

Travelogue was a Per Cent for Art Project created by Theresa Nanigian and commissioned by the National Transport Authority, Dublin City Council and the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal and South Dublin County Councils.

travelogue



Ruairí Ó Cuív
Public Art Manager
Dublin City Council

Travelogue by artist Theresa Nanigian was the first Per Cent for Art commission, and to date the only one, undertaken by the National Transport Authority (NTA). The partnership with Dublin City Council, and the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal and South Dublin County Councils provided challenges, which ultimately led to its success.

Amongst the challenges was the decision by all of the local authorities to pool their public art funding together with that of the NTA partner, and commission a single artwork. While potentially troublesome, this aspiration immediately focused the endeavour on a temporary commission with strong connections to public transport, and unlocked a uniquely ambitious commissioning process.

When each member of the final selection panel (composed of the NTA, four local arts office personnel and two external art specialists) read the proposal for Travelogue we immediately knew that we had a very special artwork in the making. The detail of the concept, written, visual, technical and budgetary information was extraordinary and incidentally, the commission as completed was uncannily close to the original proposal. Most of all it focused on the rationale for the commission, which was the idea of public transport across the Greater Dublin Region.

Theresa Nanigian's proposal was to engage with workers and public transport users in gathering data and stories, and out of this to create artworks that would be displayed on advertising sites on and around the various transport modes including train, bus and tram. The artist's ability to naturally engage with people, and to bring extraordinary business acumen in combination with great creative flair, as well as, the supplier contacts afforded by the NTA, led to a substantial increase in the spread of advertising sites on which the work was displayed – totalling over 2,300 external advertising sites, radio, print and online media. The engagement of the transport providers Bus Éireann, Dublin Bus, Iarnród Éireann, and Luas (Veolia), and advertising suppliers meant that there was a total value of over €220,000 in outdoor advertising for the artworks. The investment of a small budget for a specialised arts promotion expert led to a media partnership with Metro Herald, which featured the commission in its free commuter newspaper over the two week installation period.

Most of all, Theresa Nanigian created in Travelogue a superb artwork which captured the public imagination through engagement and interface with its myriad of constituent parts, in the most public of settings. It came as no surprise that Travelogue won the Jim McNaughton Perpetual Award for Best Commissioning Practice in the Allianz Business to Arts Awards 2012.



5	Some background
6	The commission
7	Who was involved
8	The artworks and the exhibition
9	Sponsorship
10	In situation
19	Mind maps
25	Stories and silhouettes
62	The website
63	Publicity
64	Business to Arts Award
65	Thank you

Over 2,300 advertising sites ... **on the Luas** 50 platform columns ... 460 interior tram posters ... **on Dublin Bus** 220 exterior A2 posters ... 500 interior A3 posters ... 250 6-sheet posters in bus stop shelters ... **on the Dart & Commuter Rail** 5 large 48-sheet platform billboards ... 62 6-sheet billboards ... 70 A1 posters ... 740 posters inside DART and commuter trains ... **in main stations** 4 Transvison animated screens in Busáras, Heuston, Connolly and Pearse Street Stations... **in Dublin city centre** 6 Metropanel



Some Background

01

Travelogue was a celebration of the human drama played out on the public transport system in Dublin every day, and the behind-the-scenes complexity and commitment required to keep people moving.

To explore the small undocumented tales of the daily commute, artist Theresa Nanigian embarked on a series of “residencies” across all service providers – Dublin Bus, Iarnród Éireann, Bus Éireann, Luas, taxis and dublinbikes – collecting travel stories and gathering data. The narratives that emerged from this nine-month investigation were heart-warming, poignant and often hilarious. They were the quiet confessions told to taxi drivers from the back seat of the cab, stories of lost luggage and lost souls, small acts of charity and heroic gestures of empathy. Travelogue was a demonstration of the wit and humanity of the people of Dublin as they travel around the capital city.

Travelogue was posted across all forms of public transport during the first two weeks of May 2012 - on trains, trams and buses and at points where people board them – and also included a website www.travelogue.ie where the public could view the complete set of stories and mindmaps. Upon its launch, Travelogue received major media coverage and broad public interest in its outdoor display and website. The project also won the Allianz Business to Arts Award for Best Commissioning Practice (Jim McNaughton Perpetual Award) by a unanimous decision of its judges.

Travelogue demonstrated the power and impact the arts can have on a first time business partner in the arts (the National Transport Authority) working in partnership with Arts Offices in local authorities and through the commissioning of an artist with an excellent idea and a developing career. The involvement of transport providers, staff and passengers in the creative process, and the resultant posting of the artwork on public sites as opposed to within gallery walls, brought the art process to the heart of the business world and resulted in a commission that engaged the public across the Greater Dublin Area.

Theresa Nanigian created Travelogue, an American artist who has lived in Ireland since 1998. After completing an MBA at Columbia University, Nanigian worked as a management consultant for McKinsey & Company, and later as an executive for SmithKline Beecham and American Express where she was a Senior Vice President. A desire to develop her interest in the visual arts led to her leaving that career and starting a degree in Fine Art in New York. She completed this at the Dublin Institute of Technology and, in 2004 received a Masters of Fine Art at the National College of Art & Design.

Travelogue was funded by the National Transport Authority (NTA) in conjunction with Dublin City Council and Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal and South Dublin County Councils. This was the first time that the NTA directly engaged with the arts and undertook a public art commission. The partnership with the Arts Offices of the Dublin Local Authorities was therefore of key importance in bringing commissioning experience together with the NTA and its funding, remit and connections with transport providers.

From the outset the four Dublin Local Authorities made a strategic decision to maximise the relationship with the NTA and to maximise the funding for the commission by undertaking one major joint commission and pooling the funding on offer (€64,000 in total from the NTA, of which €55,000 was allocated directly to the commissioning budget). This resulted in a commission which matched the remit and objectives of the five commissioners and which took place across the four counties of the Greater Dublin Area.

Objectives

The objectives of the commission were:

- to impact on the public's understanding of and engagement with the arts
- to offer an opportunity to an artist to make new and original work that related to the provision of public transport
- to further the career of an individual artist and enable them to showcase their work to a wide audience.

The chosen artist was particularly keen to explore the possibilities of creating a portrait of Ireland's capital city by engaging the public in one of the most democratic of venues – the public transport system, and to challenge her practice by embarking on a comprehensive public display campaign (e.g., billboard advertising) as the ultimate art form.

Who was Involved

03

The five commissioners decided to pursue the route of an invited competition in order to select the artist (following the National Per Cent for Art Guidelines). A brief was developed which invited proposals for 'public artwork(s) that respond to the work of The National Transport Authority and the Dublin Local Authorities in developing a sustainable transport network for the region.' Four artists were invited to develop ideas, which explored, encapsulated, and responded to the role of the transport network in the community life of the Greater Dublin Area. From the submitted proposals, Theresa Nanigian's proposal Travelogue was selected by a panel, which included representatives from the five commissioners and two external artistic experts.

From the point of her engagement onwards, Nanigian worked very closely with the five designated representatives from the commissioning organisations. Regular meetings with this project steering group were held to discuss the progress of the project, assist with the progression of the commission and sign off on project deliverables. The Public Art Manager from Dublin City Council acted as the specified liaison person for the artist and interfaced between the artist and the project steering group in order to provide designated support to the artist.

The business involvement of the commissioners and, in particular, the NTA was central to the project. The remit of the NTA provided a direct link for the artist to the various transport providers in the greater Dublin area such as Iarnród Éireann, Dublin Bus, the Railway Procurement Agency, Veolia (Luas), JC Decaux (dublinbikes) and Bus Éireann. This enabled Nanigian to make contact with key personnel in the transport companies and to facilitate the engagement with the transport staff for the collection of the stories and data for the artworks.

Travelogue would not have been possible without the passengers and public transport staff who shared their stories and time so generously, and others who contributed their expertise and resources to the initiative.

