

In Profile – meet our alumni ↓



Name: Kitsch Doom (Isabella Delaney)

Discipline: MFA Fine Art – Media

'My film, 'The Clothes Wear You' has won four awards for best experimental film in New York Film Awards, Los Angeles Film Awards, Festigious Los Angeles and FilmCon. and I'm thrilled to be able to say that!'

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

As a child I always knew that I wanted to be an artist. Creating characters was something I always did. I loved to make people laugh and to pretend to be someone or something else. Transporting others and myself into another reality for a while was so freeing. Through my art I've come to realise the truest form of yourself is really who you were as a child. It's so important not to forget that.

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

I always had the dream to be an artist. I always heard great things about NCAD and I knew a lot of very talented artists had studied there. I wanted to go to a college that would push me to be the best artist that I could be. I also wanted to meet other talented creatives to connect with and collaborate with. I tried to get into NCAD for fine art three times and finally got in the third time. I guess I couldn't take no for an answer! After all that, I'm proud to say that I finished my bachelor's degree with a First-Class Honours.

In June 2020, you won Best Experimental Short at the Top Shorts Film Festival, New York for your film "The Clothes Wear You" – a video performance featuring your character Meryl Daze. How work did that particular work develop?

"The Clothes Wear You" has won four awards for best experimental film in New York Film Awards, Los Angeles Film Awards, Festigious Los Angeles and FilmCon. and I'm thrilled to be able to say that! I'm glad that I took the leap to apply for film festivals during this time.

This particular piece of work started out with the search of a new character. I had just

finished my BA and was straight into an MFA at NCAD. I wanted to make a new character that represented how traditional roles and expectations can almost steal or mask parts of our identity. So I thought up the character who stars in the film, Meryl Daze. Meryl is a hybrid of a bride and a burglar. I also wanted Meryl to be like a living version of one of my prints. For my BA I studied printmaking and made large prints combining different printing techniques, like digital printing, lino printing, copper etching and watercolour. My prints show a layering of identity. I start with a digital print of an old Hollywood actor that represents the origin of archetypal characters seen in the media. So, Meryl's character is based off of Marilyn Monroe and she dreams to be like her. That's where the idea to collage Meryl's face and Marilyn Monroe's using projection came about, it all started with the multi-layered prints as a foundation.

How did you hear about the opportunity to enter your work in the Top Shorts Film Festival and how do you keep up-to-date on other opportunities like this?

I always check out the VAI website for jobs and opportunities. Instagram is great as well, in fact, most of my opportunities to collaborate have come via social media. I am also constantly searching online for opportunities in Ireland but also internationally. I stumbled upon the website Film Freeway which is a great website for filmmakers who'd like to submit their work to various film festivals.

What is the one experience at National College of Art & Design that has informed you most in your career preparation and work to date?

I chose to do the joint Critical Cultures course during my BA. I learned so much theory at these extra classes, that continue to inform my practice today. Especially, Denis Kehoe's seminars on drag and gender. These classes created a huge turning point in my work. His seminars were the reason why I started to dress in drag and started to make characters of my own to do with gender stereotypes. It was a real-life lightbulb moment. If I never went to his classes, I'm not sure what my art would look like now or what I would be doing instead. Learning about drag and gender in depth for the first time, and simultaneously learning the layering process of printmaking turned out to be

the exact combination I was searching for in my work.

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

This time is precious. What you get out of college, is what you put into it. If you're serious about becoming an artist then you have to be willing to put the work in. And not only that, but you also need drive and a way to keep that momentum. Be confident and believe in yourself. Don't compare yourself or compete with others, compete with yourself and be the best you can be. Don't take others' opinions of your work to heart, just take what you need from them. Never give up creative control.

Portfolio Links:

<http://kitschdoom.com/>

<https://youtu.be/iMpajPPQmIc>

<https://www.instagram.com/kitschdoom/>

<https://youtu.be/VdDw0STIMDc>

This 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.](#)

In Profile – students ↓

This month, we caught up with Education / Fine Art Media student Orla Comerford. Orla represented Ireland at the Rio Paralympic Games in 2016. She is currently on a break from her studies to focus on the 2020 Paralympic Games in Tokyo.

With support from NCAD, I decided to take a step back, to focus on my recovery, to defer my college work until I could give it the time and attention it deserved and needed.

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

I always wanted to be an athlete. It felt like a pipe dream at the time, little did I know how things would turn out. But I also adored art from a young age, and it was always my favourite subject both in and out of school.

