up	40	\$10
May 28	6:15 PM	<b>Dogtanic</b>	BC Theatricals	Gold	Solo-Show, Stand Up, Storytelling, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 28	6:30 PM	<b>An Adele Horror Story</b>	11th Hour Productions	OMA entrance	Comedy, LGBT, Parody, Musical	18 & Up	75	\$11
May 28	6:50 PM	<b>Shakespeare's Reservoir Dogs</b>	Hardly Working Promotions	The Abbey	Drama	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 28	7:00 PM	<b>Ain't Done Bad</b>	Jakob Kar and Co	Silver	Dance, Drama, LGBT Themes, Physical	13 & Up	55	\$12
May 28	7:00 PM	<b>The Infinite Conversation</b>	Sumner Mormeneo	the Grove at Mead Gardens	Magic, Physical, Solo-Show, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 28	7:15 PM	<b>Us and Them</b>	Cornerstone	Red	Theatre	All Ages	40	\$6
May 28	7:30 PM	<b>Always Now</b>	Micheline Moen	Haos on Church	Dance, Improv	7 & Up	60	\$12
May 28	7:30 PM	<b>Cross Country: A Self-Help Musical Performance</b>	Portals Theatre	Pink	Comedy, Improv, Theatre, Variety	18 & Up	60	\$12

May 28	7:30 PM	<b>Smooch</b>	Gromat Theatre Factory	Orange	Comedy, Physical, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 28	7:45 PM	<b>MIND EATER</b>	Theatre Group GUMBO	Yellow	Comedy, Drama, Physical, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 28	8:00 PM	<b>Nathan Mosher Is Injured: A Show about a Breakup, Breakdown, and a Breakthrough</b>	Nathan Mosher	Blue	Musical, Spoken Word, Stand Up, Storytelling	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 28	8:00 PM	<b>The Wizard of Loch Haven Park</b>	Confessions of a Lost Opera Diary	White wall in front of the Chateau	Drama, Immersive, Musical	13 & Up	40	\$10
May 28	8:15 PM	<b>Cupid and Psyche</b>	Excellent Adventure Productions	Gold	Comedy, Musical, Theatre	7 & Up	90	\$12
May 28	8:30 PM	<b>DKTV: LIVE!...(not a Zoom Call)</b>	DK Live Productions	The Abbey	Comedy	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 28	9:00 PM	<b>Josie &amp; Grace</b>	Dynamite Lunchbox	Silver	Cabaret, Drama, Musical, Theatre	13 & Up	75	\$12
May 28	9:00 PM	<b>The Infinite Conversation</b>	Sumner Mormeneo	The Grove at Mead Gardens	Magic, Physical, Solo-Show, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 28	9:15 PM	<b>Slut Like Me</b>	Logan Donahoo	Green	Comedy, Solo-Show, Stand Up	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 28	9:15 PM	<b>Tired Old Whore</b>	Ba'aser Presents	Purple	Comedy, Drag, Solo-Show, Storytelling	18 & Up	55	\$12
May 28	9:30 PM	<b>Darth and Droids</b>	The Present Company	Yellow	Comedy, Theatre	7 & Up	60	\$10
May 28	9:30 PM	<b>Oscar Wilde and Jesus Christ Walk into a Gay Bar</b>	Renaissance Theatre Company	Orange	Musical	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 28	9:30 PM	<b>Rosegold</b>	Donna Kay Yarborough	Blue	Solo-Show	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 28	10:10 PM	<b>Happily Ever After Dark</b>	The Viera Studio for Performing Arts	The Abbey	Cabaret, Comedy, LGBT Themes, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$10
May 28	10:15 PM	<b>JUDAS</b>	That One Guy Productions	Red	Comedy, LGBT Themes, Solo-Show, Stand Up	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 28	10:45 PM	<b>Fucking Men</b>	Unseen Images Theatre	Gold	Comedy, Drama, LGBT Themes, Theatre	18 & Up	90	\$12
May 28	11:00 PM	<b>Dangerous When Wet: A Tale of Booze, Sex and My Mother</b>	redBrick agency	Green	Solo-Show	18 & Up	60	\$12



May 28	11:00 PM	Sareth Ney Presents "Stories on Sunset"	A Quarter and a Dream Pictures	Blue	Comedy, LGBT Themes, Stand Up, Storytelling	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 28	11:15 PM	AWAY, NOW - The World's Most Desired Destination	Paul Strickland	Yellow	Comedy, Variety	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 28	11:40 PM	box.	boxperiodproductions	The Abbey	Theatre	All Ages	60	\$12
May 28	11:59 PM	Orlando Fringe Presents: Tonight at Midnight	Orlando Fringe	Orange	Variety	18 & Up	90	\$10
May 29	11:30 AM	Tombmates	Bikini Katie Productions	The Abbey	Comedy	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 29	NOON	Dogtanic	BC Theatricals	Gold	Solo-Show, Stand Up, Storytelling, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 29	NOON	Spotlight	Lake Howell High School	Yellow	Comedy, Drama, Theatre	18 & Up	50	\$6
May 29	12:45 PM	7 Deadly Sins	Emotions Dance Inc	Pink	Dance	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 29	12:45 PM	Coffee and Cedar	DH Cermeno Inc	Blue	Drama	All Ages	60	\$10
May 29	1:00 PM	Arden	In the Wings	Silver	Comedy, Drag, LGBT Themes, Musical	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 29	1:10 PM	DKTV: LIVE!...(not a Zoom Call)	DK Live Productions	The Abbey	Comedy	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 29	1:30 PM	FRIGORIFIC: a play by ear	Lorelei Zarifian	Green	Comedy, Solo-Show, Storytelling, Theatre	13 & Up	65	\$10
May 29	1:45 PM	God Hates Figs	Dusty Bibles Studios Productions	Yellow	Comedy, Drama, Storytelling, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 29	1:45 PM	Us and Them	Cornerstone	Red	Theatre	All Ages	40	\$6
May 29	2:00 PM	Cupid and Psyche	Excellent Adventure Productions	Gold	Comedy, Musical, Theatre	7 & Up	90	\$12
May 29	2:15 PM	Sareth Ney Presents "Stories on Sunset"	A Quarter and a Dream Pictures	Blue	Comedy, LGBT Themes, Stand Up, Storytelling	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 29	2:30 PM	Cross Country: A Self-Help Musical Performance	Portals Theatre	Pink	Comedy, Improv, Theatre, Variety	18 & Up	60	\$12

May 29	2:50 PM	<b>Shakespeare's Reservoir Dogs</b>	Hardly Working Promotions	The Abbey	Drama	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 29	3:00 PM	<b>Celebration Theatre Co Presents: HEXED, A Femme Rock Musical</b>	Celebration Theatre Company	Silver	Musical, Theatre	13 & Up	90	\$12
May 29	3:00 PM	<b>Oscar Wilde and Jesus Christ Walk into a Gay Bar</b>	Renaissance Theatre Company	Orange	Musical	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 29	3:15 PM	<b>Good Girl Gone Single</b>	Good Girl Gone Single, LLC	Red	Comedy, Drama, Solo-Show, Spoken Word	18 & Up	45	\$12
May 29	3:30 PM	<b>visABILITY</b>	Movement Theater	Green	Dance, Immersive, Theatre	All Ages	60	\$12
May 29	3:30 PM	<b>What? The Dickens!</b>	Don't Panic Theater Company	Yellow	Comedy, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$10
May 29	3:45 PM	<b>My First Miracle</b>	My First Miracle	Blue	Solo-Show	13 & Up	60	\$10
May 29	4:15 PM	<b>Selling Out - The Musical</b>	NCG Theatricals	Pink	Musical	18 & Up	60	\$10
May 29	4:30 PM	<b>Happily Ever After Dark</b>	The Viera Studio for Performing Arts	The Abbey	Cabaret, Comedy, LGBT Themes, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$10
May 29	4:30 PM	<b>SEEGER</b>	Randi Noojin	Gold	Musical, Solo-Show, Story Telling	13 & Up	70	\$12
May 29	4:45 PM	<b>JUDAS</b>	That One Guy Productions	Red	Comedy, LGBT Themes, Solo-Show, Standalone	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 29	5:00 PM	<b>Smooch</b>	Gromalot Theatre Factory	Orange	Comedy, Physical, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 29	5:15 PM	<b>Seen</b>	Terapia Di Danza	Yellow	Dance, Immersive, Physical, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 29	5:15 PM	<b>The Impossible Club</b>	Mental Multitrack	Green	Comedy, Drama, Musical, Theatre	7 & Up	60	\$12
May 29	5:30 PM	<b>Ain't Done Bad</b>	Jakob Kar and Co	Silver	Dance, Drama, LGBT Themes, Physical	13 & Up	55	\$12
May 29	5:30 PM	<b>The Little Merman from The Black Lagoon</b>	Christian Kelty	Haos on Church	Comedy, LGBT, Parody, Puppetry	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 29	6:00 PM	<b>An Adele Horror Story</b>	11th Hour Productions	OMA entrance	Comedy, LGBT, Parody, Musical	18 & Up	75	\$11

May 29	6:00 PM	<b>The Wizard of Loch Haven Park</b>	Confessions of a Lost Opera Diary	White wall in front of the stage	Drama, Immersive, Musical	13 & Up	40	\$10
May 29	6:30 PM	<b>The 500 List</b>	Ryan Adam Wells	The gate on the side leading back	Musical, Storytelling	13 & up	70	\$12
May 29	6:45 PM	<b>ExperiMENTAL</b>	Spellbound, Inc	Red	Magic	13 & Up	60	\$7
May 29	7:10 PM	<b>We Got Love</b>	Brett McMahon	The Abbey	Burlesque, Cabaret, LGBT Themes, Musical	18 & Up	75	\$12
May 29	7:15 PM	<b>IT ALL STARTED AT THE RADISSON INN</b>	Wanzie Presents & D Squared Productions	Gold	Comedy, LGBT Themes, Drama, Theatre	18 & Up	75	\$12
May 29	7:15 PM	<b>Rosegold</b>	Donna Kay Yarborough	Blue	Solo-Show	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 29	7:30 PM	<b>Alchemist of Dreams</b>	The Imagination House	Orange	Burlesque, Dance, Storytelling, Theatre	13 & Up	55	\$12
May 29	7:30 PM	<b>AWAY, NOW - The World's Most Desired Destination</b>	Paul Strickland	Yellow	Comedy, Variety	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 29	7:30 PM	<b>Corset and Cuties - Delicious</b>	Corsets & Cuties, LLC	Haos on Church	Burlesque	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 29	7:30 PM	<b>La Divina: The Last Interview of Maria Callas</b>	Shelly Cooper	Green	Musical, Solo-Show	13 & Up	60	\$10
May 29	8:00 PM	<b>The Frogpig and Friends Variety Hour</b>	Joel Swanson Productions	Silver	Comedy, Puppetry, Variety	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 29	8:00 PM	<b>The Wizard of Loch Haven Park</b>	Confessions of a Lost Opera Diary	White wall in front of the Shakes	Drama, Immersive, Musical	13 & Up	40	\$10
May 29	8:30 PM	<b>Designated Debaters</b>	Kyle's Company	Purple	Comedy, Improv, Parody/Spoof	13 & Up	50	\$12
May 29	8:45 PM	<b>A Note to Follow Sober</b>	Now or Never Endeavours	Blue	Solo-Show	13 & Up	55	\$12
May 29	8:50 PM	<b>box.</b>	boxperiodproductions	The Abbey	Theatre	All Ages	60	\$12
May 29	9:00 PM	<b>An Adele Horror Story</b>	11th Hour Productions	OMA entrance	Comedy, LGBT, Parody, Musical	18 & Up	75	\$11
May 29	9:15 PM	<b>Fringin &amp; Flagons</b>	Indigo Chameleon	Yellow	Comedy, Immersive, Improv, Storytelling	13 & Up	60	\$12

May 29	9:15 PM	<b>Slut Like Me</b>	Logan Donahoo	Green	Comedy, Solo-Show, Stand Up	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 29	9:30 PM	<b>Fucking Men</b>	Unseen Images Theatre	Gold	Comedy, Drama, LGBT Themes, Theatre	18 & Up	90	\$12
May 29	9:30 PM	<b>Requiem</b>	Opera del Sol	Orange	Drama, Musical	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 29	10:00 PM	<b>Josie &amp; Grace</b>	Dynamite Lunchbox	Silver	Cabaret, Drama, Musical, Theatre	13 & Up	75	\$12
May 29	10:15 PM	<b>#Headcanon</b>	Sole Orlando	Pink	Burlesque	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 29	10:15 PM	<b>THRIVE</b>	Downtown Arts District	Blue	Storytelling	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 29	10:40 PM	<b>Drunk Magic</b>	Colin Smith	The Abbey	Comedy, Magic	13 & Up	55	\$12
May 29	11:00 PM	<b>Kidnapping Amy</b>	Misneach Players	Yellow	Comedy	All Ages	60	\$10
May 29	11:59 PM	<b>Orlando Fringe Presents: Tonight at Midnight</b>	Orlando Fringe	Orange	Variety	18 & Up	90	\$10
May 30	NOON	<b>Confessions of a Flirt</b>	Springer Music Studio	Pink	Musical, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 30	NOON	<b>The Wizard of Loch Haven Park</b>	Confessions of a Lost Opera Diary	White wall in front of the Shakes	Drama, Immersive, Musical	13 & Up	40	\$10
May 30	12:15 PM	<b>Rosegold</b>	Donna Kay Yarborough	Blue	Solo-Show	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 30	12:30 PM	<b>Darth and Droids</b>	The Present Company	Yellow	Comedy, Theatre	7 & Up	60	\$10
May 30	1:00 PM	<b>FRIGORIFIC: a play by ear</b>	Lorelei Zarifian	Green	Comedy, Solo-Show, Storytelling, Theatre	13 & Up	65	\$10
May 30	1:30 PM	<b>SEEGER</b>	Randi Noojin	Gold	Musical, Solo-Show, Story Telling	13 & Up	70	\$12
May 30	1:45 PM	<b>A Note to Follow Sober</b>	Now or Never Endeavours	Blue	Solo-Show	13 & Up	55	\$12
May 30	1:45 PM	<b>Designated Debaters</b>	Kyle's Company	Purple	Comedy, Improv, Parody/Spoof	13 & Up	50	\$12

May 30	2:00 PM	<b>Josie &amp; Grace</b>	Dynamite Lunchbox	Silver	Cabaret, Drama, Musical, Theatre	13 & Up	75	\$12
May 30	2:15 PM	<b>Kidnapping Amy</b>	Misneach Players	Yellow	Comedy	All Ages	60	\$10
May 30	2:45 PM	<b>ExperiMENTAL</b>	Spellbound, Inc	Red	Magic	13 & Up	60	\$7
May 30	2:45 PM	<b>Requiem</b>	Opera del Sol	Orange	Drama, Musical	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 30	3:15 PM	<b>THRIVE</b>	Downtown Arts District	Blue	Storytelling	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 30	3:30 PM	<b>#Headcanon</b>	Sole Orlando	Pink	Burlesque	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 30	3:45 PM	<b>IT ALL STARTED AT THE RADISSON INN</b>	Wanzie Presents & D Squared Productions	Gold	Comedy, LGBT Themes, Drama, Theatre	18 & Up	75	\$12
May 30	4:15 PM	<b>Ain't Done Bad</b>	Jakob Kar and Co	Silver	Dance, Drama, LGBT Themes, Physical	13 & Up	55	\$12
May 30	4:15 PM	<b>Us and Them</b>	Cornerstone	Red	Theatre	All Ages	40	\$6
May 30	4:30 PM	<b>What? The Dickens!</b>	Don't Panic Theater Company	Yellow	Comedy, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$10
May 30	4:45 PM	<b>Alchemist of Dreams</b>	The Imagination House	Orange	Burlesque, Dance, Storytelling, Theatre	13 & Up	55	\$12
May 30	4:45 PM	<b>The Impossible Club</b>	Mental Multitrack	Green	Comedy, Drama, Musical, Theatre	7 & Up	60	\$12
May 30	5:00 PM	<b>The Wizard of Loch Haven Park</b>	Confessions of a Lost Opera Diary	White wall in front of the Shakes	Drama, Immersive, Musical	13 & Up	40	\$10
May 30	5:15 PM	<b>Nathan Mosher Is Injured: A Show about a Breakup, Breakdown, and a Breakthrough</b>	Nathan Mosher	Blue	Musical, Spoken Word, Stand Up, Storytelling	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 30	5:45 PM	<b>The Sack: A Play on Superheroes</b>	Airtight Theatre	Red	Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$10
May 30	6:15 PM	<b>AWAY, NOW - The World's Most Desired Destination</b>	Paul Strickland	Yellow	Comedy, Variety	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 30	6:30 PM	<b>An Adele Horror Story</b>	11th Hour Productions	OMA entrance	Comedy, LGBT, Parody, Musical	18 & Up	75	\$11