The Artworks and the Exhibition

04

During the course of her research, Nanigian spoke with over 85 passengers and staff ranging from Luas tram drivers and Irish Rail management, to commuter rail conductors and dublinbikes customers. She also spent time observing, chatting and gathering information in some fascinating behind-the-scenes venues such as the canteen waiting area for Dublin airport taxi drivers, the lost property closet at Dublin Bus and the Iarnród Éireann traffic control room.

The resulting artworks consisted of collected stories, mindmaps and silhouettes. Nanigian collected over 220 stories in total, and paired these down to 63 that were documented on the Travelogue website and in the public display posters. She also distilled the information, facts and figures about public transport into 5 mind-maps – a visual display of the complexity and imbedded humour in public transport. The silhouettes provided a strong, visual imagery of the individuals who generously shared their stories and time to the project – giving them recognition for their contributions.

The exhibition of Travelogue took place across the public transport in the Greater Dublin Area during the first two weeks of May 2012. The artworks were displayed on over 2,300 advertising sites in a wide range of locations.

The website www.travelogue.ie was also hugely successful, with over 32,500 hits in total and averaging 380 hits per day during the first month it went live.

Sponsorship 05

Nanigian was able to secure additional sponsorship from the public transport service providers and the outdoor advertising companies (Dublin Bus, Railway Procurement Agency, Dublin City Council, Iarnród Éireann, Clear Channel [advertising] and Bravo [advertising]), which donated advertising sites for the display of Travelogue. An overwhelming 1,653 advertising sites were donated at a value of over €190,000 in addition to those purchased by the artist out of the project's budget, resulting in excellent coverage throughout the city and surrounding areas.

The hiring of a publicist was instrumental in enhancing the commission's outreach to the public:

- **Metro Herald became a media partner, providing €28,500 worth of space to reproduce Travelogue stories and mindmaps in the free newspaper read by daily commuters throughout the exhibition period**
- **Travelogue also had editorial coverage by the Irish Times, The Sunday Times, Mooney Show (RTÉ Radio 1), Phantom FM, Image magazine, and other media.**

In total, the free sponsorship of Travelogue in outdoor and newspaper advertising added over €220,000 to Travelogue's original €55,000 commission budget – a figure which does not even include editorial publicity from other print and radio media.

Travelogue mind maps and stories were displayed in 2,363 outdoor advertising sites during the first two weeks of May 2012, of which 70% were donated by public transport service providers and outdoor advertising companies – Dublin Bus, the Railway Procurement Agency, Dublin City Council, Iarnród Éireann, Clear Channel and Bravo. The posters and animated screens were placed within buses, trams and trains, at Luas stops, bus shelters, DART stations, and commuter stations (Heuston, Connolly and Busárus), and on selected pedestrian streets.

Luas

- 50 Luas columns (one at every Luas stop on the network)
- 256 Luas portrait panels and 202 Luas Straplins inside Luas trams (multiple posters in every tram)

Dublin Bus

- 220 A2 posters and 500 A3 posters inside Dublin buses
- 250 6-sheet posters in bus stop shelters

DART and Commuter Rail

- 5 large 48-sheet billboards
- 62 6-sheet billboards
- 70 A1 posters
- 740 posters in DART and commuter trains

Large Stations

- 4 large Transvision animated screens in Busárus, Heuston, Connolly and Pearse Street Stations

Pedestrian areas

- 6 Metropanels in Dublin city centre

On the Dart and Commuter Rail 5 large 48-sheet platform billboards ...
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On the Luas 50 platform columns ... 458 tram posters



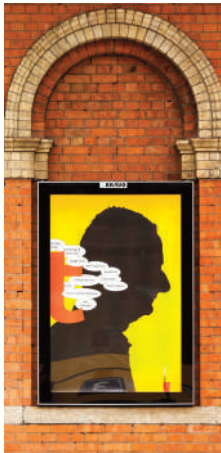
In Main stations 4 Transvison animated screens in Busáras, Heuston, Connolly and Pearse Street Stations ...



In Main stations, 4 Transvison animated screens in Busáras, Heuston, Connolly and Pearse Street Stations ...



In Main stations, 12 panel gallery in Connolly Station



Mind Maps 08

Travelogue included 5 mind maps of captivating statistics and terms culled from a variety of sources including transport providers' internal records, surveys and annual reports, websites and interviews. Information and data were mined, tallied and analysed to paint a picture of the complexity, humanity and unexpected poignancy of the public transport system, its staff and its passengers.

What's left behind on public transport

travelogue9

lost property



Travelogue was created by Theresa Nanigian www.travelogue.ie



Rita Communications, Iamróid Éireann

Travelogue is a public art commission under the Per Cent for Art Scheme funded by the National Transport Authority in conjunction with Dublin City Council and Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal and South Dublin County Councils. To view this complete set of Travelogue images, refer to www.travelogue.ie. For more information on the artist, refer to www.theresananigian.com. Poster design by Propeller. Gallery at www.propeller.ie. Copyright ©2012 Theresa Nanigian

Public transport facts & figures, Dublin

travelogue12

statistics



Michael Executive, Luas

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Pastimes & previous jobs of public transport staff

travelogue48

hobbies & heritage



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Janos Security, Iamróid Éireann

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Public transport slang, jargon and acronyms

travelogue69

glossary



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Eugene Station Controller, DART

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Public transport staff terms of endearment

travelogue105

nicknames



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Ruth Driver, Bus Éireann

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Stories and Silhouettes

09

Travelogue also included verbatim stories as told by public transport staff and passengers. Nanigian's interviews with over 85 individuals whilst travelling the network, setting out her stall in bus and train stations, and visiting employees in canteens, control rooms, stations, depots and offices produced an engaging collection of tales – most from first hand experiences but also some that have made their way into Irish public transport urban folklore. The storytellers were also asked to pose for a silhouette portrait to accompany their narrative as a small token of gratitude and recognition for their generous contributions to the project.

141 SeánCustomer Service
Iarnród Éireann

This was many years ago. I was a ticket checker at the time, and working on the 2:30 to Galway. We arrived into Portarlinton station, and if there's one thing I hate, it's seeing a woman struggling with children and luggage, and no one offering to help her. I hated it then, and I hate it now. Maybe it's because of my upbringing – if my mother saw me just standing around watching that, I'd have gotten a clip on the ear. This woman had two little children, a girl and a boy, maybe three and four years of age. I told her to hold on a minute, and I lifted the boy onto the train, then the girl and finally her bags. She thanked me, and the two were running around having a great time on the train all the way to Galway. Next thing, we got the Guards on the platform in Portarlinton on the return journey. They asked us if we'd seen sign of a child on his own. We got into Kildare, and more Guards. They asked the same question. The little fella was supposed to be on a tricycle. The next morning I was at home in the kitchen with my mother who was ironing my uniform for work. They announced on the radio that a little boy who'd gone missing the day before was found safe and sound – he'd been sitting on a very high wall with a huge drop on the other side in Galway station. They gave a more detailed description of the boy, and then it clicked. I started panicking, almost crying. My mother says "What's wrong with ya?" I says, "I think I'm going to be arrested for kidnapping." I was only 20 or 21 at the time. As it turns out, the little boy wasn't with that woman at all, he was just playing with her daughter. But, the lady never said anything so I just assumed he was with her. When I got into work, they were all taking the mickey out of me. The next day, there was a cartoon from the Daily Star taped on my locker. Every time I tore the cartoon off my locker, it was replaced with a fresh copy the following day. This went on for weeks!

