

2009004886

Original creative work



CECILIA HEFFER
**Commissioned textile design for
Government House, Sydney.**

2009 | *Historic Houses Trust*

The project was part of the Historic Houses Trust 'To Furnish a Future Program', a five-year refurbishment plan to redesign the interior of Government House, Sydney, 2002-2007. I was commissioned to design a contemporary lace curtain for the State Rooms. Throughout a three-year interview period I presented new concepts and methodologies for the lace curtain - to a series of judging panels consisting of leading architects, historians, curators and design experts.

This work is part of ongoing research-by-design investigation into the possibilities of contemporary lace. New production techniques, the possibilities of digital imagery and non-traditional imagery are explored in the context of the unique openwork structure of lace. The motivation behind these projects is to bring the qualities of lace into the world of modern textiles, fashion, interior design and architecture. These investigations combine technical and aesthetic innovation.

The significance of this research is that it stands alone in its field and has created an original Australian lace innovation; one that is unique to our culture and times. It breaks away from the traditional European floral motif normally associated with lace design. It references botanical illustrations specific to NSW and, in particular, the work of the Scott sisters who left a plethora of botanical illustrations in the 1900s. The scale, composition and repeat of the design completely breaks away from the high decorative style associated with traditional lace design, giving it a uniquely Australian aesthetic of light, space and scale.

CECILIA HEFFER
Commissioned textile design
for Government House,
Sydney

2009004886
Original creative work

Final design for lace production.
Half drop repeat. Lace produced
by: Morton, Borland and Young,
Scotland.



CECILIA HEFFER
Commissioned textile design
for Government House,
Sydney

2009004886
Original creative work

Top to bottom.

Detail of weaving process: pattern
woven as Nottingham Lace on a 100
years old loom (Production: Morton,
Borland and Young, Scotland)



CECILIA HEFFER
Commissioned textile design
for Government House,
Sydney

2009004886
Original creative work

Top to bottom.

Inspection process during
production



CECILIA HEFFER
 Commissioned textile design
 for Government House,
 Sydney

2009004886
 Original creative work

Article in Vogue Living



ORDER IN THE HOUSE



A new broom sweeps through Sydney's Government House as contemporary designers breathe life into its interior.

From south coast and beyond will be pleased to hear Government House Sydney is being given the kiss of life, even the kiss of life's life. Now, shortly, soon, by soon, the Historic Houses Trust under the custodianship of Ann Tay is resuscitating the rambling, dingy and decrepit of this once grand house – using a talented team of contemporary Australian designers and artists. If you gain on the scale of Victoria's best north Government House, it is a great big house with an intriguing history.

In 1788, Arthur Phillip's first Government House was made of canvas, and Lachlan Macquarie was unable to proceed further than his Francis Greenway started sandstone walls addition before being booted home in 1821. (The Government House stood where the Museum of Sydney is today). Real substance only arrived in the 1840s with a new site and a suburban built ordered by Governor Sir Richard Bourke, in 1834, to the design by William IV's son Edward Blore in the gothic revival style of his address to Windsor Castle. The plans were flipped by colonial architect Mortimer Lewis to ensure the main entrance faced east, and the house was built between 1837 – the year Victoria came to the throne – and 1845.

How new once in presence in the corner of the Royal Botanic Gardens. One could imagine it is the elephant in the park, something from a Gothic novel, and a house consumed in bureaucracy, silent but for the occasional song of windblown.

Starkly contrast of past alterations include 1879, when James Barnet designed the acknowledged terrace. Dull tones often prevailed, but the ceiling, painted by Lums and Cotter's Glasgow-trained artist was just the thing for the most sophisticated governor, the late Victorian Earl Beauchamp – a close friend of Oscar Wilde.

Get your full article, excerpt of the design story of Sydney's Government House, designed by the world's top interior design firm, Victoria's residential design firm, through the link below, or call 0800 000 000 for more information.

PHOTOGRAPHIC: ALEX WATT / PHOTOGRAPHIC: HEFFER HEFFER

Vogue Living Dec/Nov 07 271

CECILIA HEFFER
Commissioned textile design
for Government House,
Sydney

2009004886
Original creative work

Article in Textile Home Forum



To Furnish a Future

The Refurbishment of the State Drawing Rooms, Government House, Sydney

In 1996 Bob Carr, who was Premier of NSW at the time, decided to remove the private residential functions of Government House and to transfer its management to the professional estate and museum manager, the Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales. This brought about a number of fundamental changes in how the former residence was to be used including more opportunities for public access or guided tours, education and public programs and a variety of community functions. Today Government House remains very much a 'working state house' as the House is used to host an extensive program of Vice-Regal and State Government ceremonies and hospitality functions.

Ann Tay, the Trust's Supervising Curator of Government House, recently played a major role in the most significant refurbishment the house has seen in twenty-three years. One prominent aspect has been bringing the decoration of the State Drawing Rooms into the present-day world through the commissioning of contemporary designed furniture, lace, upholstery, carpet and other furnishing textiles to complement and respect the integrity of the historic interiors and their collections.

The program of refurbishment was long overdue as the existing furnishings were installed in the mid 1980s. Guiding the conservation and refurbishment of the State Rooms was the 'To Furnish a Future' policy developed by the Trust. This ambitious refurbishment was funded by the NSW State Government.

