

rethinking the
everyday
(different approaches to material culture)



m e a t h s t r e e t , d u b l i n 8 , 1 / 1 0 / 0 6

c o n f e r e n c e p r o g r a m m e
d e s i g n r e s e a r c h g r o u p
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d e s i g n h i s t o r y s o c i e t y

s c h e d u l e

r e t h i n k i n g t h e e v e r y d a y

	thursday morning 1	
9:00	registration	
9:15	welcome	
9:30	sherra murphy	reflections in the necro-zoo
10:00	thomas kador	an archaeology of the everyday
10:30	mary ann bolger	'boring types'
11:00	coffee	
	thursday morning 2	
11:30	lisa godson	against the everyday every day
12:00	sarah foster	open doors and dusty carpets
12:30	jane tynan	design and military culture
13:00	lunch	
14:00	thursday afternoon 1	
	design research group	
14:00	keynote: ken garland	the everyday graphic art of the street
14:40	ciaran o'gaora	<i>respondent</i>
	sorcha o'brien	<i>respondent</i>
15:30	coffee	
	thursday afternoon 2	
15:45	material cultures Ireland the digital health group (intel)	ageing in place: re-thinking the everyday
16:15	dr. daniel jewesbury	material culture of a belfast suburb
16:45	brian ward	gardening everyday
17:15	dr. stephanie rains	the everyday and the academy
17:45	conference close	

DESIGN HISTORY SOCIETY

this conference is supported by a design history society event award

thursday november 2nd 2006



lidl, thomas street, dublin 8, 8/10/06

the task of the conference is to examine the critical potential of re-thinking the everyday by exploring the multiplicity of ways in which the material/visual environment can be approached, described, evaluated, understood, interpreted or reconstructed. it thus seeks to cater for a broad church and to encourage newer as well as established researchers and practitioners to contribute and participate.



bag shop window display, tottenham court road, 14/10/06

c o n t r i b u t o r s

k e y n o t e : k e n g a r l a n d
visiting professor in graphic design, brighton university.

mary ann bolger, waterford institute of technology

sarah foster, ccad, cork / royal college of art, london

lisa godson, royal college of art london.

dr. daniel jewesbury, centre for media research, uu, coleraine

thomas kador, school of archaeology, university college dublin

anna moran, national college of art & design, dublin

sherra murphy, school of creative arts, iadt, dun laoghaire

sorcha o'brien, visual culture, national college of art&design

ciaran o gaora, Zero-G, www.zero-g.ie

dr. stephanie rains, dept. of humanities, iadt, dun laoghaire

jane tynan, csm, university of the arts, London

brian ward, school of architecture, university college dublin

material cultures ireland & the digital health group (intel)

dr. tina basi, mehfil enterprise/intel ireland

julie behan, university of limerick

dr. adam drazin, trinity college dublin

design research group, national college of art & design

feargal fitzpatrick, national college of art and design

b o b g r e y , r e d a n d g r e y d e s i g n

dr. ciaran swan, national college of art & design

which everyday ?
whose re-thinking?
what "material" ?



school building, school street, dublin 8, 17/10/06

rethinking the everyday: an introduction to what we already know

In a first approximation, the everyday is what we are first of all, and most often: at work, at leisure, awake, asleep, in the street, in private existence. The everyday, then, is ourselves, ordinarily. [...] The everyday is platitude (what lags and falls back, the residual life with which our trash cans and cemeteries are filled: scrap and refuse); but this banality is also what is most important, it brings us back to existence in its very spontaneity and as it is lived - in the moment when, lived, it escapes every speculative formation, perhaps all coherence, all regularity. (Blanchot, 1987, pp. 12-3.)

[The] shift in political and cultural life over the last few decades suggests that we need to find new ways of theorizing the everyday. (Moran, 2005, p. 18.)

On the surface, the everyday is commensurate with an experience of boredom and tedium: to speak of the everyday is to speak of 'nothing out of the ordinary,' an incessant routine that we encounter and reencounter on a daily basis. (Rassos, 2001, unpub.)

