

PLEASANCE

A photograph of a stone building with a red-tiled roof and a large rock formation in the background. A yellow sign with the word 'PLEASANCE' and a cartoon character is visible in the foreground.

**“The Best of All
Possible Worlds”**

The Observer

THE PLEASANCE

With an international profile and a network of alumni that reads like a Who's Who of contemporary comedy, drama and entertainment, the Pleasance is a place for the experimental and the new. It is where performers, writers, directors, technicians, producers and the rest of the artistic community can develop ideas and feel fully supported. It is one of the biggest and most highly respected theatre venues at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe and on the London Fringe circuit.

The Pleasance is both a Festival Organisation of 27 temporary venues across three sites and a London theatre and development centre in Islington, with three permanent performances spaces which operate in London year round. The Pleasance in London and Edinburgh are entirely symbiotic. The Pleasance Theatre Trust is not-for-profit, is a registered charity in England, Wales and Scotland, operating since 1985. The charity receives no regular public subsidy.

**“The Pleasance is not just a venue,
it has a philosophy of passionate
support for the artists it presents.”**

Miriam Margoyles

**“The Pleasance is
the centre of the
cultural universe”**
The Scotsman



**“What the Pleasance
means to me is an
instant emotional
recall of excitement”**

Miranda Hart,
Comedian



PLEASANCE IN EDINBURGH

The Pleasance has become world renowned for spotting great talent. Each year, we mount an ambitious programme of theatre, comedy, circus, cabaret, dance, music and family shows. With over seventy percent of the programme being debut or new productions, in venues under 200 seat capacity. This, often award winning, programme is now considered one of the entertainment industry's most important market places for new theatre, television and other festivals.



PLEASANCE COURTYARD

For many the Pleasance Courtyard is the very heart of the Fringe and few people leave the city without at least one visit, whether it be for theatre, comedy, children's shows, or simply to take in the irresistible atmosphere. Surrounding the famous cobble squares and overlooking the picturesque Arthur's Seat, the Courtyard houses 17 performance spaces, 6 bars and 3 cafés. Open from 10am until late into the night, it is one of the only venues to offer the true festival day out. In 2019, the Pleasance welcomed 900,000 visitors.

“My love of the Pleasance is because it’s just got a great vibe.”

**Tim Minchin,
Comedian & Composer**



PLEASANCE DOME

Since 2000, The Pleasance Dome and its 5 performance spaces has fast become the central hub of the entire Festival. As evening falls the atrium and palm court is transformed into one of the festival’s busiest nightspots, with live shows, music, food and drink keeping the crowds buzzing until 5am. The Dome is also home to the famous Brooke’s Club, the original VIP bar of the festival. Performers, press and industry professionals share the membership with the stars of tomorrow doing deals over a drink and game of pool.

PLEASANCE AT THE EICC

Launched in 2016, Pleasance at EICC in Edinburgh’s West End offers a home to some of the festival’s most ambitious and technically complex productions. With performance spaces ranging from 100 to 1300 seats, the venue offers multiple opportunities for large scale international touring shows. Shows include Cirque ELOIZE, Cirque BERSERKE, and Freedom Ballet of Ukraine

PLEASANCE IN LONDON

The Pleasance's year-round home in London, Islington, has provided some of the leading talents in the theatrical, comedy and local community with a platform to develop work, hone their craft and grow new audiences.

The artistic programme at Pleasance London runs in parallel with Pleasance Edinburgh, with curated Comedy, Theatre and Family programmes. Pleasance London comprises **three performance spaces** - the **Main House**, the **Studio** and **Downstairs**. With capacities ranging from **54 - 230 seats**, these fully flexible venues provide performing companies with excellent facilities to develop and present a large number of productions and events.

“Being a London Associate has been an invaluable step in our careers. The team at Pleasance generously tuned into our personal goals and helped them flourish.”

