



Green Void fills a space at Customs House

Spectacular architectural installation of green Lycra inspired by the geometries of plants, spider webs and soap bubbles has taken over five levels of the central atrium of Customs House in Sydney.

Green Void is a 20-metre high, suspended site-specific installation by international group LAVA – or Laboratory for Visionary Architecture – using the latest digital fabrication and engineering techniques.

The potential for naturally evolving systems such as snowflakes, spider webs and soap bubbles for new building typologies and structures has continued to fascinate LAVA – the geometries in nature create both efficiency and beauty. Their luxury residential tower for Michael Schumacher in Abu Dhabi, for example, is based on the design of a snowflake.

“The shape of the installation is the result of the most efficient connection of different boundaries in three-dimensional space, found in plants and corals,” LAVA Asia Pacific director Chris Bosse said.

“We determined the connection points within the space and the rest is a mathematical formula with a minimal surface. The concept was achieved with a flexible material that follows the forces of gravity, tension and growth, similar to

a spider web or a coral reef.

“It is based on the forces within the membrane, similar to the flow of forces in soap films. Or leaves or spiderwebs. The geometry is the one of packing of bubbles – the spaces in between the bubbles.”

The installation is inspired by the relationship between man, nature and technology. Sensual, green and digital, it provides an intense visual contrast to the heritage splendour of Customs House and is immersed in a ‘digital rainforest’ soundscape by sound artist David Chesworth.

The sculpture, based on minimal surface tension, consists of a tensioned Lycra material, digitally patterned and custom-tailored for the space.

“We wanted to see how far we could take the idea of creating more space with less material, filling 3000 cubic metres, the equivalent of eight million cola cans, with a minimal surface of 300 square metres weighing only 40 kilograms,” Mr Bosse said.

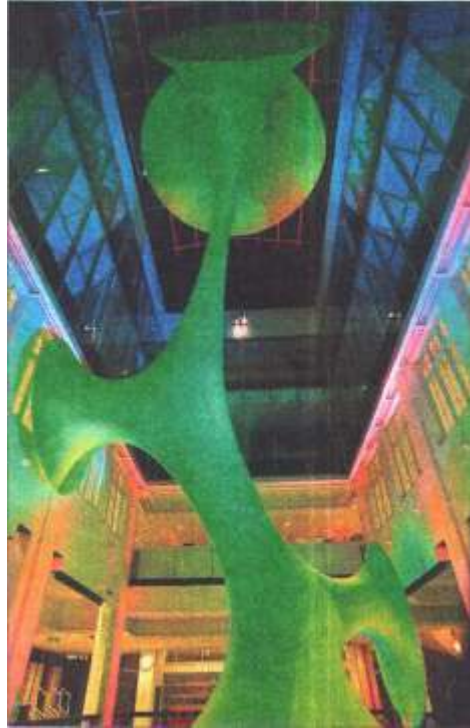
Green Void is transportable in a sports-bag to any place in the world; it can be assembled in minimal time, and is fully reusable.

The installation is on display until June 10 at Customs House at Sydney’s Circular Quay. ■



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Creation: This 20-metre high Lycra installation is inspired by the relationship between man, technology and nature.