There is a risk of both trivialising and overreaching in one's enquiry when one attempts to rethink the everyday. One risks a trivial enquiry in as much as one may presume that we are all always already grappling with our everyday context as we attempt to recast our experience as both meaningful and consequential. It is a given that we each strain to think and rethink our way through our own daily conditions of being and to construct pathways through our lives and our worlds.

On the other hand, one risks overreaching with an enquiry into the everyday in as much as the everyday may be construed as pervasive and co-extensive with contemporary existence. Everything is posited and disposed within the everyday. The everyday dissolves all into the persistent recurrence of the habitual, the unrelenting daily chore, and the could-not-be-otherwise. How could one possibly think about "everything"? Have we not learned well by now to be suspicious of any total story that seeks to encompass everything and anything?

But then the term "everyday" has come to function as a *term of art* within a range of studies that seek to refocus critical attentions on actually lived experience as opposed to the discrete specialised connoisseurship of the by-products of living. Rethinking the everyday is an attempt to overcome such approaches to the by-products of living which isolate these products from those processes of living that lend meaning and value to artefacts, signs and behaviours.

One very important tradition, in this turn to rethink the everyday, is the quintessentially modern discipline of sociology. Whether one considers the German, French or American strands of sociological enquiry, in each there is a significant turn to address the everyday. Weber, Simmel, Durkheim, Mauss, Veblen, Parsons and Mill mapped new ways of considering the tacit horizons of expectation, habit and behaviour that constitute the world of everyday social interaction and exchange. Indeed if sociology may be seen as the quintessentially modern discipline, then the everyday might be construed as the quintessentially modern life-form.

Western modernity's obsessive division of space and time disallows the fluid interchange between sacred-time and the here-and-now that characterises the theocratic social orders that preceded the modern. In disrupting the pervasive interaction of the sacred and the profane, Western modernity constructed a specific condition of *everydayness* that provides the ground and condition of possibility for multiple "other" worlds - worlds of tourism or of celebrity or of exoticism - which are always in some key sense elsewhere and ultimately incompatible with the everyday. The root meanings of the everyday may thus be thought to reside in the discrete compartmentalisation of the sacred and the profane; in that tried and trusted separation between "sunday best" and "just ordinary everyday stuff."

The cultural formation that characterises modernity's attempt to reinvent the everyday world, the avant-garde, targeted the everyday as the space where the aesthetic must be unleashed to recover authentic being. Avant-gardism's cry of "art-into-life" is a call to dismantle the everyday and reconstruct the quotidian world as art throughout. This may be contrasted with a typically ambivalent gesture of contemporary art practice such as Michael Landy's *break down* (2001). This is a work which dismantles the everyday - systematically reducing to dust all the belongings of the artist - but doing so not in order to aesthetically reconstruct the world, but rather in order, more simply and remorselessly, to catalogue the everyday tyranny of worldly things. This particular work does so without any promise of an alternative way of being. There is throughout contemporary art practice a multiplicity of strategies for re-engaging the everyday as the everyday, not in order to transcend it, but to in some way recuperate it as the only ground of possible being, or as authentic being in and of itself.

However, it is arguably the specifically French tradition of social and philosophical critique rooted in the work of Henri Lefebvre, Michel de Certeau and Pierre Bourdieu that provides much of the current vogue for studies of the everyday. Indeed Joe Moran's recent call to rethink the everyday explicitly cites this francophone

tradition as requiring renewal: "these theorists always imagined the everyday as a dynamic and historically evolving concept, and so they would not be surprised that more recent transformations in daily life have been bound up with different social and political problems." (Moran, 2005, p. 19.)

Other important contributions to contemporary approaches to the everyday have come from the unique feuilleton journalism of Weimar intellectuals such as Benjamin and Kracauer. They directed the critical gaze of the reflective cultural critic not at the traditional monuments of high culture, but towards the behaviours and aspirational luxuries of "the little shopgirls"¹ and the habitués of the department store and the movie theatre. (Kracauer, 1995) [orig. 1927.] In doing so they provided a rich and suggestive range of methodologies for a poetic and impressionistic ethnography of modernity, which are still drawn upon in contemporary design history, art and architecture theory and visual cultural studies.