May 30	6:30 PM	<b>Fucking Men</b>	Unseen Images Theatre	Gold	Comedy, Drama, LGBT Themes, Theatre	18 & Up	90	\$12
May 30	6:45 PM	<b>The Frogpig and Friends Variety Hour</b>	Joel Swanson Productions	Silver	Comedy, Puppetry, Variety	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 30	6:45 PM	<b>You'll Figure It out...Eventually</b>	Jessica Fernando	Blue	Comedy, Solo-Show, Storytelling, Theatre	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 30	7:00 PM	<b>Dangerous When Wet: A Tale of Booze, Sex and My Mother</b>	redBrick agency	Green	Solo-Show	18 & Up	60	\$12
May 30	7:15 PM	<b>Good Girl Gone Single</b>	Good Girl Gone Single, LLC	Red	Comedy, Drama, Solo-Show, Spoken Word	18 & Up	45	\$12
May 30	7:15 PM	<b>Smooch</b>	Gromalot Theatre Factory	Orange	Comedy, Physical, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 30	7:30 PM	<b>The 500 List</b>	Ryan Adam Wells	Pink	Musical, Storytelling	13 & up	70	\$12
May 30	8:00 PM	<b>Seen</b>	Terapia Di Danza	Yellow	Dance, Immersive, Physical, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 30	8:15 PM	<b>My First Miracle</b>	My First Miracle	Blue	Solo-Show	13 & Up	60	\$10
May 30	8:45 PM	<b>Arden</b>	In the Wings	Silver	Comedy, Drag, LGBT Themes, Musical	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 30	8:45 PM	<b>visABILITY</b>	Movement Theater	Green	Dance, Immersive, Theatre	All Ages	60	\$12
May 30	9:00 PM	<b>Cupid and Psyche</b>	Excellent Adventure Productions	Gold	Comedy, Musical, Theatre	7 & Up	90	\$12
May 30	9:15 PM	<b>Oscar Wilde and Jesus Christ Walk into a Gay Bar</b>	Renaissance Theatre Company	Orange	Musical	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 30	9:30 PM	<b>Tired Old Whore</b>	Ba'aser Presents	Purple	Comedy, Drag, Solo-Show, Storytelling	18 & Up	55	\$12
May 30	9:45 PM	<b>MIND EATER</b>	Theatre Group GUMBO	Yellow	Comedy, Drama, Physical, Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 30	9:45 PM	<b>Mrs. Bliss's Titanic Adventure</b>	Bridget Bean	Blue	Theatre	13 & Up	60	\$12
May 31	NOON	Patron's Pick Green		TBD	TBD			
May 31	12:15 PM	Patron's Pick Gold		TBD	TBD			
May 31	1:30 PM	Patron's Pick Silver		TBD	TBD			
May 31	1:45 PM	Patron's Pick Pink		TBD	TBD			

May 31	2:45 PM	Patron's Pick Red		TBD	TBD			
May 31	3:00 PM	Patron's Pick Green		TBD	TBD			
May 31	3:30 PM	Patron's Pick Silver		TBD	TBD			
May 31	4:00 PM	Patron's Pick Gold		TBD	TBD			
May 31	5:00 PM	Patron's Pick Red		TBD	TBD			
May 31	5:15 PM	Patron's Pick Blue		TBD	TBD			
May 31	5:30 PM	Patron's Pick Orange		TBD	TBD			
May 31	5:45 PM	Patron's Pick Yellow		TBD	TBD			
May 31	7:00 PM	Patron's Pick Blue		TBD	TBD			
May 31	7:00 PM	Patron's Pick Yellow		TBD	TBD			
May 31	8:00 PM	Patron's Pick Pink		TBD	TBD			
May 31	8:00 PM	Patron's Pick Orange		TBD	TBD			
May 31	9:00 PM	<b>Orlando Fringe Presents: Closing Ceremony and Awards Show</b>	Orlando Fringe	Outdoor Stage	Variety	All Ages	120	FREE

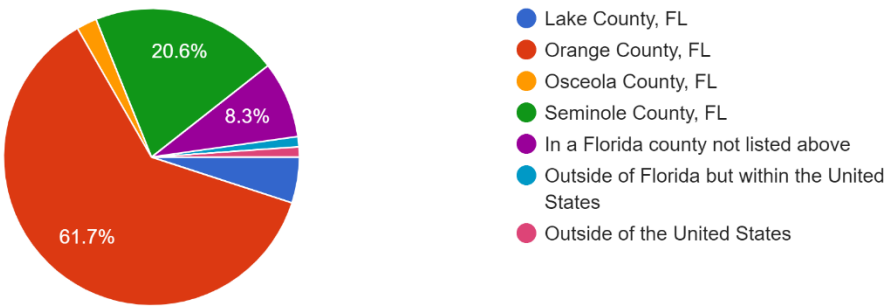


# APPENDIX D. OFFICIAL OIFF 2021 AUDIENCE SURVEY RESPONSES

(n=181)

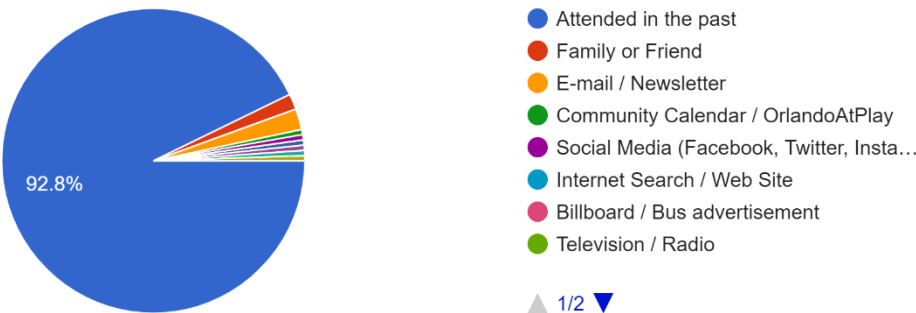
Where do you currently reside?

180 responses



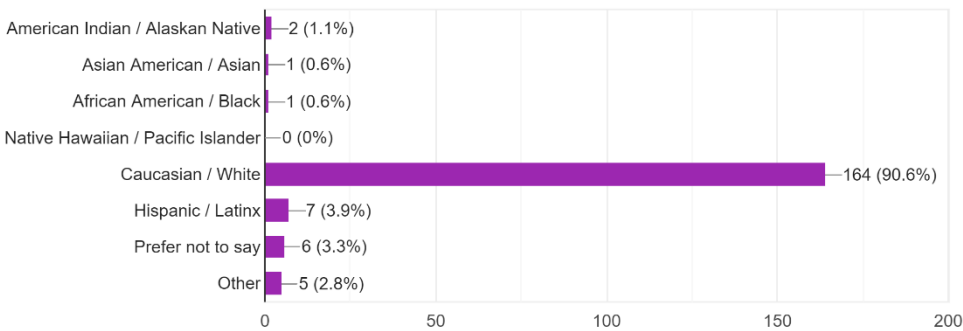
How did you hear about Orlando Fringe?

181 responses



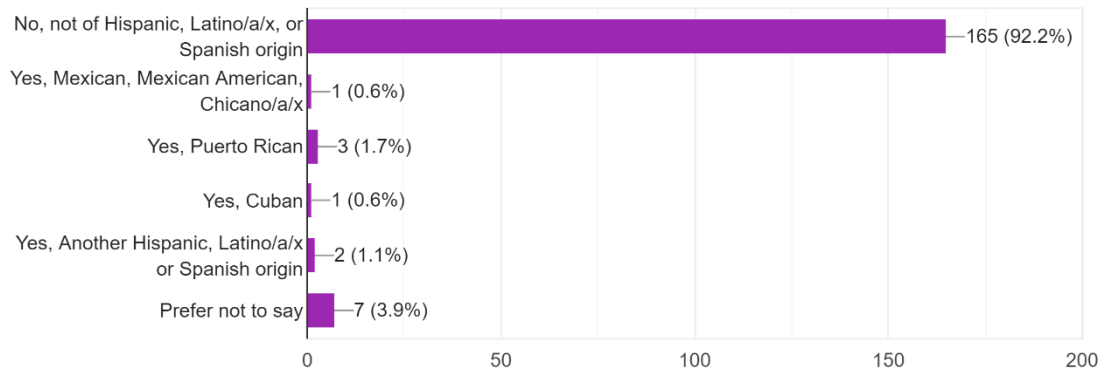
Which of the following best describes you? (select all that apply)

181 responses



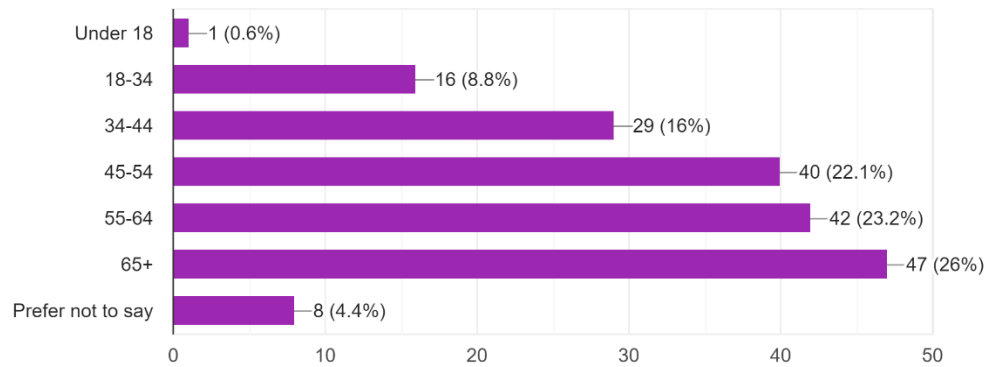
### Are you of Hispanic, Latino/a/x, or of Spanish Origin?

179 responses



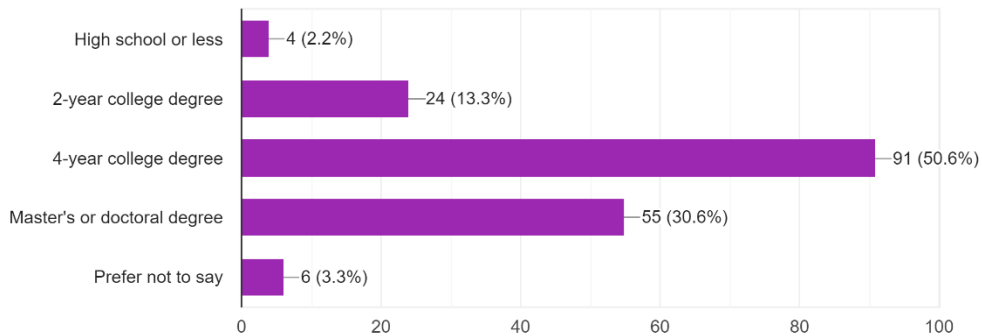
### What is your age range?

181 responses



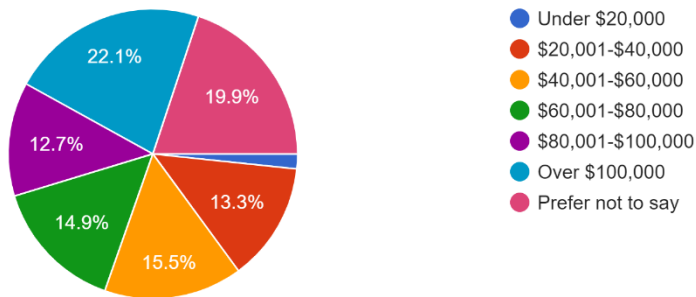
### What is the highest level of education you have completed?

180 responses



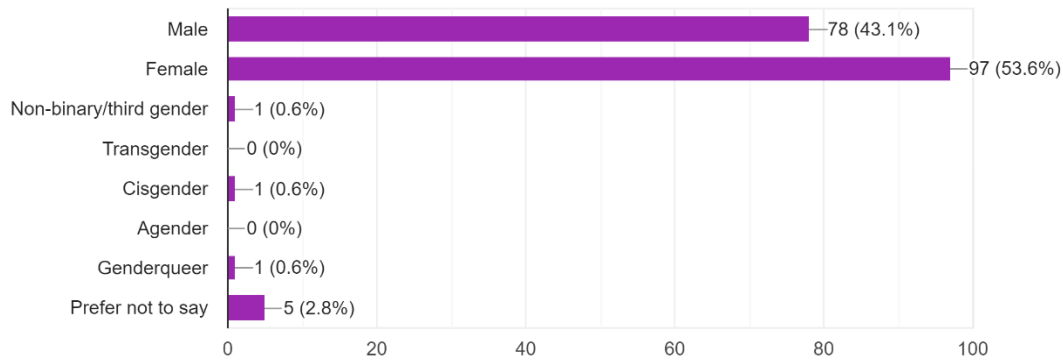
### What is your current household income?

181 responses



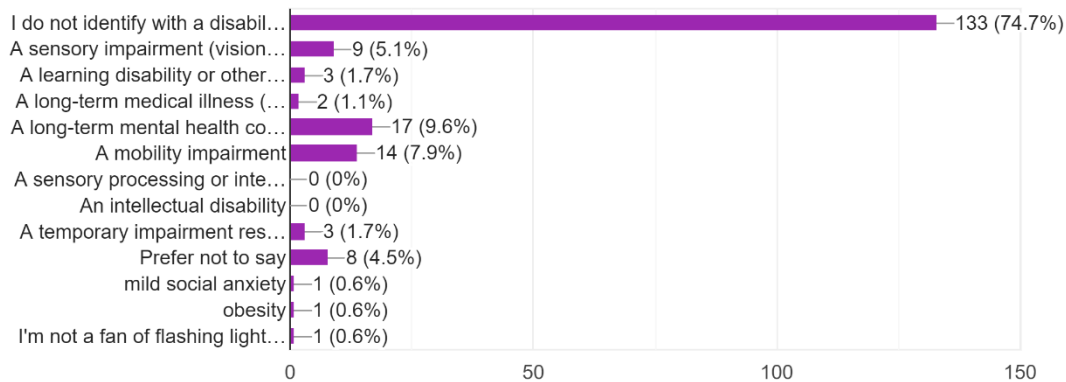
### How do you currently describe your gender identity?

181 responses



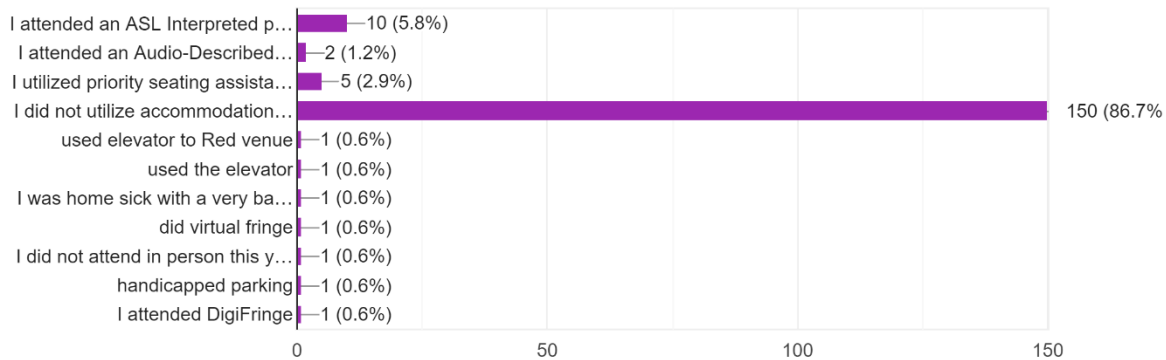
### How would you describe your ability status? We are interested in this identification regardless of whether you typically request accommodations

178 responses



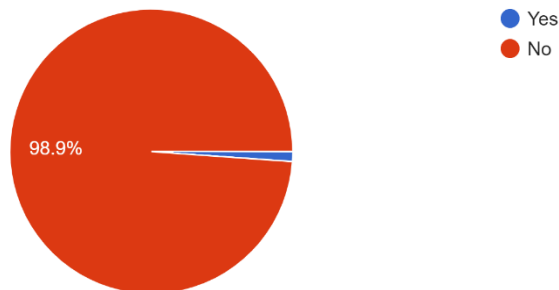
### Did you utilize any of the following accommodations at the Festival?

