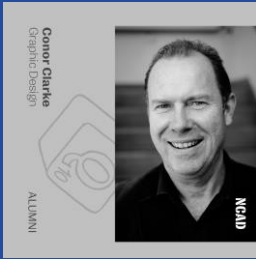


In Profile – meet our alumni ↓



Name: Conor Clarke

Current Career: Designer, Founding Partner of Design Factory

Graduation Year: 1984 (BDes), 2000 (MA)

Discipline: Graphic Design

Location: Dublin

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

I wanted to be a footballer until I was about ten. Then I wanted to be in a rock band until I was about 60...

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

...somewhere in between I wanted to be a designer, maybe aged 19. I saw a short film (by accident) about the English designer David Gentleman, and that was it. I knew what I wanted to do.

How did you develop your career towards your current job?

Once the penny dropped and I realised that I actually liked graphic design, which took me about two years, I became enthusiastic and went on to do my degree. It was a four-year degree back then. That extra year gave me time to develop and grow. It was so important. I read a lot about graphic design, and design in general, that year. I listened to my tutors, Bill Bolger and Frank Bissette, and soaked up everything they had to say. I collaborated with other students and learned a lot from them. I travelled as much as I could. I worked in Europe after I graduated, connecting with designers I admired. I took risks and made lots of mistakes. I tried to improve all the time. It was hard work, but great fun too. It still is.

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

There were two experiences. The first was a typographic poster for the Goethe Institute. The poster was to promote a concert for the German baritone and opera singer Hermann Prey. My Dad loved that music, so we connected a lot on that project. My tutors Bill and Frank made me stay very late one Thursday night until I got it right. The main letterforms (P R E Y vertically set in black Letter) were hand-cut out of red rubylith

masking film and the secondary type was set in Unifers on the IBM 'golf ball' selectric typewriter, and all finally assembled by hand. Grey paper, mounting board, scalpel and cow gum. That was my typographic baptism. I learned a lot that night. Maybe that was the night that I became a graphic designer.

The second experience was working on the Citigas identity with my tutor Frank during the summer and autumn of 1983. He taught me how to be brave, how to challenge the client and realise that there is a real value in what you think and say, once you believe in what you are doing. He also taught me a lot about the importance of typography, scale and contrast in order to achieve visual impact. Attention to detail was paramount. If it's wrong, stop and do it again. Keep at it until it is right. Just like the Goethe Institute poster. Actually, there was a third experience. Returning to NCAD in 2000 to do my MA with tutor Bill Bolger. My book 'Oranje & Green' published by BIS in Amsterdam in 2002, was the outcome of those two wonderful years.

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

Ask lots of questions and make lots of work. Play hard, work hard. Collaborate as much as you can, especially with other students and other disciplines. Read. Study the Masters of what you do. Use the library as much as you can, preferably every day. Contact your heroes. Turn your laptop off as much as you can. Your phone too. Experiment. Walk a lot. Look around. Take notes. Make sketches. Be prolific.

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

Covid-19 will pass. Stick to your plan.

Portfolio Links:

<http://designwest.eu/>

<https://designfactory.ie/>

http://www.creativeireland.com/articles/cl_013.html

<https://issuu.com/offset2010/docs/offset2013>

Go to page 44-45

[Explore the full series of alumni stories](#)

[here.](#)

In Profile – staff ↓

This month, we spoke to Dr Feargal Fitzpatrick about his PhD research project, a written thesis called *The Politics of the Image: Ireland, Landscape and Nineteenth-Century Photography*

What is the nature of your research project?

My project examines the politics inherent in photographic imaging of place and space in Ireland. Examining material that, up to now, has been dealt with largely on an empirical or canonical basis, it provides a critical-historical analysis of five separate phases of photographic activity between 1842 and 1897. This was a period during which politics on the island of Ireland was dramatically transformed, while the evolution of photographic technologies was radical in its shift from slow artisanal processes to mass-market industrialised protocols.

The argument is focused on the unstable relationships between photographic representations of place, and Irish manifestations of colonialism, nationalism and capital. Through a contemporary theoretical framework (drawing on Karl Marx, Walter Benjamin, Homi K. Bhabha and Jacques Rancière among others) it argues that photography's inception represents a rupture in visual culture – producing a crisis in the politics of representation – and that its consequences have been playing out through landscape imaging for 180 years.

What was it like to undertake a PhD while working?

There were two key things for me in undertaking the PhD while working full-time. The first was to look at the task realistically. I completed the work half-time over six years (plus a year researching the initial proposal in advance) – so simple arithmetic meant that it would require 18-20 hours per week on average for 48 weeks a year. With that established, it was down to putting in the time and hitting the interim deadlines. Secondly, I reminded myself that I volunteered to do it, and that nobody else wants or needs to hear any moaning about it! I was fortunate to have a brilliant supervisor (Professor Colin Graham) and a very patient family, which helped immensely.



