



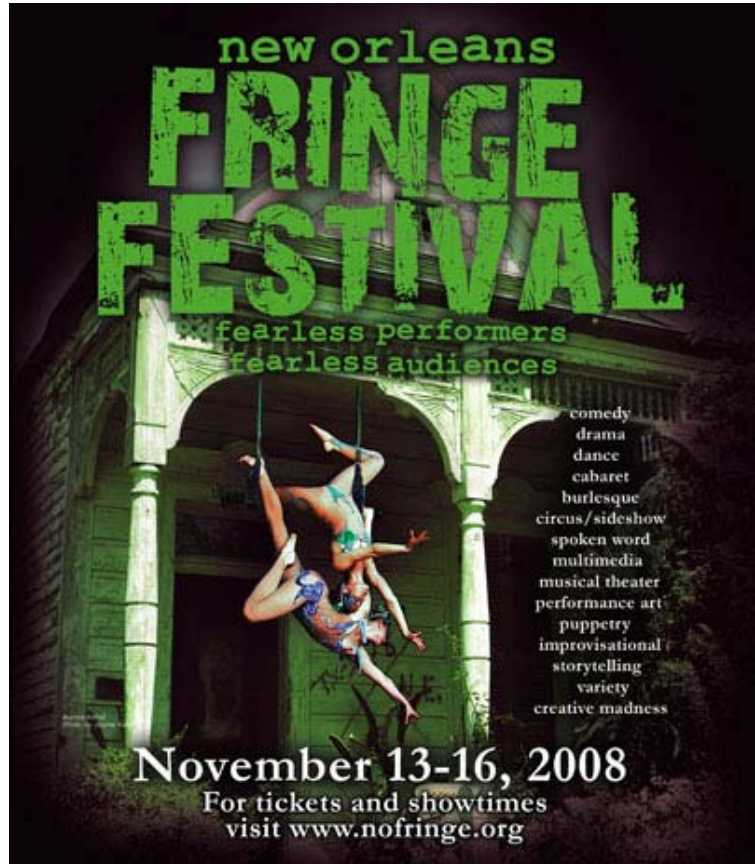
2008 New Orleans Fringe Festival Report

The Festival in Brief

In November 13-16, 2008, New Orleans Fringe hosted its first theater festival: 41 theater groups presented 120 shows at 13 venues primarily in the downtown neighborhoods of Bywater, Marigny and the French Quarter. The shows included drama, comedy, dance, improvisational, multimedia, musical theater, performance art, puppetry, storytelling, spoken word and other creative projects. Every piece presented was an original creative work.

In attendance, the Festival was a great success with over 4400 attendees at the various venues. The Festival itself and the performance groups received rave reviews, with articles in the Times-Picayune, Country Roads, Gambit Weekly, Antigravity, Ambush, and on television stations WWL and WYES.

The center of the Festival was the Circus Tent, an antique big-top at the corner of Press and Dauphine in the Marigny that served as the main box office and social hub for the Festival. People made it their own: XO Gallery next door brought out a couch, coffee table and chairs, a local artist brought his sculptures to display, and local restaurant Elizabeth's served hot food.



What the audience said:

"It was just the kind of event that, in my opinion, this city needs and deserves. I went to 6 shows, all but one of which completely blew my intellectual socks off, drank, danced, discovered new ideas and new art, got inspired, and generally had a ball for four days, all for under \$60."

-- Festival Fan

Tickets were \$7 with the one-time purchase of a festival button (\$3), and attendees could buy a 5-show pass for \$30. Online ticket sales made presales convenient, and people could purchase tickets at any of the venues and at the Circus Tent. One ticket was good for any one show.

The Festival also included a Bring Your Own Venue option, where artists presented site-specific theater pieces and organized their own venues.

There were free events too: a children's show at the Circus Tent, two popular parties—open to the public—on Friday and Saturday night, with live music and circus acts.

One of the best parts of the Festival was the Fringe parade, organized and hosted by the Good Children Social Aid and Pleasure Club on the morning of Saturday, November 15th. Frederick Douglass High School Marching Band led off a tumble of local krewes and Fringe performers along the main thoroughfare St. Claude. The parade involved the entire community in Fringe.

What performers said:

"The New Orleans Fringe Festival was immaculately run and a pleasure to be a part of."

-- Gabrielle Penabaz



Community Support Was Fundamental

The Festival was made possible by the generous volunteers who gave their time and effort: 68 people stepped up to run the box offices and doors at the venues, manage the festival tent, paint signs, set up the tent, take down the tent and handle the many important details.

