

Design/life



Roisin Lafferty:
Interior architect
and creative
director of Kingston
Lafferty Design

INTERVIEW
BY
AILEEN LEE

Designer with an eye for colour

■ What's your background?

>> I did a degree in Interior Architecture and Furniture Design in DIT. When I graduated, it was at the height of the recession so there were no opportunities here. I then did a Masters in Product Design at London's Kingston University. With that, I got selected to exhibit as part of London Design Week.

I wanted to work for a London design company, but you still needed a lot of experience, so I came back with my classmate, Susanna Kingston, and we set up Kingston Lafferty Design to get that experience.

Three months turned into three years, and Susanna decided to take our combined portfolio and go to London, and I decided to take our combined portfolio and try and build a business here. She stepped away and I started to build KLD as it is now, which is going into its eighth year.

■ What's a typical workday like for you?

>> On any given day, there are team meetings or team interactions, brainstorming or sketching. We tend to have several sites on the go, so I could be doing a client presentation in the morning and then I've got my hard hat and boots on and I'm on-site in the afternoon.

■ Tell us about a recent favourite project or design you have worked on?

>> We're collaborating with Fleetwood Paint, the exclusive supplier of Pantone colours in paint in Ireland. Recently I created an installation to showcase the Pantone 2018 colour, Ultra Violet, which very much focused on working with Irish suppliers. The palette I chose was about creating emotive

and atmospheric environments, and because it was an installation, you got to be that bit more playful with it.

In terms of interior architecture, we had the pleasure of doing a stunning private office and residence on Stephen's Green. It was very different to maybe the style people associate with us. It was a lot more refined and masculine and we got to use some beautiful classic design pieces.

■ What's your design style?

>> I try not to have a distinct style because I think it is important that you're not imposing yourself on the client.

■ What/Who inspires your work?

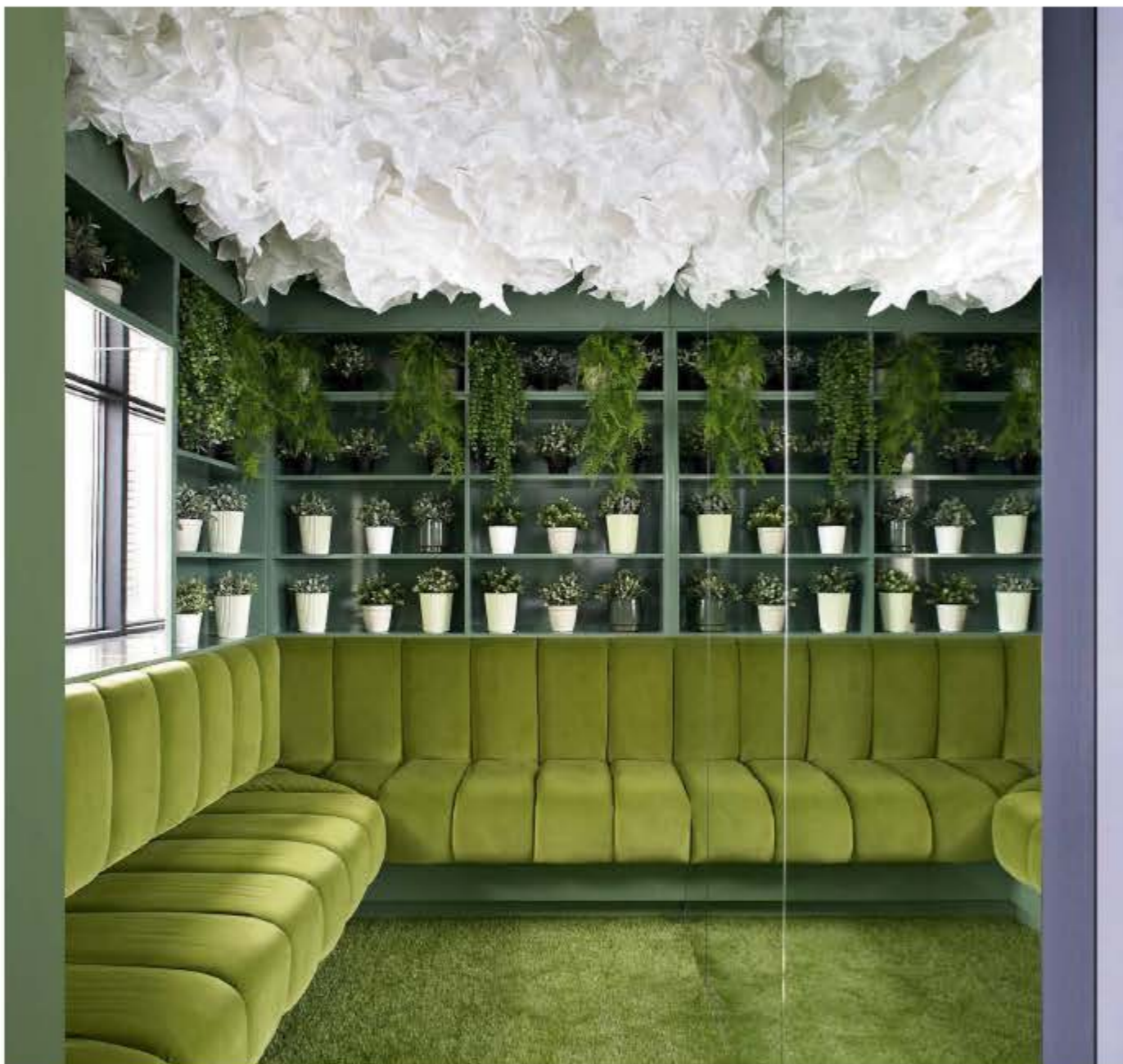
>> I try to travel as much as possible — being immersed in different cultures and environments, there's no replacing that, you can't get that same sense from a picture. Marrakech is one of my favourite places, it's a sensory overload.

■ What's your favourite trend at the moment (if you have any)?

>> I always tell people to err on the side of caution when it comes to trends, because they are a moment in time. Look at trends, be inspired by them, but don't follow them fully.

■ What's your most treasured possession?

>> I have two Michael Mortell mid-century chairs and they're upholstered in a tangerine peachy velvet which sounds awful, but they're so beautiful. I had sourced them for a commercial client but realised that they were never going to appreciate how beautiful they were. I fell in love with them but didn't have a place to put them for a year and kept



them in storage. Now they take pride of place in my meeting room.

■ Who would be your favourite designer, or style inspiration?

>> Ilse Crawford is my hero. Everything she does, there just so much depth to it. It's not about imposing style on someone. She looks at

human behaviour and creates timeless environments.

■ What would be a dream project for you to work on?

>> I recently experienced the wonders of Donald Judd's former Spring Street home in New York. The Judd Foundation offers guided tours and it was amazing!

I would love to design a creative hub in a New York cast iron warehouse, like Judd's home, showing the perfect balance between gallery space and home environment.

■ Have you any design tips for us?

>> Embrace colour — it's the most dramatic way to change a space. It's also the least expensive. Don't be safe or take it too seriously. I would encourage people to change around their spaces. Move furniture around, be



ABOVE: The Library in Iconic Office, South Point. Picture: 3D Design Bureau
RIGHT: Private office space on Stephen's Green. Picture: Barbara Corsico

I created an installation to showcase the Pantone 2018 colour, Ultra Violet, which focused on working with Irish suppliers



Private office space on Stephen's Green. Picture: Barbara Corsico