

# SKAMnanigans S1E8 Transcript

(upbeat music)

Hello and welcome to "SKAMnanigans," the theatre SKAM podcast. "SKAMnanigans" brings you into the whimsical and wacky world of theatre. I'm your host, Branden Sugden. Let the "SKAMnanigans" begin.

It's remarkable how quickly the summer flies by. It feels like just yesterday we wrapped up "SKAMpede," however, my trusty calendar begs to differ. That said, we did just finish the last bits of work we have to do to close up the festival internally, literally yesterday, so perhaps my calendar will forgive the misunderstanding.

In reflecting on the festival, I took the opportunity to catch up with Sadie Fox, founder and lead consultant of one of SKAM's dear partners, The Sustainable Fox. Before I leave you and interview Branden's capable hands, I do just want to give our deep thanks to The Sustainable Fox for their support for the past six years of "SKAMpede." Pulling off "SKAMpede" while having as small an impact as possible on our environment is something that matters very deeply to us, and we wouldn't be able to do nearly as good a job of it without Sadie.

So sit back, relax, and enjoy a great conversation with The Sustainable Fox.

(upbeat music)

Hi, Sadie.

Hi, Branden.

Thank you so much for joining us on "SKAMnanigans."

It's truly my pleasure, thanks for having me.

So before we get started, can you just introduce yourself to our audience and tell us a little bit about The Sustainable Fox?

Well, hi, my name is Sadie Fox. My pronouns are they and she, and I am the owner, founder, lead consultant at The Sustainable Fox, which is a local waste reduction and intersectional environmentalism consulting company.

And so can you tell us a little bit about how The Sustainable Fox and "SKAMpede" have sort of come together?

I always find this a little bit of a complicated question to answer because the relationship is so long at this point. We have just finished our sixth year together collaborating on the "SKAMpede" festival. And so The Sustainable Fox annually contributes waste management and reduction consultation and services. And so we run around the festival all weekend, helping to make sure that we create as little waste as possible.

I'm glad you touched on as little waste as possible because something that's, I know, really important to you and to us at Theatre SKAM is using the term minimal waste, even though you often hear zero waste. Can you tell us a little bit about the difference between the two and why that difference is important?

Minimal waste is really core to how The Sustainable Fox operates and how we approach waste reduction in general. And basically what it means is that we're acknowledging almost never is zero true. That when we say zero waste, we're actually not accounting for something somewhere in the process, even if at the end of the day, we have no physical waste in our hand. But it also means that we're acknowledging that recycling and compost are kinds of waste, even though we're not putting them in the garbage. And so minimal waste is a term that allows us to have really realistic conversations about how to not create no waste, but anywhere where waste is created, how do we reduce it to create as minimal amount as possible? And so the difference between minimal waste and zero waste at its core is that minimal is more true. It's a more actionable goal at the personal level because it's not pass fail. And it's something that you can continuously improve at. It also removes a certain amount of stigma for accessibility related waste, whether folks have medical reasons why they create waste that other people don't, or for menstrual products, or for sexual health related waste, which is something that's often not talked about in the sustainability community. But all of those types of waste are important, hard to get around, and shouldn't be shamed out of our lives.

The Sustainable Fox, as you mentioned, has been doing waste management, both consultation and the actual management itself for SKAMpede for the past six years. And I'm curious, how do you approach waste management for a festival or event like SKAMpede? And how do you know where to start?

I feel like the second half of that question is a little trickier than the first half. So the simple answer is planning. And so something that's really essential in how we plan SKAMpede is that I'm involved early, from a couple months in advance of the actual event taking place, I'm involved in production meetings, and help to consult and advise all kinds of decision making that might not even seem directly related to the waste we're creating. But at the end of the day, it all contributes to some really high diversion rates, meaning we put very little stuff in the garbage at the end of our festival.

I'm so glad you touched on how little stuff we put in the garbage after our festival, because that's something we really like to brag about after every SKAMPede. And so I'm wondering, how did we do sustainability wise at the festival this year?

I am so glad you asked, Branden, 'cause we do like to brag about it. And this year we can boast that we have diverted upwards of 98% of all festival created waste away from landfill. So that means that less than 2% of all of the waste created by the festival was sent away to landfill.

Wow, that's fantastic.

It is, it's really cool.

And like, how does that compare to previous years?

Well, I'll say that the work we've done in the last few years is making it harder and harder to trump our previous year's totals, but we have continued to gradually tick upward. But I can also say that in the six years we've been doing it we have never put more than 5% of our festival's waste in the garbage.

Wow, that's incredible.