173 responses



### Was this your first time attending the Orlando International Fringe Theatre Festival?

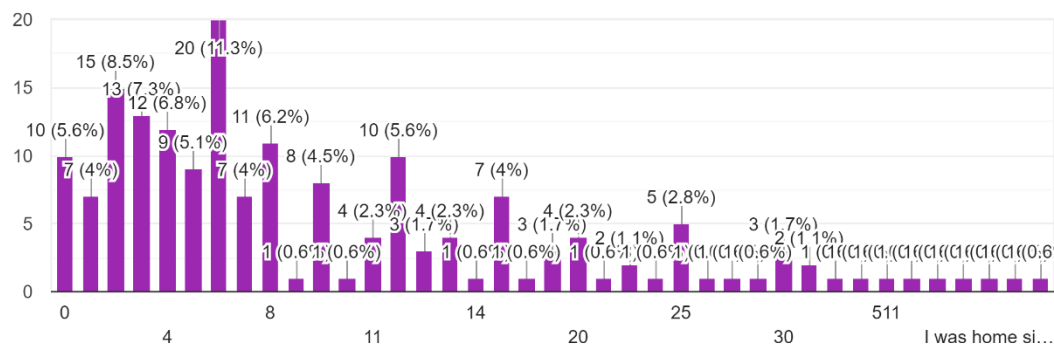
178 responses



### Average number of years attended = > 16

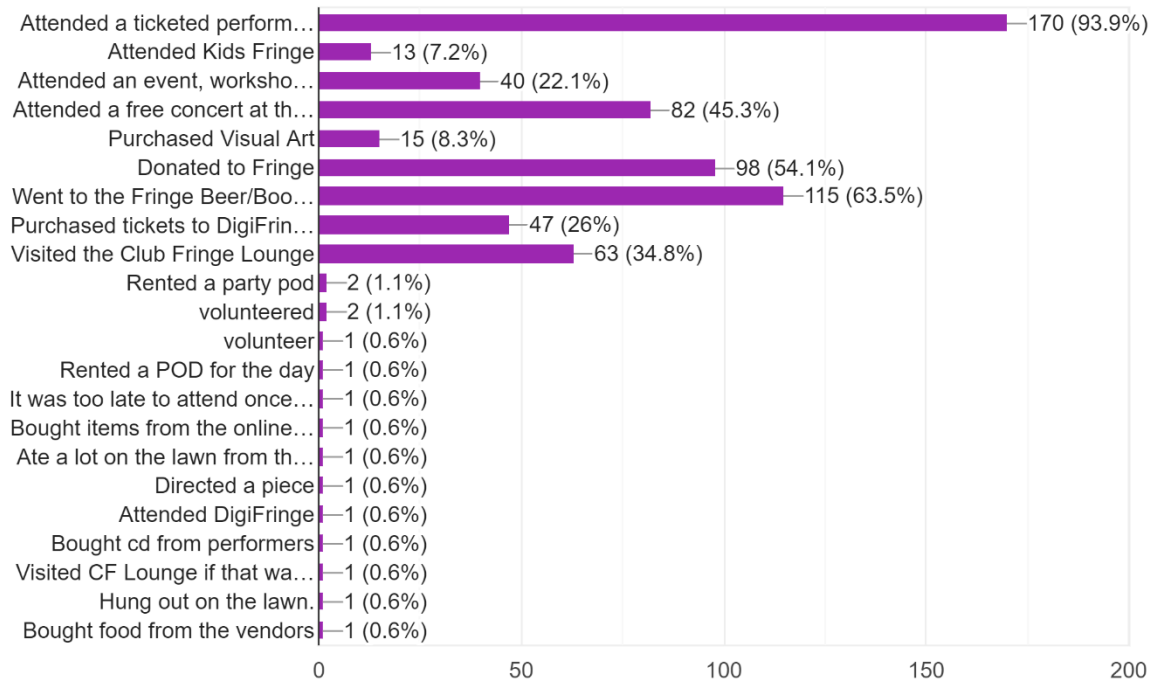
### How many shows did you attend in person at the Festival?

177 responses



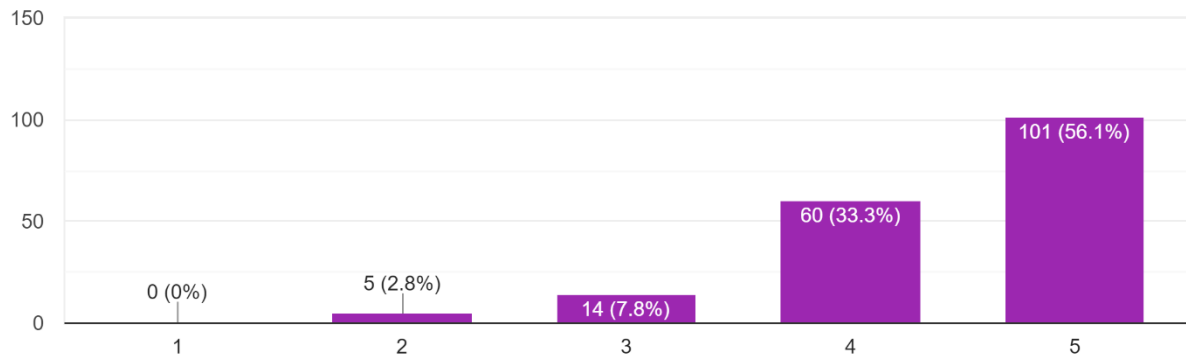
Please indicate which part of Orlando Fringe you participated in. Check all that apply.

181 responses



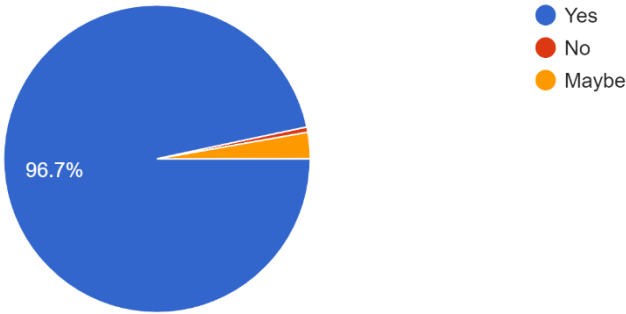
Please rate your overall satisfaction level with your Orlando Fringe experience this year.

180 responses



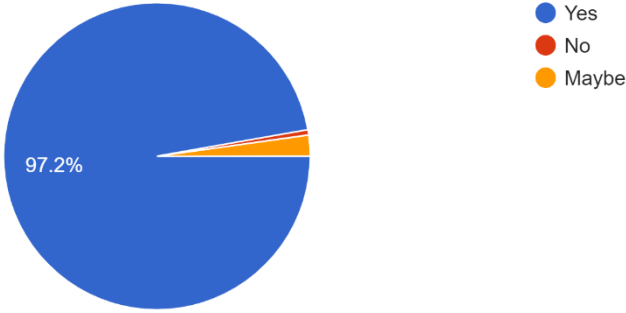
Would you attend another Orlando Fringe event in the future?

180 responses



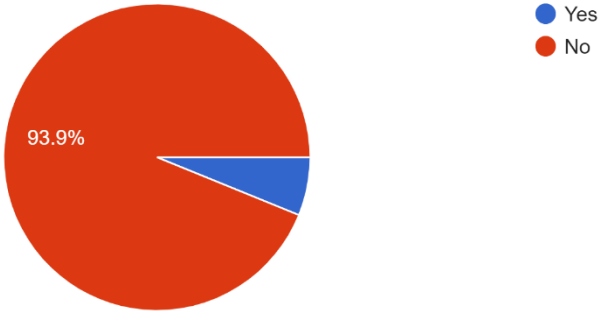
Would you recommend the Orlando International Fringe Theatre Festival to others?

180 responses



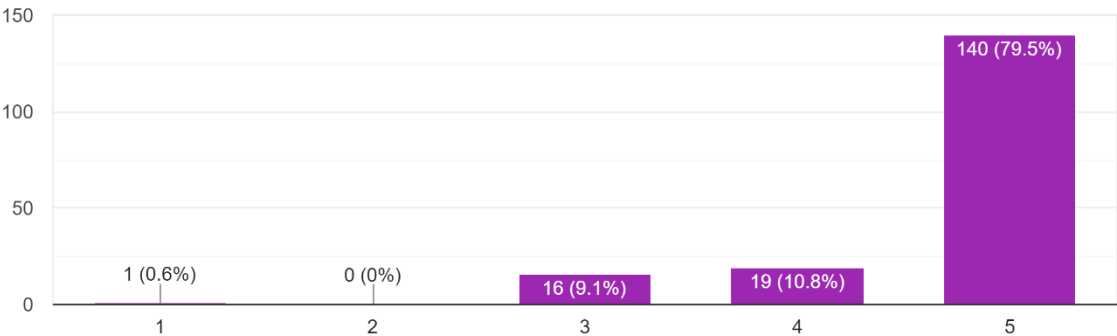
Did you rent a Party Pod on the Lawn?

179 responses



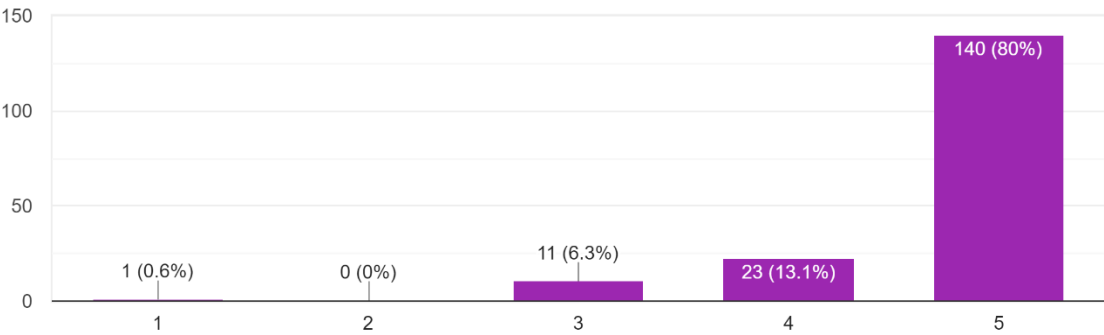
Please rate your experience interacting with staff (Politeness, helpfulness, competency, ability to resolve conflict)

176 responses



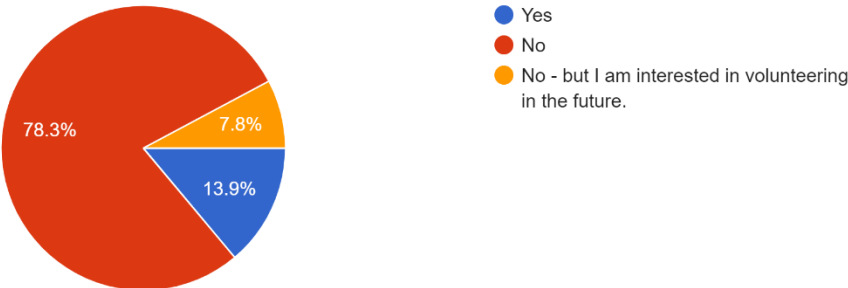
Please rate your experience interacting with volunteers. (Politeness, helpfulness, competency)

175 responses



Are you an Orlando Fringe volunteer?

180 responses



Please let us know what we can do to improve your Festival experience in the future.



"As always, if a solution to the parking issue could be found it would greatly improve the experience for most everyone."

"More VEGAN / VEGETARIAN food truck options."

"IT SEEMS THAT THE SAME PEOPLE ARE DOING SHOWS EVERY YEAR MAYBE GIVE MORE ACCESS TO FIRST TIMES SHOWS AND NEW PEOPLE NEW PEOPLE MEANS NEW IDEAS AND GROWTH. I KNOW ITS A LOTORY BUT WHEN THE SAME PEOPLE HAVE BEEN DOING SHOWS FOR THE LAST FIVE YEARS OR MORE IT KINDS OF GETS OLD. YOU KIND OF WANT TO SEE NEW IDEAS NEW CONCEPTS i ALSO THING THAT THIER SHOULD BE BETTER AWARENESS OF FOR FIRST TIME SHOW SUPORTING FIRST TIMERS MAKE SURE THEY ARE LAST TIMERS"

"There have been some obvious issues of artists demeaning staff, women being subjected to sexual harassment, and/or staff being inappropriate. I KNOW Fringe can't control what individual parties do and say, but I DO hope we keep making positive steps to address such issues. Perhaps a specific survey to gain feedback from artists and staff may be helpful?"

"Keep doing what you are doing - supporting ACTORS with a place to "give a show" and an audience to love them."

"It was amazing to be back. No complaints whatsoever!"

"Turn the AC colder"

"Parking is the biggest challenge although this year less so due to fewer attendees and shows."

"The Booze/Beer tent was a real disappointment this year (exception the courtyard bar at Shakes). "bartenders" were clearly not experienced and there was no consistency from day to day. Most staff could not answer questions, or the answers changed each day. Having experienced bartenders is critical for the booze section and volunteers at the beer tent should at least have a working knowledge of each beer provided. City Beverages should be on site each day to make sure coolers are working properly - during most of the Festival the beer was not very cold. Finally, keep it simple when it comes to liquor. The craft cocktails are labor intensive, not made well with inexperienced bartenders and drive-up costs. Fringers can be happy with the basic options."

"Please get more out-of-town artists and more shows that are aimed at middle-aged and older people. I am tired of so much sloppy, immature, and vulgar material. Everything seems like it's aimed at 20-year-olds. There were hardly any shows we wanted to see."

"I was a little annoyed to see that the plastic cups the beer was served in were plastic #7 which isn't recyclable in Orange County. I'm sure most people thought they were, and then they would be mixed with cups that were actually recyclable -- then since those cups are mixed, nothing ends up being recycled. It's a difficult dance."

"More parking"

"More racial diversity in performers and audience"

"Haha Parking"

"additional bar order/check-out lines."

"Nothing, it's perfect"

"We really need additional parking but not sure of where. I try to get to my first show an hour and half before just to locate parking"

"Everyone I've convinced to Fringe has loved it but first-timers found it daunting. What about having Volunteer Fringe Ambassadors who will meet with newbies, lead them to get a badge, take them to ticketing, explain the venue's, etc. (The Ambassadors would see the previews so could even make recommendations about shows.) The whole process is explained in the Sentinel and on the web as well as can be but it still is intimidating."

*Patron testimonials are extremely helpful to Orlando Fringe when applying for grant and foundation funding. If you have a quote that you would like to share with our potential funders about your experience at Orlando Fringe, please include below. If you would like to include your name in your quote, you may also do so below.*

"I love that we have a world class theater festival right here in Orlando, and that we can draw artists from around the globe. I'm not a typical patron; I gravitate toward the artists from out of town, and autobiographical one-person shows. I have heard stories and seen extravaganzas at Fringe that I remember for years. I was an occasional viewer for a long time, but for the past half-dozen years or so I see 25-35 shows at a each fringe, and bring friends with me to some of them. Being at Loch Haven Park allows me to easily do so. I also appreciate the high school productions. I have been very impressed with some of their performances, and love being able to support them. I wish I had a performance opportunity like this when I was in school! The Orlando Fringe truly has something for everyone."

"Orlando has made a commitment to keep the arts alive by perfecting the countries largest theatre festival."

"Orlando Fringe is literally my favorite part of the year!!"

"Orlando Fringe is the most exciting event of the year in Orlando. I plan my May work and event schedule to be able to attend shows, and exclude everything else during that time. I love the creativity, the camaraderie, and the imagination of Fringe presenters and attendees- it really is such an exciting event!"