163 Michael
Taxi driver



Back when I was a hackney driver, I got this call to pick up a lady at St. Vincent's Hospital. She came out wearing these slippers and seemed a bit upset. I brought her home to Bray. Coincidentally, about a week later I was in the same area and got a call to take her home again. Like before, she was wearing those slippers but dressed normally besides. I had to ask why she was wearing them. She told me she wore the slippers for comfort because she was in the hospital the entire day, every day visiting her sick husband. This broke the ice and she then proceeded to tell me their story. She was British, her husband was of Irish descent, and they used to live in the UK. A while back, he had wanted to discover his roots and made some progress – a minister helped him research his baptism and he made a trip over here to gather more information. He had what he called his “Irish box” with a few precious keepsakes. One item was a photograph of him on the shoulders of his grandfather walking outside the Gresham Hotel on O'Connell Street. The grandad had worked for Guinness as a cooper making those wooden barrels. His father had died very young in London. Anyway, they came to the end of the line and couldn't get any more information. However, they bought a place in Ireland and eventually settled here. When I heard about how the grandad was a cooper, it struck me because I know there weren't too many with that skill. So I told her, “Bear with me now. Don't say a thing 'til I ask you a few questions.” First I asked her, “Is it possible your husband's father was killed while fighting a fire during the blitz in London?” Then I asked, “Is it possible your husband's name is Campbell?” Well, that stunned her. It turns out, her husband was my first cousin – the son of my mother's only brother. The very next day, I contacted all my brothers and sisters. Every single one of them, all four brothers and three sisters, and their children went up to St. Vincent's Hospital – it was like rent-a-crowd. We had a big visit with him, we told her husband all kinds of stories and he showed us everything in his “Irish box”. He died three days later and was buried surrounded by family.

220 Joe
Driver
Royal Irish Tours



It was a fairly warm summer evening – actually balmy if you can believe it. We were staying at the Ardilaun Hotel in Galway, and were about a week into the coach tour. I had a big group of Canadians with me. I was sleeping in the buff because it was too warm for anything else. Like that, I went to the loo some time in the very early morning, maybe it was around 2:00 a.m. I was on the other side of the door and it closed behind me. Only I hadn't walked into the loo – I had walked out of my hotel room and into the hallway! You see, during the busy tourist season, you wouldn't know where you are from one day to the next. Every hotel room starts to look the same. So I was wondering how I was going to manage this and hoping to see a porter somewhere. But it was very late at night. I started hearing voices – people were coming up the stairs. I think there was a wedding going on. I started looking down the hallway, this way and that. I spotted a door ajar. It turned out to be some sort of utility room or something, and would you believe, there was a big bunch of keys on the desk with a skeleton key amongst them. Luckily, I was able to run back into my room before being spotted.

224 Mark

Central Control
Dublin Bus

At about 6:30 p.m. on a Friday evening, I just happened to be in Central Control because it was very busy that night. The Garda Superintendent called to say a young girl in Transition Year was to do work experience that day, but when her parents arrived back home after work she wasn't there. They immediately called the factory she was meant to be at, only to be told that she never showed up that morning. The girl was supposed to have taken two connecting buses to the factory. The guards even had her on CCTV at 9:11 a.m. that morning at the local shop where she bought her ticket. So, that was the package that was handed to me on a Friday night. I asked them for a description. She was sixteen, quite short and thin, and the only distinctive thing about her was that she spoke with a slight Spanish accent. Now, we have a button we can press here in Central Control, which will put a detailed message over the airways to all 1,000 buses in the fleet. We practiced our message a couple times and then put it out to all the buses. Very quickly, calls came in of a girl fitting the description in the north city but it wasn't her. We repeated the message every 15 minutes. The calls went very quiet, but at about 9:30 p.m. we received a call from a driver. He said he saw a girl waiting at a bus stop that fit the description, but the stop was no longer in use. We gave him permission to approach her, but when he circled the bus around she was no longer there. Then he saw her walking down a very dark lane way - this is inner city Dublin mind you, not far from places a Garda wouldn't even want to be in alone. She gave him a false name, but when he guessed that she was Spanish and told her that some people were worried about her, she agreed to come back to the Fitzgibbon Street Garda station. Shortly after, the family were reunited and all was well. It turns out, she got nervous about going to the work experience and decided to spend the day hanging around the city centre. But as the day wore on, she got more and more worried about the consequences of telling her parents she didn't show up at the factory. So, the poor girl stayed on in the city and went deeper and deeper into areas she should not go. The superintendent came straight to the depot at 11:00 p.m. that night and spent the next ninety minutes individually thanking each and every person in Central Control for their help. He returned the following day with a big box of chocolates for the staff, specifically from the Heroes brand, and to personally thank the bus driver who brought her to safety.

travelogue stories

81 Paddy
Customer Care
Luas



A woman rang the call centre one day. She was asking about a pair of lost white wooly mittens. I thought it was odd that she'd be calling about something like that. I said I'd keep an eye out and would give her a ring if anything turned up. The next day, I was checking out one of the trams and what did I find tucked behind one of the seats but a pair of small, white, Ralph Lauren mittens. I phoned the lady and she rushed straight down to collect them. She was just a young girl about 30. She was so thankful. She tried to give me money, but I wouldn't take it. She really wanted to give me a reward. She told me, "I'd be absolutely lost without them. These mittens are the last thing my daughter's Da' gave her before he died".

57 Michael
Foreman
DART



We have people comin' into the station asking for all kinds of things. Once, a chap came up to the ticket window and wanted to buy postage stamps. He had a few drinks on him. One of the lads turned around and said, "Sorry, we don't sell stamps. We only sell tickets." The man responded, "That's a disgrace, what kind of a post office is this?" The lad explained, "We're not a post office". So the man replied, "That's okay then. I'll have a packet of crisps and a paper".

130 **Dominic**
Inspector
Bus Éireann



This fella had come off the boat on the way to a funeral. He was rushing for the bus, but didn't catch it. He was so panicky he was almost crying. He kept saying, "I have to get to Sligo! I have to get to Sligo!" I ran out of the station and stopped the bus in the middle of the junction for him. He was so grateful. I waved him off and to calm him down said, "Now there you are. You've got your bus. Have a great trip". Some time later, a bunch of the fellas, maybe 20 or more, went on a golf holiday in Majorca. The very first night they were in a bar and there were two men playing music – one on the accordion and the other on the guitar. The musicians were Irish and the lads were singing along. During the interval, one of them asked where they were from. They got talking to him and told him they were all bus men and worked with Bus Éireann. He then asked if they knew Ducky McDonagh, and proceeded to tell them the whole story of how I stopped the bus for him when he was in a state of panic. Apparently, he decided to christen me an honorary president of his wildlife preservation society, and my name is now enshrined forever more on a plaque in an Irish pub in Majorca.

travelogue stories

03 Orla

Customer Service
Iarnród Éireann



He was a young chap, maybe 20 or 22 years old, and from Dublin. He came to ask us for permission well beforehand. On the day, he arrived up at the information desk. He was waiting on the Sligo train. As he'd seen her coming down the platform, he waited until she was in the main concourse. You could tell she was looking for him. They were both so young. He had a thin build and I remember he was wearing a three-quarter length grey coat. She was very much like your typical college student. So we gave him the mic to make his announcement over the PA system. He was so flushed. I think he said her name first. Then he said who he was and he stuttered a little bit. He lost his voice then, but soon recovered. He asked her to marry him, and thankfully she said yes! It was so sweet. They got a big round of applause from everyone in the station.

38 Kenny

Train Guard
Iarnród Éireann



It was sometime in the 1980's. The dead man pedal wasn't working. When that goes, you have to get either the ticket checker or another railway staff member to sit with the driver just in case anything happens to him. So this train guard – your typical Irishman, from Kerry originally – gets on the PA, “May I have your attention please? The train will be delayed because the deadman's gone.” With that, this nun comes running up the train looking to administer the Last Rites.

travelogue stories

73 Eddie
Driver Trainer
Luas



In the morning he's usually at Kilemore. Or else you'll see him at the Blackhorse stop at the side of the road. You're talking very early, say 7:00 or 7:30 a.m. He has his ghetto blaster and he dances away all morning long. He could be there for hours. He dances with people passing by on the street and he dances just by himself. He paints his face and everything. He's really skinny, about five foot seven or five foot eight. He spins around and all, touches the ground and then bounces back. He wears really tight jeans, glasses and of course, black gloves. Sometimes he wears an open white shirt even if it's zero degrees. He's got the collar up and he's doing all the moves. You can even see him on YouTube – check out The Peters Road Dancer.

