

Meet Alex, a vibrant dancer (and singer) in the GeTIN2Dance Thursday group. He has been dancing with TIN Arts since he was in sixth form and is a seasoned Best Foot Forward performer. Best Foot Forward is an annual showcase at the Gala Theatre, featuring work created and performed by artists with a learning disability or who are autistic. Alex has found Best Foot Forward 'life changing' in the past. He started off with a little bit of stage fright, but this has lessened over time. Once he developed this newfound confidence, he has been in love with the stage ever since.



In the lead up to Best Foot Forward, Alex found rehearsals 'painful' at times, describing it as: 'like teaching a dog to do tricks.' The TIN team gave him flexibility exercises which massively improved Alex's ability to move from standing to the floor. He found the routines hard to learn at first but then they suddenly clicked. The hardest part overall was just getting the timing right, which eventually helped it all come together. Tertia, one of Alex's dance teachers, described how they carefully and precisely talked through everything with him to maintain his confidence and reduce anxiety.

Overall, rehearsals were great, and Alex was excited that everyone got to hear him sing, with many of his friends 'gob-smacked' by his extra talent. Singing at the Gala Theatre had always been a dream of Alex's.



When asked how he was feeling about performing in front of a live audience, Alex said: 'I just love a live audience. I'm missing the crowd, I'm missing the cheers, I'm missing the people's clapping and seeing the people's smiles instead of hiding in the mask.'

Alex's mum, Ann, remarked that he always looks forward to the Best Foot Forward performances, as he is a 'born showman and loves nothing more than being centre of attention.' She agreed that at times he does get a

bit nervous, but with the patience and support of the TIN team his confidence has grown over the years.

Speaking to Alex after the performance, he described it as going like clockwork, with a particular highlight being his Mum smiling and cheering him on in the audience. Ann was incredibly proud to see him sing on stage at the Gala. Tertia commended Alex's hard work in his technique classes and described how it paid off with his 'brilliant dancing'. Alongside a member of the TIN team, Alex sang in the performance finale as well as joining in the group dance, which went down a treat! That was Alex's favourite moment of the whole day; he received so many lovely messages and felt like he was 'reborn'. Alex already has high hopes for next year's Best Foot Forward: 'I would just really love to sing and dance again because those two are my favourite things.'



*“People with disabilities think they can’t do anything, but they can. Because they’ve got it in their hearts, their minds, and their soul.” - Alex*