"It's fun educational and inclusive and did I say fun"

"I look forward to attending Orlando Fringe every year, because it comes with its own unique community that is inclusive and understands the importance of supporting arts and culture in Orlando. Fringe is a giant party, a celebration of life and art, which is vital in this day and age. We create joy in connection and learn from the performing arts as we, as a whole society, come to understand systemic issues and work toward greater equality and sustainability."

"Orlando Fringe is the most entertaining, inviting, friendliest festival in all of Florida. It's always a glorious joyous always surprising batch of FUN. Thank you."

"For lovers of the Arts, the Orlando Fringe is Orlando's most sacred and cherished tradition."

"Orlando is truly blessed to have this, the oldest Fringe in the USA as an annual event. It's an opportunity for both local creativity as well as international groups to provocatively entertain locals as well as visitors to Orlando. The venue is excellent, hosting so many theaters in one campus with all of the opportunities to dine and drink right there in the open area. I'm glad to be a contributing patron to Fringe -- wouldn't want to be without it!"

"Orlando Fringe is one of the best arts experiences in Central Florida. I look forward to attending every year. Every performance, visual experience, or set listened to at the Outdoor Stage reminds me why I love Orlando and the diversity Orlando Fringe brings on full display -- everyone is welcome, everyone has a place, a voice when at Fringe. There are not many arts opportunities that offer this community of inclusivity and acceptance. I'm typing without glasses bc the baby broke them -- sorry for any typos"

"I love living on the Fringe!"

"You never know what you will get with a Fringe show but whether the show is average or amazing it is great knowing that the proceeds are supporting the artists directly."

"I look forward to this festival every year and am so happy to see it continue. It's really my main source of cultural events and shows, and having something like this that we can "own" as a community is such a pleasure and source of local pride! Its inclusiveness and loving atmosphere remind me why I love this community."

"Fringe inspires. Awesome creativity."

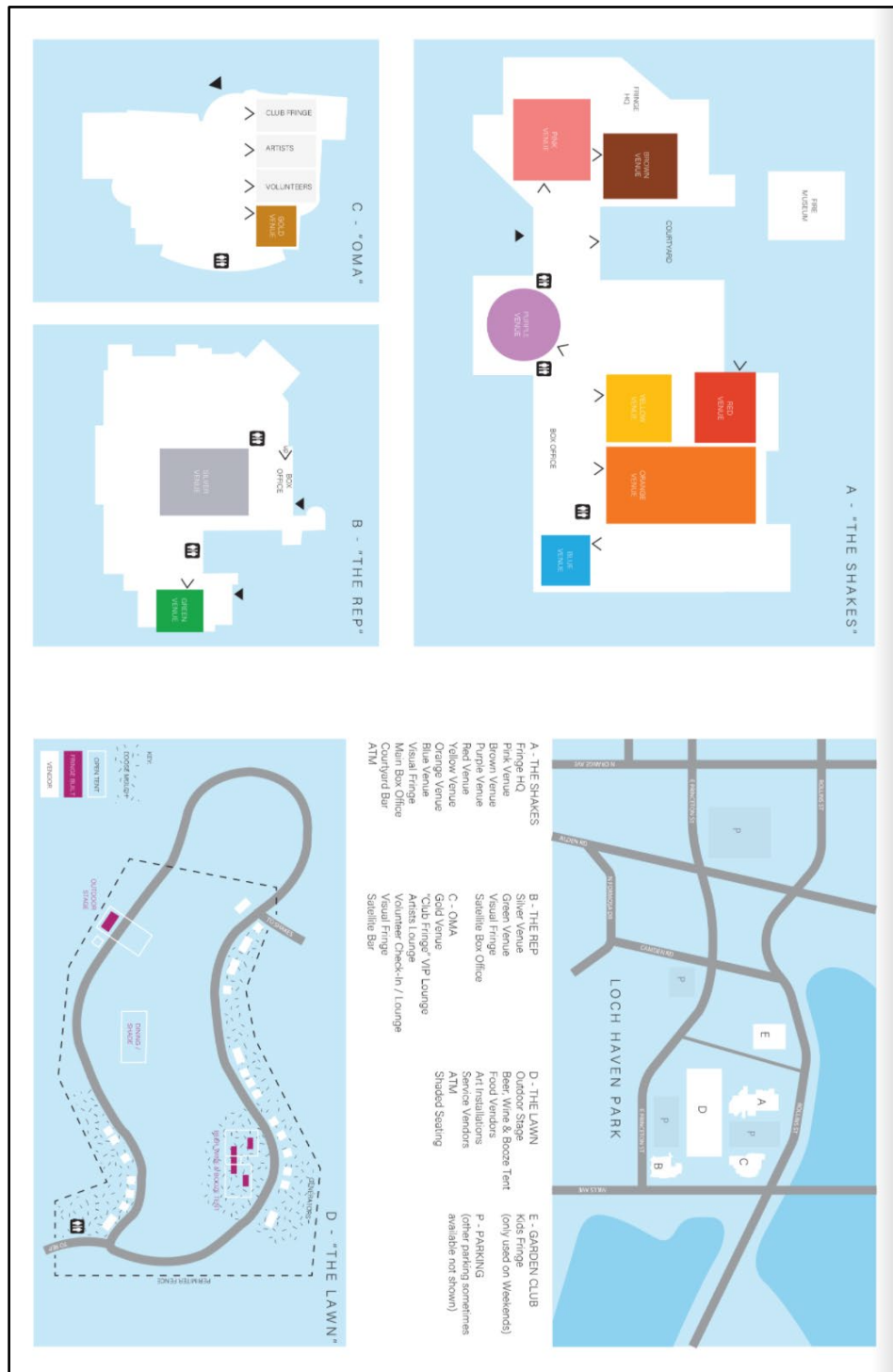
"Fringe, is not on the fringe, it is a staple of the community!"

"We've attended Fringe for 25+ years and continue to enjoy it year after year. Don't just "Keep Fringe Weird" ..... KEEP FRINGE ...Period!"

"The Orlando Fringe Festival is the best event in Orlando. For 2 1/2 weeks there is a true community of artists, patrons, volunteers, and Fringe has the most incredible energy around.

I love Fringe more than I love Christmas. If I had to choose between having Christmas or Fringe I would pick Fringe hands down every single time!"

## APPENDIX E. OIFF SITE MAP 2019



## APPENDIX F. FRINGE FIRST TIME USER EXPERIENCE

*Your typical first-time user experience to see an indoor ticketed performance:*

You randomly hear about Fringe on the radio / tv / on a billboard / Orlando Weekly / Facebook.

You drive to Loch Haven on a Friday mid-afternoon. You see the sparkly orange Fringe sign at the entrance to the parking lot so you know you've found the right place. You fight for a parking spot for 15-25 minutes.

You find the Lowndes Shakespeare Center (you also heard someone call it "The Shakes"), and head inside. You see people gathered in the lobby, and at the back there are Fringe Volunteers (it says so on their shirt and lanyard) gathered at a table. You decide to ask them for help. The volunteer directs you to go to the other end of the building, down the ramp, where you'll find the Box Office ("look for the big sign on your right!").

You pick up a Fringe program on the way. It's huge. There is so much info. But you're still not totally sure what's going on here.

You find the Box Office and get at the end of a very long line.

When it's your turn you tell them you want to see a show, and they help you decide what to see. You buy a ticket to a show that hasn't already sold out (this money goes to the performer). You also have to buy a Fringe button, which you pay for once, but can use over and over again for the entire festival (this money goes to Fringe).

You realize your show doesn't start for another 90 minutes, so you walk around inside the building and look at all the art that's posted, and seems to also be for sale. The box office person was adamant that you cannot get into the venue late, and there are no refunds if you don't make it, so you don't want to stray too far away.

You head out to the courtyard at the Shakes to get a drink and randomly meet a performer from England who is between performances. You have a really great convo, and promise to see their show later.

It's 30 minutes till your show. All of a sudden there are way more people around - the last set of shows just finished. You decide to get in line for the bathroom, back inside Shakes.

15 minutes later, you try and find your venue; you're looking for "Yellow", but aren't sure what that means until you see the large poles covered in Yellow decorations outside a stage door. You now notice other decorations for Blue, Orange, Purple, Red, Pink, and Brown throughout the building.

You get close to the Yellow doors, but realize the line is long and has 3 switchbacks. (At least this line is entirely inside, unlike the one for Orange, Red, or Pink.) You now notice people queueing for Blue and Purple, too. Everyone in line is covered in buttons, pins, and lanyards. Some people are wearing colorful tutus. A lot of people are wearing Fringe shirts from seemingly many years ago. Most people are talking animatedly with the other people in line. The noise level is high.

When you find the end of the line, you are given a “Yellow End of the Line” poster on a stick by the person in front of you. When someone steps into line behind you, you hand it to them. You strike up a conversation with them about what shows they’ve seen, and they recommend a few to you.

More Fringe Volunteers start walking the line to check you have your ticket *and* a button, and to remind you that there is absolutely no re-entry once the theater doors are closed.

It’s now 10 minutes until your show starts, and the theater doors open. The Fringe Volunteer scans your ticket (or phone), and you quickly find a seat.

The show begins. It’s remarkable, completely unexpected, and you absolutely love it. Wow.

The house lights come up, you rise from your seat, and decide to immediately get back in the box office line for more shows.

Your next show starts in 2 hours (you bought tickets for 2 more shows tonight), so you decide to get something to eat. You ask someone where to get food, and they say “The Lawn” and give you general directions.

You follow the flow of people towards the trees. You hear the generators before you get to the entrance gate, but you can’t see past the trucks inside the fence.

Once inside the fence, you smell fried foods, and can hear music playing, but you decide to just follow the sidewalk to get the lay of the land. You happen upon the outdoor bar. You buy a cocktail, and head back up the field of grass to find one of the really comfy-looking Purple Adirondacks.

On your way, you pick up a Gyro plate from a vendor, which ends up being delicious, and was so cheap!

You find a chair near the outdoor stage (but not under the tent, because it’s too hot), and a local band you’ve never heard of is starting their set. The sun is starting to set, the weather is incredible (it rained while you were in your show) and the breeze is intoxicating.



You see someone stroll by wearing nothing but a sequined speedo and thigh-high platform boots. No one else even notices this.

A toddler is gleefully running around this colorful arch thing (what is it?) that has garland blowing in the breeze. Teens are taking selfies with it.

You see other groups here and there greeting each other with boisterous hugs, as if they are family that haven't seen each other in a long time.

People are stretched out in the grass with drinks, enjoying themselves. Dogs, too. Music drifts out of the stage tent. It's surprisingly good.

A group of performers come up to you and thrust a flyer into your hands, and excitedly explain their show. You promise to see it later.

And then, you realize your next show starts in 30 minutes, so you finish your drink and head back to Shakes to gleefully start the process all over again.

How did you not know about this Festival?

## **APPENDIX G. OIFF ENVIRONMENTAL DEVELOPMENT ANNUAL SCHEDULE**

### *January*

Winter Mini-Fest Pre-Prep begins 1st week of January  
Winter Mini-Fest open second weekend of January (a 4-day version of the May Fest, held only at Shakes)  
Environmental Pieces for May Fest are shuffled to the front of storage at the end of WMF  
Final May Festival Theme Development is Released

### *February*

'Fab Fringe' Gala Fundraiser Event at end of month

### *March*

Environmental Hard Construction Begins for May Fest Pieces  
Environmental Soft Construction Begins for May Fest Pieces  
Installation Logistics for May Fest Begin  
All May Fest Signage Orders Placed by end of Month

### *April*

Marathon 24hr Fundraiser Event  
Installation Logistics Locked In by mid-month  
Local Teaser Performances for May Fest & Festival Tickets on Sale Second Monday of April

### *May*

Festival Installation Pre-Prep begins first week of May  
Festival Installation begins second week of May  
Festival Officially Open Fourteen Days prior to Memorial Day  
Festival Officially Closes Memorial Day & Strike is that night

### *June*

Analytics and recaps of the festival  
(Everyone takes a vacation)

### *July*

Kids Fringe Camps onsite at Fringe HQ  
Environmental Repairs Begin at Fringe HQ

### *August*

Kids Fringe Camps Continue at Fringe HQ  
Environmental Planning begins in earnest for next May Fest  
Last Month of Fiscal Year & Final Chance to Use Budget (usually refill supplies and order larger furniture items)

### *September*

Environmental Deliveries integrated and projects started with items ordered in August  
May Fest Theme Development Begins  
Artist Applications for May Festival Open

### *October*

Fall Performance Fundraiser Event  
Planning begins for Winter Mini-Fest

### *November*

Artist Applications for May Festival Close  
Prep for May Artist Lottery Begins

### *December*

Artist Lottery Happens  
Pre-Prep for Winter Mini-Fest before holiday break

## APPENDIX H. OIFF ENVIRONMENTAL TRIBAL KNOWLEDGE

Fringe Walk-Through Video 2017

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M-4cCLVuVIY&ab\\_channel=OrlandoFringe](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M-4cCLVuVIY&ab_channel=OrlandoFringe)

(this was the last year before our concerted effort to add branding and wayfinding to the experiences)

Fringe Walk-Through Video 2019

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4gNfahJun1o&ab\\_channel=OrlandoFringe](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4gNfahJun1o&ab_channel=OrlandoFringe)

(the majority of this was taken on a quiet morning and early evening between shows)

2020 Fringe Intro Video

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PTqZolZ6p2qGisKVJGTrxOgZcHcDijlp/view?usp=sharing>

What is Fringe?

<https://youtu.be/-g5tvEEJLcw>

The Orlando International Fringe Theatre Festival is a 14-day event built up in Orlando's Loch Haven Park and surrounding neighborhoods

- Ticketed 60-90 minute indoor stage productions are the largest draw. (Traditional Theater, Dance, Storytelling, Musicals, Illusion and Experimental Theatre)
  - All of these performances are uncensored, meaning artists have complete content control
  - All ticket proceeds go 100% back to the artists. Fringe is accessible to patrons meaning artists can set the price for their show but cannot exceed \$12.
  - The festival is unjuried, meaning artists apply to a lottery to bid for a spot at the festival.
    - A separate drawing is held during the lottery for BIPOC and LGBTQ+ artists to increase their possibility of being selected.
    - After an artist wins a spot from the lottery, Fringe makes an offer to the artist to perform, telling them which venue and how many performances. The artist has 72-hours to accept the offer and pay a venue fee. And they're in!
  - The May Festival is considered a homecoming of sorts for the artists that attend and is un-officially the kick-off of the annual global performance circuit.
- There is also a free "Outdoor Stage" fest-within-the-fest of performances on "The Lawn" (generally music - of every possible genre, with some all-day stage take-overs like the Swamp Sistas LaLa, Jambando, and Southern Fried Sunday but also stand-up comedy, spoken word, and poetry nights)
  - The Lawn also has a full outdoor bar with beer, wine, and booze, food vendors, places for shade, and sanitary facilities

- The fenced area allows for an open container permit and is staffed with off-duty police officers at each gate
- “Kids Fringe” is an additional fest-within-the-fest on each weekend morning geared towards children and families (each day’s performances and events are typically themed)
  - “Fringezilla” is the mascot of Kid’s Fringe but has been the face of the festival for over 25 years
- And finally, “Visual Fringe” is an art fair of fine and decorative arts, spread among each of the buildings that hold performance venues.
  - As with stage artists, all pieces are unjuried and can be of any subject or medium, but there is no lottery - it’s first come, first served until the spots are full
- Throughout the 14 days, there are also additional pop-up performances, exhibits, and experiences that are different every year and can happen anywhere and anytime.