64 Maria
Passenger
Dublin Bus



It was Christmas time and my boyfriend and I were busy buying presents. He phoned me on my mobile trying to find out what I had bought him. We went back and forth, back and forth, but I wouldn't tell him and kept making him guess what it was. It was a really silly, intimate conversation and I kept teasing him, but given I was speaking in Ukrainian I didn't worry about what I was saying. Just then a man sitting next to me said something in Ukrainian, which basically means, "Sorry, it's my stop, excuse me". I realised then why he had kept giggling! I had to get off at the Swan Centre stop as well, but I was so embarrassed I just looked straight ahead and stayed on the bus.

travelogue stories

63 Michael
Foreman
DART



I took my little fella' to the station because he was mad into Thomas the Tank Engine. I brought him upstairs to see the trains. The DART looks a lot like Daisy the railcar. He says to me, "Dad, you're so lucky you get to work with Daisy and Toby all day". We went for a ride on the trains and he thought this was the best thing ever. After that, he would ask me every day if the trains behaved themselves. He loved that Daisy train so much that when we let him name our second child, he named her "Daisy". Look here, I've got it tattooed right on the back of my calf.

107 Tony
Controller
Dublin Bus



I was driving up the road about 25 years ago. Back then, as buses got older the suspension got higher and higher. Well my bus was pretty old, so it was fairly high off the ground. At Crumlin, this elderly lady couldn't get up on the step. She kept trying, but there was no way she was going to make it. She was actually wearing bloomers down to her knees – pink, if you'd believe it. I couldn't heave her up so I told her, "Hold on there and I'll lower the bus for you". So I put on the hand break. In those days the hand break was a long lever and the lever let off a big gasp of air. The suspension didn't actually move, but she thought it had from the gasp. The old lady then got up on the step no problem. She even promised to say a prayer for me for my troubles when she got to church. Now that's the power of positive thinking!

148 **Eddie**

Station Manager
Iarnród Éireann



About three years ago, a French lady came up to me in the information booth. She was after taking her engagement ring off in the toilets and losing it down the drain. I told her to leave it with me and we'd try to retrieve it. I had the maintenance people take a look. The plumber took out the trap underneath, and fished out her ring with a wire hanger. I thought nothing of it at the time. A few days later, she came back with her husband and we told her we had found the ring. Of course, there were tears, hugs and kisses. She was shocked we had actually looked for it. She went back home to France after that. Then, a long time later, she came all the way back to Ireland just to thank me. She brought me a bottle of their equivalent of Poitín, specially made for me by her mother.

14 Hilary

Passenger

Taxi



I had gone to a Michael Jackson tribute musical with a friend. She left at the intermission because she couldn't take it anymore - the acts were really, really terrible. I stayed on in the hopes that the line up after the break would be better. I wasn't disappointed. My friend missed this French guy who was the spit of Michael and had all his dance moves down pat. The gig didn't finish until quite late, so I hailed a taxi just around the corner. The driver asked how my night was and very quickly changed the subject, telling me that he had once been an entertainer. He said that he'd studied with loads of celebrities like Colin Farrell, and had made the switch from acting to singing. But, he had to stop because he got sick - not eating right and sometimes feeling all mixed up. One time he went on a gambling binge in Las Vegas while on holiday in the States. He believed his illness allowed him to predict if the roulette wheel would stop on a red or a black number. He once won \$7,000. He eventually saw a doctor, who told him that if he did three things right, he'd never have another episode - stay on his meds, get acupuncture and watch his diet. He said he was strong and healthy now. He asked how old I thought he was. I guessed 45, but he was actually ten years younger. He asked if that was too old to try again. And then, without waiting for me to answer, he belted out the most amazing version of *Cry Me A River*. I smiled all the way home.

82 Andrew
Driver
Luas



I saw an American on the platform the other day. He was dragging his left leg heading toward the other end of the platform. Then there was another comin' from the other direction. This one was an Irishman dragging the opposite leg. The American nodded at him in a knowing way and said, "Vietnam, 1969". The Irishman nodded back and replied, "Dog @#*%, 20 feet".

209 Seán
Team Member
dublinbikes
(incognito)



Not too long after *dublinbikes* was launched we had a customer who happened to be a foreign national. His English wasn't too good, and he didn't understand from the directions that he was supposed to lock the bike back up after use. Unfortunately, the bike was stolen. As it turns out, the thief swapped the bike for an iPod. One of the tyres had a puncture and the bike's new owner brought it into a bike shop to get it repaired. The man in the shop kept him there chatting while a colleague called the Guards. He ran off just before the Guards arrived, he was only about 12 or 14 years old. He didn't realise that the bikes are built to require specialist tools specifically so that they are not stolen.

travelogue stories

37 Kenny
Train Guard
Iarnród Éireann



I was working at Heuston Station at the time. It was around 2004 and I was on the 4:50 train to Galway. Now the first stop on that train would have been Athlone. A woman was sitting in one of the carriages minding her own business. Next thing there was this snake crawling over her shoulder. There was pandemonium in the carriage! People were in a total panic. One passenger ran to get the guardsman. The guard didn't believe him at first, but he eventually announced over the walkie-talkie to the conductor that there was a snake on the train. Drivers of other nearby trains were cracking up because anyone within four miles could hear whatever was on the walkie-talkie. The conductor also thought he was being fed a line. You see the train guard was a bit of a character in his own right as well – a typical Dublin man, a joking man. Then the guard armed himself with a crowbar, crouched behind the ticket checker and snuck up on the snake. He finally caught the culprit. Eventually we found out that the snake had crawled out of a bag brought into the dining car by a passenger. Turns out the creature was harmless, but it sure caused an awful lot of stress.

61 Michael
Foreman
DART



Your man could be in there selling tickets, but if a beautiful girl comes along, he can't help himself. He has to use his bit of Irish charm. If the girl is Italian or Chinese say, he somehow tries to acquire her accent. He has this funny way of sticking his arm way out to straighten his hair. Then you see him getting all red and embarrassed. As far as he's concerned it's just him and her in the station.

travelogue stories

183 Eva
Taxi Driver
(incognito)



I picked up this little old lady one night. She had two small suitcases with her and asked to be taken to Bewleys. She was talking away in the back of the taxi and I figured she was on the phone. She asked me about the weather and then said, “Did you hear that Margaret? Nice weather.” Well, I looked into the rear view mirror and there was no Margaret! So I dropped her to Newland’s Cross, took out her suitcases and said, “Here now, the two of you have a good time”. I called in the fare and the dispatcher asked, “Did you charge her for the extra passenger?”.

124 Paul
Security
Bus Éireann



There’s a woman that comes in here to Busárus. She’s come in every two weeks for the past two years. She goes to see her children, who are in care outside the city. She was a drug addict, but she’s been clean for a year now. She may be getting the kids back in a year or so. I’ve seen her in all states. When I first met her she was having a panic attack. I’ve seen her very upset and I’ve seen her just fine. One day I had to send her home because she forgot her inhaler and she was in an awful state. Her kids are now 10 and 14. When that lassie is on her way to seeing them, you can see the light in her eyes. She’s actually writing a book with the help of her counselor – she wants to tell her story so she can show it to her kids. Last time I saw her, she had it half written and they’d found a publisher for it.

184 **Eva**
Taxi Driver
(incognito)



A driver had a bunch of Americans in the back of the taxi. He picked them up at the airport and was bringing them into town. They kept asking him questions about Irish history, "What's this? What's this? What's that?" It got to the point that he started making things up. Finally, he couldn't take it anymore. So when they asked, "Oh, is that Christ's Church?" He replied, "Actually, I think he owns them all".