In a perhaps more surprising vein, the emergent paradigms of "ambient", "pervasive" and "ubiquitous" technologies have promised "*The New Everyday*":

Within the next decade, as digital technologies become increasingly pervasive, we may find ourselves living with almost invisible, intelligent interactive systems - an 'Ambient Intelligence' that could soon form a natural part of our everyday existence. (Aarts and Marzanno, 2003.)

In a way that arguably continues and extends the early twentieth century technocratic discourse on "planning," the technologically-grounded reconstruction of the everyday has become a world-making project for contemporary technologists and designers. While the continuities are obvious - "for decades now, people have been predicting the imminent advent of the 'smart-home'" (p.8.) - the potential radical reorganisation of the life-world by the implementation of distributed and embedded technologies is perhaps less easily grasped. Have we really comprehended the telephone yet, never mind the mobile phone, or indeed what the mobile phone may yet become?

In a different strand of intellectual enquiry one encounters another critical engagement with the everyday (and also the original impetus to cultural studies) in the attempt to describe the popular negotiation of mass cultural forms and behaviours. Richard Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy* (1957) initiated a research project that sought to examine the interaction of established working class culture with the emergent dominance of mass-media in post-war Britain. Interestingly Hoggart draws on established literary conventions (drawn in part from 19th century realist novels) such as the indicative domestic vignette - that serve to produce the "typical" everyday social world, that is to say social "types" - in order to construct his argument about the massification and alienated reconstruction of the everyday driven by new media forms. (In this context it is interesting to note Lee's claim that Cultural Studies "had roots in the work of the first New Left [...] but Cultural Studies was inscribed as well in the long-term tradition of literary and social criticism on the right stretching back through Matthew Arnold to Edmund Burke." (Lee, 1997.))

With the emergence in the 1980s of a discrete domain of cultural studies under the rubric of "visual culture" there was another disciplinary convergence in the domain of the everyday. Strategies of image analysis first elaborated within the study of visual art, and later film studies, began to be extended to an ever wider domain of

¹ Kracauer's expression in this context emphasises the centrality of gender issues in the interrogation of the everyday, a centrality which is far from exhaustively addressed.

visual forms. This give rise to an enthusiastic study of the visual culture of the everyday world: an everyday world increasingly saturated by the image.

In another line of development both the archaeologist's and the anthropologist's gaze have been returned upon the culture of modernity, as the category of "material culture" has been deployed as an overarching term with which to conceptualise the diversity of human life forms and social worlds. Berger asserts that "material culture challenges the student of everyday life to discover how objects in any social world are produced, received, and experienced" and "to explore the boundaries between objects, their uses, and practices." (Berger, 2004, p. 21.) While Daniel Miller defines the study of modern material culture as an "inherently multidisciplinary space where a number of disciplines converge." (Miller, 1998, p. 19.)

Whatever else we might try to do under the heading of "rethinking the everyday," it is surely apparent that we must talk across any habitual boundaries between disciplines, between expertise domains and between objects of study. Importantly, rethinking the everyday is also about rethinking what we do, and not just a matter of rethinking how we talk about things. A small part of rethinking the everyday might also be rethinking the "specialist" everydays of our professional worlds as practitioners, as academics, as students, as researchers and as colleagues.

Thinking is perhaps never an innocent activity; rethinking is even less innocent in as much as it necessarily acknowledges that other thoughts have gone before, other things have been spoken already. We somehow come a little late to our conversations when we are rethinking things. The hope remains that in rethinking there is the potential for renewal.

