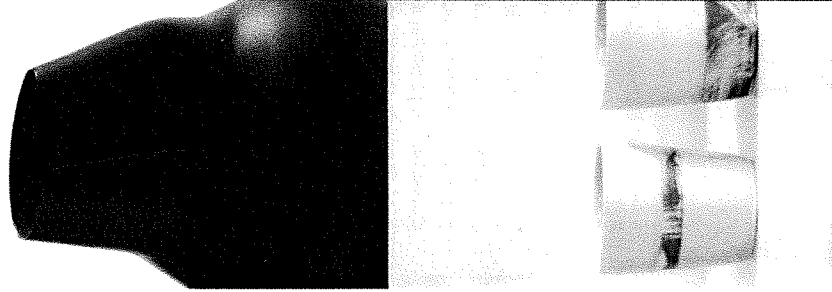


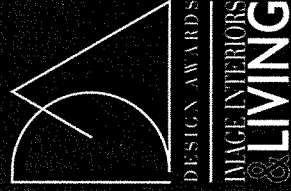
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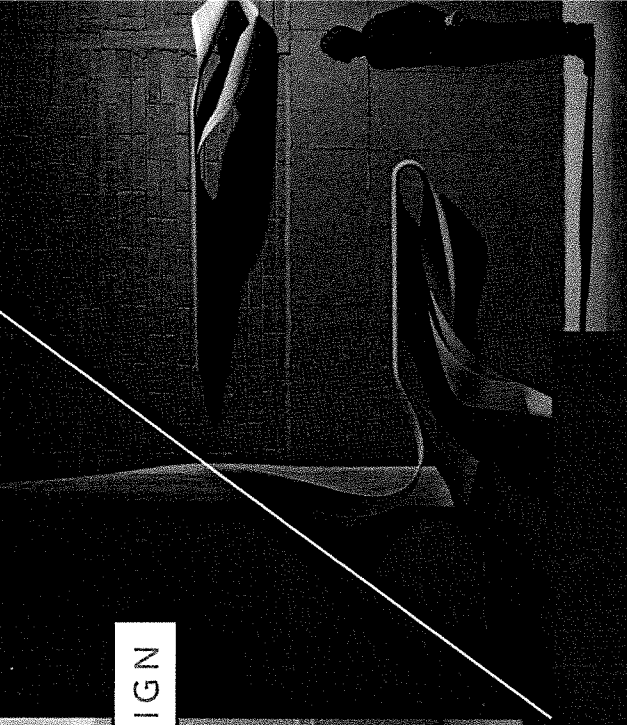
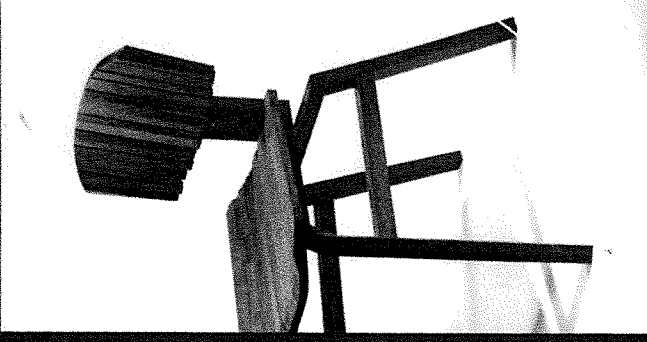
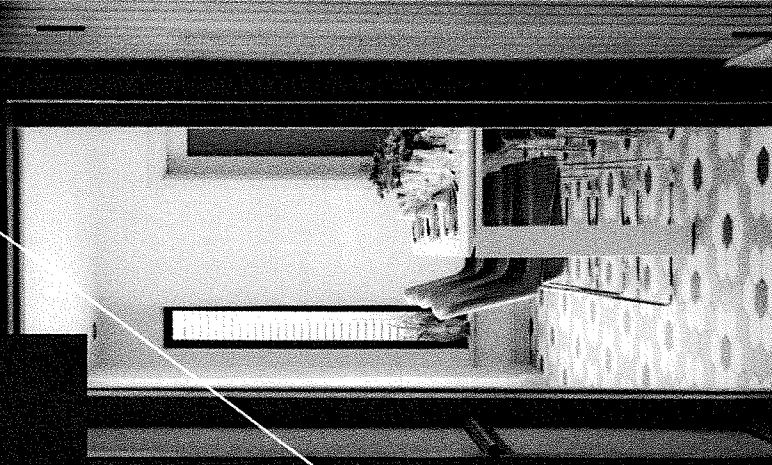
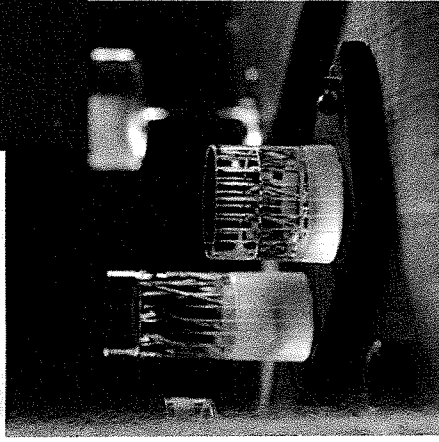
# MEET THE NOMINEES

This year marks the first of many awards to celebrate and reward  
work by Ireland's top creatives ....

WORDS AIDEEN MCCOLE



DESIGN AWARDS  
IMAGE INTERIORS  
& LIVING



Irish design is in a pretty good place right now. The sector is growing; more and more students are embarking on a wider range of creative disciplines at third-level and, crucially, more and more people in Ireland are making a living from design.