### **Fringe has a 30-year history but most people don’t know what it is**

- This org is part of a network of Fringe Festivals of all size and structure but is unique in its longevity and the way it funds the artists; Orlando is considered a global leader
- New users can often become overwhelmed with the overall experience and layout of the campus; even the language of the Fringe can be hard to pick-up without a primer
- Long-term users are often extremely resistant to change but are fiercely loyal
  - Fringe has always been a bootstrapped organization, and they like it to look that way - we *often* hear cracks about something looking too ‘corporate’
    - The way the outdoor bar currently looks is a perfect example of how long-term users want the entire festival to look; colorful and cobbled together.
- Experience is KEY; Fringe is a feeling that sticks with you
  - We try to create opportunities for experiential Fringe moments in every venue
  - “It’s so Fringey!” is the highest compliment you can get on a design

### **Fringe is a Non-Profit**

- Budgets are minuscule in the best of times, and labor is scarce and generally unskilled.
  - The total annual budget for Environmental Design & Wayfinding is \$2000; this is all-in for furniture and displays, raw materials, labor, and other supplies (*including* signage printing). (This does not include venue rentals, structure rentals for the lawn, or any tech or A/V which is either donated/sponsored or within separate budgets.)
    - We often get creative with capital investments and annual budgets for each event to subsidize the May Fest (i.e. - purchasing table

- covers or step and repeats in January that then get used in May or ordering furniture that can be used in many applications)
- Raw materials are often donated, prior to need, and with no guarantee of usability.
  - Upcycling & Re-Invention with found and leftover items is the rule, not the exception. We throw away NOTHING.
- You have to be constantly ready with the next project plan fully formed because you never know when the next grant/sponsor financial trigger will be pulled.
  - Sponsorships can often offset the costs but are not guaranteed year over year
  - Grants provide an influx of cash but often come with specific rules and timing constrictions
- Labor is entirely based on volunteers, with mostly limited skillsets for construction and installation - but tons of energy and heart! But, often it's just Mel and her tools with one of the Shakes set builders.

### **Fringe is an Annual Event**

The goal of the last 3 years has been to build a foundation of items to use year after year and event after event that fit the brand aesthetic but can be re-mixed or updated with each year's festival theme.

- Each year we have purchased more outdoor grade furniture for the lawn that fits better with the brand overall, replacing what you'll see in the videos
  - Purple Adirondacks, Orange armless chairs, White Dining Tables & Orange barstools
- Everything must be re-usable
  - We try to limit the disposable supplies we have to buy each year to clear packing tape, deck screws, low-temp hot glue, and 12" clear zip ties; corrugated plastic signboards with out-of-date info get saved and re-used for other projects
- Everything must be extremely durable (much like stage sets, everything *really* takes a beating)
- Year-Round Storage is at a minimum
  - Items must easily breakdown small and flat for storage in the Fringe office upstairs at the Shakes
  - Items must be light enough to be carried up 2 flights of stairs with a switchback by a 5th percentile female OR fit into a 5'l x 4'w x 7'h elevator with a combined weight of less than 800lb
  - Some small, durable items can be stored into the PODS at the end of the fest, but items become un-reachable until the next festival (and we're really trying to get away from the cost of the PODS)

### **Fringe is Outdoors. In May. In Central Florida. For 25 consecutive days.**

- It's a rain or shine event.
  - Everything must be weather-tight, UV stable, and tropical stormproof with tough humidity and heat resistance.

- We use a lot of pressure-treated lumber and marine ply coated with exterior latex paint. We've also had success with inexpensive plastic materials like grid fencing, hula-hoops, pool noodles, and surveyors tape for decorative pieces and 4" thick styrofoam coated with latex paint for large-scale signage.
- Our latest design exploration has been trying to work better *with* the physical environment - especially on the lawn - with more kinetic installations, or with UV-charged lighting for nighttime experiences. We also want to have larger scale items that draw attention from the passing streets (particularly Mills).

### **Fringe Environmental is similar to theater set design and installation.**

While we have many months to plan, Install and Strike are extremely quick.

- We try and make any outdoor installation process as quick as possible to avoid heat-stroke and exhaustion; 3 items or less on a Task Analysis, and getting the fixtures to the site is one, if not 2, of those items
- Because of venue rental timing, the installation happens when the buildings are typically FULL of artists and tech crew; we have to carefully choreograph the two teams so we're not in each other's way
  - We pre-prep *everything* for installation so that we can come in like special forces, drop and secure the pieces and get out of the way
- Lawn installation is dependent on the final Tent & Structure installation
  - We also have extremely limited moving resources (golf cars, wagons, ladders, etc.) so it's often stop and start with the lawn around other installations
- Strike happens so incredibly fast, over a few short hours, with every venue coming down at once
  - We space plan the upstairs storage area over the last few days of the fest to plan for not only the next event but for any additions or changes we might be making to the fixtures or furniture over the next year

### **Fringe does not own its festival grounds or year-round facility**

- Each location used for festival event venues has a different jurisdiction group with its own set of guidelines. All safety protocols and regulations and laws for each individual venue must be followed when considering install.
  - Capacities, entrance and egress, and event logistics are set by each individual venue.
    - Generally, installed Environmental items and signage must not be permanently attached to any surface; we do have loose agreements in place with each venue about 'light' attachment points, but these have to be re-upped each year in the contracts.
    - Items on the lawn cannot be staked into the ground and cannot have a footing larger than 18" sq (because of grass kill).
      - We have had good luck with outdoor sandbags, or stage bags covered in plastic trash bags - but we have to pay to rent these (and they look awful)
- Fringe does not currently have a pre-build site for construction



- We rely on the grace of the Shakes set team shop and backstage area in the 5 days prior to load-in OR attempt to have items built off-site and then delivered during load-in. When we are flush with cash from a grant, we order things pre-built from manufacturers, but this is EXTREMELY RARE.

**COVID has proven to be a bigger challenge for Environmental design than we initially expected.**

- In a normal year, we would attempt to find many ways to physically bring people together in a more intimate way, but this year that's all a no-go as we have been asked to follow strict social distancing both inside and outside this year's venues
  - Additional check-in stations for COVID protocols
    - How can we visually define those as official Fringe areas?
  - No traditional photo stops / photo booths or backdrops
    - This has been a great 'free' social marketing tool in the past
  - No artist paper goods
    - getting a postcard promo hand-out from an artist is a quintessential Fringe experience, but also no programs or menus
  - No lawn/bar games or group experiences
    - Wait-Service to reserved socially distanced seating will be the majority of the lawn
  - No indoor art exhibits or experiences
    - Visual Fringe is a completely digital experience
  - Different lounge experiences
    - The VIP lounge will be socially distanced and capacity capped; the artist lounge will be split into two
  - Load-In & strike has to be staggered and with fewer people on-site at a time
  - Fewer venues overall; capacities, entrances, and exits are also limited
    - Queues/Lines are a staple of the Fringe experience, but TBD how that will be done this year - especially in buildings with multiple venues like the Shakes

**Other changes for 2021:**

- Number of Venues – 11 to 8 venues; Cut Ballet, Brown, and Purple
- 58 artists in the festival
- Digital Component to Festival June 4-18, called DigiFringe
- Seating Capacities - currently at 30-40%, working to increase
- Added Haos on Church and The Abbey as BYOVs
- Teaser show to April 19- Courtyard and Margeson and live-streamed
- The full artist show schedule will begin on Wednesday, May 19
- Artist backout deadline was moved from Feb 1 to Feb 8
- Artists must wear masks
- Adding "Play What you Can" stage to Shakes Courtyard
- Two artist lounges - one in OMA and one in Brown

## APPENDIX I. EARLY OIFF ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

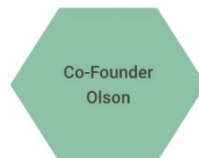
### ORLANDO FRINGE FESTIVAL ORGANIZATIONAL CHART 1992



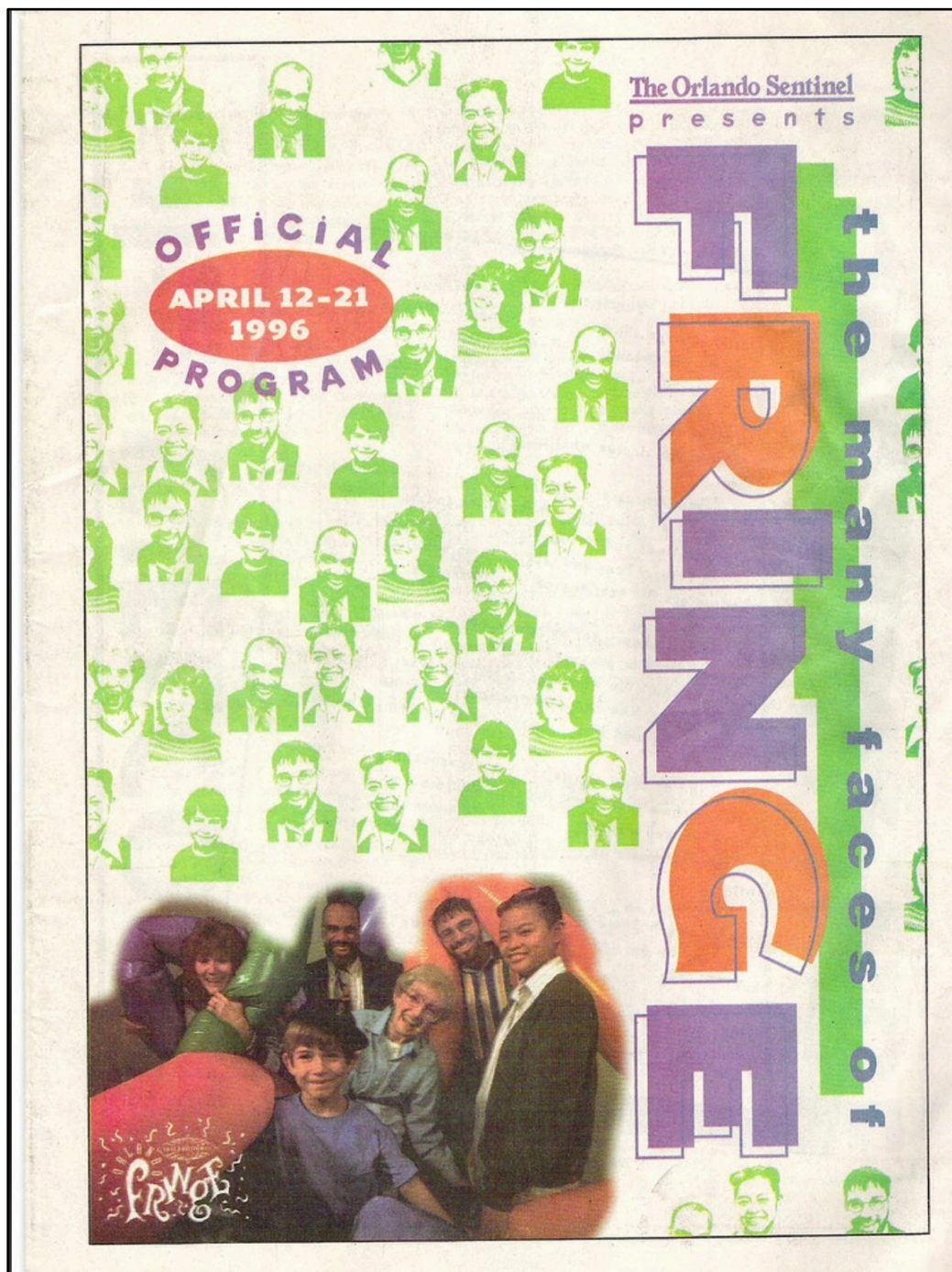
### ORLANDO FRINGE FESTIVAL ORGANIZATIONAL CHART 1993



### ORLANDO FRINGE FESTIVAL ORGANIZATIONAL CHART 1995



## APPENDIX J. 1996 OIFF PROGRAM





# the WELCOME

Welcome to the Fringe! You'll find 52 different indoor shows, 10 Outdoor Stage shows, 5 Kids Fringe shows and over 40 groups on the Orlando Sentinel Community/Rave Stage. That's over 500 performances in 10 days!

You want to make the most of this once-a-year cultural bonanza. How do you decide what to see?

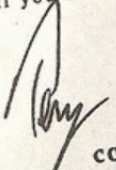
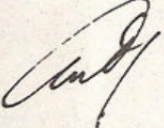
Study this program, check the Master Schedule Board, look at the daily reviews in the Orlando Sentinel and be sure to talk to people in lines and on the street. Or catch the performers in the Fringe Tent and talk to them about their shows. People are the best source of information.

We've provided a chance for artists to present whatever it is they feel compelled to present. This freedom is important to them and to you. We won't try to tell you what you'll like or won't like. You know that better than we do. So pick some shows that sound like your type of thing and go enjoy!

And since the price of shows are very reasonable, check out at least one show that is not the type you'd normally go to. Go ahead, expand a little. The more we know about each other, the easier it will be to live together in the same community.

If you're new to the Fringe, we're sure you'll come to love it as much as we do! And, if you're a returning fan, welcome back!

Fringe till you drop!!

 &   
co-producers



**Buy your Fringe Button!** This allows you to purchase tickets and helps support this Non-profit event. The cost is only \$3.00 and enables us to give the Artists 100% of the revenue from their performances. FRINGE BUTTONS are available at any Fringe Venue, the Fringe tent and the Fringe Information Booth (at Church St. & Orange Ave.). Tickets to performances are all \$8.00 or less.

**Tickets for Fringe** shows may be purchased in advance at the Fringe Information Booth (April 8 - 11 • 11:30am-1:30pm & April 12 - 21 • Fringe open till Midnight) up until the day before each performance. There will be a surcharge of \$1 on all advance tickets. This \$1 charge goes to help support the Fringe for next year. *\*note\* - Only 50% of the available tickets will be sold in advance.*

Starting April 12th tickets may also be purchased at each venue one hour before each performance. A few seats will be reserved for volunteers, media and staff who have deadlines to meet - this will be strictly controlled and your cooperation is appreciated.

#### Please Note

Tickets are sold on a first come, first served basis. No one will be admitted to any Fringe performance once it has started - even if they have a ticket. Tickets are not transferable from one day to another. Tickets are not refundable. No one will be admitted to any Fringe performance without their Fringe Button.

#### CHECK THE MAP

The Fringe Festival has 6 indoor venues, one outdoor venue, the Kid's Fringe Area, the Fringe Tent (beer and other refreshments), an International Food Court, and craft merchandise booths all within a two-block area in the heart of Downtown Orlando. Most venues are converted store fronts and each is clearly marked with its appropriate color.

#### CHECK THE SCHEDULE

##### THE ORLANDO INTERNATIONAL

##### FRINGE FESTIVAL operates:

Friday	4/12 - 6pm-2am
Saturday	4/13 - Noon - 2am
Sunday	4/14 - Noon - 1:30am
Monday	4/15 - 5pm - 1am
Tuesday	4/16 - 5pm - 1am
Wednesday	4/17 - 5pm - 1am
Thursday	4/18 - Noon - 1am
Friday	4/19 - Noon - 2am
Saturday	4/20 - Noon - 2am
Sunday	4/21 - Noon - 9pm

Performances are scheduled continuously in each space with approximately 45 minutes between shows. The Master Schedule Board (located at Fringe Central near the Fringe Tent) will tell you what's playing next at the Fringe and keep you posted if there are any schedule changes. **Please check the Master Schedule Board - it is the most up to date and correct source of information.**

**THE OUTDOOR STAGE** will provide spectacular entertainment with artists from around the world. Located on Church Street (between Orange Ave. & Magnolia Ave.) at Fringe Central the outdoor stage is pass-the-hat for the Performing Artists. If you appreciate this talent please be generous. However, if you can't afford to give please feel free to stay as long as you like and enjoy this wonderful entertainment.

#### ALSO, +2

Fabulous Fringe T-Shirts and other merchandise are on sale at the Official Fringe Merchandise Booth in the Fringe Central Area.

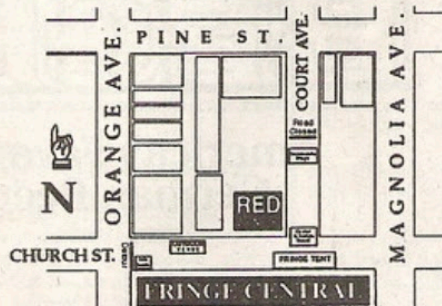
Three cheers for the Volunteers! Box Office, Front-of-House, Fringe Tent, Security, Information Services and a whole lot of fantastic people are volunteers from your community who want to help make your visit to the Fringe magical, memorable and as fun as is humanly possible.