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

Representing my country internationally in the 100 metres sprint, including the 2016 Paralympics, provided me the opportunity to consider big colleges with sports scholarship programs. That was enticing; but going to a smaller specialist college that has more flexible course pathways was more appealing. Picking NCAD created opportunities for me that a large college wouldn't have. Besides, I had heard so many people speak of the incredible skills they'd learned in NCAD,

especially in relation to how they viewed and questioned the world around them. The most important thing was that I wanted to go somewhere that gave me the option to explore different areas in art, before deciding which one I wanted to specialise in. NCAD makes it possible for all students to explore and experiment before they have to make that decision.

Your studies have taken an unexpected turn, what happened and how are you doing?

I suppose my “career” at the moment is being a student athlete. I started in NCAD in 2016 after arriving home from the Paralympic Games in Rio. In 2019, I had to undergo surgery for an injury I’d had. This led to missing a month or so of college at the beginning of 2020. I found myself in a very difficult spot. For a couple of months, I tried to catch up on my work, while also trying to recover physically. I ended up being completely disillusioned with, and by, my work. The combination of being really unhappy, totally uninspired and overwhelmed, led me to decide to defer my final semester. I wouldn’t have been confident in my decision if it wasn’t for all of the help and reassurance from the staff in both the Education School and Fine Art - Media. Sometimes life gets in the way of best made plans. With support from NCAD, I decided to take a step back, to focus on my recovery, to defer my college work until I could give it the time and attention it deserved and needed. I want to really love and enjoy the work I produce, and that just wasn’t happening.

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

My work has been inconsistent since I took time away from college. However, I do think the lateral thinking I learned in college informs a lot of my decisions when it comes to my sport and the rest of my life. This is an invaluable tool.

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

Trust yourself. If someone says you can’t do something, believe in yourself not them. They don’t know what you’re capable of. But in the same breath know your limitations, recognise them head-on and do what’s right for you.

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

During the Covid-19 health crisis I think there’s an expectation for creatives to be in this constant state of creative flow, because they may have nothing else to do. I think it’s important not to let this get on top of you. In my experience, sometimes the weight of expectation can be enough to stop you in your tracks. So, I think it’s important to be kind to yourself. I see this time as an opportunity to learn that looking after yourself can and will lead to producing better work in the long run. That’s been my experience in the past couple of years anyway.

Student Achievements ↓

At the **ICAD Awards 2020**, NCAD Graphic Design graduate **Kate Dennehy** won the highly prestigious Student Designer of the Year Award, while six additional [NCAD graduates received ICAD Upstart Awards](#).

The DCCI Future Makers Award recognised NCAD Fashion Design graduate **Tom Langton** as its overall Student Winner for his work which creates a conversation between masculinity and femininity in menswear. [Nine additional NCAD recent graduates and students saw their work awarded](#).

NCAD also saw six of its design students win at the **IDI Graduate Design Awards 2020**: the NCAD Design Bureau team of **Keith Fitzsimmons, Alex Hennessy, Roisin Maher and Joe Fahy** who won the sustainability award and design for change award for their project ‘Seafloor’; **Súlan Ó Muirgheasa** who took the Exhibition Design/Visual Merchandising Award; Fashion and Textiles Award **winner Sarah Flynn**; and Handmade Product Design winner, **Sanaa El Habbash**. [You can read about all the winners on the NCAD website](#).

Congratulations to **Dominique Crowley** and **Nadia Armstrong** who won the [RDS Visual Arts Award RHA Graduate Studio Award](#) and the [RDS Centre Culturel Irlandais Residency Award](#) respectively.

Congratulations to all the students and graduates!

January on Campus ↓



We are starting 2021 with everyone working remotely, which is a disappointing but very necessary start to the year. We look forward to restarting teaching and learning on campus when we can and in the meantime a busy programme of remote learning continues.

We were delighted to celebrate the conferring of our **2020 Graduates** on January 25th with a [virtual ceremony which can be viewed here](#). While it was unfortunately not possible to see all our graduates in person, we get to see images of all their work. It was a great reminder of the strength of work that is achieved by all our students every year, and a clear demonstration of the extraordinary resilience and commitment shown by all our graduating students last year as they reached such high levels of achievement in the face of considerable challenges. We are extremely proud of everything that they achieved and wish them all best wishes for their creative journeys from here.

We continue to platform the work of our 2020 graduates with the [MFA exhibition Spectacular Replica](#) and look forward to showcasing the work of our Design graduates during February.

We continue to see the work of our graduates, alumni and staff recognised nationally and internationally and we were delighted to spot that **Laura Weber**, a graduate from NCAD, embroidered Dr. Jill Biden’s dress, coat and face mask for the US presidential inauguration celebrations.

Support for Students ↓

Linda in the counselling service and Corina in learning support are offering a weekly wellbeing workshop, which started on Thursday, 28th January. They run from 1-2pm. Please email learningsupport@staff.ncad.ie to register your interest.

Week 2: Stress and Overwhelm

Week 3: Isolation and Getting Connected

Week 4: Managing your Feelings