

The Joy of Peasantry

Peasantry

I work in a booth, so I'm not really a street peasant. But I got dragged out by one of the royals to be dragon bait for one of his bits... and as bad as it sounds, it was so great to act like a *dumb* peasant. You get to ask great questions ("what's a dragon, are you a dragon?"), don't have to worry about being all hoity toity, and when talking to the big people I got to be lewd! Yay! ("What's a dragon?" ::call from sidelines:: "Check in his pants!" "That's not a dragon at all, that's a trouser snake!")

It's lots of fun!

Amelia
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What I Liked About Being a Peasant!

I liked being able to sit on the ground anywhere you wanted to! It didn't matter if it was in the dirt.. or the mud - or right in the middle of a walkway! Sitting on the ground and playing in the dirt was a great way to interact with the patrons! (plus nicer than having to look for a bench to sit down on properly)

Plus - you also got to carry around silly props and no one thought it was strange. For instance, I carried a giant orange fork and a shovel - great conversation starters!

Lastly - as a peasant you can hike your skirt up way more than is technically proper when it's hot!

Michelle
Lady Jocelyn Kinsley - Terpsichory
Formerly Mairi MacKinnon - engineer of the mayor's illustrious highway.
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Ode to Peasantry

The best way to relate to the 21st Century peasants is to be a 15th Century peasant. Being a good peasant at fest is like being good prostitute; you give the patrons a good feeling and spread a little joy. As a peasant, you are "free", no silly intimidating retinue of toadies and hangers on sauntering around in noble packs quite removed amidst the patrons. And of course the clothing allows a freedom too; not just because it is less confining and more comfortable, but by the obvious lower stature a peasants wardrobe displays. Nothing is expected of a mere peasant. They represent a simpler life. They are what they are; fun loving and open. There's more give- There's more take. A peasant can let his or her hair down and is more approachable, more full of life, more enjoyable. That's how I see it anyway.

Penn Bowen
King of the Log Volunteer Hawker
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Why I like being a Peasant

I can sit on the ground and not worry about getting dirty.

Deborah Meysembourg
Formerly of Terpsichory Dance Troupe
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Peasantry

I began festival in 1984 as a peasant known as Robyn Banks. Initially, I wanted to play a thief (note the name), but it didn't stick. I was simply a peasant. I carried much of my belongings on my belt and my costume was created out of choir robes and select stitching (I didn't sew). As a peasant, I did a lot of things to keep me busy through the day. Mostly I hawked for various vendors, food booths, stage acts, and Crown stage. I

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would interact with the audience every minute I could.

As the years went by, I wanted to try new things. I was part of court, a member of the guard, a villainess, one half of a stage act, and eventually I became the character I am today. I play a servant to a noble. A well-dressed peasant who has the eyes and ears of some of the nobles due to my craft – I cook.

As a peasant I don't have to necessarily worry about how I will damage my costume. The occasional stain and tear (and occasional repairs) adds to the character. Many of my skirts have burn holes from the hot coals or my shirts have permanent grease stains on the sleeves. If it rains, I get wet. There are certain costume pieces I do not wear when it does rain (my straw hat or leather bodice), but I do have substitute piece that I wear when I know the weather will be bad.

Peasants add to the color of the village. They are the residents and workers. They are the ones that lift the nobles to their level of aristocracy. When approached by patrons, they will understand who you are by looking at you instead of trying to explain who and what you are. Our village has plenty of nobles, pirates, gypsies, but what we need are peasants as they are the soul of our village.

Anjila K. Olsen
A.k.a. Alice
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Peasantry

Awesome awesome awesome! It would rock to have more peasants out there. One of my favorites is being able to grab my lunch, plop down in the path, and eat with my hands. I get to be a kid all over again, all

day. Nobody can tell me I'm not being proper.

Also, being a peasant seems to make interactions with patrons much easier to initiate. Patrons can sometimes be intimidated by a character in a large fancy costume, as if that sort of character is meant to be looked at from a distance and respected. Kids, especially, will gladly get down on my level (on the ground) to talk to me.

Groveling is an art form.

I've been both a peasant and minor nobility. Doing the peasant thing is much cheaper costume wise, it's easier to get dressed in the morning, you can get as dirty as you want, and you're free to run about and play with other peasants. More fun, period.