mw

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a b s t r a c t s

speaker	sherra murphy
title	reflections in the necro-zoo: the natural history museum, dublin as material culture.
abstract	As material culture, the Natural History Museum, Dublin is much more than the sum of its animal parts - its collections and internal structures point to numerous avenues for exploration, reflection and critical analysis. As well as a 'museum of a museum', or a study collection, it may also be seen as an archive or index of multiple and interlocking concerns. The Museum preserves for us an elegant portrait of the moment in time when it was thought possible to create a clear system of hierarchy encompassing all forms of life - that it was possible to know all of nature and its forms so intimately that they could be arranged in the manner of a stamp collection. As such, it also says a great deal about the temporal and political activities of the men and institutions which created it, and is a portrait of a worldview.
bio	<i>not available at time of going to print</i>
speaker	thomas kador
title	past lives from materials: an archaeology of the everyday.
abstract	Archaeology by its very nature deals with materials - in the form of objects, buildings and places of past human interactions. However, the dominant approach has been to produce grand narratives and longue durée histories rather than focus in on the snapshots of people's daily lives that everyday objects can grant us. In this paper I will argue that this preoccupation with large scale explanations has caused us (archaeologists) to often neglect or ignore the fine grain detail of the material remains we are supposed to study. This in turn has helped to reinforce stereotypes of past lives modelled on modern societal norms. I will thus suggest a number of alternative strategies, allowing us to pay closer attention to the actual material conditions of daily lives in the past.
bio	<i>not available at time of going to print</i>

speaker	mary ann bolger
title	boring types: why some things don't 'go without saying'.
abstract	Myth is most prevalent when the object is ordinary, everyday, 'boring'. The paper introduces attempts to get design students to look beyond their assumption that everyday graphic objects (from religious ephemera to manhole covers) are 'boring'. It also suggests that the study of 'boring' typography can help expose mythologies and aid broader investigations into culture, meaning and identity.
bio	Mary Ann Bolger runs the historical and theoretical elements of the BA (Hons) Degree in Design (Visual Communications) at Waterford Institute of Technology. One of concerns of the course is bringing 'theory' and 'practice' together in design education. In much of her research, Mary Ann collaborates with Clare Bell, a designer and researcher. Together they represent Ireland in the Association Typographique International. A graduate of the MA in Design History at the Royal College of Art, Mary Ann lectures widely on issues relating to typography, religion and identity. She is a member of the IDI, Typography Ireland and the Design History Society.

speaker	lisa godson
title	against the everyday every day
abstract	My paper takes as its specific focus the ceremonial material culture of Limerick city in the 1920s, in particular that of the largest lay religious organisation in the world at that time - the all-male Archconfraternity of the Holy Family. While the members engaged in ceremonial practices on the streets of the city almost every single day, their activities and material culture were concerned with countering 'the everyday'. As such, the methodological focus of my paper is concerned with ways of approaching a material culture that partakes in the everyday in terms of its pervasiveness, but seeks to transcend it in terms of its intention and use.
bio	Lisa Godson is tutor in Critical and Historical Studies at the Royal College of Art, London where she also holds a fellowship in Teaching and Learning. She is currently completing her doctorate thesis in the RCA/V&A department of History of Design on the material culture of public events in the Irish Free State, 1922-39. She was previously a lecturer in the Department of the History of Art, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin Institute of Technology and elsewhere, wrote a weekly column on Irish design for the Sunday Times for six years, worked as a curator (On Neon, National Photographic Archive of Ireland), as a consultant to the National Museum of Ireland (Eileen Gray permanent exhibition), the Office of Public Works and Ballymun Regeneration Ltd. Her research is funded by the British Association of Irish Studies and the Design History Society.

speaker	sarah foster
title	open doors and dusty carpets: identity, representation and the domestic interior in 19th century Irish fiction.
abstract	This paper will discuss several contemporary novels from the point of view of the design historian seeking to recover details of everyday life in 19th century Ireland. Writers of fiction, this paper will argue, use furnishings - their style, their cost, their state of repair - as a way of suggesting the social status, confessional identity, or political attitudes of their owners. How should such descriptions be assessed? Do literary texts reinforce, or contradict, other types of evidence about the interior and how it was constructed, and perceived?
bio	Sarah Foster, Crawford College of Art & Design, Cork: Lecturer in History of Design; Royal College of Art, London: doctoral research student. Having worked as a tutor in several Irish art colleges, and as a consultant to the National Museum in Dublin, Sarah is now full-time Lecturer in History of Design at Crawford College of Art & Design, Cork and a visiting lecturer on the NCAD M.A. in History of Design & the Applied Arts. Sarah graduated from the V&A/R.C.A. M.A. in History of Design in 1995, with a dissertation on shopping and the negotiation of national identity in 18th-century Dublin. Under the aegis of the Royal College of Art, Sarah is currently undertaking doctoral research on 'The expression of national and religious identities in the 19th-century Irish domestic interior.' Sarah's publication credits include articles and reviews in Circa art magazine, Things, History Today, and Ceramic Review.

