

Lindsay Koffler, Shillington Graduate and Graphic Designer at Refinery29



Armed with her beautiful Shillington portfolio of industry-relevant work, Lindsay Koffler landed her dream job, designing at Refinery29 in New York City. Previously a wholesaler, Lindsay was always creative—working as a photography and drawn to design—but it wasn't until she started dabbling in the design programs that she got serious. Realising graphic design was her career passion, she decided to study 3 months full-time at Shillington aka “the perfect school to propel [her] into a coveted career as a designer.”

Read on to hear Lindsay's full story, learn about her typical day at Refinery29 and get some advice for aspiring graphic designers!

What were you up to before Shillington and why did you decided to study design?

Prior to my education at Shillington, I worked as a wholesaler for a children's wear importer. Also, I work professionally as a photographer. In the past, I've covered several celebrity red carpet events, and I am currently photographing landscape, travel, stock images, private events, architecture and more.

I've always been a visually creative person, a strength that was somewhat limited while working in sales. I applied it when possible, providing vital input to designers creating lookbooks and layouts for my former sales team. This enabled me to teach myself a few of the basics in the design programs which I had never used before. This small sample of work led me to realize that I wanted graphic design to be the focus of

my career. Enter Shillington, the perfect school to propel me into my coveted career as a designer.

Comparing other school options was not even necessary, as Shillington offered everything I was searching for.



You recently landed a job designing for Refinery29. Tell us about that interview process. Did you feel confident on the job hunt?

Well, I wasn't quite "on the job hunt" since I was working full time, but I did have my eye open for any positions at Refinery29 that might become available. Having over a year of experience working as a full time designer while also freelancing on the side, coupled with my Shillington education, provided me with the confidence in myself and my portfolio to pursue the R29 position. I landed an interview with the Creative Director for an editorial designer position which required extensive illustration experience, which I have none of. However, she was so impressed by my passion for design and my Shillington portfolio (she loved my aesthetic and thought it was on brand with R29) that she referred me for a newly created position in the Creative Services Department. My "interview" the next day consisted of going through the day to day life at R29 and going over projects which I would be working on.

What's your typical day like?

There is no typical day; every day is different—which I love! I receive daily requests for different projects which have deadlines that range from one hour to a few days.

I design graphics for video content on social media, create pitch presentation decks, packaging, logos and so much more.

Could you tell us about a recent professional project?

Recently, I designed a pitch deck for a new 1990's inspired podcast series. I used 90's graphics to influence me, but I wanted some of these graphics to be used as a texture to also provide a modern look. *The deck shown has lorem and stock images since this is a confidential pitch presentation.*



What do you love about being a designer?

Where to begin? I love that I have the ability to create something out of nothing, making an idea or a brand come to life beautifully and meaningfully. I love that the learning is endless; collaborating with other creative minds on a daily basis creates an environment where we all learn new ways of being creative and designing from each other. As I mentioned earlier, every day is different and has a new set of challenges – work does not feel like work, it just feels like fun.

What's your favourite project from your Shillington portfolio? Walk us through your process!

I would definitely say the handmade project where I designed an album cover for Pharrell's single, "Freedom," where I was able to use a photograph I had taken of him at a red carpet event. It enabled me to demonstrate who I am as an artist, both as designer and photographer. The word freedom immediately made me think of birds flying through the air so I incorporated macro images of feathers into my design. After carefully dissecting the song lyrics I learned that it's all about contradictory elements and ideas, so I represented this concept with the contrasting colors of black and white. I then added a bold pop of color to elude to the boldness of the song itself. The back cover also shows contrasting elements.



If you could give one piece of advice to someone starting at Shillington, what would it be?

Trust your instincts and never close your mind off to learning more because you will never know everything, therefore ask as many questions as possible! Never take constructive criticism personally; these comments will mold you into a better designer, helping to bring you closer to reaching your full potential.



Anything else you'd like to share?

Speaking from my experience, if you have your heart set on a particular job, go for it!

You have nothing to lose by reaching out. I've landed many positions simply by contacting employers and sending them my resumé and portfolio. Additionally, I cannot stress enough how important it is to network. Your classmates at Shillington are a great base network to start out with. From there, make as many friends and contacts at every job because in the future, they may be in a position to help you or vice versa.

Huge thanks to Lindsay for sharing her Shillington story! Check out her website and follow along on Instagram and Behance for more.

*Do you want to create a creative career like Lindsay? Study design 3 months full-time or 9 months part-time at Shillington in New York, London, Manchester, Sydney, Melbourne or Brisbane
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