

## Eleanor Mitchell – Edinburgh Festival, Summer 2015

This summer, thanks to a generous grant from the Pembroke Players' Peter Cook Fund, I was lucky enough to be able to take part in the Edinburgh Fringe Festival as Stage Manager for the CUMTS musical *Pippin*. I had never been involved in theatre before starting at Cambridge; however I have greatly enjoyed discovering all that Cambridge's theatre scene has to offer, and my experience at the Edinburgh Fringe was especially rewarding. Stage Management usually involves sourcing props and being responsible for the health and safety of everyone involved in the show, yet *Pippin* presented these challenges and more. Working with the Director, Production Designer and Technical Director to adapt an elaborate Broadway musical for a Fringe venue, and all the time and space constraints that involves, was an exciting (if at times stressful!) process, requiring plenty of creative thinking and advance preparation. The show also called for some pretty unique props, including rapiers – which were fun to take on the train – and a medieval-style flame torch for the grand finale.

It may be a cliché, but the month I spent working on *Pippin* and living with the rest of the cast and crew at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival was one of most enjoyable and memorable of my life. The atmosphere in the city during the festival was incredible – everyone was so excited to be involved, and the opportunity to see endless numbers of plays, comedy shows and musicals was amazing. There was always something interesting to see, talk about and engage with, exposing me further to new innovative forms of theatre and performance. The chance to take advantage of these opportunities and to create a wonderful show as part of a team of equally wonderful people – many of whom are now close friends – was also one of my favourite things about the experience. That we formed such a strong and close-knit team, working together to make the show a success, only made the month all the more rewarding, allowing me to develop cooperation and communication skills that I can bring to future projects.

I would absolutely recommend the experience to anyone thinking of getting involved with a show going to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival this year – it was such an incredible opportunity, and offered invaluable exposure to different kinds of theatre, helping to inform how I think about drama in the context of my English studies as well as making for a really fun and memorable month!

Eleanor Mitchell  
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Team Pippin on Arthur's Seat