

Our picks for an adventurous Melbourne Fringe experience

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To fully experience a fringe festival, you need to plunge into the outrageous and the unusual.



This year's Melbourne Fringe Festival once again offers a smorgasbord of performing arts events. With so many shows on offer, choosing what to see can be a challenge. No doubt, if you had the time and money, you would attend as many events as humanly possible. For most of us, however, the reality of the situation is that we need to make selective decisions. So we ask: Which show will be good? What is this venue like? Who is this artist? And when we are happy with our answers we pick the shows which appear to be high quality.

But we at ArtsHub implore you: forget about your selective decision making. Take the risk. Choose a show that seems completely beyond your comfort zone and personal

boundaries. It's difficult choosing which events to go to, and yet it's even harder to lose yourself in the forest of avant-garde and amateur performances of Fringe's programming. But what's exciting about a Fringe Festival is that it runs on an open access model: any artist or company can register their show. It can be almost impossible to determine a show's content and quality; you just have to go and experience it. 'But that's entirely the point. Fringe is a risk. Fringe is an adventure', says Richard Watts in his ArtsHub article [on the curation of Fringe Festivals \(http://www.artshub.com.au/news-article/opinions/arts/is-it-still-fringe-if-its-curated-196461\)](http://www.artshub.com.au/news-article/opinions/arts/is-it-still-fringe-if-its-curated-196461).

This is where we step in to help you out. Within each performance category of the festival, we've given you a couple of options. We think these are shows that are bizarre and thought provoking. These are our adventurous picks for the Melbourne Fringe Festival.



Special Events

Potion (<http://www.melbournefringe.com.au/fringe-festival/show/potion/>), dining with the scent of sins, is part of the *Sensorium* (<http://www.melbournefringe.com.au/fringe-festival/show/sensorium/>) exhibition being held at Red Gallery in North Fitzroy from 26–29 September. This evening will stimulate your senses as *Potion* offers a [scent based dining experience \(http://performing.artshub.com.au/news-article/feature/performing-arts/art-thats-on-the-nose-196680\)](http://performing.artshub.com.au/news-article/feature/performing-arts/art-thats-on-the-nose-196680), while artistic works featured in *Sensorium* will engage with all your other senses. And if you fancy free events, keep in touch with the City of Stonnington on Twitter as *ArtsBurst* (<http://www.chapelstreet.com.au/arts-burst-pop-up-festival-2013/>)—a small pop-up festival—takes place in the Windsor area of Chapel St between 4–5 October.



Performance

Following the news of [Paul Yore's child porn charges \(http://visual.artshub.com.au/news-article/features/visual-arts/porn-or-persecution-the-real-paul-yore-story-196610\)](http://visual.artshub.com.au/news-article/features/visual-arts/porn-or-persecution-the-real-paul-yore-story-196610), the seizure of his work and the recent election of a conservative government, we're going to suggest some controversial Melbourne Fringe theatre. *Poly* (<http://www.melbournefringe.com.au/fringe-festival/show/poly/>) visits Melbourne for the first time as small independent theatre company, [The Cutting Room Floor](#)

<http://thecuttingroomfloor.com.au/Hello-Hi-and-Welcome>), bring their successful first production all the way from Perth. This play explores a polyamorous relationship between three women, a concept that challenges conventional relationships. The performance will be held at the Ballroom space in Revolt Melbourne from 1–5 October.

The other interesting performance, in which audience members have previously walked out in previews (<http://www.mka.org.au/program/previous-production/2013-2/mka-pop-up-adelaide/unsex-me-adelaide>), is MKA Theatre's production *UnSex Me* (<http://www.melbournefringe.com.au/fringe-festival/show/mka-un-sex-me/>). The company describes itself as 'The Theatre of New Writing (<http://www.mka.org.au/>)' and is known for creating daring explorations of theatre and collaborating with emerging writers. Mark Wilson, the sole actor, plays an actress of the same name who shows no restraint. Nor does the production: sexually explicit, it delves into black comedy and gender-bending. This daring performance is on from 29 September—5 October at Son of Loft in the Lithuanian Club on Errol St, North Melbourne.



Comedy

Inside the Egg (<http://www.melbournefringe.com.au/fringe-festival/show/inside-the-egg/#>): *The Life of Anne Geddes' Prisoner Children*, is our comedy pick for this year's festival. This absurdist performance is summed up beautifully in its description on the Melbourne Fringe website: 'three adult-age bubs break ... the silence on a life crammed inside prop vegetables, the peculiar loneliness of cherubic servitude, and (mal)adjusting to the real world after it was all over'. Held at pop-up venue The Tuxedo Cat from 18–24 September, this is a must-see. Otherwise, if you're a comedy extremist, *The Big HOO-HAA! Melbourne* (<http://www.hoohaamelbourne.com.au/>) is offering 24 hours of uninterrupted improvised comedy (<http://www.melbournefringe.com.au/fringe-festival/show/24-hour-hoo-haa/>) from 4–5 October at the Czech Club in Queensbury St, North Melbourne.



