



Pardon Our Fringe

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Playwright Julia Jarcho's "mutation" of *Mansfield Park*, with its Sadean overlay (the Marquis's *Justine* replaces the German Romantic play *Lovers' Vows* as the internal theatrics), does its best work in showing how utterly commonplace such corseted trappings can feel: Jane Austen's problem child, as presented (a major portion of the script is taken from her text), has enough reserves of sex and politics on its own—e.g., men who believe a glass of Madeira is the fix for any female ill. The poor and virtuous Fanny spends much of the play in a box, and Elena Mulrone's portrayal goes from faintly annoying to Ibsen-level powerful in seconds. With the startlingly choreographed ball scene and its evocation of Austen's past, the performance affirms the potential for inventive transformation.