

# FRINGE ARTS

## Following a record-breaking 2025 Philadelphia Fringe Festival, FringeArts announces Winter-Spring 2026 Season and a New Artist Residency Program

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**PHILADELPHIA, PA:** Building on the success of the 2025 Philadelphia Fringe Festival, and under the new leadership of Producing Director and CEO **Nell Bang-Jensen**, **FringeArts** is renewing its commitment to acting as a platform, launchpad, and resource for Philadelphia-based artists whose work deserves to be seen on both a city-wide and national scale. For the first time since before the pandemic, the organization will launch a **Winter-Spring 2026 Season** and a **new artist residency program**, both at its home on the Delaware Riverfront.

“FringeArts is a home for bold artists, projects, and experiments; a place where Philly can come together to celebrate the arts, each other, and the power of community,” said Bang-Jensen. “With these two new programs, FringeArts aims to bolster the vibrant artistic ecosystem already existing in Philly and introduce Philly artists and audiences to works that push the boundary of what's possible in the performing arts.”

The 2025 Philadelphia Fringe Festival saw record-breaking participation from both artists and audiences. Over 1200 performances of 350 shows and events took place during the month of September. Audiences increased 15% from 2024, with more than 35,000 Fringe Festival tickets sold.

In partnership with the Albert M. Greenfield Foundation, FringeArts is proud to announce a new creative residency program: the **Albert M. Greenfield Residency at FringeArts**. This program leverages FringeArts’ resources and space to promote the development of new work in a trust-based selection model. Adjudicated by a panel of artists who represent Philadelphia, the residency is aimed at developing new pieces in line with FringeArts’ overall mission and vision. The goal is to help artists with their process in a way that is not prescriptive. Artists are not required to deliver a specific product at the end of their residency, and are given space, time, money, and mentorship to develop their work. Three companies or artists will be selected for the program’s inaugural year in 2026.

The new **Winter-Spring Season** seeks to bring audiences to FringeArts’ home on the Delaware Riverfront more consistently year-round. This new model moves away from the organization’s previous mini-festival model, which featured weekend-length programs Blue Heaven Comedy Festival and Hand to Hand Circus Festival. Audiences can expect to encounter different types of art and artists experimenting across disciplines. The season model will allow FringeArts to

prioritize depth of support for artists and their works, meeting each individual featured project on its own terms.

The season will feature ***we come to collect: a flirtation with capitalism***, written, co-directed, and performed by Jenn Kidwell; ***Baby Everything***, written and performed by Lee Minora; ***assimilating*** and ***Moving State 1***, choreographed by Hirokai Umeda; and ***Girl Dolls: An American Musical*** created by Pax Ressler & Jackie Soro.

Scratch Nights will also return in 2026. Each of four variety nights will be curated by one of our Fringe Festival Hub partners. Additional Scratch Nights will feature longer-form works-in-progress.

“From Philadelphia premieres, to new musicals, to Fringe Fest favorites, we're thrilled to be presenting and supporting a slate of artists whose work spans genre, disciplines, and borders,” says **Mikaela Boone**, FringeArts' Director of Programming. “Whether you met Fringe through a love of boundary-pushing performance art, because you're an admirer of contemporary dance, or because you wandered into Fringe Bar—there's something for everyone this spring at Fringe.”

## **FringeArts 2026 Winter-Spring Season**

### ***we come to collect: a flirtation with capitalism***

Written, co-directed, and performed by Jenn Kidwell

Thursday January 22, 2026 at 7pm  
Friday January 23, 2026 at 7pm  
Saturday January 24 at 2pm & 7pm

FringeArts, 140 N Columbus Blvd, Philadelphia, PA 19106

OBIE Award-winning artist Jenn Kidwell and ASL artist Brandon Kazen-Maddox invite you to roll in the pigsty of American consumerism. Dark, funny, incisive, and just a little bit misbehaved, Kidwell's interrogation of capitalism and her place within it is an unforgettable, all-inclusive trip into the heart of darkness. Beneath the laugh-out-loud humor is a proposition: fuck work, chase your dreams—believe that you are a miracle.

See the hilarious comedy that startles, delights, and surprises. Come ready to laugh, and leave seeing your worth in a new light.

### ***Baby Everything***

Lee Minora

Thursday, February 26, 2026 at 7pm  
Friday, February 27, 2026 at 7pm  
Saturday, February 28 at 2pm and 7pm

FringeArts, 140 N Columbus Blvd, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Have you seen the news today? Isn't it awful? Is now the best or worst time to be alive? In all of human history? Are you going blind? Maybe you should go to Italy? Will you feel better if you meet a friend for coffee? Should you stop talking to your mom about politics? Should you be the great witness to all the world's suffering? How much do you really want to see? Everything? Are you sure?

