

# Statement of Interest

MFA Design Application

Lily Smith

I have long been interested in design. My father was a furniture maker and my mother is an architectural designer. My childhood, spent in workshops and on building sites, gave me a strong sense of the built environment and the necessity to provide people with products that are environmentally sound.

During college my study was focused on furniture design and sustainability. While there, I created numerous pieces of furniture and developed a strong interest in product design which I learned is an area I would like to pursue with more rigor. After receiving my BA, I began working in residential construction, which gave me a greater understanding of how buildings are formed from blank sites to completed structures. Research into the built environment ultimately resulted in the design and construction of my own small cabin.

For this project, I completed all aspects of the design and build, excluding electrical and plumbing, in addition to making all the furniture and builtins. Designing a small space is a challenge; however, careful placement of windows and thoughtful choice of materials produced a clean, warm atmosphere. This project gave me a broader understanding of the role interior and product design play in addressing the complexity of creating well-functioning spaces. This project was a great starting place to explore space and product on a human scale. Further research in these arenas would be my goal of participating in a masters program.

In 2016 I received Irish citizenship through my grandmother, who was from Dublin; this prompted me to spend half of this past year in Ireland. I visited NCAD and was delighted by the campus. From further research into the program I was intrigued to see that there is a strong emphasis on practical design projects as well as research-based study.

It was exciting to see designers in Ireland taking a socially and environmentally-conscious approach to their work. I found myself drawn to the work of Superfolk, whose thoughtful connection with landscape and material is clearly evident. I had the opportunity to visit the home of Elements of Action and appreciated the way they restored their Georgian home while updating it for modern use. In addition, people behind NTN and 31 Chapel Lane showed innovation, and an admirable commitment to using quality materials.

The relationship between environment and space fascinates me; as a masters student in design I would be eager to expand my knowledge and practice in these areas. As can be seen from my portfolio, I have started to experiment with product and building design. I am self-motivated and self-directed and will follow through to realize my vision. This background will serve me as a masters student where I plan to complete ambitious projects and broaden my design sensibilities to create spaces that are healthy for people and the environment.

To be offered the opportunity to study at The National College of Art and Design would be an honor.