



Glór Dance Project Final Report 2023-2025

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Front Cover Photo Credit: DGM Photographic

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Glór Logo designed by Karen Winkens Nolan

About Glór/ Voices Dance project (by Traces Dance Ensemble) is an incredible new creative dance project, designed to develop and nurture the creativity & expression of seldom heard young people who have additional needs, in Co Waterford.

Glór puts the voice and heart of young people with additional needs, centre stage with the running of a series of accessible, inclusive dance workshops & events beginning in Spring 2024 and concluding at Easter 2025.

These are facilitated by a dynamic team of contemporary dance artists Deirdre Grant (Creative Lead), Rachel Ni Bhraonain, Trish Murphy and Susie Lamb (Freelance dance artists) alongside project manager, Lynn Cahill.

The project produced 'Turas' & 'Féach', 2 public showcases of artistic work and also developed a new youth advocacy strand - 'Peer to Peer Mentoring', 'Role & Poll Day' and 'How I see where I live' as part of the larger Glór Project. Traces Dance Ensemble also produced a new website www.tracesdanceensemble.com

The Glór project concluded with a 'Town Take-over Day' in 2025, a dance trail performed around Waterford City by young dance artists with additional needs

The proud focus throughout Glór is to increase young people's voices, visibility and participation in society. Proudly supported by Creative Ireland under Creative Youth Nurture Fund 2023-2025 and administered by Down Syndrome Ireland Waterford & South Kilkenny (on TDE's behalf) with additional funds from Arts Practice Grant, Waterford Council.



SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES – 2023 -2025

Some of the amazing work we got to do and be involved with this year

- | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and assembling Creative Team Members & Project Manager • Design work completed - Glor Logos and branding | Oct-Dec 2023 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glór Public Information Night at Garter Lane Arts Centre, • New Glór/ Click Here: Traces Dance Ensemble Website Launched • Glór Taster Dance Workshop at Garter Lane Arts Centre, Waterford | Feb 2024. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Series of Glór weekly workshops x 10 at Garter Lane Arts Centre, Waterford' • Glór Outreach to 'Cape-ability' group, Lismore, Waterford • Performance Showcase of Glór at St Patrick's Gateway Centre, Waterford | April 2024 |
| Youth Advocacy Days:1 - Peer to Peer Mentoring Day at National Opera House. | June 2024 |
| Series of Glór weekly workshops lead by the Creative Team x 10, Butler Community Centre, Waterford | Nov 2024 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Advocacy Days: 2 - Role & Poll Day, Waterford Healing Arts Trust | Dec 2024 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Advocacy Days: 3 - How I See Waterford – Dance & Architecture Day, Waterford City | Jan 2025 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Series of Glór weekly workshops with intensive rehearsals at 'A Little Room' over Easter • Féach Exhibition of participant's portraits, Central Library, Waterford city • Féach 'Town Take-Over Day', Waterford City | April 2025 |



Beginnings: Taster Workshops:

We ran one very successful Glór 'Taster' Dance Workshop on 1st February 2024, 4pm at the Dance Studio, Garter Lane Arts Centre, 5 O Connell St, Waterford We advertised locally in the papers also for new members between 16 to 24 years of age and that love to dance. The free taster workshop was an ideal way to learn movement in a fun, warm and supportive environment for young people with additional needs.

Public Information Night: A very successful night for patents & potential participants. Creative Lead, Dee Grant created an ID friendly presentation for the evening

See Here: [Glor Information Night PDF](#)

Printing of flyers We also drafted up flyers and distributed them to other venues, special education schools in the area as well as promoting it through DSI branch office. Derek Corcoran from Garter Lane Arts Centre was particularly helpful in getting the word out to other special education schools in the area.

Weekly Youth Dance Workshops (various venues used in 2024-2025)



Glór Dance Workshops (weekly) with Traces Dance Ensemble

We hosted 20 participants approximately at the early Glór workshop phase Feb-April 2024, including our Outreach to the Lismore group with young people of various disability levels between the ages of 17-35yrs. On average we had 13 young participants at regular weekly workshops.

Contact Times with the group were: 4pm (soft start) for a 4:30pm -6pm workshop, with extra time spent with Creative Team before & after each session. We held the first sessions in the Dance Studio, Garter Lane Arts Centre, 5 O Connell St, Waterford & 2 additional rehearsals at St Patrick's Gateway Centre as we moved closer to the showcase of work in 2024.