Burnt Lemon,
Associate Artist



PLEASANCE FUTURES

Pleasance Futures, the artist development strand of the Pleasance is at the very centre of everything we do, acting as an incubator for bold new artists to make their mark and take risks. Pleasance Futures is committed to discovering and supporting the most exciting new voices, nurturing the development of emerging companies, young performers, new writers and new producers.

At the Pleasance we continue to work tirelessly on behalf of artists, performers and those behind the scenes, to successfully mentor career paths that, without support, may never come to light.

“A lot of theatres talk about encouraging new work and new talent but the Pleasance really does it.”

David Mitchell
Actor, Comedian and Writer





THE CHARLIE HARTILL SPECIAL RESERVE

The Charlie Hartill Special Reserve is a designated fund to support emerging theatre makers and comedians in bringing their work to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. The fund was established in 2004 in memory of Charlie Hartill and consists of three strands - the Theatre Reserve, the Comedy Reserve and the Generate Fund.

COMEDY RESERVE

The Comedy Reserve supports new comic talent on the Fringe by selecting four emerging comedians and presenting them in a nightly mixed bill show in Edinburgh, without any financial risk. Previous recipients include Jack Whitehall, Jamali Maddix, Holly Walsh, Daniel Rigby, Roisin Conaty, Lou Sanders and Brett Goldstein.





THEATRE RESERVE

The Theatre Reserve provides a young theatre company with the rare and extraordinary opportunity to present a fully produced, groundbreaking performance at the Festival. Support includes financing, mentoring and programming options in our London transfer run post-Fringe. Shows include Olivier award winning *Flesh and Bone*.



GENERATE FUND FOR UK-BASED BLACK, ASIAN AND GLOBAL MAJORITY ARTISTS

The Generate Fund for UK-based Black, Asian and Global Majority Artists provides financing, mentorship and programming opportunities to support UK-based Global Majority artists in bringing their work to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, to support exciting projects that would otherwise not be able to come. Shows include *Block'd Off* and *Made in India Britain*.

"I was 18 when I first performed at the Pleasance, six months into becoming a comedian and they gave me a break through the Charlie Hartill Comedy Reserve. Without the Pleasance finding ways to bring new comic talent to Edinburgh the Fringe wouldn't be quite the same."

Jack Whitehall
Charlie Hartill Comedy
Reserve Recipient 2007

"With the backing and guidance of The Pleasance, we felt free to create something ambitious and inventive, which we were then able to present to a wide audience. It's been hugely beneficial to our development and to all of us individually as artists."

Caitlin McEwan,
Charlie Hartill Theatre
Reserve Recipient 2019

"Taking Patricia to the Fringe with the Pleasance was a real dream. It makes such a difference to feel championed from the start, within a festival where it's easy to get lost. The financial grant alleviated so much pressure from the run and so it felt like we had permission to enjoy ourselves."

Patricia Gets Ready
Creative Team
Generate Fund Recipient
2020/21



NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

At the Pleasance we work with partner theatres across the UK to identify and support exceptional artists and companies local to them who want to take work to the Fringe. Each partner is a leading national producing house, with a commitment to supporting and developing new artists. This programme recognises the extraordinary work being created outside London, and provides tangible support to these companies to present at the Fringe. Together, we hope to make a substantial contribution to develop the next generation of leading theatre-makers and companies.

Current National Partnership theatres include:

- HOME Manchester
- Pitlochry Festival Theatre
- Bristol Old Vic Ferment
- Theatre Royal Plymouth
- Leicester Curve
- Sherman Theatre Cardiff
- York Theatre Royal
- Eden Court Inverness

“It’s brilliant to partner with an organisation like the Pleasance The support of venues and organisations to help the very best emerging work find a platform on this amazing international stage is vital.”