199 **Harry**
Bus Driver
Dublin Bus



One day I pull over to a stop and there's this guy standing by a tall red brick wall. He let's off this big whistle and over jumps this huge Great Dane. He wants to bring the dog onto the bus. I say politely, "No, you can't". He says, "I'll carry it". I says, "It's a horse, not a poodle!" This goes on for a while and he starts getting nasty. Finally, he understands that there is no way he is getting on the bus with the dog. So he goes back onto the footpath and the Great Dane hops back over to the other side of the wall. Next thing, I see him stop a taxi. Once again he whistles and the dog pounces over the wall. He leans over the passenger window of the taxi, clearly getting nowhere with the driver. As I'm driving away, I see the taxi driver pull out through my rear view mirror and the fella still hanging onto the car door trying to convince him to take the dog inside.

travelogue stories

140 Brian
Customer Service
Iarnród Éireann
(incognito)



We used to have this gatehouse outside the station about six or seven years ago. It was manned all the time. It had a pot-belly stove and we'd burn turf in it to keep it nice and toasty inside. Whenever we might have something nice left over in the station, it would make its way out to Macky in the gatehouse. One night we were all at a retirement do and I was dancing with Macky's wife. She told me she was very worried about him because he wasn't eating. I had to laugh because he was eating plenty as far as I was concerned. Maybe he was getting better quality at the station than at home!

70 Joe
Driver
Luas



I was coming into service, and there was this passenger with his arms straight out, being carried by two others. He was struggling and shaking all over. I went over to him to see if he needed help. He says, "Ah, it's the Parkinson's, it's the Parkinson's". So I helped him onto the train. As I'm about to drive away, I see another passenger shaking her finger at me from the platform. So I look over to her and she tells me that the man is a dipper. He'd act like he needed help or he'd stumble into a passenger, and then steal their wallet. He'd been in and out of court and well known for this. But, he sure looked very believable. Someone actually asked him if he needed an ambulance. One of the ladies holding onto him asked if he needed the guards. "No, Parkinson's, Parkinson's", he whispered. You should have seen the look on his face when I warned the passengers that there had been reports of pickpockets on the train. Once he heard my announcement, I saw him lean over to another passenger and ask for help getting off at the next stop. When we got to the next stop, he stumbled to the door. And then once everyone else had left the platform, he straightened right up and walked off. I put a call into the control office to tell them we might have a con artist in our midst, "We have a Keyser Söze on the train. Look out for him at Heuston".

travelogue stories

16 Jimmy
Taxi Driver



My friend was driving this lady into town. They started off chatty enough, talking about the usual stuff – you know, the weather, sports, this and that. Then about halfway there, she hits him with “Why are you not talking to your friend?” My friend answers, “Sorry ma’am?” thinking this woman is a little creepy even though she looks normal enough. She says, “But he’s awfully friendly. His name is Michael and he is sitting in front with you and smiling at you.” He thought this was very strange, because his father’s name was Michael and he recently died. Then the woman proceeded to describe what this supposed passenger looked like – and it was the exact same description of his dad. She told him he had nothing to worry about, that his friend in the front seat had his arm around him and was looking out for him. My friend went straight home after dropping her off – he was so rattled he couldn’t finish his shift even though he had only just started.

191 Fergus
DART



We had building work going on at the station. The builders had this compressor generator to power their tools, and at the time there were no CCTV cameras or anything like that. The compressor was parked just beside the back wall. A four by four truck drove up and there was this guy poking around. So Cian came out to ask if he could help because the fella looked a bit lost. He helped the man get the generator onto a trailer and hooked it onto the back of his truck. Cian then stopped all the traffic coming into the station and directed the truck out of the station, being all helpful and all, and gave him a big wave goodbye. A little while later, the fella who owned the generator showed up and asked where it was. Cian told him that one of the builders had taken it out of here that morning. So the guy made a few calls and no one he knew had indeed taken the generator. Turns out Cian had helped your man rob the generator in broad daylight!

travelogue stories

06 Paul
Security
Iarnród Éireann



A few years ago this man, about 70 years old, came up to me and asked, “Can you tell me how I can get to Howth?” I told him that it wasn’t a great day for sight seeing. We got talking. He was in the industrial school in Artane as a child. He was actually in the same school as my dad. They were both abused there. My dad still doesn’t talk about it to this day. The man left Ireland for England years ago. This was the first time he’d come back home after 52 years, if you can believe it. He specifically came back here to make a point. He was going to simply walk out to the sea and drown himself. He’d been missing back home for two days, and told me that he left a suicide note for his wife and his daughter. Fortunately, I kept him talking until I could get the Gardaí to the station to help him out.

214 Fiona
National Transport
Authority
(incognito)



The Number 7 was coming out of town on the Merrion Road one evening back when there was both a driver and a conductor on the buses. The conductor was caught short, so they decided to pull over where he could hop the wall and relieve himself. Unfortunately, he had forgotten about the leather satchel attached to his hip. When he jumped the wall, it caught and all the change fell out. The bus’s entire take was sprayed across the grass. He had the full busload of passengers patting around in the dark searching for coins.

travelogue stories

150 John

Revenue Protection
Iarnród Éireann



We have a few adults trying to travel on children's tickets because it's all automated now. In Galway we stopped a very well dressed woman in her early 20's, who was using a children's ticket. She claimed she should be allowed to travel on a children's ticket because she didn't yet have a job, and shouldn't have to pay the €107 fine. She then put us onto her mother. Her mother's view was the same because her parents were still paying for their daughter's room, board and other expenses. The mother asked what would happen if they didn't pay the fine. We told her that the fine would go up to €1,000 if the case had to go to court. So the daughter took the train again from Athenry to Galway and duly brought her envelope with the €107 payment. When we asked her for her train ticket, what did she produce but another children's ticket!

158 John

Driver
DART
(incognito)



I was driving the DART from Bray to Greystones. Around Bray Head there are about four tunnels and it takes about ten minutes to get from Bray to Greystones. As I was traveling, a marvelous, big, grey Irish hare was standing in the middle of the tracks. I stopped the train and blew the hooter. He moved forward about four steps. Then I moved forward a bit and blew the hooter again. He moved a bit toward me again. This went on for about ten minutes. I had to make an announcement, "I have to stop here because there is a hare on the tracks but I don't want to kill him". Eventually, the hare found a way to get off. At this stage, I was about five minutes behind schedule or maybe even more. When I got into Greystones, the passengers getting off the train starting clapping. One fella said, "I've heard of trains being stopped by leaves, but never by a single hair!"

30 Derek
Depotman
DART



We had this very eccentric customer. He must have been nearly 70 years old when he passed away last year – an approachable, big, strong man. He would come to Seapoint every day for most of his life. There were three of them who always hung around together. In the newspaper article after his death, they called him “the man from Seapoint”. He told me that when he was young he used to collect scrap metal and store it in his mother’s house. Eventually, they couldn’t even get into the house! This man saved everything he ever earned. He only went on holiday once in his life – to Spain. Even though he worked in a very good job for 30 years he had an odd routine. He checked parking metres and phone booths for change. He looked for abandoned trolleys and would return them for the Euro coin. He’d search for discarded bus credit receipts and he’d eat the pound dinners served up by the Capuchin Monks in town. He had four bicycles placed at certain points in and around Dublin. After he retired, he would start at 8:30 in the morning, take a train to the first bicycle, do his routine in that area, then take the next bicycle to the next location, and so on. He used to have loads of newspapers on the back of his bike to light his fire. Then one day, his friends couldn’t get a hold of him. It turns out he had been in the hospital for six weeks and died. He left his sisters three houses and €2.8 million in cash.

126 Ruth
Driver
Bus Éireann



Christmas Eve a few years ago I was driving the bus on a long distance journey. A visually impaired young man in his early 20’s was going as far as Monaghan. Security brought him onto the bus – a 53-seater – and he got the last seat available. The bus was packed for the holidays. When we got to Monaghan, I went down to him and said, “Ready to go?” “Yes”, he replied. “Do you have luggage?” Another, “Yes”. So I said, “Know the colour?” “No”, I got back. “Is your name on it?” I asked. “No”, again. So we had to get everyone off the bus to claim their own luggage, so we could then determine that the only bag remaining was his. After 45 minutes, we finally found his luggage. His mum had packed the bag for her little darling, without thinking of putting a nametag on it.