Lee Minora, the writer/performer of *Nosejob* and *White Feminist*, brings her hit Fringe Festival show, *Baby Everything*, to the FringeArts stage. This reimagined production invites you to spend a revelatory day in the life of Baby as she tries to stay sane in a world where suffering comes at you faster than you can refresh your feed. Follow her into the ultimate doomscroll in this hilarious, incisive, and savage solo show.

You'll laugh. You'll flinch. You'll feel seen—too seen.

## ***assimilating and Moving State 1***

Hiroaki Umeda

March 14, 2026 at 7pm

March 15, 2026 at 2pm

FringeArts, 140 N Columbus Blvd, Philadelphia, PA 19106

**Hiroaki Umeda's** choreography and eye for digital design have been celebrated throughout Europe, Asia, South America and the U.S. Critically acclaimed for his almost impossibly fluid movement style bordering on street dance – subtle, radical, and provocative – his dance pieces frequently synthesize ultramodern video, dramatic lighting and crackling soundscapes as interlocking components interacting with moving bodies on stage. Now, this slick avant-garde mastermind brings a double bill of his latest cutting-edge projects from Tokyo to Philadelphia. ***Moving State 1***, performed by four protege female dancers from Umeda's **Somatic Field Project** who have fully absorbed his sleek, oiled movements and ***assimilating***, Umeda's signature solo performance, operate within a dance aesthetic where refined physicality merges with cyberart.

The U.S. tour of Hiroaki Umeda: *assimilating* and *Moving State 1* is produced by Japan Society with grant support from the Harkness Foundation for Dance. Additional support is provided by Sowaka.

## ***Girl Dolls: An American Musical***

Pax Ressler & Jackie Soro in partnership with the Bearded Ladies Cabaret

Preview: May 8, 2026 at 7pm

Opening: Saturday, May 9, 2026 at 7pm

Sunday, May 10, 2026 at 2pm and 7pm

Tuesday, May 12, 2026 at 7pm

Wednesday, May 13, 2026 at 7pm (masks required)  
Thursday, May 14, 2026 at 7pm  
Friday, May 15, 2026 at 7pm  
Saturday, May 16, 2026 at 2pm and 7pm  
Sunday, May 17, 2026 at 2pm

FringeArts, 140 N Columbus Blvd, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Join doll enthusiasts and certified 90s kids **Jackie Soro** and **Pax Ressler** as they rifle through their confidential childhood toy chests in ***GIRL DOLLS: The American Musical!*** Presented in collaboration with **The Bearded Ladies Cabaret** and FringeArts, GIRL DOLLS is part tea party, part identity crisis—a deep dive into our country’s favorite doll franchise in search of the stories that got left out of the dollhouse. Through original songs, nostalgic PowerPoints, and serious research™ disguised as musical comedy, Jackie, Pax, and an all-star band rip open the seams of American girlhood to ask: What does your favorite doll reveal about your childhood trauma? Is Samantha Parkington a sleeper agent for the American Project? And most importantly: When everything else about America feels awful, why can’t we let go of their tiny doll hands? Bring your doll, and come ready to laugh, cry, and cringe our collective way down memory lane!

Disclaimer: This project is in no way affiliated with Mattel or the American Girl brand. We pinky-promise that it’s all totally legal!

## ***Scratch Nights***

Monday, January 12, 2026 at 7pm: Co-hosted with Morgan Andrews of Studio 34  
Monday, February 9, 2026 at 7pm: Co-hosted with Cannonball  
Monday, March 23, 2026 at 7pm: Co-hosted with Tanya Morgan of Sawubona Creativity Project  
Monday, April 20, 2026 at 7pm: Co-hosted with Sarah Knittel of DUMB HUB

FringeArts, 140 N Columbus Blvd, Philadelphia, PA 19106

This long-running works-in-progress series is an opportunity for artists and audiences to connect. Each Scratch Night features a handful of artists from across disciplines bringing an informal showing of something they’re working on, from the first spark of something new to an excerpt of a finished piece. Audiences get a front row seat to the artistic process and provide vital feedback that will help with the development of the work.

## **TICKET INFORMATION**

Tickets go on sale to FringeArts Members on December 10 at 10am, and to the general public on December 12 at 10am.

Tickets can be purchased online at [FringeArts.com](https://www.fringearts.com).

## **Albert M. Greenfield Residency at FringeArts**

This program is for Philadelphia-based individual artists or collectives who are developing new work that pushes, redefines, or blurs artistic boundaries. Designed for artists at any stage of their artistic journey, the residency program will support **three projects per year** at any stage of development, from idea generation to final staging.

The three artists selected for this residency will receive residency funding, mentorship opportunities from FringeArts staff and outside voices, access to the FringeArts space to develop their work, and opportunities to connect and cross-pollinate with other artists from their cohort.

The inaugural year of the Albert M. Greenfield Residency at FringeArts will be supported by a grant from the Albert M. Greenfield Foundation, which strengthens the fabric of life in the City of Philadelphia by empowering grantees in areas of arts and culture, education, human services, and civic initiatives.

Applications are open for artists through January 15th. Residencies will begin in summer 2026.