

Odd-Shaped Balls <http://planepapertheatre.com/odd-shaped-balls/>

In August 2015, we took Odd Shaped Balls to Edinburgh Fringe. Our aim was to promote discussions surrounding homophobia in sport and utilise theatre as an agent to tackle the issue. This project identified theatre as not just a form of entertainment, but a platform for expression and social change. We soon created a buzz in Edinburgh because of the important message. Throughout the two weeks we received a lot of support from audiences, some of which had been in similar positions and had been inspired by our story. We also received a 5 star review that named Odd Shaped Balls as a 'gift to humanity'. We worked tirelessly throughout the two weeks to make sure our message was promoted, and in the end we have received a lot of interest from the arts industry.



In terms of community impact, the project spread its message throughout Edinburgh and began an exciting dialogue surrounding homophobia in sport. For us, it proved that theatre insights conversation and education. Luke has gone on to further productions of Odd-Shaped Balls which have been met with critical acclaim. Through Plane Paper Theatre he has also been an Associate Artist with Live Theatre and is now a trainee designer with the Royal Shakespeare Company.

Without the Student Initiative Fund, we would not have been able to produce the project. We required funding for Fringe Registration and for production costs. So without the funding, we wouldn't have been able to go to Edinburgh and we would have had no production to take with us. Our team was made up of current and ex Newcastle students, so support from our university meant a lot to us.

We have learnt a lot from this project. Mainly that producing your own project is hard work but it is rewarding in the end. We learnt an endless amount of team work and communication skills because in that environment everyone needs to be 100% on the ball, whether that be on the Royal Mile promoting the project or doing technical during the show. We also learnt marketing skills, finance skills and various other techniques required to produce theatre.

Our advice to any students wishing to create their own innovative project would be, 'Just do it!' Only you can make things happen, and if you have an idea that you are passionate about and will inspire cultural / community / social change then you should just do it. People are very receptive to innovative ways of discussing issues.