170 Charles

Taxi

Driver



I was a hackney driver at the time working for Checkers at Parnell Street. This nice looking lady got into the taxi at about 11:00 a.m. Even though she was just leaving work, she had the smell of Guinness on her. She asked me, "Would you mind taking me to Templeogue, please?" I said, "You must have been on the beer last night." She replied, "Well, would you like to hear my story?" So she proceeded to tell me about her husband who drove a truck. He had five or six trucks on the go and several guys working for him. He used to do a long run – he'd be home for three or four days, and then on the road for three or four days. One day, this girl, about 25 years old, knocked on the lady's door. She said, "Hi, my name is Sophie. I've come to see my father". The lady replied, "I have five sons and no daughters, sorry but you're at the wrong house". The girl then mentioned the man's name, so the lady invited her in. The girl told her a very convincing story about how she was the man's daughter. The lady was devastated – obviously this girl was a love child. When the man came home on the Sunday night, she quizzed him and all hell broke loose. Two weeks later, the girl came back with a lady carrying a briefcase this time. The woman brought them into her house, sat them down and offered them a cup of tea. The lady with the briefcase asked to have a quiet word with her in the kitchen. She asked, "You really don't get it, do you?" The woman answered, "Get what?" She said, "Sophie has four sisters". The husband had been living with two families, one in Rathfarnham and the other in Templeogue. The mother and eldest daughter in Rathfarnham knew the story and were keeping it a secret, until the daughter saw her 18 year old sister getting romantic with her half brother of the same age in a disco – she decided then that it all had to come out in the open. So I said to the passenger, "I feel awfully sorry for you. What did you do?" The lady replied, "What could I do? I put several pounds of sugar in the diesel tanks of all of his lorries and left him!"

travelogue stories

89 Dave
Driver Team Leader
Luas



I was standing on the platform one night with a customer service officer. There was a tram at the platform and on the other side of the track was this guy trying to open the door. The door was never going to open – he had to go to the other side of the train. There was also another train coming from the opposite direction. I kept calling over to him to try and get his attention, I was worried he'd be hit by the oncoming train. He'd gone to all this trouble to conceal his identity – he was wearing a hat, his collar was up and he had sunglasses on – and yet, he was calling all this attention to himself by his behaviour. By this time, all the passengers on the platform were staring at him. They got a good chuckle out of this well known television presenter making a fool out of himself.

41 Antony
Driver
Dublin Bus
(incognito)



One day I'm driving along and hit a pothole in the road. I see something in my rear view mirror drop. Next thing, a passenger bends down, picks up his false teeth and carefully wraps them in his handkerchief.

travelogue stories

156 John
Traffic Control
Iarnród Éireann



The Ambassador was taking the 2:30 to Galway, and we had to do all the “meet and greet”. So Pat met the Ambassador and his wife at their car and escorted them to the train. He got them settled in, nice and comfortable, and started waving at them from the platform – all delighted with himself. Next thing, the Galway train started pulling out from the other platform. Pat started shouting frantically to try and stop the train. He ran into the first train, grabbed all of their bags and next thing there was this outrageous sight of the group of them running down the other platform. Pat was leading the way struggling with the luggage, followed by the Ambassador and his wife, and two bodyguards coming up the rear!

51 Tony
Taxi Driver



Three years ago December, I was parked at a taxi rank on Aston Quay. I noticed this fella about 20 years old, very drunk, walking along the Liffey. He was holding onto the railing, but when the railing came to an end he fell over, knocked himself out and dropped into river. I had to go in after him and swim about 50 metres before I reached him. Fortunately, another guy, a pedestrian, jumped in to. When we got him out of the water, he was actually unconscious. A doctor just happened to be walking by and was able to bring him back. He was very cold, but okay. When he was revived and realised that he had almost died and we'd saved him, all he could do was cry.

83 Mick
Station Manager
DART



Back when the Pope visited Ireland, there was no DART, just commuter services on the line. I reckon it took the Pope less time to get to here from Rome – between his flight to Dublin airport and his helicopter ride to Phoenix Park – than it took our trains to get from Booterstown to Ashtown station, there were such crowds. I was working with my Dad at Booterstown station that morning. He had the radio on and RTE was transmitting live from Phoenix Park. He put the radio next to the microphone, taped the button down to keep the mic switched on, and broadcasted the crowds from the Park over the public address system. You could hear thousands of people saying the Rosary while they waited for the Pope to arrive. So the passengers in the station joined in and started saying the Rosary as well across the entire platform. You could hear the loudest roar when the Pope arrived. The parish priest did a collection after the First Decade. He gave the collection to my father, and he in turn split it between us boys. We worked in the station until 1:00 a.m. the following day, twenty hours straight, and received a fiver each. We were delighted – that was a quarter week's wages back then.

80 Paul
Customer Care
Luas



There's a lad that works for us. He's quite fond of money. He'd talk to you all day about money. At the back of Dundrum, there's a bit of a wasteland. There's also this big drop of about ten or eleven feet. You have to climb down very carefully. At the time there were some fliers posting a special deal, offering a €50 rebate for buying a phone. The flyer really looked like real money. The fellas cut the part about the €50 out of the flyer and put it down in the ditch. They pointed it out to your man and asked him if it was real. He dismissed it. About an hour later, they all came back because they knew he'd be there looking for it. The guys in the control centre also saw him get off at the next stop and walk back. Sure enough, within a few minutes he was climbing down. The lads took a picture of him from above. It took him about a half an hour to climb back out.

54 **Mark**
Taxi Driver
(incognito)



My company used to give rides to the Taoiseach's Press Secretary. He was a bit of a grump. We were told not to make comments when he was in the back of the taxi. It was a tense political time with North and South relations. I got to his home to collect him, he came out of the house and opened and closed the back door of the taxi. We had just started our journey and were only about a mile from his house, when my taxi was suddenly surrounded by police. As it turned out, the Press Secretary had thrown his briefcase into the back of the taxi and was walking around to the other side of the cab to get in when I drove off. I had been so concerned with not bothering him that I thought he was in the back seat all along.

66 **Aisling**
Luas



We found a handbag on one of the trams. It was full of papers – nothing valuable. But we were worried, because amongst the papers was a suicide note. We tried everything to track down its owner. Her name was Valerie. We found a birth card with a phone number on it, so I called the number. The woman screamed, “Jaysus, you found it! Do you really have it?” The bag contained a temporary release letter from Mountjoy. If she had returned without that letter, they would have locked her up again because she would have been in breach of parole. She was so excited and grateful when we saw her.

travelogue stories

07 **John**
Station Operative
Iarnród Éireann



I found this bag up on Platform 5 about three or four summers ago. There was about €1000 in it – all in small bills. I had the station master call it in, and then I spotted them. There was this woman about 40 years old and two children. They were all huddled together. The kids were crying. They were meant to be going to Wexford for the next ten days and staying in a caravan park. The bag was their holiday money. She thought they had lost everything, and she had just told the kids that their holiday was called off. She wouldn't even have gotten home because she didn't have any money for the bus fare!

55 **Mark**
Taxi Driver
(incognito)



Just before Christmas during one of the biggest snowstorms in decades, I picked up a couple who were going out to South Africa – an Irish girl and her South African boyfriend. They had just announced their engagement and his parents were going to throw them a big engagement party. They were meant to fly to London, but had just heard that all flights were cancelled from London to Johannesburg until the 29th of December. The girl was distraught because she had done all the engagement celebrations with her parents here and not with his parents. They had me driving them from the airport to Dun Laoghaire in the hopes of taking a ferry to the UK, but there were problems on the other end getting out of the UK. She had her mother on the phone checking out flights from southern European countries. I got all the way to Booterstown when the mother phoned again and told them to go back to the airport and that she had booked flights from Dublin to Madrid, and then from Madrid to Johannesburg. She'd gone through all the possible emotions and all the tissues in the taxi, and he'd sat there the whole time calm as can be. I don't know how the story ended, but when I dropped them both back to the airport, she was all smiles.

