

# Kingston Lafferty Design

*The Dublin studio fuses 1970s influences with a love of luxurious modern materials*

**Who are they?** Founded by Roísín Lafferty, Kingston Lafferty Design is one of Ireland's most respected interior-design studios, championing emotional wellbeing in its projects. Lafferty's formative design experience was as a child, when visits to local galleries with her grandfather awakened a love of art and atmospheric spaces. Later, she studied interior architecture and furniture design in Dublin, followed by an MA in product and spatial design at Kingston University. Meanwhile, she also took on part-time roles at architectural practices and in a department store, creating window displays. A stint as a magazine editor gave her a glimpse of 'what the Irish interiors world was like' and, in 2010, she set up her studio with Susanna Kingston, an old college friend. ➤



**Above** Roísín Lafferty in her Dublin studio space **Below left** Statement tiles in the bedroom of KLD's Lovers Walk project



## Expert advice

*Roísín Lafferty's top tips for decorating with opulent materials and bold ideas*

**You can never get enough of mirrored glass**, which appears time and again in our projects. A bronzed finish gives a subtle, almost hazy, effect. Use it on a whole wall, from floor to ceiling – this may sound like too much, but it will feel invisible in the space and accentuate the feeling of scale, reflecting all the things you love about a room.

**Utilise tiles in unexpected ways.** We have used them as 'headboard walls' in bedrooms to add an element of surprise. In dining rooms, handmade zellige tiles have a glistening quality, which provides texture. Choose a design that you really love – focus on texture and shape rather than pattern, which may date or which you may tire of.

**Natural stone is nature's artwork.** Rather than one type of stone on a floor, I love to dream up new patterns and combinations to make something unique. Sketch out different layouts and patterns to help you make a choice. And be bold with scale – small marble patterns can look fussy, whereas larger ones are more contemporary and work in a variety of spaces.

**It's great to layer a multitude of materials, but there needs to be an anchor** in any space. Wood is great for this and we use it constantly; mainly for flooring, but also for wall cladding and joinery. We opt for either rich or very light, muted varieties, which add earthiness to a room. For a luxurious effect on floors, define each zone with a different pattern in the same timber.

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**Above** Rose-hued marble makes a lasting impression **Below** Bronzed mirrored glass in the kitchen of KLD's 'Kaleidoscope' home



**Below** Bright colour in this modern extension to a family home in Dublin by KLD



Today, another fellow former student, Becky Russell, has taken her place, alongside a vibrant design team. 'We see every project as an opportunity to come up with something new; each one is a creative collaboration,' Lafferty says.

**What is the studio's style?** Joyously colourful and with a distinct retro influence. Lafferty says that her ambition 'is to create spaces that evoke emotion and excitement'. How people feel inside a KLD space is just as important as functionality. 'Clean lines, visible pathways and framed views are elements that we bring to every job; no detail is ignored,' she explains, adding that the studio's work is always 'bold and playful'. 'My inspirations include Danish designer Verner Panton for his celebration of imagination and play, and other 1970s figures like Willy Rizzo and Gio Ponti, who designed holistically. I admire designers who can create everything in their spaces – that's the ultimate goal for me.'

**What are their recent projects?** A bijou Dublin apartment, christened 'Kaleidoscope', for a couple passionate about style, art and travel. The pair's second home, it was imagined as a fun environment where they can host parties and work meetings, and is full of flamboyant colours and shapes. 'It offered a chance to experiment, looking at the space more as a cocktail bar or members' club than as a family home,' Lafferty says. 'We curated a global art collection and the apartment as a whole is a feast for the senses. Every element was custom made with incredible finishes, such as lacquer, bronze and velvet.' KLD has also created a new ►

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Dublin headquarters for the construction company Sonica. 'They're incredibly creative and it was the opposite of corporate,' Lafferty says. 'We channelled 1970s style, inspired by the sculptures of Donald Judd. The result is a series of dramatic and punchy spaces that blend polished concrete, perforated stainless steel and lightboxes with vibrant orange upholstery and blue-tinted mirrors.'

**What are they currently working on?** As well as the launch of a furniture and lighting collection this autumn, KLD is collaborating with the Montenotte Hotel in Cork to create the Montenotte Woodland Suites, 'a series of treehouses and cantilevered suites set in wild forest'. Opening next summer, they offer an experience of Ireland's rural landscape. There's also 'The Farm', a country home in Meath, Ireland, where Lafferty has configured the interior layout with an architect. 'Custom joinery defines every space, and at its heart is a curved, polished plaster staircase,' she says. 'It's a textured, warm, earthy home with a harmonious blend of materials.'

**They say:** 'The spaces we experience affect how we feel and how we relate to the physical world around us. To create positive spaces that brighten people's lives is magical.' [kingstonlaffertydesign.com](http://kingstonlaffertydesign.com)



**Above** Rich textiles add a luxurious feel to the living room of KLD's 'Kaleidoscope' project  
**Below** Space-age detailing and bold colour in Sonica's unique office



## The little black book

*Every successful project requires access to the contacts that make magic possible*

**Vintage** Acquired and The Vintage Hub are two Irish suppliers that source incredible must-have pieces. I send them my ideas and they keep an eye out for me on their travels. I've found some exquisite mid-century chairs, mirrors, coffee tables and sideboards. [acquired.ie](http://acquired.ie); [thevintagehub.com](http://thevintagehub.com)

**Lighting** Apparatus Studio in New York is my favourite lighting designer. The quality, design and detail of its fittings is perfection. We have used the 'Cloud' chandelier in multiple projects. It is a cluster of glass orbs, which is made like a piece of jewellery. [apparatusstudio.com](http://apparatusstudio.com)

**Craft** We often work with the online craft-specialist Artemest. Its products are made in Italy, by Italian craftspeople, and created by interesting designers. We have sourced sofas, chairs, decorative objects and lighting here – there's a huge array of pieces. [artemest.com](http://artemest.com)

**Natural stone** Miller Brothers are magicians with natural stone. They supply most of our projects, produce our marble furniture and meticulously install our patterned floors, stone sinks and wall cladding. They have a breathtaking collection of stones from all over the world – the warehouse is like Aladdin's cave. [millerbrothers.ie](http://millerbrothers.ie) **ED**

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