Glór - October Series of Dance Workshops 2024

Come dance with us!

Traces Dance Ensemble organised a special three-week block of dance classes on Monday 7th, 14th and 21st October 2024 at the Butler Community Centre, Waterford. 4.30pm for young people with additional needs (aged 16 - 24). Approximately 11 young dancers attended. We worked on ideas generated from the theatrical device (movement based) of the Greek 'Chorus'. Looking at Unison, Exaggeration, Mirroring Canon. We were also joined by movement & drama artist, Susie Lamb for this block.



Reflection Photos



Star reflection/April 2024



Chalk Reflections/December 2024

'Turas (The Journey) .

6th April 2024 (Our 2024 showcase of work from Glór)



Photo by DGM Photographic

St Patrick's Gateway Centre, 7:30pm Saturday 6th April 2024

Participants/Performers: Liam Cody, Aoife Cuddihy, Aoife de Paor, Niamh Harte, Grace Howley, Zoe McAuliffe, Brian Mc Sweeney, John Mulligan, Zak O Dwyer, Olwyn Reddy, Sean Upton, Cian Wall

A fantastic, dedicated group of young dancers from Traces Dance Ensemble began working on 'Turas -The Journey' earlier this year and this event aimed to bring these young performer's voices centre stage by showcasing their 'work in progress' through reflection, performance, imagery, decision making and choreography.

The public sharing of their work was guided by Traces Dance Ensemble members themselves on the night, supported by a dynamic team of experienced contemporary dance artists.

Turas = The Journey is part of the larger GLÓR Dance project being undertaken by Traces Dance Ensemble during 2024 and 2025 with the support of Creative Ireland.'

**Féach' - An exhibition of portraits of participants from the Glor Dance Project, Central Library, Lady Lane, Waterfird City
24th -29th April 2025**



Photo by DGM Photographic

Féach, was a unique photographic/audio exhibition that opened to the Waterford public from Thursday 24th April to Tuesday 29th April on the ground floor of Central Library, Lady Lane, Waterford. Traces Dance Ensemble were delighted to host the wonderful large portrait photographs by photographer, Davi Matheson as part of the exhibition.

The idea of the large portrait prints is to promote increased visibility and presence of young people with additional needs in public spaces.

Féach is about promoting the individual voice of the young person's artistry through innovative reflection & feedback mechanisms through innovative video and visual/audio languaging platforms.

Each portrait contains a QR code which opens up into the participant's own voice. You can still visit this exhibition digitally on tracesdanceensemble.com

Féach - 'Town Take Over Day' Sunday 27th April 2025



The second part of Féach's 'increased visibility' takes place with a 'Town Take-Over Day' style performance event by dancers from Traces Dance Ensemble which ran the streets of Waterford city bringing an audience along with them - Féach Dance Trail on Sunday 27th April 2025





Waterford City - Feach Town Take Over Day by Traces Dance Ensemble



Waterford City - Féach Town Take Over Day by Traces Dance Ensemble

Youth Advocacy days: 1 'Peer to Peer Mentoring Day' at National Opera House, Wexford - Friday 28th June 2024



Fantastic day at our first 'Peer to Peer Mentoring Day' at National Opera House, Wexford with Traces dancers led by our Glór Dance Facilitators, Dee Grant & Rachel Ni Bhraonáin. The young dancers were amazing!

This was our first day of looking at Youth Advocacy and moving the group in this direction.

They came up with terrific ideas of how to support each other in class and welcome new people to the group. Fantastic to learn some elements of 'Lamh' and we constructed several insightful & funny role-plays together looking at positive psychology and changing our mindset.



We designed amazing posters around mentoring and left the venue with plethora of new skills (not to mention Certification of Participation!)

Well done to Traces Dance Ensemble members John, Olwyn, Aoife De P, Aoife C, Zoe, Sean and Liam who completed this training.

Many thanks to the National Opera House & La Vista (upstairs) for hosting us and giving us great space & such a great lunch.



Photo Credits: Pdraig Grant

The event was so successful that we are thinking of making a follow up Stage 2 Mentoring day.

Youth Advocacy Days: 2 Role & Poll Day 11th December 2024 Waterford Healing Arts Trust, Waterford University Hospital



A special day learning to have a role within the group, learning about our strengths. Promoting the ability to make decisions for ourselves by using different voting mechanisms that suit the group.