speaker	jane tynan
title	designing bodies for unstable spaces: design and military culture.
abstract	This paper explores my recent research on First World War British Army military uniform. While the analysis of sources explores uniform as object of exchange in the marketplace, it also considers its personal significance to the soldier, revealing a role not only in the operation of modern warfare, but in modern life. To locate uniform as an object of intimacy and instrument of power, an interdisciplinary approach is employed calling on aspects of visual culture, philosophy, economic history, and the anthropology of material culture, to develop an interpretative framework to re-think the role of uniform clothing in modernity.
bio	Jane Tynan is a lecturer in cultural studies at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, University of the Arts, London. She has also taught at Goldsmiths College London and London College of Fashion and has published in the area of cultural history and art and design education. Her current research involves an exploration of the representation, production and consumption of First World War British Army uniform.

speaker	keynote: ken garland
title	the everyday graphic art of the street
bio	<p>Ken Garland completed his studies in graphic design at the Central School of Arts and Crafts, London, in the 1950s. He was Art Editor of Design magazine from 1956-62, when he left to establish his own graphic design studio as Ken Garland and Associates. Among his many clients were Galt Toys, Race Furniture, Barbour Index, The Butterley Group, William Heinemann, Paramount Pictures, Harper & Row, Otto Maier Verlag, The Science Museum, Cambridge University Press, The Ministry of Technology, Jonathan Cape, The Arts Council, the Royal Parks Agency and the Barbican Gallery.</p> <p>He has contributed many articles to design periodicals in the UK, US, Europe and Japan. His own publications include: First things first: a manifesto (Self-published, London, 1964); Graphics handbook (Studio Vista, London/Reinhold Publishing, New York, 1966); Illustrated graphics glossary (Barrie & Jenkins, London, 1980); Graphics, design and printing terms: an international dictionary (Lund Humphries, London/Design Press, New York, 1989); Mr Beck's Underground map (Capital Transport, Harrow Weald, 1994); A word in your eye (Department of Typography and Graphic Communication, University of Reading, 1996); Metaphors: a portfolio of text and image (Bradbourne Publishing, East Malling, 2001).</p> <p>In addition to fulfilling regular appointments as a Visiting Lecturer at the University of Reading (1971-99), the Royal College of Art (1977-87), Central School of Art and Design (1986-91) and the National College of Art and Design, Dublin (1982-92), he has lectured widely in the UK, US (three lecture tours in 1995, 1997 and 2002), Canada, Portugal, Norway, Denmark, Germany and Bangladesh. He was Visiting Professor in Information Design at the Universidad de las Americas, Puebla, Mexico from 1999-2003, and is currently Visiting Professor in Graphic Design at Brighton University, UK.</p> <p>TV appearances on design subjects include: Panorama, 1960; Tonight, 1964; The Visual Scene, 1969; Making Toys, 1975; Omnibus, 1976; Design classics, 1988; Tales from the Mapping Room, 1993; Underground - the Story of the Tube, 2000. Garland's photographic work has been seen in the following one-man exhibitions: Linescape, lithoscape, landscape (Reading, 1987); Ken Garland: A retrospective (Reading, Coventry and Sunderland, 1997); The singing (South Armagh and Donegal, 1999); Images of Ulster and other places (Northern Ireland, 2000); Metaphors, a port-folio of text and image (Brighton and Coventry, 2002, Hull, 2003, Glasgow and Portugal, 2004); The children of Bangladesh/The rickshas of Bangladesh (Coventry and Reading, 2006).</p>

speaker	sorcha o'brien
title	respondent to keynote
bio	Sorcha O'Brien lectures in the history of design, specialising in the history of industrial design and technology. She is currently researching a PhD thesis at the University of Brighton on the representation of electrical technology in the early Irish Free State in different visual media, centering around the images of the Shannon Scheme hydro-electric power station at Ardnacrusha. She holds a doctoral research studentship from the Arts and Humanities Research Council and has had work published in the first edition of <i>Thought Lines</i> , as well as <i>Circa</i> and <i>Room</i> magazines.

