

Interior designer Cameron Woo: "Always Go Big" Blouin Artinfo

BY Lim Sio Hui | June 07, 2013



The entry foyer at Nassim Park Residences.

(Courtesy Cameron Woo Design)

SINGAPORE — A third-time winner in the Interior Design category at the [Asia Pacific International Property Awards](#), hot Singapore-based interior designer [Cameron Woo](#) is well-known for his tactile, bespoke projects that can make a HDB apartment just as luscious as a five-star hotel. His Nassim Park Residences project, which won at this year's Asia Pacific awards (and will represent the region in the world awards at the end of the year) is an ultra-luxurious penthouse decked to the nines with many custom-designed furnishings, such as a show-stopping decorative screen made of bronze, mirror, rock crystal, mother of pearl, capiz and shagreen in the entry foyer. Woo speaks to BLOUIN ARTINFO about his work and shares tips on creating your dream home.

How did you get started in designing interiors?

I was the type to change my parent's furniture arrangement in their living room and repaint the house when growing up. Renovating my parents' home in Sydney was my first interior design project whilst I was still studying interior design. Come to think of it, they must have really believed in me then.

What was the first design you fell in love with?

I really loved the interiors of the Ceylonese hilltop plantation house in [the film] *Elephant Walk*, starring Elizabeth Taylor. I remember the vastness of the colonial interior where they could even ride their bicycles let alone have elephants roaming the interior!

What do you consider your most important role when designing a residence?

I see myself having the dual roles of creator and editor. First and foremost, I am a "creator of desire" – I need to create romance and glamour. As the editor, I distill the design to its essence.

What seals a good interior design for you personally, in a home?

Creating a home is like telling a good story. The home reveals the owner's personality by way of their possessions and collections. Walking through the home should be like a narrative: you see new rooms and vistas that tell the story of the owner's life journey.

Can you share some tips for creating luxury at home on a budget?

Whilst luxury is about creating something bespoke and personal for your own indulgence, comfort and pleasure, I always adhere to key principles of design when designing any home – even on a budget – to create glamour, as these principles have little to do with money. Above all, as a home is a sanctuary, it should bring you joy.

True. Share one tip for creating glamour.

Exaggerate to get the little big house feel: make something big in a small space to exaggerate its importance. For standard door openings, take architraves to the ceiling to make the doors appear taller to create instant glamour. Also, I like working with a large rug that helps to anchor the room. Most people are afraid to go big, but my advice is to go big and not small. This always makes a small space look larger.

How would you advise us to use color?

Color and paint are the best and simplest ways to achieve impact on a budget. Start with an interesting rug and work your interior palette of colors from the rug. Do a sample on the wall and look at it at different times of the day and under both natural and artificial light. Remember that color is a chameleon, so it changes, under different lighting conditions. But this is what I love best about the changing nuances of color, as the one color creates different moods in the same room. By painting different sized panels of color in a room, you can instantly improve the proportion of the room.

Are there any design rules you think that should be thrown out the window?

Is there a design rulebook? I think there are principles to be adhered to, but I wouldn't call them design rules. For luxurious interiors at home, I don't believe in absolute minimalism that is devoid of the owner's personality.