Roles identified: Youth Ambassadors, Senior Mentors, Facebook Administrator, Costume Designer, Stylist, Announcer, Publicity, Creative Writer

These roles would become important for the Féach phase of the project in Jan-April 2025





Youth AdvocacyDays: 3 How I see Waterford

Dance and Architecture Day

18th Jan 2024

This was designed by the Creative Team with our young group in mind:

- To investigate space by looking at shapes, structures and patterns
- To see how our bodies can interact with these elements.
- Dancers are encouraged to explore their space around them in a way they may not have seen before.

Why did the group focus on this?

- To explore some aspects of our hometown
- To strengthen a sense of identity.
- To promote creative decision making and ownership of these choices.
- To gather still photographs of dancers in interesting spaces.
- To explore a sense of mapping space

How will we explore?

- Identify some interesting shapes and structures
- Ask the dancers to choose one of the interesting sites to pose in stillness or movement if inspired to do so.

Young people's interview Questions.

- Where is your favourite place in Waterford and why?
- On your space exploration, why did you choose this spot for your photo? Did you like a shape or structure or the energy of a certain spot



Reflections from the group. 2024-2025



Photo Credit: DGM Photographic

Question: *About how you feel about 'Traces' and what we did the past 18 months?*

S.U : 'We're in a community. Friends and family and our fans can connect with each other & we have great opportunities to connect with each other'

Z.Mc: 'I like the different ages in the group'.

B.Mc: 'I like making projects & sharing the projects. I like to follow another person and their ideas and see where its leads'.

L.C: 'It has reached everyone lives and giving us new opportunities to be socially active'.

O.R: 'I'm a happy camper! Friendship and learning dances.

A. DP: 'Working as a team and dancing with other people'

J.M: 'I like the joy'

You can ALSO listen to their final post- Glor Reflection in 2 sound files: [Voice Recording Day](#) - 5th April 2025 (13secs)
[Post - Feach performance](#) - Wed 30th April 2025. (12mins)

Reflections from the Creative Team on 2024



Trish Murphy: Creative Team Dance Artist

'The whole show was epic and seeing the reaction from parents and audience was a key moment. The feedback was immense joy from parents and so proud to see moments that surprised them too. The taking on of roles was particularly a highlight. They really came into their own strengths and did the roles with pride'

Rachel Ni Bhraonain: Creative Team Dance Artist

'I feel the classes are so much more than a dance class, where typically I may not speak much to my students aside from giving instruction, with Turas I found that I would have a conversation with almost every member, every week. This was helped by our soft start to class, allowing people time to relax into the environment and have a chat before class started. It was also helped by our feedback time at the end of each class and my experience of interviewing them for the video.'

Deirdre Grant: Creative Lead, Traces Dance Ensemble

‘So many key moments for me - their ownership over their own image in the photographs for the exhibition showcase. Watching them enjoy & design ‘the good ideas board’. Reactions of the group to voting on every element and witnessing new members Cian & Liam’s contribution & finding their step & voice within the group. From the facilitators perspective shaping the workshop time effectively to have 3-4 elements in each workshop and matching this time with our facilitator’s strengths, that in particular was so satisfying.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Artistic Highlights

It was amazing to witness Traces Dance Ensemble - planning, deciding content & delivering their own showcase of work **'Turas/The Journey'** which premiered on 6th April 2024 at **St Patricks Gateway Centre Waterford**. They followed up the next year with **Feach Town Take Over Day** through the streets of Waterford. This was particularly different from other experiences which the creative team had worked on before with previous artistic material predominantly being 'artist-led & driven'. Operating with the philosophy of putting the voice of the participant at the centre of the experience continues to be an amazing experience for the creative team. The split between artistic & youth work-based exercises was so interesting and having the time to do this piece was really valuable & life altering. The aspect of the young people taking on individual 'production roles' i.e. front of house, MC, costume etc (with soft mentoring in the background) by the creative team to support the showcase was a particular delight to see.

Social Development Highlights



There was a momentous effort made by the Creative team working on Glór to nurture the voice of the young person in amongst our Traces Dance members on a weekly basis. On several occasions, we successfully integrated strategies through a series of youth work exercises that co-existed alongside with the weekly dance material in all our 2024/2025 workshops/classes & events. The participant were given time for reflection, encouraging them to explore how they were feeling about the work they were doing and finding really interesting ways to do this, visually, spoken word, pictures. This project is challenging them 'to give opinions and 'vote' on aspects of the workshops, taking a little more control of their decisions & lives. We noticed while some young people got a little overwhelmed with this at times, others thrived.

