

In Profile – meet our alumni ↓

Laoise Carey

Alumni (Fashion)



Name: Laoise Carey
Graduation Year: 2017
Current Career: Fashion Design
Discipline: Fashion Design
Location: Tipperary

What career path did you want to follow as a child?

I was always very creative but was torn between pursuing art or academia as a career path. I had to choose between studying fashion/textiles, languages or engineering.

Why did you decide to study at the National College of Art & Design?

I decided to study at NCAD because I have some family friends who are NCAD alumni so I knew that graduates could have positive outcomes and get good jobs. I always wanted to live and study in Dublin because I found it to be such an inspiring city.

How did you develop your career towards your current job / practice?

After graduating from NCAD in 2017, I worked for a fashion manufacturing company Styletux in Dublin as a Junior Pattern Cutter. From there, I moved to London for two years to work for an Irish luxury fashion designer Simone Rocha (also an NCAD Alumna). Here, I worked in the design department for six months and then moved into the area of garment technology as the sample room assistant. I moved back to Ireland in December 2019 to prepare my application for Masters courses, but during the Covid-19 pandemic I decided to defer my applications and start to work launching my own fashion brand.

What is the one experience – during your time at NCAD – that has informed you most in your career / work to date?

For me, the best experience at NCAD was learning exceptional pattern cutting and sewing skills, including making tailored jackets, blouses and jeans. I have always been interested in the crafts of tailoring and

dressmaking, so the hands-on nature of my experience highlighted to me that my skills lie mainly in the areas of pattern cutting and garment technology.

If you were chatting with current NCAD students today, what is the one piece of advice you would offer?

I would encourage everyone to take part in the Studio+ year, after Year 2, to elongate your course. Once you have graduated it is much more difficult to take on unpaid internships, so the Studio+ year is a great opportunity to build up industry experience before you even graduate, and while you can still take advantage of student loans to fund your internship.

Given the global turmoil and change, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, what – in your opinion – are the opportunities for those in creative industries?

The fashion industry is currently experiencing a time of huge change: brands are becoming more environmentally conscious, striving to implement more ethical manufacturing processes, and improving interaction with their audiences through the use of technology (accelerated by Covid-19). Opportunities are opening up for creatives to be drivers of change, and innovators in every area of fashion design, production, sales and marketing. I strongly believe that graduates, assistants and juniors with exciting ideas have more power to create positive change within a company than they may believe.

Laoise's interview is part of our 'Alumni Stories' series, where some of our NCAD graduates reflect on their time at NCAD.

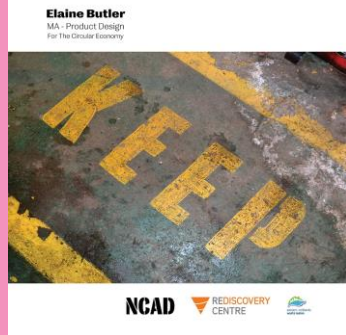
[Explore the full series here.](#)

What's Coming Up ↓

The NCAD Gallery presents, [Lacuna: CEAD Higher Diploma Graduate 2020 Exhibition](#) from the Centre of Continuing Education in Art and Design (CEAD), the first in a series of graduate student presentations to take place at the Gallery over the course of the academic year 2020-2021.

[Between Telemorphosis and Security Zones](#), an online exhibition from ACW is live on the Goethe Institute's website and [can be found here.](#)

In Action ↓



Project Title: Product Design for the Circular Economy

Elaine Butler is a postgraduate student in Product Design. In 2019, she was awarded an NCAD scholarship to research design for the circular economy. The scholarship was made possible by NCAD through partnership with Rediscovery Centre, and Eastern Midlands Regional Waste (Dublin City Council). Funding was awarded to the partnership by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation in the UK.

How did you come to apply for the research design scholarship?

I graduated as a furniture designer and worked in exhibition design, interior design and interior architecture over the next 24 years. During this time, I became interested in environmental issues and started blogging about my efforts to live a more ecologically sustainable life. I saw the scholarship advertised and applied. It is funded by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, a fantastic organisation that is championing the circular economy as a sustainable alternative to our current linear economy. They are particularly interested in engaging with designers, primarily because 80% of a product's carbon footprint is determined at the design stage.

What has been your research focus to date?