91 Aisling
Luas



I received a call from this old dear. She was at the Kingswood stop and said there was a car driving on the tracks. You can never be sure what to make of this kind of phone call, so I took a look at our monitors and sure enough this car was bouncing down the tracks. I flew down to Kingswood in an emergency car. This Italian man was sitting in the car with a cigarette in one hand and all four wheels spinning. I shouted to him, “Where are you going? Shut off your engine!” With that he rolled up his window. Just then two guards arrived and patted on his window. They put him in handcuffs and had him sit on the grass while they sorted out the car. He was so calm and collected, sitting there on the hill. I couldn’t understand it. A driver spotted him quietly taking little steps to the side whenever the guards weren’t looking, inching closer to a nearby depot. We had to tell the guards to handcuff him to something stationary because it sure looked like he was trying to do a runner.

122 Paul
Security
Bus Éireann



I get on the same bus every morning – the 6:20 a.m. from Mullingar to Dublin. At the bus stop, there’s David who works with the Gardaí. We met on the bus and golf together. He’s got a wealth of knowledge. I always keep a seat for him – every morning and every evening. There’s also Steve – he works in a bank. Crissy and her daughter work in Dublin at a taxi company. They’re all at the stop every morning. Waiting on the bus there’s Alice 1 and Alice 2, who always say hello. There’s Marjorie whose husband is Scottish as well – I give her the Daily Record after I’ve read it so she can pass it along to him. Marjorie runs her own business. She’s a good looking woman and she’s got money. And from what I hear, Marjorie is all for no knickers. Then there’s the driver – I know all the bus drivers. About four months ago, I went through a period of oversleeping and missing the bus. So, one morning they presented me with an alarm clock as a gift.

169 Donal
Taxi Driver



I picked up a very wealthy looking man outside an exclusive hotel. He asked if I could take him to a nightclub. We got there but the nightclub wasn't open yet. He said, "Stay with me". I told him I had to work, so he put a €100 note in my hand and that solved it. We went to a pub and later to another nightclub. At this stage I told him, "I've really got to go now". He put another €200 in my hand, so naturally I stayed with him. We went onto yet another nightclub. He had me approaching ladies on his behalf, but none of them were interested in meeting him. The two of us just ended up drunk. He handed me a fist full of dollars and I carried him back to his hotel. He asked if I'd bring him to the airport the following day. Early the next morning, I showed up at the hotel and he was waiting with his wife and four kids.

154 John
Traffic Control
Iarnród Éireann



This young fella, he's about 14 years of age, gets off the train and his parents are waiting for him. The cleaner finds a bag under his seat and runs after him, "Wait, wait, you left this bag on the train". The boy replies, "No, sorry, that's not mine". The cleaner insists, "But, I'm sure it's yours. See here, you left it right under your seat." The boy says again, "Nope, sorry, it must be somebody else's". The cleaner goes on, "Are you sure...?" So finally the father steps in, "Here, let's have a look just to be sure". What's in the bag but a stack of dirty magazines. The young fella's face turns white and the mother's a bright red.

travelogue stories

118 **Michael**
Inspector
Bus Éireann
(incognito)



One night I was working in the station as an inspector. All of a sudden there was this crab running around the floor. Genuinely! There were several of them, each about eight or nine inches long. Walking sideways as they do. They were scrambling all around the seating area. The waiting passengers were panicking. Turns out a Chinese couple were bringing them to their restaurant in Belfast to cook them. It took us forever to get them back into their bag. That's as true as I'm standing here.

90 **Monica**
Luas
(incognito)



This lady was in court and found guilty of stealing from an elderly woman. She was looking after the woman as a caregiver and had been given the woman's ATM card to make necessary purchases. However, she was also using the card to steal money for her own use. I think this had been going on over a very long period of time. Anyway, on the day of her sentencing a man in a car came to pick her up outside the courthouse – maybe he was her partner or something. There was a gaggle of press waiting outside the building to get the story. The man took off in haste to try and avoid getting their picture taken, and he drove straight into a Luas tram! They were both unharmed, but now it was an even more fantastic news story.

travelogue stories

05 Mick
Security
Iarnród Éireann
(incognito)



He was homeless, living in the chapel doorway. He was also an alcoholic. He came in through here on numerous occasions, and I often had to escort him out of the station. I eventually took him under my wing. I would stop, talk with him, get him a cup of tea. I'd listen to his story. He had regrets that he wasn't there for his father's or mother's funeral. He started coming into the station every day to me. I'd tell him, "There's other things to life". He started to clean up his act. He stopped drinking. He got his own flat. Four years later, he's now 58 years old. He has a girlfriend. He even comes to our social gatherings – he comes to funerals, he comes to the pub with us and just has an orange juice or 7-Up. He's never been to AA, but he did go to a counselor. He still comes in nearly every day or every second day. I haven't come across anyone as good as him for the strength he had in giving up the drink.

13 Jimmy
Taxi Driver



There's this husband and wife who I pick up often. The woman is about 35 years old and the man is a bit older. I collect them in Dalkey. One night they called for a taxi and I collected them at their home. They got into the taxi with a bag. I asked them if they were going away anywhere nice. They said they weren't, they were going to a club and wanted to collect some friends on the way. The man told me they were going to a swingers' club. The club used to get together in the city, but now they congregate more locally. They have a meeting every other month. Apparently, over 200 people apply, but they screen most of them out. They take over two penthouses for their sessions.

145 **Seán**
Customer Service
Iarnród Éireann



There was a time I was a messenger boy. Myself and another lad were known as the “lad porters” because we were under age. This train came in from Cork while we were in having our tea. The station manager sent us in to get him an Irish Times and handed us this gorgeous chocolate cake. So I showed Tony the other lad, “Look what we’re after getting.” We were all sitting there eating our cake and next thing there was a knock on the door. Tony opened the little hatch and a woman asked, “I’ve just left my chocolate gateau on the train. Have you seen it?” Course, Tony’s face was covered in chocolate. He turned and muttered, “Ah, station manager?” The manager responded in an authoritative voice, “Food items are perishable and non returnable”. He’d been handed the cake from the cleaner on the train.

31 **Derek**
Depotman
DART



We had a fire in the station some time back. These guys were trying to break into the solid steel safe and must have ignited the oil based paint on the wooden door. Anyway, before the station was repaired we had three large photographs of beautiful scenes from the countryside – real rural Ireland. You can still see the outline on the wall where the pictures used to hang. One day before the fire, this tall, redhead – I’d say she was about 30 – came running into the station. She looked to be in a real hurry until she spotted the pictures through the glass ticket window. As it turns out, the photographs had been taken by her father, who had worked for CIE years ago. One of them included her when she was seven – a gorgeous red headed girl sitting in the middle of a field where she grew up. This lady was just home on a visit having been living in Los Angeles for many years. We were delighted to reunite her with the picture.

44 Anthony
Driver
Dublin Bus
(incognito)



There was a mother and child on the bus. I overheard the mother ask the child what she wanted for Christmas. She said, “You’d better write to Santa soon, otherwise how is he going to know what you want?” The little girl replied, “I don’t want to write him a letter, I’ll send him a text”. The mum responded, “Oh, I don’t think Santa has a mobile phone all the way up there in the North Pole”. I then heard the girl reply, “Mum, everybody has a mobile phone!”

10 Paddy
Security
Iarnród Éireann



Paddy comes in on Monday and Tuesday mornings. He lives in Drogheda. He takes the train to see his grandchildren. He’s 80 actually – a very fresh 80 years of age. He went over to England years ago and fought against the Germans. He likes to tell us about the war – about bombing the Germans and about his Ma going to the pawnshop. She would go in with a pair of shoes every week. One week she would go in with the right shoe and a brick wrapped in a parcel to make the pair. The following week she would alternate, bringing in the left shoe and another brick. This way she would get double the money. We love slagging him about the fact that after all that, he actually married a German!