speaker	material cultures ireland
title	ageing in place: rethinking the everyday
abstract	Drawing upon research conducted by the Digital Health Group at Intel Ireland over the summer of 2006, this presentation examines Irish homes in rural and urban settings focussing on the experiences of ageing and the materiality of everyday living. The Material Cultures Ireland project is linked in with a larger international research project, the Global Ageing Experience, which explores the social construction and cultural interpretation of health and illness with respect to the aged along with the meaning and relevance of key concepts such as quality of life, autonomy, dependence, and end of life, whilst seeking out opportunities for technologically based interventions.
bio	<p>As the research is still very much in its preliminary stages, this presentation will look at some of the methods used for data collection and analysis, along with presenting images from our fieldwork.</p> <p>The Digital Health Group at Intel Corporation is based in part here in Leixlip as well as in Portland, Oregon and Santa Clara, California. Health is a fairly recent interest for Intel and researchers here form part of the team in Europe for Health Research and Innovation (HRI).</p> <p>Tina Basi, Julie Behan, and Adam Drazin work as designers and social scientists on a range of projects, of which the Material Cultures Ireland project is one. Tina Basi finished her PhD in 2005 at the University of Leeds on women working in transnational Indian call centres. Julie Behan is currently completing her PhD on autonomous robotics at the University of Limerick. Adam Drazin is a social anthropologist affiliated to Trinity College Dublin, where he has spent two years working on cultural forms of home and openness among people moving from Romania to Ireland.</p>

speaker	dr. daniel jewesbury
title	archive: lisburn road. the material culture of a Belfast suburb.
abstract	Ten years into the peace process, the catalogue of visual representations of Belfast is still overwhelmingly concerned with images of intractable working-class conflict. The book and exhibition Archive: Lisburn Road (2004) present a record of an otherwise invisible Belfast, an affluent suburb that runs against the grain of the established image of the city.
bio	Daniel Jewesbury is an artist and writer. He graduated in Fine Art at NCAD and subsequently completed doctoral research at the University of Ulster. His work has been shown internationally, most recently in the exhibition 'Universal Experience: Art, Life and the Tourist's Eye' at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. Daniel is one of the founder-directors of the Visonic audio-visual festival in Belfast, and is also a co-editor of Variant magazine (www.variant.org.uk). His writing has been published in Mute, Third Text and Art Monthly, and in catalogues for Willie Doherty, Roderick Buchanan and Duncan Campbell, amongst others. He is currently a Research Associate at the Centre for Media Research in the University of Ulster.

speaker	brian ward
title	gardening every day.
abstract	This paper explores some of the thinking current in the garden suburb movement at the turn of the twentieth century behind the use of gardening and craftwork as hobbies which would re-connect the general populace to the world around them.
bio	Brian Ward is a design tutor and lecturer in the School of Architecture, Landscape and Civil Engineering in University College Dublin, where he is conducting research into the garden suburb landscape. He is editor of 'building material', the journal of the Architectural Association of Ireland. He also co-chairs the collaborative module between NCAD and UCD on "spatial cultures". He has previously practised as an architect in Berlin, Dublin, New York and Leitrim.

speaker	dr. stephanie rains
title	the everyday and the academy: a new generation of cultural studies?
abstract	This paper is an analysis of the developing interest in the everyday and the popular within Cultural Studies, the place this has within the academy, and a case-study of the author's own practices in studying the everyday and the popular.
bio	Stephanie Rains lectures in Cultural Theory in the Department of Humanities at the Institute of Art Design and Technology, Dun Laoghaire, Dublin. She received her PhD from the School of Communications at Dublin City University, and her book, <i>The Irish American in Popular Culture, 1945-2000</i> , will be published by Irish Academic Press in 2007. She has also published articles on Irish-American identity and Irish tourism in anthologies such as <i>The Irish In Us</i> , <i>Tourism in Ireland</i> , and is currently working on a historical study of consumer culture in Ireland.