Another key element was the support from local organizations. The Arts Council of New Orleans, the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation, the Contemporary Arts Center and St. Claude Main Street provided grants; the Bywater Neighborhood Association acted as fiscal agent to procure grants; GoodChildren



Social Aid and Pleasure Club organized and financed the parade; NOCCA leased us their property for the Circus Tent; Ashe Cultural Center lent us chairs; Whole Foods was a key sponsor; Sweet Olive B&B hosted the performer party prior to the Festival; Faubourg Marigny Improvement Association lent us their stage; local press outlets (Gambit, T-P, Antigravity, WWL-TV, WYES, WTUL, WWOZ, Ambush, New Orleans Magazine) were exceptionally generous with their coverage; and many other organizations helped out in myriad ways.

A Successful First Festival

We judge the Festival a success by several standards: audience attendance exceeded our expectations, the quality of performance was repeatedly lauded by reviewers and audience members, we received positive feedback on the organization both from attendees and performers, we made money for performers and local businesses, and we met our budget. Financially, the Fringe Festival was commendably successful, particularly as a first-year effort. The projected budget of roughly \$46,000 was met via income from ticket sales and sponsorships, all costs were covered with a small profit remaining, and the Festival generated a direct ripple economic effect that distributed \$15,200 among 150 performing artists, \$4,000 among a dozen technicians, \$3,600 among ten venues, and \$15,000 among a large variety of local businesses that provide services to the performance arts community. As a scrappy, grassroots startup, we think we can be proud of these numbers.

Most importantly, we achieved our goal: we gave performers a chance to present their riskiest, weirdest, best original work to audiences who had never seen anything like it before. Furthermore, our efforts brought positive effects to a wider community, including technical workers, business owners and audiences from all segments of the New Orleans area and region.

We took a big chance: did New Orleans want a Fringe Festival? The city showed us that it loved Fringe, and the theater community embraced Fringe. In March 2009, the Fringe was awarded a Special Recognition Award by the Big Easy Theater Awards in New Orleans. This award commended all of the organizers, performers, volunteers, theater techs and the outstanding audiences who made the Fringe a success.

Nonetheless, we have plenty of room to improve in 2009: we will expand the festival to include an additional night (Wednesday) and include more groups. We hope to reach a broader cross-section of New Orleanians. We will improve our finances by trimming expenses, purchasing instead of

What the press said:

"The inaugural New Orleans Fringe Festival was full to overflowing with exciting new work — too much for any one person to see and much too much to discuss in the limited space here. Theater suddenly seemed to be everywhere — in scattered oases for aesthetic Crescent City nomads. And the nomads came in droves."

-- Dalt Wonk, Gambit Weekly



renting equipment, and seeking more sponsors and advertisers in order to generate a reserve to finance the Festival every year and pay part-time staff (see *Fringe Continues* for more even bigger ideas).

Economic benefits to the community

The Fringe benefited a range of local performers and businesses with direct economic impacts to the community:

- Ticket sales were split 50/50 with performers. Performers (including musicians and Children's Stage performers) were paid a total of \$15,269.50. Some performers earned as much as \$1064 for their shows. Average payout was \$433.65.
- Venues were paid a total of \$3,600 (many venues also made bar business).
- Venue technicians were paid a total of \$4,465.
- Other local businesses (Gambit, equipment rental companies, merchants) were paid over \$15,000.

Several local merchants—including Louisiana Pizza Kitchen in the French Quarter, Sweet Olive B&B, Elizabeth's and Olde Town Inn—informed us that the Festival business generated business for them.

See the attached P&L for the complete financial picture of the Festival.

2008 Festival Facts

2008 Festival dates: 4 days, November 13-16

Number of performances: 120
performances; most performance were between 30-60 minutes

Number of performing groups: 41
performing groups

Origin of performing groups: 61% were from New Orleans. Other places represented were Madison WI, Dallas, Milwaukee, Pensacola, Paris, Austin, New York, Chicago, Albuquerque, Washington D.C., Richmond and Baltimore.

Genres included: *drama, comedy, dance, improvisational, magic, street theater, multimedia, musical theater, performance art, puppetry, storytelling, variety, cabaret, burlesque, sideshow, other creative madness*



Venues: *Marigny Theatre, Hi-Ho Lounge, Sidearm Gallery, Skull Club, North Rampart Community Center, NOLA Candle Factory, L'Art Noir, Le Chat Noir, On Piety, Dixon Auditorium, Voodoo Mystere, private living room of Dr. George C. Velour, Marquette Theatre*

Fringe Continues

The fall festival is the flagship event, and the 2009 Festival is planned for November 11-15. But the Fringe vision is bigger than the Festival: we plan to transform Fringe into a year-round alternative theater incubator. Activities will include remounting successful Fringe productions throughout the year, providing training workshops for Fringe artists, and hatching new talent in New Orleans through youth events. Our activities so far have included the Adult Petting Zoo, a mini-Fringe event that showcased a successful Fringe Show with several new works (held March 12-14). Pending financing, we are planning Fringe workshops on theater production and management issues and an original children's production.

