



[CING Lecture](#) @ [BoConcept](#)

Ilsa Parry: Design trends in a tough climate

Reviewed by [Simon Belt](#) February 2011

In late 2009, Liverpool based designer [Ilsa Parry](#) made her mark on the nation by competing in BBC 2's **Design for Life** competition.

When she won with her innovative Flo design, Ilsa spent six months at top French designer **Philippe Starck**

's design studio in Paris.

Ilsa has been lecturing as course leader for the BTEC national diploma for 3 dimensional design at Liverpool Community College since late 2007, so it seemed natural for her to be delivering the February [Creative Industries Networking Group](#) (CING) lecture.

CING is a professional interest networking group, established in June 2008 and organised by Benny Hui and Phil Northall through the Meetup social network site. I didn't get to my first CING

meeting until January 2011, but was immediately impressed by the very relaxed feel and tone of the sessions - often missing from most other business networks I've attended.



This CING lecture was sponsored by **BoConcept**, who made their store available as a lecture / discussion venue and provided a buffet and drinks reception with a free goodie bag for the first 50 attendees. The management and floor staff of Manchester's BoConcept store on Great Ancoats Street complemented CING's laid back professionalism.

I've been following CING's progress since a colleague recommended I join to help extend Manchester Salon's connections with the creative industries in Manchester and across the North West. I first met Benny Hui a few months prior to my first CING meeting through the [La Soiree](#)

Concert Series he organises to help promote his

[Your Event Musicians](#)

initiative. I was so impressed with the first performance in this series of concerts that I immediately set about getting a regular group outing from the

Manchester Salon

to them.

The atmosphere and vibe at this lecture was very relaxed, but I didn't anticipate just how natural **Ilsa** would be at presenting to an audience of her peers. Admittedly, she'd been lecturing in design for two years before her big break on the show, and had continued lecturing since so she should be no stranger to it, but clearly design is a genuine passion of hers.

Ilsa started her lecture by outlining the different phases and aspects of her career, including her [REthinkthings](#)

company, and her view of the need to keep the different sides of her professional persona discrete and formalised through different business identities. It was when she moved into trying to identify

contemporary trends

in design, and

forecasting

where they are heading that her lecture had any real interest for me though. Her identification of

social responsibility

and

ecological functionality

as key aspects of what's fashionable in design and purchasing trends was most illuminating.

