

11TH August 2023

Pilot Programmes

with Darren Yorke

An open invitation

No matter your experience of play or making theatre, I invite you to 'Come and Play,' 'Make Things Happen,' and 'Raise the Game' with me around from **The LAB** (Dublin 1).

Programme #1	September 11 th – 15 th	(10am–2pm each day)
Programme #2	September 18 th – 22 nd	(10am–2pm each day)

To anyone I don't know... I'm Darren. Hello. I'm delighted you're reading this. Thank you. For context, I practice improvisational theatre, or "impro", which I first discovered almost 10 years ago. So much of what I know about myself, understand in others, and believe about life has been discovered through *play* and *making*. Anchored in the late Keith Johnstone's methodology, my approach has been steadily informed by my own experiences, personal interests, interdisciplinary curiosities, and a lust for learning. What's evolved has inspired two programmes: ***Spirit Guides*** and ***Making Senses***.

This venture is an unfunded passion project made possible with in-kind support from Dublin City Council Arts Office by way of **Incubation Space** (Unit 4 James Joyce St, D1). While there won't be a financial exchange with participants, I intend for this to be a mutually beneficial exchange in the spirit of "Yay learning!" as I share this practice and formalise programmes that offer holistic learning experiences in play and making.

Please RSVP to darren@grandstretch.com by Mon 25th August, outlining which programme(s) or intensive workshop(s) you'd be interested in and available for. This is **not a competitive application process! Spaces are limited, but I'll confirm on a first-come basis, prioritising anyone who can commit to a full programme.**

These experiences are enriched by a group's diversity, in every respect. Impro humbles the mighty and makes newcomers shine. Come as you are, from wherever you're at...

It's all to play for!



Programme #1

Spirit Guides

September 11th – 15th
(10am–2pm each day)

This programme explores *how we are* and *what we experience* in **five** aspects of being. The intention is not to teach anyone what they *need to know* about improvisation, but to facilitate discoveries of *Mind, Heart, Body* and *Soul* in the connecting spirit of play.

- MON 11TH ***The Spirit of Play*** — fail-safe, friendly, fun, and fearless.
- TUE 12TH ***Open Minds*** — effortless, egoless, curious, and spontaneous.
- WED 13TH ***Unruly Hearts*** — irrational, unreasonable, and unpredictable.
- THU 14TH ***Busy Bodies*** — impulsive, supportive, dynamic, and inspiring.
- FRI 15TH ***Soul Searchers*** — truth, matter, meaning, and staying power.

Programme #2

Making Senses

September 18th – 22nd
(10am–2pm each day)

This programme explores *how life happens* and *what our role is*, from big picture stories to microcosmic scenes. This won't be a formulaic process. It's about understanding the nature of *Story, Self, Status, Space, Scene* and *Style* and developing intuitions as makers.

- MON 18TH Making Sense of... ***Story***
- TUE 19TH Making Sense of... ***Self***
- WED 20TH Making Sense of... ***Status***
- THU 21ST Making Sense of... ***Space***
- FRI 22ND Making Sense of... ***Scene***

(Our Sixth Sense is "***Style***", which we'll explore throughout the week.)

Darren Yorke

Playmaker bio

Darren enjoys a rich interdisciplinary arts practice with a strong focus on improvisational theatre, or “Impro”, and theatre for young audiences. He also plays a few instruments and makes music. Hailing from Longford, he holds a BA in Drama & Theatre Studies from Trinity College Dublin and is currently an Arts Council funded YPCE Artist in Residence at Marino Institute of Education.

In Sports, a *playmaker* leads from his field of play—instilling fearlessness, influencing game flow, initiating artful advances and inspiring team towards their shining moments. As a performer, creator, and facilitator, Darren strives to be a playmaker in the arts.



While based in Canada as Education & Outreach Coordinator for [The Improv Centre](#) (2014-2016), Darren trained extensively and performed with Vancouver TheatreSports™ in the company style. Inspired by Keith Johnstone’s pioneering methodology and show formats, Darren established [Grand Stretch®](#) as Ireland’s leading member of the [International TheatreSports™ Institute](#).

Since 2017, he set out to level the playing field, make things happen and raise the game for diverse talents through his practice — actively engaging team players of all ages, abilities and backgrounds in the arts, with the sporting spirit of “*it’s all to play for!*”

Highlights from 2022 / 2023 include:

Boss Rob (co-creator / performer, *Cruinniú na nÓg* with Dublin City Council Arts Office);
Fergal (co-creator / performer, *Bualadh Bos Children’s Festival* at Belltable Theatre);
Under the Tree at (Gay) Spar (devising director, Abbey Theatre / BelongTo Youth Services);
The Lighthouse at the Library (performer, Dublin City Libraries / DCC Creative Hubs);
Maestro™ (playmaker, National Festival of Youth Theatres with Youth Theatre Ireland);
Impro (playmaker with Cabinteely Youth Theatre, and Fun House Youth Theatre).