NCAD Gallery ↓



A Reluctant Mirage: NCAD Art In The Contemporary World (ACW)

MFA 2020 Graduates Exhibition, 2021
19 – 28 February, 2021, NCAD Gallery

A Reluctant Mirage speaks to the cultural zeitgeist of detachment, virtuality, resistance, and ideological reshifting that has pervaded throughout the past year. In a time of global crisis, the struggle to create is challenging. A longing for the immediate past, and desire for the increasingly distant future, permeates our days. We exist in a collective limbo, both isolated and together at once. As the horizon shifts, our future dawns and sets in a haze of mere speculation. Amid this distortion, the churning of living has slowed to a cycle of existence. **A Reluctant Mirage** survives as a collective narrative, a resistant force that is propelled by a necessity to merely continue, to merely finalise, to merely squint at the vibrating horizon and draw a breath.

The NCAD Gallery is very happy to continue to host the class of NCAD 2020 graduates through the academic year 2020-2021. This is an opportunity for NCAD to support the graduate class of 2020 in realising the culmination of their work and study they would have ordinarily presented in June of 2020.

We have devised a number of ways to access the content of **A Reluctant Mirage** virtually during Covid-19, and are also fortunate to take advantage of the architecture of the NCAD Gallery window facing onto Thomas Street, Dublin 8, where part of the exhibition can be viewed by our passing on-street audience.

EXHIBITION:

- **A Reluctant Mirage** exhibition on-line video walk-through, available to view on the exhibition page & YouTube.

- **Listen to Artist**, Jessica Neville's, *The Influence of Music in Societal and Cultural Change*, 2020, Podcast Voice Recordings Chapters 1, 2, & 3.

- **Listen to Curator**, Orlaith Phelan's reading of her response to Wolfgang Tillmans' *Rebuilding the Future* exhibition (IMMA, 2019).

EVENTS

- TUES, 23 FEB, 7PM: **Artists Seanán Kerr and Frank Wasser In Conversation** and Q&A live broadcast. Featuring an introduction to Kerr's film, *A Million Years Painting Watercolours*, an educational Art film followed by a live watch-along screening with the artists, and follow up live Q & A session.

- THURS, 25 FEB, 7PM: **I know you're blind, but you've got to see this** : Artist Seanán Kerr In Conversation with panelists, Dr. Francis Halsall, Dr. Rachel O'Dwyer, C Derrick Varn, and Prof. Helena Sheehan. A panel discussion inquiry into Adam Curtis' *Can't get you out of my head* series.

- FRI, 26 FEB, 1PM: Annie Fletcher Director of IMMA (Irish Museum of Modern Art) In Conversation with **A Reluctant Mirage** exhibitors, on-line Youtube broadcast.

[More information on all of this can be found here.](#)

Student Achievements ↓

MA Service Design graduate **Marie Salova** has been shortlisted for a Service Design Award 2020. The annual international competition is globally recognised and regarded as the most prestigious within the Service Design community.

Competition organisers, the Service Design Network (SDN), said Marie's shortlisted work is now recognised as 'an international case study for world-class service design'.

Marie's project **Low Touch: The Future of Dining Out**, focused on how restaurants might redesign their service in response to changing behaviours associated with Covid 19.

Final results will be delivered at this year's Service Design Global Conference, online later in the year.

Congratulations to Marie, and her tutors Dr. Caoimhe McMahon and Brian Gough.

[Further information can be found here.](#)

February on Campus ↓



February has seen us continuing with remote learning, which while disappointing has been a necessary response to the national picture. We are working towards a cautious phased resumption of some teaching and learning during March with an ambition of a wider return as the national picture improves.

We continue to be energised and heartened by the incredible work being produced across the College despite very challenging circumstances. As ever the creativity and commitment of our students is outstanding and inspiring and we were delighted to see another of our recent graduates celebrated on the global stage with Maria Salova's nomination for a Global Service Design Award and to celebrate the work of our ACW MFA Graduates as part of our 2020 Graduate Programme. These examples of the creativity and energy that continues to flow from NCAD are a much needed respite from the challenges we have all faced over the last few months and a great focus for optimism as we look to the future.

Items of Interest ↓

L'Internationale Online launches its newest e-publication, **Degrowth and Progress**. Following the e-publication **Austerity and Utopia**, L'Internationale Online presents a second collection of interventions to think through two apparently distant concepts. Artists, thinkers and researchers were invited to reflect on a dissimilar pair of themes as fertile ground for thought and proposition.

NCAD is a partner in the EU funded L'Internationale programme and will hold a 5 week online conference in April/May. [More information can be found here.](#)

The **2021 AXA Art Prize** submission site is open. With a jury of renowned artists and curators, a show of the finalists in New York, and an international virtual exhibition, the **AXA Art Prize** is one of the premier student art competitions in the nation. The AXA Art Prize is open to figurative paintings, drawings and prints created by undergraduate and graduate art students. [More information can be found here.](#)