It's also a part of Irish culture that's being consumed, enjoyed and appreciated on a wider scale. Businesses big and small are increasingly recognising the role design can play in the development of their goods and services, and in how they communicate. And people are using and enjoying design more in the home, the proof being in how many thriving design and interiors specialists we have in Ireland now.

How did this all come to be? Last year's Irish Design 2015 initiative certainly didn't hurt. Meanwhile organisations like the Irish Architecture Foundation, Pivot Dublin and Design Week have been working for years to communicate the value of design to the public. Similarly, retailers like the Irish Design Shop, Article and others have encouraged us to embrace unique design – from Ireland and elsewhere – when shopping for ourselves, as well as our friends and family.

At the same time, Ireland's designers and makers have banded together to support each other, offer educational opportunities and recognise quality work. Particular credit has to go to younger organisations like Offset, a world-class design conference, and the 100 Archive, Ireland's newest – and biggest – design organisation, which is developing an archive of graphic design from Irish creatives.

So it seems the time might be right for the inaugural *Image Interiors & Living* Design Awards. "Although we've been featuring Irish makers throughout the magazine's 26-year history, we wanted to have more of a celebration," says editor Amanda Kavanagh. "We hope to encourage both new and established talent to keep innovating, all the while continuing to play our part in showcasing great Irish design."

While the awards naturally place a focus on interiors, they identify a wide range of categories: fabric, tableware, collectors' pieces, lighting, furniture, collaborations, interior designers, emerging talent, retailers and design heroes. Pleasingly, the judges had a tough task narrowing down a shortlist for each category.

"Furniture Designer of the Year and Young Design Talent were particularly difficult, but having such a breadth of talent to choose from is very encouraging," continues Amanda. It's a sentiment echoed by judge Karen Hennessy of the Design & Crafts Council of Ireland.

"I'm continually bowled over by the innovative work being produced by emerging designers and makers all over the country who are pushing the boundaries of

their practice, exploring new materials, approaches and techniques," affirms Karen.

Mourne Textiles is just one example of Irish innovation, as lauded by judge Aoibheann McNamara. "They have been crafting beautiful fabrics for a very long time with old techniques, but are always pushing the boundaries to make modern textiles and products. This is amazing, they don't stay still."

Judge Alex Milton, Programme Director of ID2015, is similarly enthused. "I'm excited about the playful

innovation of our best designers. The fusion between the tactile delights of our craft and design heritage and

the technological innovation of Dublin's blossoming digital design scene is resulting in some fantastic smart products," he says. "This ability to transcend traditional disciplinary silos is what will help Ireland to make a mark on the global design scene."

Alex also points to lighting as an area for exciting development in Ireland. "The light is part of the traditional holy trinity of furniture design, along with the chair and table, and it's great to see designers such as Niamh Barry showing how light can sculpt an interior."

Over at Powerscourt Townhouse's Article, John

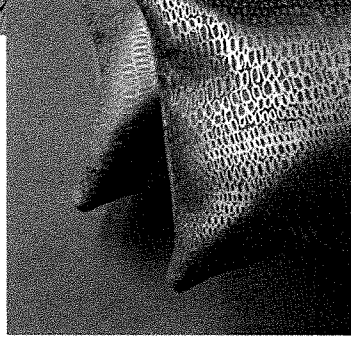
Adams praises Irish ceramics, both for design and flexibility of use. "What's so interesting is that depending on the owner, these pieces can be functional or purely decorative. I also think they stand up internationally, which is really important."

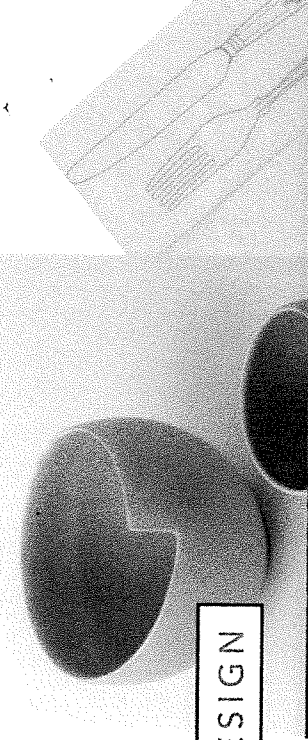
And what next? Irish design has seen huge momentum build in the past decade and our designers, retailers, curators, writers and the many design organisations in Ireland all need to ensure that energy doesn't fade.

Conversations and collaborations will be key to ensuring an open and inspired design community in Ireland, with an international offering that is diverse and cutting-edge. I ask Aoibheann what she hopes for Irish design going into the future. "Designers and disciplines should cross over and enhance each other, forming long, fruitful, collective relationships." We couldn't agree more. Voting is now closed, but keep your eyes peeled for the January-February 2017 issue of *Image Interiors & Living*, on shelves December 22, where the winners will be revealed.

## "I'm excited about the playful innovation of our best designers"

Alex Milton





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“I think Irish ceramics stand up internationally, which is really important.” John Adams

# NOMINEES

## BEST FABRIC

Jennifer Slattery  
Molloy & Sons  
Mourne Textiles  
Print Block

## BEST TABLEWARE

Adam Frew  
Arran Street East  
Diem Pottery  
J Hill's Standard

## BEST COLLECTORS' PIECES

Sara Flynn  
Derek Wilson  
Andrew Ludick  
Róisín de Buitéar

## BEST LIGHTING

Niamh Barry  
Shane Holland  
Mullan  
Donna Bates

## FURNITURE DESIGNER OF THE YEAR

Snug  
Simon Doyle  
Aodh  
Zelouf+Bell

