### Can anyone help me set it up?

Yes. There is an "infringement international" Steering Committee (with at least one representative from each infringement festival) that oversees the entire festival circuit, and attempts to support artists and festivals as best as possible. The Committee provides new festivals with consultation, a help-guide, propaganda, samples of venue contracts, artist application forms, and media and web support.

You can read a more detailed guidebook about how to create a festival at the main website for all infringement festivals:

### www.infringementfestival.com

#### What else do I need to do?

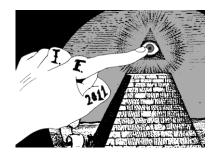
To get involved in the infringement movement and start a festival in your town, or for more information, please don't hesitate to contact us. When you are ready to connect your community's infringement festival to the global network, please send infringement international the following information:

- Your city or community
- Contact person
- Public contact details (email, phone, address, fax, website, etc.)
- E-mail address to be added to the Steering Committee's listserve
- Suggested dates for your festival
- What type of support you need (web, media, propaganda, etc.)

Email: optatif@gmail.com Phone: (514) 842-1467

Once we have received these details, your community will be added to the infringement festival circuit and listed on our website!





# Does your community need an



## FESTIVAL?

www.infringementfestival.com

### infringement festival

Celebrating Freedom of Expression, activist performances and a broad range of eclectic, independent, and controversial art of all forms, the infringement festival is modelled on the original 1947 Edinburgh Fringe, which was a DIY (do-it-yourself) artistic protest against corporate elitism and exclusion of local artists.

At the infringement festival, artists and audiences of all backgrounds are invited to create a charged environment where people come together to take chances, push boundaries, explore uncharted territory, and to do so without corporate interference or having to pay any fees. Designed as an arts democracy, the Infringement Festival empowers communities, artists, and audiences to take charge of the culture and use it as a tool for social justice.

The infringement welcomes a variety of performances and cultural resistance: theatre troupes, players of all types, street activism, political drama, musicians, radical performances, visual artists, films, marginalized arts, spoken-word, puppet shows, disadvantaged groups, and anyone wishing to artistically infringe on the monoculture and oppression that creeps into every corner of our lives.

### **History of the infringement**

The "Fringe" festival was founded by angry artists in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1947. They created the festival because they were denied the right to perform at the new Edinburgh International Festival, and therefore played on the "fringe" in protest. Eventually the Fringe Festival outgrew the original festival it protested against and began to spread virally around the globe. In the 1990s corporate interests began taking over and the word "Fringe" was trademarked in Toronto in 1998 to restrict artists from using it without paying.

In Montreal, summer of 2001, the first show ever in the history of the Fringe was kicked out. The Gazette, a Canadian corporate newspaper (and sponsor of the Fringe™), literally kicked an experimental show called Car Stories out of the festival. A playful attempt to charge the theatre critic, followed by a satirical critique when she refused to pay, sparked off a chain of disturbing reactions. Not only did The Gazette threaten to withdraw \$15,000 in sponsorship, but also halted all fringe reviews. Car Stories was removed from the premises and the artists were never reimbursed "pay-to-play" fees or ticket sales from a week's run. They have been fighting back ever since!

The infringement Festival was born in 2004 to stop this branding and ownership of our culture and to put the Fringe back into the hands of artists and the community. Infringement festivals now exist in Montreal, Buffalo, Brooklyn, and Hamilton, and others have been held in Manhattan, Toronto, Ottawa, Regina, and Bordeaux, France! Infringement continues to grow!

### Why start an infringement festival?

Here are some good reasons to start an infringement festival in your community:

- The arts are under threat because they are being co-opted by corporations. For example, the Fringe Festival was trademarked by businesspeople and now they charge artists money to play there. Infringement challenges this dynamic.
- **Infringement reclaims culture** as a people-based alternative to the corporate-based monoculture. Reclaiming culture empowers artists and communities, leading to positive social transformation.
- Artists build careers at the festival. Infringement supports artists in the community by providing them a free space to play, media coverage, and opportunities for future development.
- Amazing arts & performances! Infringement encourages the creation of arts and performances, providing valuable opportunities for people to express themselves artistically and politically - in a safe setting. The critical works can inspire activism and social change.
- Infringement builds community. Connecting artists, activists, and audiences, locally, nationally, and globally, it is a solidarity movement of critical expression.

### Are there any rules/guidelines?

Yes, to avoid being co-opted, the infringement Festival asks all festivals follow a mandate:

- The festival is 100% free for all artists to participate in. It will never charge a "registration fee" or take any money of artists' ticket sales.
- The festival is open to all critical artists and must never refuse admittance, set entry criteria or censor.
- The festival is run as a non-hierarchical arts democracy.
- There must be no unethical or conflict-of-interest sponsorships.
- Individual festivals are free to set their own policies as long as they
  do not contradict the mandate. For example, the Buffalo festival sets
  the maximum ticket price artists can charge at \$10 while other
  festivals have no such cap.