Ben Atterbury,
Producer,
Bristol Old Vic Ferment

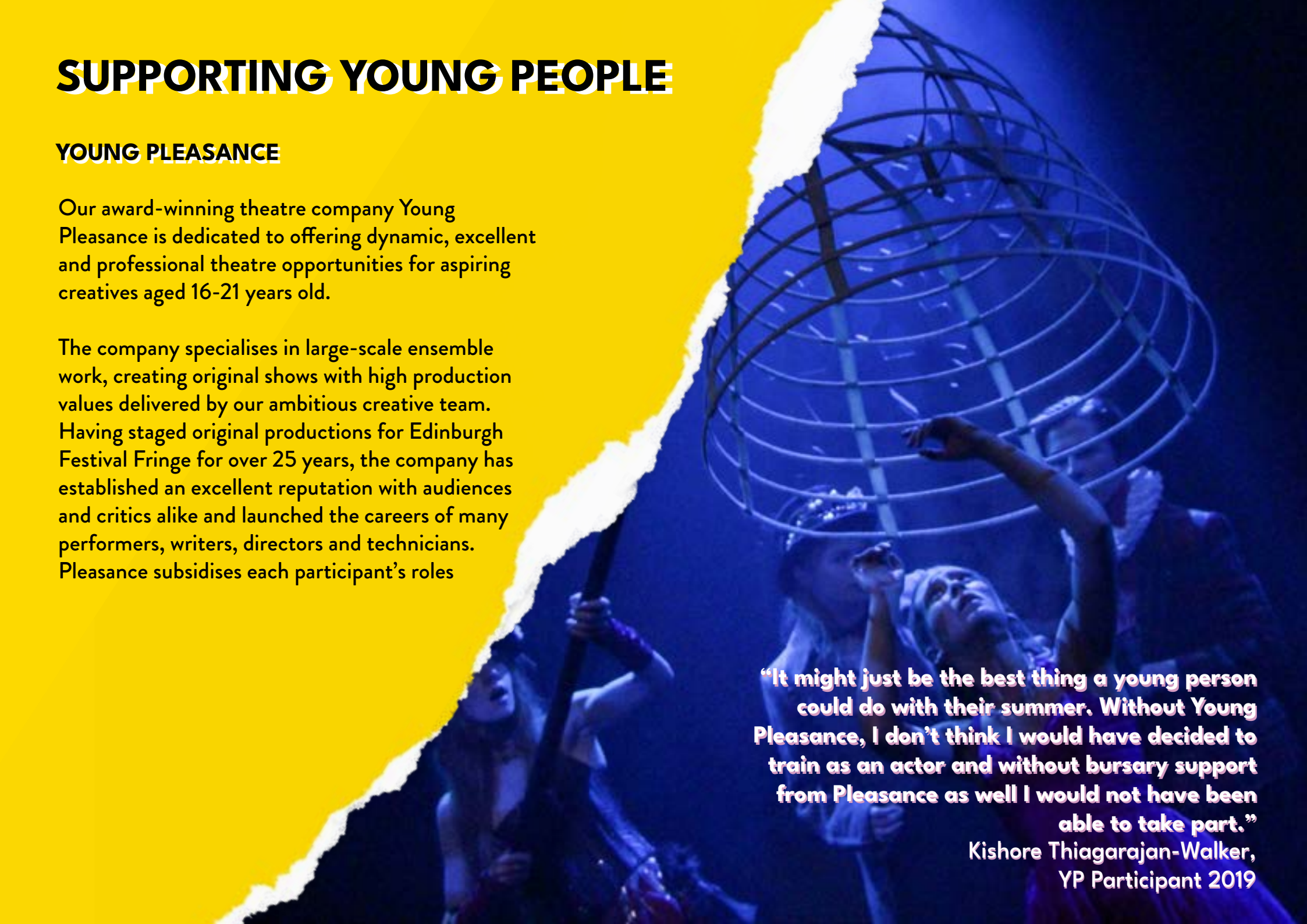


SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE

YOUNG PLEASANCE

Our award-winning theatre company Young Pleasance is dedicated to offering dynamic, excellent and professional theatre opportunities for aspiring creatives aged 16-21 years old.