I decided to focus on residential furniture, so researched the main sources of furniture waste in Ireland and Europe. I also looked at circular economy and waste management policy, along with the principles behind the circular economy and circular design. Having identified poor success rates for eco products, I examined consumption patterns, consumer psychology and market trends, and had identified re-use and re-manufacturing as potential routes to circularity for furniture. My research into circular design led me to consider circular materials and my research into consumer psychology brought me to examine Design for Behaviour Change and its potential for lowering consumption rates for

furniture. My research indicated that bulky furniture waste was an area in need of intervention and that sofas might offer the most fertile ground. I focused my primary research on sofa owners and makers, visiting sofa factories in Ireland and carrying out surveys, both in person and online. This revealed that despite sofas on the market with a life span of 35 years, customers were choosing to dispose of their sofas after 10-15 years. As the supply of second-hand sofas is outstripping demand, most sofas are incinerated, adding to pollution and resulting in a loss of materials and embodied energy. I identified that the most appropriate intervention to extend the use of sofas is a service / product combination that keeps the value of sofas high throughout their functional life. The final proposal will integrate Design for the Circular Economy and Design for Behaviour Change principles and serve as a vehicle to test the various design toolkits in this sphere.

Impact of Covid-19

I was very lucky to have completed in-person interviews before movement restrictions came into effect but, having my children at home made it difficult to set aside time to analyse and synthesise data. I think people being at home helped me garner a large response rate to my online survey, and the transferring of seminars online gave me greater access to global industry experts. One of the main difficulties I had completing course work was accessing original reference material, particularly those contained in books.

Future Plans and Opportunities

My aim for the project is to co-create a new sofa design with one of the sofa makers I interviewed. If this isn't possible, I will design independently at home. I am very experienced in 3D visualisation and so intend to augment rough physical mock-ups with photo-realistic images embedded in a fully functioning website that communicates the full scope of the product / service proposal. I also hope to write a paper on the potential for Design for Behaviour Change to impact on the re-use of products by more than one owner. This insight will hopefully prove useful to other practising designers wishing to nudge users towards more ecologically sustainable behaviours in a positive, life-enhancing manner.

My ultimate goal is to help Irish manufacturers navigate how best to pivot

Staff / Student Achievements ↓

We are pleased to announce that NCAD staff have picked up 14 nominations in the [IDI 2020 Design Awards](#). This is a glowing endorsement of the quality of our design education and research, and the professional standing of our staff team. NCAD staff collected 10% of the nominations, not to mention the numerous nominations for our alumni!

Congratulations to **Olwen Kelly**, a current 3rd year student and the regional winner in Visual Arts from her submission of work from her 2nd year TAA Main Event Project in the [Global Undergraduate Awards 2020](#). In the Architecture & Design category, **Jack Canavan** and **Keith Fitzsimons**, were [highly commended](#).

In response to the COVID-19 situation the first ever online Global Design Graduate Show created by [ARTSTHREAD x i-D/Vice Media & Gucci](#) took place. We were thrilled to learn that NCAD graduate **Sabhín O'Sullivan** (BA Product Design, 2020) and **Diarmuid Farrell** (BA Interaction Design 2020) have been voted overall winners in their categories. BA Interaction Design graduate **Linas Staniukynas** is the winner of the [Interaction Design / Game Design judges vote](#).

That means that the first graduating cohort of the BA Interaction Design have taken both People's Choice and Judges Award for these awards. A real tribute to the ixD team and in particular **Marc Hanratty** and **Conor Bergin** in their supervision of these students final year projects.

Congratulations to **Rosemarie Quilty Sharry**, a CEAD VAP student who has had a painting accepted for this year's [190th RHA Annual Exhibition](#). The painting is currently being exhibited [online here](#).

Car Park

We've been getting a lot of queries about parking lately from staff and students - if you're looking to drive to campus, you can get €4 parking with Q-Park Four Courts by following [this link and applying for an NCAD discount card!](#) This car park is about a 5 minute walk from campus.

their businesses towards the circular economy, so that they can safeguard the future of their company during this time of transition.

October on Campus ↓



It has been great to see our students back on Campus during October and to see work underway in the studios and workshops again. Thank you to everyone in the NCAD community for following the protocols we have put in place to protect each other whilst on Campus. We really appreciate everyone's commitment to helping us ensure that teaching and learning can continue on Campus and that the studio continues to be available to our students as a space for learning during these challenging times.

We continue to see the work of our graduates, alumni and staff recognised nationally and internationally and some of these recent successes are detailed in this newsletter - congratulations to all of you for these great achievements.

And finally, we were delighted to learn that NCAD's bid in collaboration with IADT and UCD to the Human Capital Initiative Pillar 3 was successful and that we have been awarded over €10 million to develop the **Creative Futures Academy**. We are very excited to work with IADT, UCD and our partners across the creative sector to build new cross-institutional programmes that will support creative practitioners at all stages of their careers. A vibrant creative sector will be vital to Ireland as we emerge out of these difficult times; the significant funding awarded to the Creative Futures Academy recognises this and will enable us to support creative practitioners to thrive, innovate, imagine and drive change - all things we will need in the coming years. [You can find more information here.](#)