Cabaret

Winner of ArtsHub's 2012 Best Emerging Group (<http://performing.artshub.com.au/news-article/news/performing-arts/lady-sings-it-better-192978>) and both the Critics' Choice and People's Choice awards, *Lady Sings It Better* (<http://www.melbournefringe.com.au/fringe->

[festival/show/lady-sings-it-better/](#) is a cabaret performance that entertainingly examines pop culture songs through a feminist lens. ‘This is Michael Jackson, AC/DC, Nine Inch Nails, Leonard Cohen, Usher and Queen as you’ve never heard them before’, says the Melbourne Fringe’s website. The performance runs from 28 September—5 October at the Ballroom space in the Lithuanian Club.



Visual Art

[Innocence of the Apocalypse \(http://www.melbournefringe.com.au/fringe-festival/show/innocence-of-the-apocalypse/\)](#) verges on a live art exhibition, fusing audience participation with the creation of a post-apocalyptic immersive environment created via projections, artwork and unsettling sound design. Held in a secret location, participants must RSVP in order to attend this free event, taking place between 6:30pm and 9pm on 27–28 September.

Tying in with the festival program’s ‘digital look’ this year, our second visual arts pick examines digital media—but not in a way you would expect. [Digital Outlawed \(http://www.melbournefringe.com.au/fringe-festival/show/digital-outlawed/\)](#) is a new media work that creates a world without the existence of computers at the Raglan Street Gallery, North Melbourne, from 19–30 September.



Live Art

Our picks for this year’s live art exhibitions are both participatory. [19 points of Connection \(http://www.melbournefringe.com.au/fringe-festival/show/19-points-of-connection/#\)](#) draws upon a quote by Enrique Penalosa for its inspiration: ‘We know a lot about the ideal environment for a happy whale or a happy mountain gorilla. We’re far less clear about what constitutes an ideal environment for a happy human being.’ This work invites audience members to engage with each other and to use a selection of 19 posters to create an ideal environment for a human being. This event takes place at the City Of Melbourne Bowls Club on 18 September, 20 September and 26 September.

If you want to be more intimate with a stranger, then [Sex Poetry Booth: Sloppy Seconds \(http://www.melbournefringe.com.au/fringe-festival/show/sex-poetry-booth-sloppy-](#)

seconds/) is the live art event for you. Participants engage with 'sex-text' expert Dosh Luckwell, winner of WA's Best Emerging Artist at the 2012 Fringe World Awards, to create personal sex poetry that can be taken back home for your own private reading. This poetry art installation was also the winner for Best Live Art at last year's Melbourne Fringe Festival. Get sexy at the Fringe Club in North Melbourne from today.



Music

Once again linking to the digital elements of this year's program, *Momentum: live* (<http://www.melbournefringe.com.au/fringe-festival/show/momentum-live/>) is a project initiated by Nat Grant—a multi-instrumentalist, sound artist and composer, and currently completing a PhD in music composition at the Victorian College of the Arts—who records everyday sounds and mixes them into unique tracks. Adding electronic sampling and acoustic sound recordings, she creates soundscapes that combine natural and digital environments. Nat will be playing these tracks at the Conduit Arts Space in Fitzroy from 19–22 September.



Circus

...We Should Quit (<http://www.melbournefringe.com.au/fringe-festival/show/we-should-quit/>) adds a comedic energy to a circus performance that incorporates Chinese pole, corde lisse and acrobatics. This performance, held at the Gasworks Arts Park theatre from 1–5 October, is set in an office space and examines the chaos surrounding a break in habitual routine. Also held at the Gasworks theatre, *Blindscape* (<http://www.melbournefringe.com.au/fringe-festival/show/blindscape/>) offers a circus performance with the addition of interactive digital media. Audience members will be provided with iPhones that have a *Blindscape* designed app and will use it from the very moment they enter the performance space. The concept aims to blur the boundaries between virtual and real spaces and is running from 24–28 September.



Photo: Ellen David

Dance

Parallax (<http://www.melbournefringe.com.au/fringe-festival/show/parallax/>) is a dance performance that also uses an interactive digital medium. The Fringe website describes it as taking the dancer and the audience through digital spaces and environments that merge with 3D props which become dance partners. This performance takes place at The Substation workshop space in Newport from 26–29 September. 3D glasses are provided.



Kids

Winner of the 2010 Best Family Show at Melbourne Fringe, *Kapow!* (<http://www.melbournefringe.com.au/fringe-festival/show/kapow/>) returns to Gasworks Arts Park this year. Interactive and accessible for all ages, this performance with a ‘comic book aesthetic’ examines the roles of superheroes and questions our own identities and morals. Catch it on 1–2 October at Gasworks Arts Park, Albert Park.

Melbourne Fringe Festival

www.melbournefringe.com.au

18 September—6 October

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