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grandes dames in Paris, Crawford managed to sidestep the tyranny of what does and doesn't go. Hers was a loose, snobbery-free concept of 'style', though her editorial board was brimming with current movers and shakers, including Nigel Coates, Tom Dixon and Joseph Ettedgui.

Ever since, Crawford has built upon the idea of touchy feely over tense and tough. Function in design should be integral. Sensuality is key. Design that appeals to the heart will work in the home, and in the office. 'I want to make human spaces,' she says. 'If they are loved and cared for, then they have a future. It is important that the space survives after the designer has walked away.'

The room in which we meet is an example of her theory made reality. The club room of the Wellcome Trust on London's Euston Road is hidden away in a grand 1930s building. It is a single space punctuated by a massive vintage De Sede sofa that snakes through the room. There are Jean Prouvé chairs at solid wooden tables and a cluster of Rietveld's non conformist chairs, now re-editioned by Cassina. Crawford has

*Top left: Cecconi's Italian restaurant, in Mayfair, Crawford blended glamour and utility for its interiors*

*Top right: A new chain of British cooking inns called the Olde Bell Inn. The first opens in June in Hurley, Berkshire*

*Above right: A recently completed series of glasses designed by Crawford in collaboration with industrial designer Michael Anastassiades*

garde, more playful. Idiosyncratic objects from the Wellcome Collection – an outsized wooden tooth, a photograph of the physicist Nikola Tesla in his laboratory, and a model of the herpes virus – are dotted throughout. 'There is a sense of the school library to it,' says Crawford. Perhaps very few school libraries boast her trademark Farrow and Ball Chappell Green walls – 'It's a colour that other colours look amazing against,' she says.

You could say that Crawford's stock-in-trade is to combine the smart and the unexpected, the rough with the smooth. At Cecconi's restaurant in Mayfair is a diagonal black and white striped marble floor reminiscent of Italian architects Gio Ponti and Carlo Scarpa. It speaks of all things mid-century Italian in the spirit of the original establishment, however, the chairs are upholstered in emerald green leather and a soft banquette section uses luscious dark green velvet. Its Los Angeles sister restaurant, opening soon on Melrose Avenue, will be an entirely different proposition, though the black and white floor will remain. 'That floor is the DNA of the

Crawford's relationship with Soho House, which owns Cecconi's, goes back to the opening of Babington House in 1999, the club's first outpost in the Somerset countryside. 'It's the home of an imaginary family, where the parents have gone away and left the kids with the keys to the drinks cupboard.' Crawford had her wedding there. Yurts constructed by friends of her hippy sister who lives in Glastonbury were erected there among edible flowers. 'Glamorous bohemian at its best,' says a guest. Her Colombian husband, Oscar Peña, brought the Colombian serenaders.

Peña is senior creative director at Philip but also runs a department at Eindhoven, called Man and Activity. They met because he had seen her first book *Sensual Home*, and he thought she would be good at the Academy. He began meeting up with her in New York, where she was working for Donna Karan, creating a new Home division. Starting in 1998, Crawford introduced designers such as Hella Jongerius to the world of home/fashion. 'But after two years I needed to decide,' she says. 'I realised that given the choice of a life decked out in black cashmere filling in