

Personal Statement – Joshua Beaumont

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe has been the foundation of my professional life and remains the most significant platform for my creative and commercial work. I would be honoured to contribute my insight and experience as a Board member, bringing a deep-rooted understanding of the festival from both an artistic and operational perspective, developed over more than a decade of committed participation.

My first experience of the Fringe was as a student—young and inspired by the scale and energy of the world's largest arts festival. I returned as an early-career producer with Seabright Productions, one of the largest independent producers at the Fringe. I worked across a dozen shows per season, developing a comprehensive knowledge of how to deliver work successfully in a high-pressure, high-competition environment. These were formative years where I honed my understanding of marketing, sales and technical delivery at the Fringe.

Today, I am an independent commercial producer running The Production Garden, where the Fringe is the cornerstone of our year. It's our creative R&D lab, marketplace, and springboard for developing new work and forging global partnerships. We produced *Why I Stuck A Flare Up My Arse For England*, which won the Holden Street Theatres Award and the Adelaide Fringe Award before transferring to Australia. This year, we return with Ben Weatherill's new play *Motorhome Marilyn*, starring Michelle Collins, alongside a comedy show and a four-hander play expanding into a larger venue.

My work spans all four major venues as well as a diverse range of performance spaces from 50-seat black boxes to 800-seat houses. I understand the Fringe from the ground up, having worked in nearly every capacity: from flyering and front-of-house in my earliest days to leading future life negotiations for Olivier Award-winning shows that began at the fringe such as *Showstopper! The Improvised Musical*.

Beyond the festival itself, I bring a broad commercial producing background including West End and touring work through David Pught Ltd (Shirley Valentine starring Sheridan Smith and Olivier Award Winning *Pride and Prejudice** (*Sort Of), Bill Kenwright Ltd (*Heathers*, *Rain Man*, *Foxfinder*), I have been supported by Stage One's New Producers Bursary and now mentor on the same scheme.

In addition to my producing work, I serve as a trustee of Lichfield Garrick Theatre, a role that has deepened my understanding of board governance, strategic oversight, and the responsibilities involved in stewarding a publicly facing cultural organisation. I've been part of discussions shaping long-term artistic vision, financial planning, and audience development—experience directly relevant to the Fringe Society's own priorities and challenges. This role has given me a clear understanding of the balance between governance and operational delivery, as well as the importance of advocacy, transparency, and stakeholder engagement.

The Fringe is more than an event to me—it's a living, breathing ecosystem of experimentation and ambition. It has shaped my values as a producer: resilience, adaptability, and championing new voices. I have developed, mentored, and collaborated with artists at all stages of their careers, and I remain deeply committed to ensuring the Fringe remains open, accessible, and sustainable for future generations.

The Fringe is at a turning point. Financial pressures, accessibility, diversity of programming are urgent and complex issues. As someone who has navigated these firsthand, I understand the daily realities faced by artists, producers, and venues. I believe I can provide a constructive, empathetic, and entrepreneurial voice to the Board. I am particularly passionate about developing clearer support pathways for independent producers, improving transparency around venue practices, and future-proofing the Fringe's infrastructure to allow it to thrive without losing its spirit of creative risk-taking.

In joining the Board, I bring an independent producer's insight, a collaborative approach, and a track record of making things happen. I am used to balancing creative ambition with practical delivery and would bring this same mindset to Board-level conversations—championing the festival's founding principles while advocating for innovation and improvement.

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe has given me a career. It has challenged, inspired, and sustained me. It remains the highlight of my year, and I am eager to give back to the organisation that made all this possible. I am confident that my lived experience across the spectrum of the Fringe—from student volunteer to independent producer—and my board-level understanding as a theatre trustee would bring a grounded and valuable perspective to the Fringe Society Board, and I would be proud to play a role in shaping its future.

Joshua Beaumont – Participant Statement

I first attended the Edinburgh Festival Fringe as a student for two weeks, instantly captivated by its scale and creative energy. Since then, it has become the anchor of my year as a theatre producer. I went on to work with one of the largest independent producers at the Fringe, regularly producing over ten shows per season. It was a formative training ground, giving me hands-on experience across all aspects of the festival — from flyering on the Mile to managing large-scale productions.

Now as an independent commercial producer, I return each year, developing new shows and forging connections with artists, venues, and collaborators. The Fringe is not just a platform — it's my creative home. My work spans all four major venues as well as everything from intimate 50-seaters to 800-seat houses. I know the mechanics,

rhythms, and demands of the Fringe inside out and thrive in its uniquely challenging environment.

A recent highlight was producing *Why I Stuck A Flare Up My Arse For England*, which won the Holden Street Theatre Award and went on to win the Adelaide Fringe Award after transferring to Australia. This year, I'm producing *Motorhome Marilyn*, a new play by Ben Weatherill starring Michelle Collins, alongside a comedy show and a returning four-hander in a larger venue.

From student spectator to professional producer, my journey through the Fringe has shaped my entire career. I'm now at the coal face, making work happen — and it remains the highlight of my year.