In the past six years, all of the garbage waste that we have produced at the festival could fit in one big black garbage bag.

That's so impressive. Like, even as someone who has seen the amount of garbage that we produce every year, that's like sort of hard to believe.

It is, yeah. And I gotta say it feels pretty cool and special that Theatre SKAM has been invested in this work long enough to be able to boast a notable figure like that.

Yeah, and we're really happy to be also integrating minimal waste into our facilities here at Studio 846 and at the Satellite Studio, because of course, who cares about sustainability if you're only doing it for three days a year? So I'm sort of curious what your approach is as the Sustainable Fox to supporting businesses like Theatre SKAM the way you have for our office and venue spaces.

Yeah, well, okay, so and this actually relates back to, I think there was a second part of your last question that I didn't fully answer, and where do you start? And that's almost always the hardest part. And I think it's one of the things we can be of the most help with at the Sustainable Fox is really coming in and looking around and going, what is the lay of this landscape that you're working within? What are your resources? What are you trying to achieve? What are you willing to do to get there?

And then taking all of that information and creating a tangible strategy. And so the reality is there's no cookie cutter prescription where I can say, do this, do this, do this, and you'll be creating less waste. But in terms of a business, every operation is so different that it really does take an individual looking at and an analysis of what is sustainable for that organization or individual or workspace, because it's always different.

That's such an interesting point you talk about about what is most sustainable for that business, or I guess that person at that time. So can you talk a little bit more about what exactly that means?

100%, so something I talk about in consultation is that we all have an individual sustainable balance. And that's true for an organization and also for an individual. And the reality is that our balance shifts at different times and that we all have different factors impacting our balance. And so when we're talking about making sustainable choices, we're not just factoring in an environmental consideration. We also need to be aware of our economic reality, our energy, and our emotional values. Because if we are consistently making choices that strain those other three things so that we can be making environmentally strong choices, then eventually we're gonna run out of steam and it's not sustainable for us. And so sometimes we might have more energy than others. Sometimes we might have more money than others to be able to put towards our environmental efforts. And the reality is we have to make case-by-case decisions with the information in front of us, with the knowledge that we have, and with the resources at our disposal.

So in the spirit of wondering where to start, what is one sustainability tip that you can give our listeners to help them begin their own journey toward living a minimal waste lifestyle today?

I honestly think one of the best pieces of advice I can give any individual who is even a little bit already conscious about this is to start framing it as minimal waste, especially compared to zero waste. Because if you're asking yourself the question, can I do this activity and create a zero amount of waste? And the answer is no, then that's the end of that conversation with yourself. But if you ask yourself, can I do this activity with a minimal amount of waste? The answer is yes. You just have to figure out how and what that minimal is.

Awesome. Well, thank you so much for coming on the podcast, Sadie. And just before you go, can you tell our listeners where they can go if they want to keep up with the Sustainable Fox or if they want to book a consultation of their own?

100%. Well, you can find all the information that you might be looking for on my website at [www.thesustainablefox.ca](http://www.thesustainablefox.ca). You can book online there. You can get in

touch with me, learn more about the different services that we provide. And you can keep up with us on Instagram at the same handle @thesustainablefox.

Thanks so much for joining us, Sadie.

Thank you for having me.

(upbeat music)

We give our thanks to Sadie for coming on the show this week. If you want to book a consultation for your home, event, or business, we here at Theatre SKAM highly encourage you to reach out to The Sustainable Fox. You will learn to approach your work in a whole new way and find limitless opportunities to apply that knowledge throughout your life. As the end of summer rapidly approaches, so too does the Victoria Fringe Festival. Join us next week as we speak with some of this year's fringers to get a sneak peek at some of the shows which will take the city by storm August 21st to September 1st, 2024. Until then, keep your waste to a minimum and maximize your support for the arts whenever you can.

(upbeat music)

Theatre SKAM is grateful to live, work, and create on the traditional territories of the Lekwungen people, now known as the Esquimalt and Songhees First Nations. SKAMnigans is hosted by me, Branden Sugden. Our producer is Logan Swain. Special thanks to Sadie Fox, founder and lead consultant at The Sustainable Fox. Our marketing materials and graphics are by Janine Rzeplinski. We would like to acknowledge the support of our operational funders, the BC Arts Council, the Capital Regional District, and the City of Victoria for their support of Theatre SKAM. SKAMnigans can be found wherever you get your podcasts. Subscribe to get notified when new episodes drop. Transcripts for our episodes are available on our website, [SKAM.ca/podcast](https://SKAM.ca/podcast). Thank you so much for listening.

(upbeat music)