



OHOS: The Podcast! Episode 2: Poetry as CDGC with Glasgow Disability Alliance

Posted on: [23 Aug 2024](#) Last updated on: 26 Aug 2024 Categorized in: [Project Blog](#), [Project News](#) Written by: [Ewan Hannaford](#)

In this blog, Dr Abi Glen from the OHOS Archives Lab at the University of Glasgow gives an insight into the project's collaboration with the Glasgow Disability Alliance, as creators and curators of CGDC.



“Do you have a guitar?” asked Shug. Not on me, mate.

“That’s alright,” shrugged Shug, before proceeding to perform, with no intro or accompaniment or even a drumroll, a flawless rendition of his own “Lockdown Blues”.

Honestly, I wouldn't have been surprised if Lewis, GDA staff member and AV extraordinaire, had a six-string tucked about his person. Or if in the rabbit warren of White Studios, where the team work to support over 6000 participants across the city, we might find a fully stocked music room. The charity's commitment to creative expression has seen the establishment of everything from poetry groups to screen-printing classes to the [Purple Poncho Players](#), the dramatic wing where GDA participants deliver their stories to groups of influential people.

My turn, not being influential but instead preternaturally keen, came on another blustery Tuesday. Hannah, the GDA's Digital Inclusion Manager, had suggested we do individual podcast episodes this time, where the artists could reflect on their pieces with the pair of us.

First up was Caragh, a podcast aficionado, and her poetry on Places and Spaces. A series of her poyums led us through the thrill of her new tricycle (careening through lockdown-empty streets), her thoughts on kindness of strangers, and a taut haiku about a BBQ:

*Food and laughter shared
As the barbecue sizzles
Days to remember.*

Caragh also spoke about the ways her creative process occupies her days, and how the GDA's classes have been the catalyst for work she is (justifiably) proud of.



Caragh and Hannah

Next, one half of the poetry class's Tupac and Biggie, Eric Elder. His compatriot, Pete, who joined us later, rather objects to Eric's love of a rhyming couplet, but who could resist:

*Stay at least two metres apart
Useful, if you need to fart!*

Discussion turned, ironically, to the elevated status of poets in Scotland, something Hannah, a New Zealander, has noticed after moving here (we even covered perhaps our greatest living poet, Taylor Swift, who Eric has some *thoughts* on). Eric himself is the Makar of his community, giving poems as gifts to commemorate special occasions.

A veteran of GDA's creative classes, and poetry groups across the city, Pete's range and sensitivity were in full evidence. His contributions covered topics broad as childhood memories of Holi, the [Social Model of Disability](#), and ketchup. Here again we saw the true versatility of our sound man Lewis, who was called upon to read out Pete's "Wir Cool", a Weegie version of Gwendolyn Brooks' "[We Real Cool](#)":

*Wir pure cool, but.
Dog school, but.*

*Hing late, but.
Slash straight, but...*

And the quiet beauty of his "Menshie":

And for punctuation

*Slightly adrift from the main body. A
sinuous Ouroboros.*

*"I'm here". The
Menshie says.
"I own this place."*



Pete

Karen and Shug arrived fresh from rehearsals for the [Purple Poncho Players](#). Karen shared with us a reflective essay on what GDA means to her, and a concrete poem about her dog, Beauty.



Karen

We discussed the importance of the GDA in her life, giving her confidence and a place to truly express herself and be known beyond her disability. In contrast to Karen's affectionate portraits, we had Shug's blues, filled with wistful frustration:

*I hivnae got enough bread tae feed the doos
 li got the lowdown, lockdown blues...
 Boris fiddles while the fire ensues
 I got the lowdown, lockdown blues*

Our final guest was Rosie. I found out she used to work in security, so of course I asked her who the best famous person she ever met was, and she told me a great story about accidentally waving to Keanu Reeves on Nairn beach. Rosie's painted bollard, graced with the cycles of the moon, is displayed outside the [Glasgow Science Centre](#) as part of a competition to decorate the area.



The Covid Art Archive is a gold standard of Community-Generated Digital Content (CGDC): truly community-led, layered, and portraying the genuine and varied viewpoints of its creators. Our work with GDA shows the complexity and multi-format nature of CGDC and reflects how this sort of content is so important to documenting community voices.

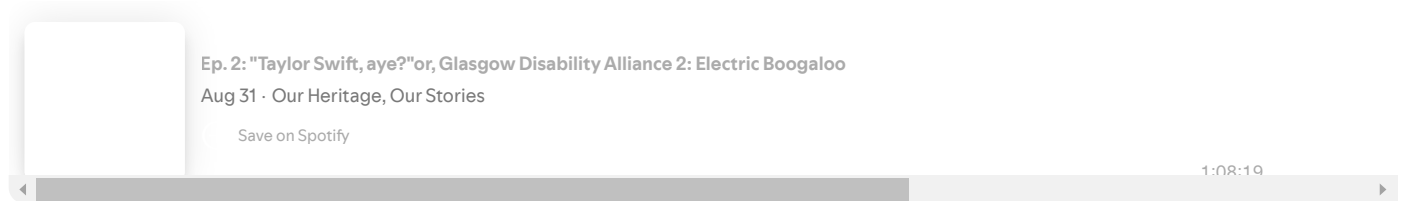


Hannah

However as with most CGDC, the Covid Art Archive also faces digital preservation and archiving challenges, in large part due to its disparate storage across the participants and creators of the material. It is a credit to the GDA that they have supported their participants in building IT skills as well as artistic ones, so that this material can begin to be preserved. The Covid Art Archive is also multimedia, so finding a unified way to gather and store the archive itself, both IRL and digitally, poses a challenge. The workshop was an important way to expose the content and bring its creators together to share their experiences, fulfilling the OHOS brief to work with community groups to truly understand their material and its specific preservation challenges. The podcasts themselves will form another part of this digital archive, and you can listen to them below.

.

OHOS podcast series



[Previous Post OHOS: The Podcast! Episode 1: The Covid Art Archive with Glasgow Disability Alliance](#)

[Next Post WCIA MayDay Archiveathon](#)