**NO PHOTOGRAPHY IS PERMITTED IN THE VENUES.**

**TURN OFF ALL MOBILE PHONES AND SET BEEPERS TO STUN DURING PERFORMANCES.**


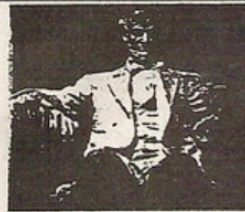


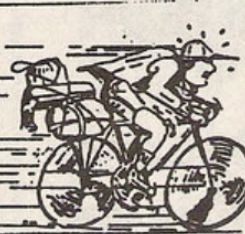
**ALL PERFORMANCES WILL START ON TIME.**

**NO LATECOMERS WILL BE ADMITTED - THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS.**

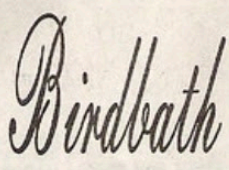



# HOW TO FRINGE

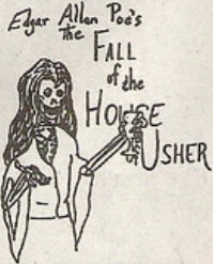






OUR ARTWORK	OUR STORY	OUR TIMES	OUR VENUE
	AAAA - The Big Finish by: SAK Theatre SAK Theatre Orlando, FL The critics rave! "AAAATBF...the first show in the program!" "...Andrew Lloyd Webber would turn in his grave...but he's not dead!" "...Funny...Spangly!" Also see SAK's "SUSPECT" and TheatreSports™ • 45 min. • Improvised musical comedy • \$6	FRI 4/12 @ 6:00-6:45 SAT 4/13 @ 9:35-10:20 SUN 4/14 @ 12:55A-1:40A TUE 4/16 @ 9:40-10:25 FRI 4/19 @ 10:50-11:35 SAT 4/20 @ 1:25-2:10 SUN 4/21 @ 1:45-2:30	RED
 ACTION	Action by: Sam Shepard Member Project Code Orlando, FL Dancing bears, Walter Cronkite impersonators, fresh turkey, a sense of community and a Christmas tree help stew up profound truths in this sci-fi comedy. • 50 min • Sci-Fi • WARNING: Suggested minimum age of 14 • \$8/\$6 Stu/Sr/Military	FRI 4/12 @ 6:15-7:05 SAT 4/13 @ 7:30-8:20 TUE 4/16 @ 8:20-9:10 WED 4/17 @ 6:15-7:05 THU 4/18 @ 3:20-4:10 FRI 4/19 @ 11:30-12:20A SAT 4/20 @ 1:50-2:40	GREEN
 ANYTHING GOES...said the Priest to the Rabbi	"Anything goes," said the priest to the rabbi. by: Banks Helfrich Tossed Salad Productions, Orlando FL A Man, A Stage and an Audience. A Minimalist, the World and the Players. A Fashion Show, Words on a Board and food • 40min • Audience participation/Improv/Storytelling/Juggling • Pass the Hat	SEE THE MASTER SCHEDULE BOARD	OUTDOOR
 CAMERON SILVER IN BERLIN TO BABYLON	Berlin to Babylon: The Songs of Kurt Weill and Friedrich Hollaender by: Cameron Silver The Cameron Silver Foundation Los Angeles, CA "BEST CABARET PERFORMER" & "PICK OF THE WEEK" - Silver's hit musical history show of comedy, tragedy and sensuality, featuring Schindler's List era and Broadway and film songs from Hollaender and Weill. • 60 min • Cabaret/Musical Theatre • \$7/\$5 Stu/Sr	FRI 4/12 @ 8:00-9:00 SAT 4/13 @ 1:05A-2:05A SUN 4/14 @ 8:55-9:55 THU 4/18 @ 10:40-11:40 SAT 4/20 @ 5:35-6:35 SUN 4/21 @ 2:20-3:20	YELLOW
	The Bicycling Comedian's One Man Comedy Show by: Tom Snyders, The Bicycling Comedian Ottawa, IL Tom Snyders, The Bicycling Comedian Seen on "Regis & Kathie Lee," "ESPN," "Comedy Central," Tom Snyders has ridden a bicycle 80,000 miles across 49 states since 1987! Not just a comedy show—it's an adventure! • 60 min • Comedy • \$7/\$5 Sr	FRI 4/12 @ 10:55-11:55 SAT 4/13 @ 5:40-6:40 SUN 4/14 @ NOON-1:00 TUE 4/16 @ 7:30-8:30 THU 4/18 @ 2:05-3:05 FRI 4/19 @ 12:20A-1:20A SUN 4/21 @ 3:35-4:35	PURPLE




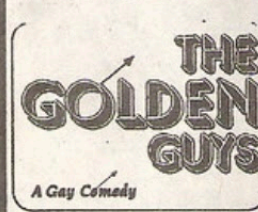



OUR ARTWORK	OUR STORY	OUR TIMES	OUR VENUE
	<b>Birdbath</b> by: Leonard Melfi Up In the Attic Productions Orlando, FL A down and out poet with attitude encounters a high strung woman with a dark secret. • 45 min • Drama • \$1	FRI 4/12 @ 9:40-10:25 SAT 4/13 @ 2:55-3:40 SUN 4/14 @ 12:20A-1:05A MON 4/15 @ 8:30-9:15 WED 4/17 @ 10:40-11:25 THU 4/18 @ 12:15A-1:00A SAT 4/20 @ 4:10-4:55	<b>YELLOW</b>
	<b>C'est Cheese</b> by: Arrogant Worms The Arrogant Worms Kingston, Canada Those irrepressible worms are back for one more kick at the musical-comedy can. C'est Cheese . . . the only show where the mundane becomes spectacular. • 60 min • Cabaret • \$8	SAT 4/13 @ 8:30-9:30 SUN 4/14 @ 6:05-7:05 MON 4/15 @ 5:35-6:35 TUE 4/16 @ 9:55-10:55 THU 4/18 @ 2:30-3:30 FRI 4/19 @ 12:35A-1:35A SUN 4/21 @ 4:40-5:40	<b>ORANGE</b>
	<b>Contents Under Pressure</b> by: John Hunter, Ryan Smith, Stuart Maxwell, Jay Hopkins, and Lauren Pritchard Faustian Bargain Hunters Orlando, FL Join five misguided performers as they embark on a comedic wilding, mocking America's cherished institutions and exorcising personal demons. Also, balloons for the kids. • 60 min • Sketch Comedy • WARNING: Language • \$4	FRI 4/12 @ 7:20-8:20 SAT 4/13 @ 5:10-6:10 SUN 4/14 @ 9:15-10:15 MON 4/15 @ 11:45-12:45A TUE 4/16 @ 6:35-7:35 THU 4/18 @ 10:25-11:25 SAT 4/20 @ 6:35-7:35	<b>ORANGE</b>
	<b>The Crimson Yak</b> by: David Belke Shadow Theatre Company Edmonton, Canada Two little nations hidden in the Himalayas have lived in peace for generations. Only one thing can drive them to the brink of war: an American soft drink manufacturer. A comic fable by one of the Fringe's most popular playwrights. • 120 min • Comedy • \$8	FRI 4/12 @ 7:25-9:25 SAT 4/13 @ 11:00-1:00A SUN 4/14 @ 10:15-12:15A MON 4/15 @ 10:20-12:20A THU 4/18 @ 7:05-9:05 FRI 4/19 @ 12:05-2:05 SUN 4/21 @ 6:00-8:00	<b>RED</b>
	<b>Dance Extravaganza</b> Directed by: Janet M. Sterner Arbor Ridge Eaglettes Orlando, FL Enjoy the high energy of these talented young dancers. Routines range from Bee-Bop to Hip-Hop as the dancers move to sounds from Pocahontas, Beach Boys and many more. • 45 min. • Children's Theatre • FREE/Donation	SAT 4/20 @ 2:40	<b>KIDS FRINGE</b>






OUR ARTWORK	OUR STORY	OUR TIMES	OUR VENUE
	<p>Edgar Allan Poe's The Fall of the House of Usher Adapted by: Darryl Pickett Rick Spiller and Darryl Pickett Orlando, FL Madness! Horror! A spine-tingling tale from the American Master of terror and suspense, Edgar Allan Poe. A dramatic re-telling with an original musical score. • 65 min • Drama • \$5</p>	<p>SAT 4/13 @ 2:45-3:50 SUN 4/14 @ 8:35-9:40 MON 4/15 @ 6:55-8:00 WED 4/17 @ 11:55-1:00A THU 4/18 @ MIDNIGHT-1:05A FRI 4/19 @ 6:00-7:05 SAT 4/20 @ 7:45-8:50</p>	<p><b>BLUE</b></p>
	<p>"El Lenguaje es un Virus" by: Estela Mieres and Liliana Enciso Grupo Teatromimo Insalubre Montevideo, Uruguay Take a Peek! Roll up! Teatromimo "INSALUBRE" invites you to a fun and thought provoking performance, where two actresses mime with absurdity and humor numerous characters. Uplifting with us. Roll up! • 60 min • Mime • \$5/\$3 Students</p>	<p>SAT 4/13 @ 4:25-5:25 TUE 4/16 @ 8:00-9:00 SUN 4/21 @ NOON-1:00</p>	<p><b>RED</b></p>
	<p>Episode 26 - Flash Gordon A Parody by: Howard Korder Atomic Theater Orlando, FL Adventure, romance, aliens and lots of pulp. Save the universe with Buzz Gatecrasher, Aquaballerina, L. Hillen Dale and Dr. Art Deco as we revisit the kitsch of Saturday morning Sci-Fi series. • 60 min • Comedy • \$8</p>	<p>SAT 4/13 @ 7:50-8:50 MON 4/15 @ 5:15-6:15 TUE 4/16 @ 10:30-11:30 THU 4/18 @ 6:45-7:45 FRI 4/19 @ 10:45-11:45 SAT 4/20 @ 12:55A-1:55A SUN 4/21 @ 2:00-3:00</p>	<p><b>BLUE</b></p>
<p>EYEWITNESS THEATRE COMPANY</p> 	<p>Family Affairs by: Peter McGarry Eyewitness Theatre Company Cheshire, England From the company who brought you last year's winner OUR DAILY BREAD—a play about sex and sexuality!—with all its consequences! INTERNATIONAL AWARD WINNER! "Funny, provocative, daring!" THE TIMES • 65 min • Drama • WARNING: Adult themes/Language/Nudity • \$8/\$7 Stu/Sr</p>	<p>SAT 4/13 @ NOON-1:05 SUN 4/14 @ 9:10-10:15 TUE 4/16 @ 9:10-10:15 THU 4/18 @ 5:55-7:00 FRI 4/19 @ 10:35-11:40 SAT 4/20 @ 2:30-3:35 SUN 4/21 @ NOON-1:05</p>	<p><b>PURPLE</b></p>
 <p><b>FILM DEPENDENCY</b></p>	<p>Film Dependency by: Various Artists Central Florida Film &amp; Video Festival Orlando, FL Mind altering independent films are the only addiction you'll ever need. We'll supply your dose of short films, so come raise your state of consciousness and get the ultimate fix. • 90 min • Film &amp; Video Showings • WARNING: Adult themes/Language/Violence/Nudity • \$2</p>	<p>SAT 4/13 @ 12:25A-1:55A SUN 4/14 @ NOON-1:30 MON 4/15 @ 7:15-8:45 TUE 4/16 @ 11:30-1:00A WED 4/17 @ 9:35-11:05 FRI 4/19 @ 6:25-7:55 SAT 4/20 @ 2:45-4:15</p>	<p><b>ORANGE</b></p>



OUR ARTWORK	OUR STORY	OUR TIMES	OUR VENUE
	<p>From the Mississippi Delta by: Dr. Endesha Ida Mae Holland Dr. Phillips Theatre Arts Department Orlando, FL</p> <p>Spirituals/folk traditions pepper Dr. Endesha I. M. Hollands' autobiographical play, <i>From the Mississippi Delta</i>, which pays tribute to the strength and courage of African-American women, their struggles, triumph, and legacies. • 100 min • Drama • \$5/\$4 Stu/Sr</p>	<p>SUN 4/14 @ 2:05-3:45 MON 4/15 @ 9:25-11:05 WED 4/17 @ 5:35-7:15 THU 4/18 @ 4:10-5:50 SUN 4/21 @ 6:20-8:00</p>	<b>ORANGE PURPLE ORANGE BLUE YELLOW</b>
	<p>FTM by: David Harrison David Harrison San Francisco, CA</p> <p>FTM is an entertaining, informative and poignant exploration into David Harrison's transsexual journey from Female to Male, and his mother's challenge with breast cancer. FTM is a Fringe Must-See! • 65 min • Drama • \$6/\$4 Sr</p>	<p>FRI 4/12 @ 9:10-10:15 SAT 4/13 @ 10:55-MIDNIGHT MON 4/15 @ 5:40-6:45 WED 4/17 @ 7:35-8:40 THU 4/18 @ 11:55-1:00A FRI 4/19 @ 6:40-7:45 SUN 4/21 @ 5:05-6:10</p>	
	<p>Gilligan's Island Uncensored by: John G. Peros Manhattan South Studio Theatre Orlando, FL</p> <p>Manhattan South's hilarious follow-up to The Brady Bunch; uncensored wherein Ginger Grant stands trial for the mysterious deaths of the other six castaways. • 90 min • Comedy • WARNING: Adult themes • \$8/\$6 Stu</p>	<p>SAT 4/13 @ 10:10-11:40 SUN 4/14 @ 12:35A-2:05A WED 4/17 @ 11:45-1:15A THU 4/18 @ 8:10-9:40 FRI 4/19 @ 4:15-5:45 SAT 4/20 @ 8:15-9:45 SUN 4/21 @ 2:30-4:00</p>	
	<p>The Golden Guys by: Dennis T. Giaciro Out &amp; Out Productions (ooPs) Orlando, FL</p> <p>"Wickedly funny!" raves <i>Seattle Gay News</i> about this live sitcom where three gay roomies form a drag Karaoke act to overcome middle-age depression! "Hot stuff!" <i>New York Daily News</i>. • 60 min • Comedy • \$5</p>	<p>TUE 4/16 @ 12:05A-1:05A WED 4/17 @ 10:10-11:10 THU 4/18 @ 10:20-11:20 FRI 4/19 @ 7:45-8:45 SAT 4/20 @ 1:10-2:10</p>	
	<p>Happy Hour with Martini &amp; Olive! "on the rocks" by: Judy Heneghan &amp; Grant Richey Martini &amp; Olive Minneapolis, MN</p> <p>"Happy Hour with Martini &amp; Olive" is a wacky, inventive 70's variety show. This Minneapolis comedy lounge duo dazzles with absurd medleys, the swizzlestick dancers, sketches, and polyester hijinks! • 65 min • Comedy Cabaret • \$6/\$4 Stu</p>	<p>FRI 4/12 @ 12:55A-2:00A SAT 4/13 @ 8:00-9:05 SUN 4/14 @ 10:35-11:40 MON 4/15 @ 6:50-7:55 TUE 4/16 @ 10:05-11:10 WED 4/17 @ 12:05A-1:10A THU 4/18 @ 1:55-3:00</p>	