-Cat Thompson
-Lady Juliana Montague, Shakespeare's
Love Child 2005
-Rin, Peasant Mud Sculptress & Human
Combat Chess 2003-?
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Why I Like Being a Peasant

As a peasant, my character has a real job she's responsible for, that patrons can relate to...unlike many of the nobles.

I can wash my costume on Saturday night, and wear it again on Sunday.

I don't have to sit like a lady.

I can run if I need to get somewhere quickly.

I don't have to write essays!

Sarah Bell
Greta the Goose Girl
Puppet Pawn
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Why Peasants Rock

What I loved about being a peasant - the utter freedom to look like a dork and have it be entertaining. If you're grubby on the third day of Labor Day Weekend - hey, it's authentic! And the ability to get dressed in under five minutes.

Why I'm not a peasant anymore - My final year at Irish Cottage, I was "stolen" by the Gypsies. Having my character show up in a sort of peasantry-Gypsy outfit the next year made a lot of sense, especially after mid-way through the off-season my friend Katelyn asked me to join the Gypsy family she was starting. Alas it only lasted one year, but by then I'd gotten mildly addicted to the sparklies... and was loathe to give up the one costume that fit, as I had outgrown my peasant garb.

Meghan
Bryn "O'Gypsy" Muldoon
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Peasantry

Why do I like being a peasant? Well, first of all, I am not bound by the rules and traditions of royalty. Who cares about etiquette when I can should obscenities and act like I have an education level of a seven year old. Also the garb is so much more comfortable. I can move easily and entertain in comfort. Being a peasant gives you a chance to do a lot more with your character and has more opportunities. There is my two shillings.

Jenny Z
Genevieve Marie Dessiner
Artist extra-ordinary.
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Peasantry

I once was a peasant, actually come to think on it I was twice a peasant...

Peasantry is a GREAT thing for many reasons, here is my contribution:

The Costuming... it is inexpensive and it is easy to hide things that are not period with peasant outfits, sneakers can be wrapped up in cloth and obscured from view, warm shirts can be hidden under rags of the outer clothing, and lets not forget when it is warm out... Peasants can get away with wearing less clothing when it is warm out.

Vilification tennis... Most nobles or higher born people could not take part in this sport as it involves using "Vulgar tongue" or insults, some would deem it inappropriate.

You can become a caricature of yourself, example wooing... A noble or merchant class person might woo with poetry and a soft kiss on the hand, a peasant could woo with flower stems and phrases like "You shur stink pretty" or really bad poetry "Roses are red, the grass is green, I'll show you something that you've never seen" (I recommend NOT using that one out at festival).

Playing the giddy fan... you could as a peasant play the part of a giddy fan always missing the King and Queen, something could be done where you ask around about the royals saying how you are sooooo excited to finally have them here! Because last time they were in town you were out... saying that when the Royal court is NEAR you in a LOUD voice could work to comedic effect.

Also remember that not all peasants were jobless you could be a stable hand, a grave digger or other manual labor worker and still be considered a peasant.

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Mike Heck AKA

His Grace Sir Michael Alexander DeVille
Duke of Cambridge, Chancellor of the
Exchequer, Knight of the Garter
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Peasant Memories

I went through academy in 1992 with Dane Breimhorst, Scott (Mush) and Lindsay Weiler. We had a blast. At the time my boyfriend, Steve Shane, and several other folks (notably Andy Z, but also Michael Ritchie, Eryc Leaf, and Matt Eubank) were Peasant Temporary Services, and went around generally wrecking havoc wherever possible. You might talk to Andy Z as he's still around. I worked at Pavilion as a stage hand, but my greatest bit was when I was the ice wench and iced the parade for 4 or 5 years. Great experience... ever feed an elephant ice? The elephant learned what I looked like and would go looking for me--that was a trip. I remember both the sing-along by the oak near Como and great improv skits at closing gate. You might see if anyone still has tapes of "Team Non-Sequitur"- it was great. Tim Wick would be another good guy to talk to.

Missy Wyatt

Catskill Mountain Moccasins (which pays better than street!)
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Peasantry – A Request

If you're organizing peasant events at Fest, would you let me know? I'm one of the Scottish dancers, so I tend not to hear about anything being organized in the rest of the cast--but I'm a peasant (albeit a Scottish one) and I'm interested!

Liza

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Peasantry

One thing - you get to wear cooler (I mean lighter, less confining, airier) clothes, and no one looks at you horribly if you lift up your skirts a little to get some air.

Rachael

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