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# Life & Leisure

## THE SOPHISTICATED TRAVELLER

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WHITE LIGHT  
BEST POWDER  
FROM FALLS  
CREEK TO VAIL

BABYMOON  
SPECIAL  
HAVE BUMP,  
WILL TRAVEL

SAVING RHINOS  
TOURISM HELPS  
FIGHT POACHING

# COUNTRY COMFORT

GROUNDED LUXURY



FINANCIAL REVIEW

## SEAT 1A.

HERMÈS HAS LONG COLLABORATED WITH COTTON PAPER SCULPTOR ANNA-WILI HIGHFIELD. SHE'S ALSO JUST FINISHED A COMMISSION FOR THE MUCH ANTICIPATED HOTEL HOTEL IN CANBERRA. SEAT 1A TALKS TO HER ABOUT ART, KIDS AND TRAVEL.

## ANNA-WILI HIGHFIELD

**Home is** in Marrickville, in Sydney's inner-west, with my husband and our two kids, aged 6 and 2.

**Favourite local haunts** include the Cornersmith cafe. It's getting attention for its interior, food and sincere focus on local, sustainable produce. My mother sells her home-made cordial there. It's trendy, but also friendly, and I'm forgiven when my son throws an explosive sugar vessel through the air. We also love the ocean and often drive to Maroubra beach, where concrete freeway gives way to sandy sidewalks and wild banksias.

**You're best known for creating large cotton paper sculptures – particularly the Hermès horse heads. What inspires these ethereal pieces?**

I aim to represent a moment of contact with nature in an immediate and authentic way. I try to capture the energy and life of a creature through wrestling with my medium of cotton paper.

The horses for Hermès are the result of a fun, ongoing relationship with the fashion house since 2010. I'm preoccupied by other creatures at the moment though; I just made three life-sized kangaroos for a home in coastal Victoria and have a commission from a Mexican politician for a jaguar.

**Another recent major commission was for the soon-to-open Hotel Hotel in Canberra. Tell us about the two pendant lights you created, featuring a bogong moth and an owl. The pendant lights were conceived through collaboration with Broached Commissions, who took four artists and designers and guided us through the design history of Canberra. My inspiration came from a story about how the lighting in Parliament House had to be redesigned to deal with the bogong moth invasion that takes place each year in spring. I like the idea of nature overtaking the city. I worked on this with my husband, Simon Cavanaugh.**



Simon made the turbulent brass internals to both lights, which my creatures (made from kangaroo skin) cluster about. I'm excited to see them in situ.

In Canberra, I was taken by the way the bush meets the city, and charmed by Hotel Hotel's creator, Nectar Elkarpidis. There's a depth of thought about the project, and passionate focus on sustainability I didn't expect on such a huge-scale build.

**Your last holiday was?** I recently escaped the family for a week in New York,

staying with a friend on the Lower East Side. We went to beautiful bars, restaurants and hotels. I don't remember the names – just dark tiles, antique mirrors and jalapeño margaritas.

As a family, we like to camp at Treachery Beach in Seal Rocks. My six-year-old daughter and I are planning a glamorous weekend away in Melbourne soon. She still hasn't forgiven me for not taking her to New York.

**Most memorable Seat 1A experience?** Does keeping a flight

Artist Anna-Wili Highfield with 'Kangaroos' 2013, photographed in her inner-west Sydney studio.

grounded on the tarmac when an artwork my husband packed was mistaken for an explosive give away that I'm not the most sophisticated traveller?

When we were finally allowed to board, my husband walked ahead sheepishly.

As we passed the captain, he took one look at Simon's dapper 1930s get-up, raised his eyebrows and shook his head.

See [annawilhighfield.com](http://annawilhighfield.com). Hotel Hotel opens late 2013. Go to [hotel-hotel.com.au](http://hotel-hotel.com.au). Anna-Wili Highfield spoke to Fiona Cummers.