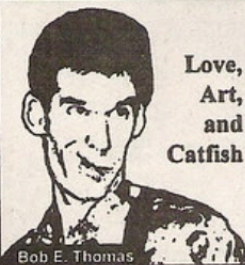


OUR ARTWORK	OUR STORY	OUR TIMES	OUR VENUE
	Human Knots by: Motus O Motus O Dance Theatre Ontario, Canada Highly physical and visually stimulating, Motus O's dance production "Human Knots" takes you on a roller coaster ride that abounds with theatre and humor and spills over with social relevance. • 90 min • Dance/Mime • \$5	SAT 4/13 @ 12:35A-2:05A SUN 4/14 @ 5:00-6:30 MON 4/15 @ 8:50-10:20 WED 4/17 @ 11:20-12:50A THU 4/18 @ 7:40-9:10 FRI 4/19 @ 2:15-3:45 SAT 4/20 @ 4:30-6:00	PURPLE
i never saw another butterfly	I Never Saw Another Butterfly by: Celeste Raspanti Jewish Community Center Players Maitland, FL Raja is a survivor of the Nazi interment camp, Terezin. This is her story, showing the best and the worst of which the human heart is capable. • 45 min • Drama • \$4/\$3 Stu/Sr	SAT 4/13 @ 9:30-10:15 SUN 4/14 @ 1:40-2:25 MON 4/15 @ 7:25-8:10 TUE 4/16 @ 5:50-6:35 THU 4/18 @ 12:15-1:00 SAT 4/20 @ 10:50-11:35	PURPLE
Ian MacDonald Presents: <b>AUSTRALIA</b>	Ian MacDonald Presents: Australia by: Ian MacDonald, Produced by: Mik Jacobs Ian MacDonald The Outback, Australia Ian MacDonald's dad was a sheep farmer, his mum an opera singer. Come hear his hilarious stories of life in the Outback and on to experiences gained living and working in the ports of Latin America to the boardroom of Japanese conglomerates. • 60 min • Comic Storytelling • \$8	FRI 4/12 @ 12:10A-1:10A SAT 4/13 @ 3:30-4:30 SUN 4/14 @ 10:50-11:50 THU 4/18 @ 6:30-7:30 FRI 4/19 @ 1:05-2:05 SAT 4/20 @ 10:25-11:25 SUN 4/21 @ 12:50-1:50	ORANGE
 <b>IN TROUSERS</b>	In Trousers by: William Finn Anne Hering Orlando, FL William Finn's original "Marvin" musical, this FALSETTOS predecessor serves up lust, joy, mental breakdown and darn good music. It'll zip your fly. For those who love love. • 90 min • Musical • WARNING: Adult audiences • \$8	SAT 4/13 @ 12:45-2:15 SUN 4/14 @ 4:50-6:20 TUE 4/16 @ 7:55-9:25 WED 4/17 @ 7:05-8:35 FRI 4/19 @ 7:20-8:50 SAT 4/20 @ 12:20A-1:50A	YELLOW
	"Inherited Albums" A Musical From a Box of Records by: Thomas F. Scahill Thomas F. Scahill for The Names Project Orlando, FL "Inherited Albums" traces one man's life and A.I.D.S. death through the vinyl he left behind, one of the hits from the 1995 Fringe, all proceeds go to the A.I.D.S. Quilt. • 65 min • Cabaret/Musical Theatre • WARNING: Adult themes/Language • \$5/\$5 Friends of the Quilt	FRI 4/12 @ 11:35-12:40A SAT 4/13 @ 1:00-2:05 SUN 4/14 @ 11:45-12:50A MON 4/15 @ 8:40-9:45 TUE 4/16 @ 7:00-8:05 FRI 4/19 @ NOON-1:05 SAT 4/20 @ 11:10-12:15A	BLUE



OUR ARTWORK	OUR STORY	OUR TIMES	OUR VENUE
	<b>The Inner Circle</b> by: Patricia Loughrey The Speakeasy Theatre Co. Tampa, FL The Inner Circle. A powerful, entertaining show that takes a realistic look at how the lives of four best friends change forever, when one of them is stricken with AIDS. • 75 min • Drama • \$4/\$3 Stu	SAT 4/13 @ 2:30-3:45 SUN 4/14 @ 8:20-9:35 TUE 4/16 @ 6:05-7:20 THU 4/18 @ 12:40-1:55 FRI 4/19 @ 12:15A-1:30A SAT 4/20 @ 5:55-7:10	<b>RED</b>
	<b>It's Magic</b> Starring Adam Steinfeld by: Adam Steinfeld Adam Steinfeld - Illusionist/Comedy Magician - Ft. Lauderdale, FL It's Magic! Illusions! Comedy Magic! Audience Participation! Levitation! Adam Steinfeld is an Illusionist/Comedy Magician whose live-wire exuberance and spellbinding effects involving audience members equals nonstop laughter... "the ultimate New Vaudeville explosion." • 70 min • Illusion Comedy Magic • \$7/\$5 Stu/Sr/Kids under 12	FRI 4/12 @ 6:05-7:15 SAT 4/13 @ 6:15-7:25 SUN 4/14 @ 3:00-4:10 MON 4/15 @ 10:00-11:10 TUE 4/16 @ 6:05-7:15 SAT 4/20 @ 7:15-8:25 SUN 4/21 @ 4:00-5:10	<b>YELLOW</b>
	<b>JJ's Cabaret de Fringe</b> by: Ellen Jones Jacqueline Jones/Ellen Jones Orlando, FL Catch Miss Jacqueline Jones' show - where its always 3:00am. Music and patter — naughty but nice! Mature "Jazz & Blues" themes. "The Children's Hour is over." • 60 min • Adult Cabaret • \$7	SAT 4/13 @ 1:00A-2:00A SUN 4/14 @ 1:00A-2:00A MON 4/15 @ 5:25-6:25 THU 4/18 @ 10:00-11:00 FRI 4/19 @ 1:00A-2:00A SAT 4/20 @ 9:20-10:20 SUN 4/21 @ 7:00-8:00	<b>YELLOW</b>
	<b>Jeff Korn—Attracting Flies</b> by: Jeff Korn Jeff Korn Orlando, FL Who needs therapy when I have you! Go ahead—laugh at my pain and witness a live nervous breakdown. A musical comedy without music. "Better than CATS!" — Rin Tin Tin • 45 min • Comedy • WARNING: Adult themes • \$3	FRI 4/12 @ 10:10-10:55 SUN 4/14 @ 10:25-11:10 TUE 4/16 @ 5:35-6:20 WED 4/17 @ 8:35-9:20 FRI 4/19 @ 4:35-5:20 SAT 4/20 @ 4:25-5:10 SUN 4/21 @ 3:40-4:25	<b>BLUE</b>
	<b>Jiggleman</b> by: Banks Helfrich Tossed Salad Productions Orlando, FL He throws things. He catches things. He drops things. Jiggles, joggles, jabber wockys, jitterbug, jazz, jive, jamboree, Japanese. • 45 min • Children's • \$1	SAT 4/20 @ 1:30 and @ 4:20 Sun 4/21 @ 7:10	<b>KIDS FRINGE</b>



OUR ARTWORK	OUR STORY	OUR TIMES	OUR VENUE
	<p>Joyride by: Laura McGhee McManic Productions Toronto, Canada</p> <p>This provocative satire of the "coming of age" genre follows a young woman's journey—across North America—toward self-validation. "Uncompromising!"—<i>Chicago Tribune</i>. Special Merit Award—Canadian National Playwriting Competition. • 60 min • Comedy • WARNING: Adult themes /Language • \$7</p>	<p>FRI 4/12 @ 7:50-8:50 SAT 4/13 @ 5:50-6:50 MON 4/15 @ 7:05-8:05 THU 4/18 @ 8:20-9:20 FRI 4/19 @ 3:20-4:20 SAT 4/20 @ 11:00-MIDNIGHT SUN 4/21 @ 12:05-1:05</p>	GREEN
	<p>Keely and Du by: Jane Martin Off Its Feet Theatre Company Orlando, FL</p> <p>In this controversial drama, a young woman is abducted and finds herself in a struggle where the politics are very personal. • 90 min • Drama • WARNING: Adult themes • \$7</p>	<p>FRI 4/12 @ 6:45-8:15 SAT 4/13 @ 7:20-8:50 SUN 4/14 @ 10:55-12:25A TUE 4/16 @ 10:55-12:25A THU 4/18 @ 3:45-5:15 FRI 4/19 @ 8:25-9:55</p>	PURPLE
 Lady & the Hoover	<p>Lady and the Hoover by: KayLynn Raschke KayLynn Raschke San Francisco, CA</p> <p>A poignant and delightful one woman journey into the world of forbidden secrets and the love of electrical appliances. Entertaining, Educative, Erotic and sure to make you hummm, more please. • 60 min • Comic-tragedy • WARNING: Adult themes* \$8</p>	<p>FRI 4/12 @ 10:30-11:30 SAT 4/13 @ 6:50-7:50 SUN 4/14 @ 4:25-5:25 WED 4/17 @ 7:55-8:55 THU 4/18 @ 12:05A-1:05A FRI 4/19 @ 10:45-11:45 SAT 4/20 @ 4:55-5:55</p>	ORANGE
<p>Friends of the Groom Drama Group Presents:</p>  <p>The Lion the Witch and The Wardrobe</p>	<p>The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe by: le Clanche du Rand Friends of the Groom Cincinnati, OH</p> <p>An entertaining and innovative treatment of the classic C.S. Lewis tale of faith, courage, and giving. This excellent two actor adaptation has enthralled audiences of all ages. • 55 min. • Children's Theatre • \$6/\$5 (12 yrs. and under) KIDS FRINGE</p>	<p>SAT 4/21 @ Noon and @ 7:05 SUN 4/21 @ 2:45 and @ 5:35</p>	KIDS FRINGE
 Love, Art, and Catfish	<p>Love, Art and Catfish by: Bob E. Thomas Bob E. Thomas Boston, MA</p> <p>"Marvelous, hilarious stories...with wonderful, crazy dancing!" Monologues discussing marriage, art's relationship to beautiful women, and the tragedy of catching trout when fishing for catfish—punctuated by eccentric dancing. • 60 min • Monologue/Dance • \$7</p>	<p>SAT 4/13 @ 7:55-8:55 SUN 4/14 @ 12:50-1:50 WED 4/17 @ 7:50-8:50 THU 4/18 @ 9:45-10:45 FRI 4/19 @ 4:00-5:00 SAT 4/20 @ 11:50-12:50A</p>	RED










This area provided s  
you can keep track o  
your experiences a  
the Fringe.




laugh  
out  
loud

Doodling Area








OUR ARTWORK	OUR STORY	OUR TIMES	OUR VENUE
	<p>Macocos' Medley - Guiso De Macocos by: Los Macocos Banda de Teatro Los Macocos Buenos Aires, Argentina Los Macocos presents many different shows made with the best of their 10 years drama investigation. War, sex, death, etc. are seen by a particular humour view through singular techniques. • 75 min • Comedy/Music, in Spanish • \$6</p>	<p>SAT 4/13 @ 9:45-11:00 SUN 4/14 @ 7:00-8:15 THU 4/18 @ 7:15-8:30 FRI 4/19 @ 12:50A-2:05A SAT 4/20 @ 2:15-3:30</p>	YELLOW
	<p>The Magician by: Michael Alan Kaufman Magical Mystical Michael Austin, TX Enter the eccentric philosophical concepts of "The Magician." People float, water stops in mid-air, locks open, a pencil stands up, people laugh while being musically enchanted by the Magician's Musician. • 70 min • Music/Magic • \$8/\$6 Sr</p>	<p>SAT 4/13 @ 6:05-7:15 SUN 4/14 @ 4:20-5:30 TUE 4/16 @ 11:05-12:15A WED 4/17 @ 9:30-10:40 THU 4/18 @ 11:25-12:35A FRI 4/19 @ 5:40-6:50 SAT 4/20 @ 4:00-5:10</p>	RED
	<p>Man In A Trance by: Gary Doles Rubicon Productions Orlando, FL A one-man blues/folk/comic/drama. The original songs of accomplished singer/song-writer Gary Doles in a simmering stew of funny, moving, transcendent vignettes. An artist at work. • 80 min • Drama/Comedy/Music • \$5</p>	<p>SAT 4/13 @ 1:45-3:05 SUN 4/14 @ 7:10-8:30 MON 4/15 @ 11:00-12:20A WED 4/17 @ 5:35-6:55 FRI 4/19 @ 12:20-1:40 SAT 4/20 @ 8:50-10:10 SUN 4/21 @ 1:35-2:55</p>	PURPLE
	<p>Marching Cheese Dad's Garage Theatre Co. Atlanta, GA Marching Cheesel • 60 min • Defcon 4 • \$5</p>	<p>FRI 4/12 @ 11:20-12:20A SAT 4/13 @ 2:30-3:30 SUN 4/14 @ 7:50-8:50 MON 4/15 @ 12:05A-1:05A TUE 4/16 @ 6:40-7:40 FRI 4/19 @ 9:50-10:50 SAT 4/20 @ 12:05-1:05</p>	GREEN
	<p>Mating Rituals by: Michael Rafferty and Susan M. Cummings Spinning Plates Productions Fruitland Park, FL From Adam and Eve to Thursday nights on NBC one thing has remained the same, the neverending struggle between men and women. One man, one woman, 45 minutes—sound familiar? • 45 min • Sketch/Improv Comedy • WARNING: Adult themes/Language • \$3/\$2 Fringe Performers</p>	<p>SAT 4/13 @ 11:40-12:25A SUN 4/14 @ 12:10-12:55 WED 4/17 @ 5:40-6:25 THU 4/18 @ 9:10-9:55 FRI 4/19 @ 11:25-12:10A SAT 4/20 @ 12:50-1:35 SUN 4/21 @ 7:15-8:00</p>	YELLOW





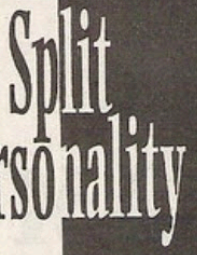


OUR ARTWORK	OUR STORY	OUR TIMES	OUR VENUE
<b>MESSAGE FROM THE THIRD PLANET</b> 	<b>Message From the Third Planet</b> by: Brian Bradley and Peter Hurtgen Jr. Third Planet Productions Orlando, FL Message from the Third Planet is three (and 1/3) one-acts going "from Shakespeare to Beckett to Seinfeld...the full spectrum of dark and whimsical comedy styles." <i>Ink 19</i> • 75 min • Comedy • WARNING: Adult themes/Language • \$4	FRI 4/12 @ 6:20-7:35 SAT 4/13 @ 9:30-10:45 SUN 4/14 @ 12:20-1:35 WED 4/17 @ 6:40-7:55 THU 4/18 @ 8:25-9:40 FRI 4/19 @ 12:25A-1:40A SUN 4/21 @ 6:45-8:00	<b>BLUE</b> <b>OUTDOOR</b>
<b>Noise Between the Ears</b>	<b>Noise Between the Ears</b> Mansion Maze Orlando, FL An all original 3 piece progressive instrumental Rock-Jazz band from Orlando. • 45 min • Rock • Pass the Hat <b>OUTDOOR</b>	<b>SEE THE MASTER SCHEDULE BOARD</b>	<b>GREEN</b>
<b>one night only.</b> starring <b>bill &amp; jill</b> <i>...last seen with Lily Tomlin at "Laughter Positive"</i> <b>Stuff about Orlando, Moonpies and Stereotypes.</b> <i>I agree! Bill &amp; Jill are funny. Look at me! I'm still laughing!</i> - Mrs. Ellen Dover 	<b>One Night Only! Held Over!</b> by: Jill Shargaa Jill Shargaa Orlando, FL Orlando's "Female Comedy Dream Team" tackles everything from Moonpies to PMS. Starring Jill Shargaa from "Laughter Positive", Bobbie Cross, Mary Hunt, Christine Robison, Jerrilyn Wheeler, Megan Whyte, Kelly Willett. • 70 min • Music/Comedy • WARNING: Adult subjects/Language • \$8	FRI 4/12 @ 9:30-10:40 SAT 4/13 @ 12:40-1:50 SUN 4/14 @ 11:10-12:20A TUE 4/16 @ 9:50-11:00 WED 4/17 @ 11:50-1:00A THU 4/18 @ 6:30-7:40 SAT 4/20 @ 3:40-4:50	<b>GREEN</b>
 <b>OUT OF THE BOX</b> <i>by Karen Stephens</i>	<b>Out of the Box</b> by: Karen Stephens Karen Stephens West Palm Beach, FL The life experience through the eyes of a black female born and raised in the south; exploring through music, dialogue, and dance, the universal search of love and self. • 60 min • Multi-media • \$5  <b>Playground of the Mind with Hypnotist Rick</b>	SAT 4/13 @ 4:10-5:10 SUN 4/14 @ 9:30-10:30 MON 4/15 @ 10:25-11:25 SAT 4/20 @ 5:30-6:30 SUN 4/21 @ 1:45-2:45	<b>GREEN</b>
<b>Playground of the Mind</b>	<b>Stratton</b> by: Rick Stratton Hypnotist Rick Stratton Key West, FL Rick Stratton is a hypnotherapist and comedian. With an open mind and the desire to travel to the inner world of the imagination, don't miss "Playground of the Mind!" • 90 min • Stage Hypnosis • \$7/\$5 w/coupon from their show at Outdoor Stage Raspyri Brothers' Comedy Circus	SAT 4/13 @ 9:00-10:30 SUN 4/14 @ 2:00-3:30 WED 4/17 @ 7:45-9:15 THU 4/18 @ 1:10-2:40 SAT 4/20 @ 7:10-8:40	<b>GREEN</b>