The Fringe Organization

New Orleans Fringe Inc. is a Louisiana non-profit in the process of attaining 501(c)(3) non-profit status. We were founded by a core group of New Orleanians who are passionate about theater.

Fringe Organizers:

Artistic Director: Dennis Monn, dennis@nofringe.org
Executive Director: Kristen Evans, kristen@nofringe.org
Volunteer Coordinator: Ben Moren, ben@nofringe.org
Development Coordinator: Damon Rosenzweig, damon@nofringe.org
Technical Director: Jeff Zielinski

Festival Partners:

Arts Council of New Orleans
Ashe Cultural Arts Center
Bywater Neighborhood
Association
Entertainment Law Legal
Assistance (ELLA)
Faubourg Marigny
Improvement Association
Good Children Social Aid and
Pleasure Club
Le Petit Theatre
Marigny Theatre
New Orleans Contemporary
Arts Center
New Orleans Jazz and Heritage
Foundation
NOCCA
NOLA Candle Factory
Sidearm Gallery
St. Claude Arts District (SCADNOLA)
St. Claude Main Street Project
XO Gallery



Festival Sponsors: Whole Foods, Salvatierra Imports, Louisiana Pizza Kitchen in the French Quarter, Olde Town Inn, The Joint, Sweet Olive Bed & Breakfast

Mission

New Orleans Fringe *nurtures emerging performing arts* in New Orleans by organizing events that create opportunities for artists to develop and present innovative theater. *We bring fearless performers to fearless audiences.*

Vision

New Orleans Fringe *catalyzes artistic, economic and community development* by presenting fun, fearless and affordable theater and creating ties between artists, audiences, businesses and local organizations.

Artistic Expression

New Orleans has always been a city that embraces artists, where creativity has flourished and the avant-garde has gravitated. These are the roots of the New Orleans Fringe – theater of the wild, weird, fresh, and original. Anything can be performed: we let the audiences decide what is excellent, astonishing or brilliantly insane.

Community Strengthening

The New Orleans Fringe is a year-round community connector: we bring venues, resources, artists and audiences together for events that contribute to the cultural strengthening and renewal of New Orleans. We do this through several activities:

- the annual Festival
- year-round events
- outreach programs
- theater training workshops

Cultural Economic Development

The New Orleans Fringe contributes to the local and regional cultural economy by:

- attracting regional, national and international theater groups and audiences to the city during the festival and events
- generating income for local artists and venues through ticket sales and fees
- providing emerging artists with opportunities to showcase their talent and exposure to launch their work
- nurturing the growing pool of creative and technical talent in New Orleans and Louisiana in order to complement and enhance mainstream cultural economic development initiatives.



Values

Fringe is fun, but it's a lot of work. We are doing it because we believe in:

- Freedom of expression

- Diversity of perspective
- Institutional transparency
- Organizational efficiency
- Inclusiveness
- Community
- Fearlessness



New Orleans Fringe Inc.
Profit & Loss
 January through December 2008

	Jan - Dec 08
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Expense	
Bank Service Charges	150.45
Equipment Rental	4,151.96
Insurance	
Equipment Insurance	470.50
Event Liability Insurance	1,186.50
Total Insurance	1,657.00
Licenses and Permits	547.00
Meals and Entertainment	46.12
Miscellaneous	
Email Marketing	97.42
Festival Marketing and Advertis	7,702.07
Festival Party Supplies	265.53
Festival Photography	500.00
Festival Tent Expenses	1,554.21
Merchandise	2,277.13
Office Supplies	683.95
Ticket Printing	227.31
Venue Materials	1,304.50
Volunteer Supplies	103.23
Web Site Hosting	153.35
Total Miscellaneous	14,868.70
Postage and Delivery	178.83
Printing and Reproduction	574.31
Professional Fees	
Legal Fees	30.00
Musicians	800.00
Performers	
BYOV Venues	129.00
Children's Tent	1,200.00
Fringe Venues	13,140.50
Total Performers	14,469.50
Technical Consultant	1,000.00
Theater Technicians	3,465.00
Total Professional Fees	19,764.50
Rent	
Venues	3,600.00
Total Rent	3,600.00
Telephone	344.63
Total Expense	45,883.50
Net Ordinary Income	-45,883.50
Other Income/Expense	
Other Income	
BYOV Fees	833.00
Donations	175.00
Festival Application Fees	1,875.00
Fundraisers	700.00
Grants	7,482.50
Sponsorships	3,000.00
Ticket and Button Sales	33,600.20
Total Other Income	47,665.70
Total Other Income	47,665.70
Net Other Income	47,665.70
Net Income	1,782.20