conference team

mick wilson	head of research & postgraduate development ncad
anna moran	course director, ma in design history & material culture
feargal fitzpatrick	design research group
bob grey	design research group
dr. ciaran swan	design research group

s t u d e n t s u p p o r t

about the m.a. in design history & material culture at n c a d

(formerly "history of design & applied arts.")

about: this programme has been offered in the past on a biennial basis however, due to high levels of demand and due to the success of the programme is now delivered every year. it provides both full and part time modes of study - the newly revised programme now requires just over 12 months full-time study and approximately 24 months part-time study. we advise applicants who may wish to apply for this programme to contact the programme director anna moran at morana@ncad.ie or the head of faculty of visual culture prof. niamh o'sullivan osullivann@ncad.ie.

the master of arts in design history and material culture examines the historical, critical, theoretical, and interdisciplinary approaches to the study of design and material culture. it is a unique programme in Ireland building upon the success of the college in providing the first masters programme in design history and material culture in the State.

modules: the programme includes modules in:

- the meaning of things: interpreting consumer economy
- making and selling: design, manufacture and retailing goods
- spatial cultures (*in collaboration with ucd architecture and the ncad m.a. art in the contemporary world*).
- style and ideology
- technology, design and society
- irish material culture
- design and identity
- designing modernity

students develop their own research agenda and cultivate personal research interests through modules in:

• **research methods:** what are the research issues in the historical study of design? how does one go about developing a research project in the study of design and material culture? how does one establish meaningful and relevant research questions when looking at material culture and the shaping of the everyday environment?

• **major research project:** an opportunity for each student to evolve a self-set project examining themes and questions and engaging particular personal interests in aspects of design and material culture.

context:

the ncad has been responsible since 1983 for pioneering design history as a highly successful undergraduate course with an unchallenged national reputation. this programme is able to offer not only the expertise of ncad staff, but also design practitioners and visiting scholars from a range of different institutional backgrounds. the ncad Library (established c. 1900) and its incorporated national irish visual arts library (nival) offer unique resources for research and documentation unavailable elsewhere. The College has an ongoing commitment to the development of design history and material culture as key areas of national and international research collaboration.

students and graduate profile:

to date, students have been drawn from third level teaching institutions, from the professional fields of archaeology, architecture, archives, public and arts administration, fashion, industrial and graphic design, art history, curatorship, craft practice, publishing, economics, history and sociology. some have been financed by the Office of Public Works where the programme is seen as an important adjunct to their work; others have received an extra allotment of research time from their educational institutions to enable them to pursue the programme.

the highest achieving student on the 2001-3 programme was awarded the gill & macmillan award for a thesis of exceptional merit. two students on the 2003-5 programme have been awarded prizes for their written work as part of the crafts council of ireland's third level education awards pilot scheme.

graduates of the course tend to want to pursue the research they have initiated, to return to their teaching with new skills, to work in higher education, with historic interiors or architectural documentation, to publish and lecture, or to work in curatorial or educational capacities in galleries and museums. some intend to proceed to embark on ph.d. theses in the faculty.

some key points of information relating to the m.a. design history and material culture:

1. this is a taught programme
2. there are lectures and seminars on two-days of the week for full-time students and on one day of the week for part-time students.
3. the duration of the programme is just over 12 months full-time, and 24 months part-time
4. students attend classes from September to June, and then submit a major piece of work in the autumn.

application guidelines:

1. applicants are required to submit a clear statement of intent (minimum of 500 words) which indicates their reason for wishing to pursue the programme and what they hope to achieve. (5 copies)
2. they are required to submit a recent example of written work. (5 copies) for more see www.ncad.ie

p r o g r a m m e p r o d u c e d b y n c a d r e s e a r c h