

“There was no one reason why I wanted to move home. It was many things, I felt at the time like I had a really good business idea and I wanted to make a go of it.”

## CLARE O’CONNOR

### Clare O’Connor Luxury Designer Brand



Just like her designs, Clare O’Connor’s career has been a vibrant one so far.

With a background in Graphic Design and two Bachelor’s degrees from IADT, Clare also has experience in the creative hub of Berlin as well as the calm canals of Venice, where she lived and worked as an artist assistant and in the Venice Biennale.

Clare’s current venture as owner and designer of her own luxury accessory brand is perhaps her most creative yet – turning her playful and energetic paintings into wearable art.

“People used to say to me that my paintings would look amazing as dresses and tops. An artist in Venice was making scarves, which she sold in the gallery with her paintings so that’s where the idea came from; I felt scarves were a good starting point,” she explains.

“It’s very hard to make a living as a painter, so I was looking for other ways to use my talent to create the life I wanted. I love seeing my work translate so well onto fabric, the combination of the contrasting patterns, colour and energy creates something really playful and vibrant.”

However, before taking to the streets of Italy and Germany, Clare established an impressive and lengthy CV, one containing vast experience, which has allowed her to hone and develop the skills she holds today.

In Dublin, she facilitated art workshops with adults and also worked as a tutor with children from disadvantaged areas with Youth Reach. She worked as an English teacher, tour guide, gallery assistant, graphic designer and even a wedding celebrant, not to mention all the exhibitions she has participated and worked on around Europe and Ireland.

The time Clare spent working abroad – particularly in Venice – is clearly reflected in her designs. But Clare felt that although unique, beautiful and inspiring, living in Venice “wasn’t real life”

“I missed the busyness and opportunities of a big city and also simple things like cars and Irish supermarkets,” says the Dubliner who moved home 18 months ago to settle in County Meath.

“I missed normal life. I had created a huge body of work and there are definitely opportunities in Italy that I can’t find

in Ireland - for example, the silk I use is manufactured in Lake Como which is the heart of silk manufacturing. I had tested different manufacturers and tried many different fabrics, but felt I had reached a stage in Italy where I could go no further”

Clare credits Back For Business with keeping her energised and helping her realise how far she has come in a short amount of time.

“I didn’t find it daunting setting up the business because it’s what I’ve always wanted to do. I’m working to establish myself now and I hope to be in stores abroad later this year.”

Clare was recently a finalist for Irish Accessory Designer of the Year at the Irish Fashion Innovation Awards and a finalist for Best New Business in the Meath Style Awards. Her packaging was also shortlisted for Best Luxury Packaging at the Print Design Awards last year.

Her designs can be found at The Designer Exchange on Exchequer St., House of Ireland on Grafton St., and Marion Cuddy Irish Designer’s Emporium in the Powerscourt Town Centre, Dublin.

CLARE OCONNOR

#### POSITION

Founder

#### WHAT WE DO

We are a luxury accessory brand creating silk and cashmere scarves inspired by art.

#### CONTACT US

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