65 Aisling
Luas



About four years ago we started finding these handbags on the trams. Every day there would be a different handbag, with the same story tucked inside. The story was about this American lady. She had been married to a baseball player, but they had a very rocky relationship and she left him. They had a young, ten year old son. She came to Ireland with her dog, but it was left in quarantine. Upon her arrival in Dublin, she had amnesia and was brought to a hospital. She was in the hospital for three or four months, assessed and handed over to the State for care. Once her dog was released, she left and went incognito. No one could find her. So every day, there was a handbag left behind with an email that told this story. Finally, on the ninth day there was a sheet left in yet another handbag that read, "Thank you Luas for finding my handbags. Could you please turn them all in to such-and-such garda station?" We did as she requested and never heard what happened with the Hansel & Gretel trail.

53 Mark
Taxi Driver
(incognito)



I have a couple I do a lot of driving for. They were going to Florida, and had booked a Delta flight from Dublin to JFK and then onto Florida, because Aer Lingus didn't have business class on their Dublin to Orlando route. The Delta flight was cancelled due to a snowstorm, but they were able to book a flight into Boston. They then rented a car and drove to New York, only to find that the flights out of New York were cancelled. They rented another car and drove to Philly because they heard there might be flights to Orlando from there. They were in a hurry you see, because they needed to get to their house in Orlando before their son arrived. They didn't want to miss the look on his face when he found the Jeep wrapped up in a bow waiting for him in the garage for his 18th birthday. He, of course, was on the direct Aer Lingus flight from Dublin to Orlando, happy enough to fly tourist class and getting there much faster than his parents.

186 Eva
Taxi Driver
(incognito)



This female taxi driver has no sense of direction. One day she had some Americans in the car. She was having trouble finding her way and ended up going around the Custom House twice. So one of the tourists said to her, "Driver, I think we've already passed here". She replied, "No, we've got two of those".

166 Tommy
Taxi Driver
(incognito)



A taxi driver waiting at Shelbourne Park gets a call to collect a fare at the hotel. Two Americans put their luggage into the boot and ask to go to Heuston Station. They get into a conversation in the back of the taxi. One of them says to the other, "Did you see those shoes? They cost only €10 but in America you'd have to pay at least \$200." So they arrive at Heuston Station and ask the driver how much they owe him. He replies, "Ah, just give us the price of an old pair of shoes".

travelogue stories

167 **Donal**
Taxi Driver



I recently picked up this businessman who was a foreigner. He kept asking me all kinds of questions, wanting to know all about the local culture. He was in a big hurry to get to the airport and asked me to get there as quickly as possible. At one stage this truck pulled out in front of us. I used an expletive and he copied me. We had another similar incident and the same thing happened. So I decided to have some fun for the remainder of the journey. I was putting out expletives the whole way there, and he copied everything I did. Even when I put my fingers out the window to a guy, he followed suit. He had no idea what anything meant, but wanted to learn the local culture any which way he could.

49 **Eamonn**
Taxi Driver
(incognito)



Christmas week this guy flags me on the street. He's very well dressed, suit and all, but also very agitated. He throws twenty quid onto my passenger seat and shouts, "Take that @#*% home!", pointing to a woman standing on my side of the car. She's very good looking. Dressed up as well in a black number and heels. She shouts back, "I don't want a ride. I don't want anything to do with him. I hate him!" And, she storms off. I'm left with €20 and I didn't even move.

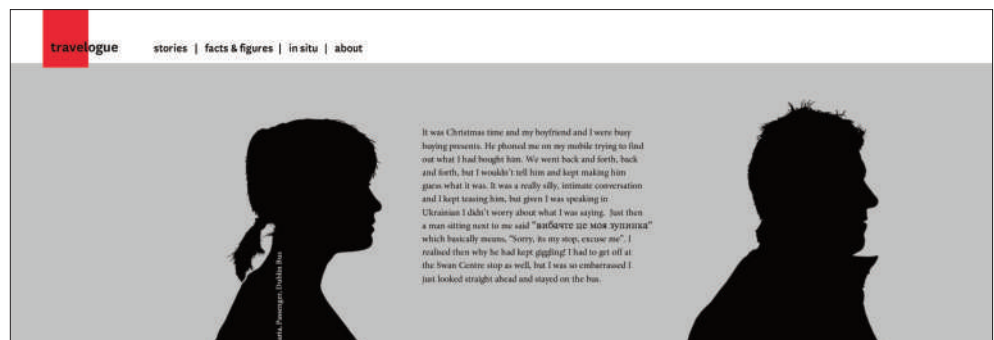
201 Michael
Executive
Luas



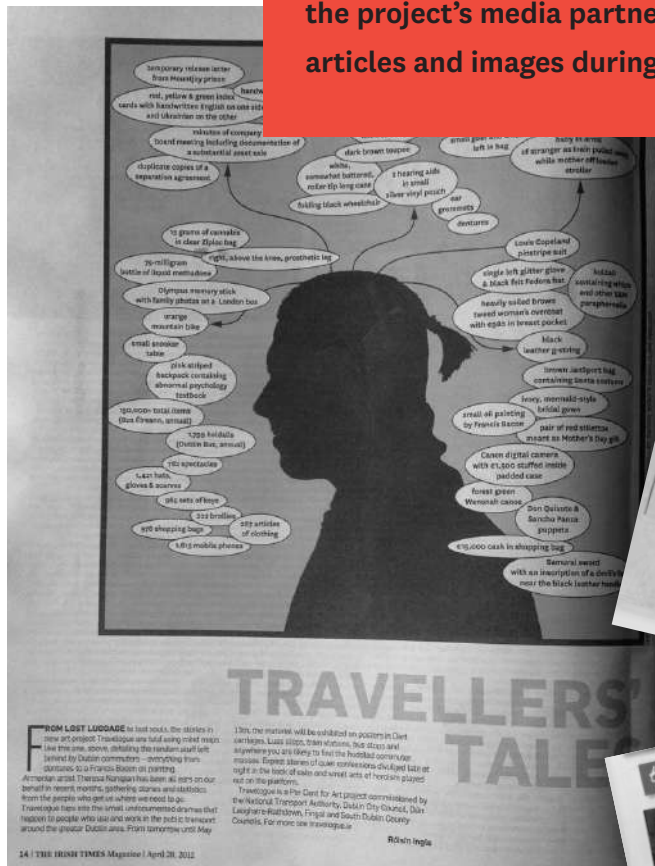
In the middle of the snowstorm last winter, a train on the red line was heaving with passengers including a half dozen out and out Dubliners in their 40s. We were heading out of town and got to the Blackhorse stop only to find that a car had lost its orientation in the snow and ended up on the train tracks. The tram was blowing its horn, but the car couldn't move because a huge barrier of snow was blocking its way. These situations have a way of bringing out the best in the Irish and bringing out the chat as well. Just like when you lose your electricity, everybody ends up talking instead of watching television. So this group of strappy lads get out and manage to push the car off of the tracks. When they get back into the train, a round of spontaneous applause erupted from the other passengers. One of the rescuers retorted with a bit of Dublin wit, "Thanks but Jaysus, who took my *@#% seat?"

The Website 10

Travelogue's website www.travelogue.ie is comprised of the complete set of mindmaps and stories, as well as, images of the public art commission in situ and a description of the project. The website is still live and has attracted over 32,500 hits as of the date of this publication.



Travelogue enjoyed a considerable amount of gratuitous print, radio and on-line publicity. Numerous national and local newspapers featured the commission including articles in the Irish Independent, a spotlight in Image magazine and a full-page feature in the Irish Times Weekend Magazine. Live interviews with the artist appeared on The Mooney Show and Phantom 105.2 FM's Feedback programme. Several on-line news sites promoted the project, namely The Journal, Irish News Review, Dnote and World Irish (later rebranded Irish Central). Of particular importance, the Metro Herald, a free-sheet distributed on the greater Dublin public transport networks to 162,000 daily readers before it ceased publishing in 2014, became the project's media partner and featured numerous Travelogue articles and images during the two week outdoor advertising run.



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Poster design
Tony O'Hanlon, Propeller
info@propeller.ie

Website
Claire Nidecker
clairenidecker@gmail.com

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www.theresananigian.com