The new confidence around public speaking & the voice-recordings to accompany their portraits at the Central Library Exhibition, Waterford was a particular highlight.

Operational challenges

Having the opportunity & financial security of having the full Creative team together (all 3 at any time) for planning meetings & working with the group every week made this an exceptional high-quality experience. It was also wonderful to have a Project Manager specifically for Glór and it separated duties out between what was administrative and what was artistic very effectively.

It was interesting to use up to **6 different venues** in various contexts, Garter Lane Arts Centre, SETU Arena, St Patricks Gateway, Waterford Healing Arts Trust, Butler Community Centre, The Studio (Okay Dance Studios) Waterford, as well as National Opera House, Wexford amongst others. It was challenging but refreshing (for all of us) to see how the group responded to new spaces, and it was an important step for the group to promote themselves outside of the city of Waterford and to remain flexible and responsive to new energy that a space or a new venue may bring to us.

The management of the finances by a third-party organisation was a particular strain on the project, causing much unnecessary disruption and stress at times.

Challenges ahead for Glór:

- Keeping **the voice of the participant** to the front of the project is challenging, but very impactful, humbling & inspiring every time we are reminded to do this.
- Facilitating 'all the good ideas' that the group have and want to do. (**There are so many ideas**)
- **Integrating and embedding youth work practices into the artistic structure.** The will is there - but the money and funding streams that allow us as a Creative Team to work more intensively i.e. post Glór, is not at the moment.
- Continuing to have a high-quality **dance studio space** available to use.
- Finding a **working organisational structure** for this group, where it can be self-autonomous in the running of its activities and have financial control over its activities.

Many voices have helped shape this report, not only the Creative Team, but the weekly feedback from participants in Traces Dance Ensemble. We would also like to acknowledge the photographers who captured & witnessed the work and gave us some really beautiful documentary evidence of the Glór experience. The staff at the various venues too, who worked weekly to provide our young dancers with the space they need or endeavour to make our young people's dreams happen for them.

Compiled by:

Deirdre Grant,

Creative Lead, Glór Dance Project, Traces Dance Ensemble November 2025

Flyers & Poster Samples



GLOR
A Dance Project by **traces** Dance Ensemble

Creative
Youth

OCTOBER DANCE CLASSES
Mondays 4.30pm
tracedanceensemble@gmail.com

Comhairle Cathrach & Contae Phort Láirge
Waterford City & County Council



YOU ARE INVITED TO: FÉACH



PHOTOGRAPHIC/AUDIO EXHIBITION + LIVE DANCE PERFORMANCE

WEDNESDAY 23RD APRIL 2025 AT 6.30PM

EXHIBITION RUNS TO TUES 29TH APRIL, LIBRARY HOURS

CENTRAL LIBRARY, LADY LANE, WATERFORD. X91 V045



Clár Éire Ildánach
Creative Ireland
Programme



FÉACH

★ **Wednesday 23rd April at 6.30pm**
Central Library, Lady Lane
Exhibition Launch +
Live Dance Performance
Exhibition runs till Tues 29th April, Library Hours.

Sunday 27th April, from Noon
Town Take-Over
Follow Traces Dance Ensemble as we lead you through the streets of Waterford to see its architecture in a new light, through the medium of creative dance.

GLOR is a dance project created by Traces Dance Ensemble with the support of the Creative Youth Nurture Fund from Creative Ireland. Traces Dance Ensemble would like to thank our funders, supporters, families and friends for all their support.

Dancers: Aoife Cuddihy, Aoife De Paor, Niamh Harte, Grace Howley, Zoe McAuliffe, Brian McSweeney, John Mulligan, Zak O'Dwyer, Florence Pickett, Martha Power, Olwyn Reddy, Sean Upton.

GLOR is facilitated by a professional team of dance artists: Deirdre Grant, Susie Lambie, Trish Murphy, Rachel Ni Bhraonáin
www.tracesdanceensemble.com

Town Take-Over performance locations, starting noon on Sunday

1. Port of Waterford Building, O'Connell St.
2. John Roberts Square
3. City Square Shopping Centre
4. John Condon Memorial, Cathedral Square
5. Silver Museum, Cathedral Square
6. Chess Board, Cathedral Square

☔ **Apple Market - all Sunday events will take place here if it's raining.**