The company specialises in large-scale ensemble work, creating original shows with high production values delivered by our ambitious creative team. Having staged original productions for Edinburgh Festival Fringe for over 25 years, the company has established an excellent reputation with audiences and critics alike and launched the careers of many performers, writers, directors and technicians. Pleasance subsidises each participant's roles



"It might just be the best thing a young person could do with their summer. Without Young Pleasance, I don't think I would have decided to train as an actor and without bursary support from Pleasance as well I would not have been able to take part."

**Kishore Thiagarajan-Walker,
YP Participant 2019**

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING AND KIDZONE

Over the past decade Pleasance has cemented its position as the place to see the world's best children's and family-friendly shows at Edinburgh Festival Fringe, with over **50,000 tickets sold** to families every year! Each year, the programme brings together adaptations of the best loved children's stories alongside brilliantly original work from exciting new artists.

The fun doesn't stop on-stage at the Pleasance. The Kidzone, our dedicated family area at the heart of the Courtyard, offers a **family-friendly space for arts and crafts activities** - the only

venue on the Fringe that has one. The fantastic programme of practical activities, **suitable for all ages**, include award-winning music workshops, story hours, face painting, and a dedicated arts, crafts and play area (with plenty of toys!).

Our annual **Primary School outreach** initiative also takes place at the Kidzone, where **500 school children** and accompanying adults from some of Edinburgh's most socioeconomically disadvantaged Primary Schools are transported to the Pleasance to see a show, meet the performers and spend time in the Kidzone Art and Craft Tents.



“The Pleasance venues lead the way in terms of children and families.”

The Times

STARTING CAREERS ON AND OFF-STAGE

Aside from our performance opportunities, the Pleasance provides a platform for people from all backgrounds to hone their skills in the creative industries by playing a vital part in the daily operation of the Pleasance's venues. With a focus on training and development, Pleasance provides teaching led by a specially appointed team of Senior Technicians, who each hold notable positions within the industry. A range of additional training and information sessions are offered throughout the festival, providing participants with opportunities to hone in on specific areas of interest through skills and knowledge-sharing based workshops with members of the Festival Management team.

“A great opportunity to work with new people and develop skills that can be used in pursuing a career in technical theatre.”

Stephanie,
Venue Crew



PLEASANCE IN NUMBERS

	2019	2022
Pleasance Performance Spaces	34	32
Performances	5535	5881
Productions	274	280
World Premieres	203	200
Artists & Company Members	2,040	2,009
% of Productions on the Fringe	7%	8%
% of Ticket Sales of the entire Festival Fringe	20%	21%
Award Wins & Nominations	45	38
4 & 5 Star Reviews	760	587
Industry Tickets Issued	10,900	9,144
Social Media Followers	63,973	91,990
Pleasance Visitors	924,680	757,009
Tickets Issued Pleasance London	33,356	19,116
Tickets Issued Pleasance Edinburgh*	560,650	458,988
Visitors to the Edinburgh Fringe	3 Million	2.2 Million
Complimentary Tickets Issued	37,710	31,312
Pleasance Team	223	213
Funding for Pleasance Futures Productions	£103,000	£150,000
Regular Public Subsidy	£0	£0
Years on the Fringe	36	38
ABC1 Earners	84%	84%
Spending Power	Over £100 Million	

*2019 was a record breaking year for The Pleasance.

2022 was the first full festival following the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Top Booking Regions

District	% of Total Bookers
City of Edinburgh	30.7
London	20.9
Rest of Scotland	10.1

Bookers by Country

District	% of Total Bookers
England	41.7
Scotland	40.8
Rest of the UK	1.4
Rest of the World	16.1

“The Pleasance’s credentials are quite beyond reproach, its history of success forms an almost exhaustive list of the best and brightest performers in the UK.”

The Times

**“The Pleasance
is at the very
heart of the
greatest show
on earth”**

Edinburgh Festivals
Magazine