OUR ARTWORK	OUR STORY	OUR TIMES	OUR VENUE
	<p>by: Raspyni Brothers Raspyni Brothers San Francisco, CA</p> <p>A fast paced comedy variety show utilizing such skills as juggling, magic, whip cracking, balance, music, improvisation and audience participation. This show is serious fun. Bring everyone you know. • 75 min • Comedy • \$5</p> <p>Raspyni Brothers' Comedy Circus</p>	<p>SAT 4/13 @ 11:10-12:25A SUN 4/14 @ 5:55-7:10 TUE 4/16 @ 11:40-12:55A WED 4/17 @ 9:55-11:10 THU 4/18 @ 11:40-12:55A SUN 4/21 @ 3:25-4:40</p>	GREEN
	<p>by: Raspyni Brothers Raspyni Brothers San Francisco, CA</p> <p>A fast paced comedy variety show utilizing such skills as juggling, magic, whip cracking, balance, music, improvisation and audience participation. This show is serious fun. Bring everyone you know. • 35 min • Comedy • Pass the Hat</p>	SEE THE MASTER SCHEDULE BOARD	OUTDOOR
	<p>The Rick &amp; Jan Variety Show The Rick &amp; Jan Variety Show Key West, FL</p> <p>Rick and Jan's trained stunt swine and other oddities! This fast-paced comedy show contains trained pigs, cheap theatrics, juggling of sharp, shiny things, unicycling, magic and more. • 45 min • Variety • Pass the Hat</p>	SEE THE MASTER SCHEDULE BOARD	OUTDOOR
	<p>Red in Limbo - "Rojo en el Umbral" by: Franz Kafka, adapted by Margarita Esther Gonzalez Juan Alonso, Performing Artist Mexico City, Mexico</p> <p>An energized Kafka's drama, representing the human condition in a full action acrobatic and acting challenge. Join Peter the Red in the Limbo experience. • 60 min • Acrobatic Drama • \$5/\$4 Stu/Sr/Educators 4/18 Show in Spanish</p>	<p>FRI 4/12 @ 1:00A-2:00A SUN 4/14 @ 4:15-5:15 MON 4/15 @ 8:45-9:45 THU 4/18 @ 4:50-5:50 ** THIS SHOW IN SPANISH FRI 4/19 @ 6:15-7:15 SAT 4/20 @ 12:40A-1:40A SUN 4/21 @ 5:20-6:20</p>	GREEN
	<p>Runa Pacha by: Runa Pacha Runa Pacha Otavalo, Ecuador</p> <p>The culture of the ancient Inca's through music and dance, using instruments made with indigenous materials - wood, bamboo, llama hooves and skin. • 45 min. • Music &amp; Dance • Pass the Hat OUTDOOR</p>	SEE THE MASTER SCHEDULE BOARD	OUTDOOR



OUR ARTWORK	OUR STORY	OUR TIMES	OUR VENUE
<b>Sensible Footwear</b> 	<b>Sensible Footwear's Mid-Life Crisis</b> by: Sensible Footwear Sensible Footwear Toronto, Canada Alex and Alison return with Tracey (a Canadian) who is younger than they are. Using comedy and song they'll explore tattoos, mud packs, and the question, "is David Letterman attractive?" • 70 min • Cabaret/Musical Theatre • WARNING: Adult themes • \$8	FRI 4/12 @ 11:05-12:15A SAT 4/13 @ 4:20-5:30 MON 4/15 @ 11:50-1:00A TUE 4/16 @ 11:50-1:00A THU 4/18 @ 5:15-6:25 FRI 4/19 @ 9:35-10:45 SAT 4/20 @ 9:05-10:15	<b>YELLOW</b> ✓
<b>THE SHAFT</b> 	<b>The Shaft</b> by: Robert Bellamy with Martin Balmaceda and Jenny Lambert Azzizz Theatre, Inc. New York, NY Buttons pushed. Doors close. Azzizz Theatre presents its newest comedy, THE SHAFT. Three strangers trapped in an elevator. Awkward, humorous, sometimes sexy fantasies strip away pretense and expose vulnerabilities. • 75 min • Movement Theatre • WARNING: Adult themes • \$7/\$5 Sr	FRI 4/12 @ 11:15-12:30A SUN 4/14 @ 2:25-3:40 MON 4/15 @ 6:15-7:30 WED 4/17 @ 5:55-7:10 THU 4/18 @ 3:00-4:15 SAT 4/20 @ 7:50-9:05 SUN 4/21 @ 4:10-5:25	<b>RED</b>
<b>Shakespeareance</b> 	<b>Shakespeareance</b> by: Roberta Willison Around The Globe Productions New York, NY Straight from NY—Roberta Willison transports you into the world of Shakespeare. Meet the characters, feel the romance, hear the music...in sonnet, speech, and song. A heart-full Shakespeareance for everyone. • 45 min • Cabaret • \$5/\$3 Stu/Sr	SUN 4/14 @ 1:35-2:20 MON 4/15 @ 5:25-6:10 WED 4/17 @ 9:15-10:00 THU 4/18 @ 3:50-4:35 FRI 4/19 @ 5:55-6:40 SAT 4/20 @ 10:55-11:40 SUN 4/21 @ 5:50-6:35	<b>YELLOW</b> 25 ✓
<b>Shirley Confidential</b> spyin' in the House of Talent 	<b>Shirley Confidential: Spy in the House of Talent</b> by: Cynthia Cunningham Classic Tales Theatre Orlando, FL Sex is not love. Fashion is not taste. Michael is not LaToya. These are the voyages of the House of Talent. Watch and weep babe. • 50 min • Comedy • \$6	FRI 4/12 @ 9:00-9:50 SAT 4/13 @ 1:10-2:00 SUN 4/14 @ 7:45-8:35 TUE 4/16 @ 8:25-9:15 FRI 4/19 @ 2:45-3:35 SAT 4/20 @ 12:35-1:25	<b>ORANGE</b>
<b>Split Personality</b> 	<b>Split Personality</b> Sober Rover Ft. Lauderdale, FL Unpredictability is the name of the game. Even Madonna was put to shame. Driving energy will make you insane. Fantasy and illusion will take you to change. • 45 min • Alternative Rock • Pass the Hat	<b>SEE THE MASTER SCHEDULE BOARD</b>	<b>OUTDOOR</b>



OUR ARTWORK	OUR STORY	OUR TIMES	OUR VENUE
	<b>Suspect! A Game of Murder</b> by Lori Dungey, Ian Forsyth, Ken Roberts, Richard Side SAK Theatre Orlando, FL A loosely scripted/improv comedy murder mystery where no one (except the murder- er) knows who done it until the very end. Also see SAK's "AAAThe Big Finish" and "TheatreSports™." • Loosely scripted come- dy murder mystery • 90 min. • \$8	SAT 4/13 @ 12:20- 1:50 SUN 4/14 @ 6:10- 7:40 MON 4/15 @ 8:10- 9:40 WED 4/17 @ 11:25- 12:55A THU 4/18 @ 5:00- 6:30 FRI 4/19 @ 7:30-9:00 SAT 4/20 @ 9:40- 11:10	<b>RED</b>
	<b>Tch Tch Tch Tch</b> by Moin Aali Baig Nth - (India) Hyderabad, India An intense hour long live art experience on the theme "contemporary Indian Homosapien in the midst of an unending chaotic world order moving towards the end of the century". • Multi Media • 60 min • \$3 • WARNING: Adult Themes	SAT 4/13 @ 12:45A- 1:45A SUN 4/14 @ 6:55-7:55 TUE 4/16 @ 8:45-9:45 THU 4/18 @ 4:50-5:50 FRI 4/19 @ 1:50-2:50 SAT 4/20 @ 5:50-6:50 SUN 4/21 @ 12:15- 1:15	<b>BLUE</b>
	<b>Teenage 42</b> Glenn St. Jon Winnipeg, Canada A middle age rebel on a musical fling (couldn't afford the Harley.) Avant Folk. Somewhere between Wierd Al and Zappa. • Musical Theatre with Audience Participation • 35 min. • Pass the Hat	<b>SEE THE MASTER SCHEDULE BOARD</b>	<b>OUTDOOR</b>
	<b>TheatreSports™ Tournament of Champions</b> by SAK Theatre SAK Theatre Orlando, FL Teams vs Teams!! Comedy vs Comedy!! The superbowl of Improv except it's not boring, there's less injuries and commer- cials are cheaper!! Also see SAK's "AAAA - The Big Finish" and "Suspect." • Improv Comedy Competition • 75 min. • \$8	FRI 4/12 @ 12:40A- 1:55A SAT 4/13 @ 3:45-5:00 WED 4/17 @ 9:25- 10:40 THU 4/18 @ 10:05- 11:20 FRI 4/19 @ 4:45-6:00 SAT 4/20 @ 12:15A- 1:30A SUN 4/21 @ 6:45-8:00	<b>PURPLE</b>
<b>Variete Internationale</b>	<b>Variete Internationale</b> by: Zaripov Cypress Gardens Russia/Winter Haven, FL New Variete Internationale. This highly acclaimed European acrobatic show adds four new acts for 1996. Enjoy a zany mix of contagious humor and amazing acrobat- ics. • 30 min. • Acrobatic Clowning • Free	SAT 4/20 @ 6:00 - 6:30 SUN 4/21 @ 4:05 - 4:35	<b>KIDS FRINGE</b>

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OUR ARTWORK	OUR STORY	OUR TIMES	OUR VENUE
Variete Internationale	Variete Internationale by: Zaripov Cypress Gardens Russia/Winter Haven, FL New Variete Internationale. This highly acclaimed European acrobatic show adds four new acts for 1996. Enjoy a zany mix of contagious humor and amazing acrobatics. • 30 min. • Acrobatic Clowning • Free	SEE THE MASTER SCHEDULE BOARD	OUTDOOR
	War of the Currents by: Robert Sheely Orlando Science Center Orlando, FL He touches our lives every day yet you may never have heard his name. Come witness the courage and determination of Nikola Tesla—father of our modern system of electricity. • 30 min • Science Theatre • \$3/Free to Orlando Science Center Members	FRI 4/12 @ 10:05-10:35 SAT 4/13 @ 1:35A-2:05A FRI 4/19 @ 9:40-10:10 SAT 4/20 @ 2:50-3:20 SUN 4/21 @ 3:05-3:35	RED
we need a book deal, Elvis said so! 	We Need A Book Deal, Elvis Said So! by: E. George Betz The Actors Group Orlando, FL Elvis! Keating! Hoffa? The Witness Protection Program or just a bunch of lunatics? You decide after seeing this rousing comedy by Native Floridian E. George Betz. • 40 min • Comedy • WARNING: Adult themes • \$6	FRI 4/12 @ 1:20A-2:00A SAT 4/13 @ 11:25-12:05A SUN 4/14 @ 2:15-2:55 MON 4/15 @ 10:25-11:05 WED 4/17 @ 5:20-6:00 FRI 4/19 @ 9:20-10:00 SAT 4/20 @ 3:05-3:45	BLUE
WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS???	What are the Implications? by: K. Riley & the Implications Left Past Mercy Street Orlando, FL Consider the implications of a girl, a guitar, a beatbox and an arsenal of tunes from the dashboard radio of any car, America. You'll sing, you'll dance, you'll throw mints into the air. • 30 min. • Music, Audience Participation • Pass the Hat	SEE THE MASTER SCHEDULE BOARD	OUTDOOR
 "OH, MOM, YOU NEVER LIKE ANYONE I BRING HOME"	Women Who Love Way Too Much by: Laura Mahaney, Corinne Clawson, Lindy Langlois Self Help Theatre Orlando, FL A woman determined to change her psycho killer "boyfriend" into Mr. Right. • Comedy • 60 min • \$4	FRI 4/12 @ 8:15-9:15 SAT 4/13 @ 4:30-5:30 SUN 4/14 @ 5:20-6:20 MON 4/15 @ 11:40-12:40A THU 4/18 @ 3:10-4:10 SAT 4/20 @ 9:30-10:30 SUN 4/21 @ 5:05-6:05	BLUE



## APPENDIX K. FRINGE BUTTONS THROUGH THE YEARS















## APPENDIX L. PROGRAMMING FOR THE COVINGTON FRINGE

Local programming for the Covington Fringe Festival included stage and screen actor Danny Hanemann's repertoire of dramatic readings ranging from Shakespeare to spicier fare by Shel Silverstein, New Orleans native Mark McLaughlin's one-man show about actor John Barrymore, a one-woman show by a Madisonville actress entitled "Life as a Grownup" - an original staged production by Jackie McKenney and Cutting Jenkie, and a series of poetry readings led by St. Tammany Parish poets Ian Schoen and Lauren Clark.

National programming included Tod Kimbro's "Electra at the Weiner Stand." An improv comedy show that was presented by the sketch-comedy troupe, *THEM*, and the Orlando-based comedy group, *Poster Child*, who brought a show called "LOVE: A Grave Mental Disease."

## APPENDIX M. OIFF FESTIVAL STATISTICS 2017-2021

2021 Orlando Fringe - Festival Stats					
	2017	2018	2019	2021	2019
Paid Admissions	39741	37216	38977	27261	-30.06%
Event	48777	45746	47427	27987	-40.99%
Attendance	10000	11000	11100	4000	-63.96%
Attendance	8673	12500	14125	11500	-18.58%
Volunteers	450	452	450	155	-65.56%
Staff and	300	262	254	292	14.96%
Performing	1748	1850	1000	780	-22.00%
Performing			100	50	-50.00%
Stage Artists	400	420	417	275	-34.05%
# of VF Artists	52	60	75	100	33.33%
Total Attendance	70400	72290	74948	45139	-39.77%
Ticketed Artists	\$462,427	\$405,853	\$423,875	\$271,546	-36%
Pay to Artists				\$5,309	100%
VF Artists	\$5,603	\$9,250	\$9,677	\$1,195	-88%
KF Artists	\$550	\$1,150	\$1,425	\$450	-68%
Outdoor Stage	\$11,255	\$13,300	\$10,150	\$2,500	-75%
Performers	\$0	\$1,100	\$1,100	\$0	-100%
Artists	\$479,835.00	\$430,653.00	\$446,227.00	\$281,000.00	-37%
Buttons Sold	8885	8962	9507	7391	-28.63%
# Art pieces sold	57	72	77	16	-381.25%
Average Payment per artist	\$2,877	\$3,221	\$3,261	\$4,374	25.45%
# of Producing Companies	153	126	130	52	-150.00%
% of House Sold	43%	52.52%	56.76%	78.24%	27.45%
# of Ticketed Performances	930	764	850	416	-104.33%
# of Outdoor Stage Performances	72	86	91	78	-16.67%
# total Kids Fringe Performances			26	28	7.14%
# of Total Performances	1002	850	967	522	-85.25%
# of Soldout Shows*	98	147	157	176	10.80%
Total % Sold Outs	10.54%	19.24%	18.47%	42.31%	56.34%

\*22 of the sold out shows in 2019 were Peevira with 6 total audience potential. So sold outs were 125 without Peevira.

<b>Analysis/Messaging:</b>				
We shattered the record of sold out shows, with 42% of total shows sold out.				
Audience attendance dipped 41%, even though we had 70% less capacity than 2019.				
We paid artists, on average, 25% more than last year.				
Average Percentage capacity of each performance went from 56% to 78.24%.				



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## VITA

Brook Akya Hanemann was born in New Orleans, Louisiana in 1975. She attended the New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts before earning her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theater at the University of Central Florida in 1999. She also earned her Master of Fine Arts from the University of Central Florida in 2004. Her career includes performances in 28 productions, including *Bondage* at the Orlando International Fringe Festival, where she later became associate producer and then executive producer. She founded the Covington Fringe Festival in Covington, Louisiana in 1999. She has directed and produced for over 20 productions. She has teaching experience at the Mississippi University for Women and at Louisiana State University. She worked as the director of theatre and events coordinator for the Tennessee Williams New Orleans Literary Festival. She now serves as Director of Banners, an arts and humanities organization based at McNeese State University in Lake Charles, Louisiana. Brook lives with her husband and two daughters in Calcasieu Parish.