



(News No.11) Greenhouse

Designed by Atelier 2+

/Worapong Manupitpong & Ada Chirakranont

(News No.12)







“We felt the need to make room inside for the nature that surrounds us.”

Greenhouse — straddling the boundary between art and design.

“I liked it immediately, feeling that it was very Scandinavian as to its architecture.” Thus Anders Färdig, managing director of Design House Stockholm, described his love-at-first-sight encounter with *Greenhouse*.

And there is certainly something familiar about *Greenhouse*. The architectonic form that it shares with traditional Swedish buildings developed in answer to the specific conditions in our part of the world. Swedish architecture needed to protect people against wind and hard weather and almost everything else that has the potential to make life uncomfortable. The task that the Thai design studio Atelier 2+ have allotted to their *Greenhouse* is doing the opposite: opening the door to flora and fauna. When Worapong Manupipatpong and Ada Chirakranont talk about their *Greenhouse* they describe it as a terrarium and it fulfils this function just as well as that of a greenhouse for plants, either reducing the world around to let a small landscape move in beneath a glass roof, or providing a habitat for some small domestic animal.

But the burning issue is whether *Greenhouse* is actually an item of furniture at all. True, one can fill it with all sorts of different things but in the core of its being it is something other than a piece

of domestic furniture. It is a sculpture. Art is not readily defined — which might very well be a way of defining it. What cannot immediately be understood based on notions of usability, and that is also mould breaking, is often endowed with artistic qualities. The *Greenhouse* is a design object with artistic ambitions.

Improving the quality of life by bringing green plants into the home or public space is far from being a new idea. Rather the reverse — that green plants are a neglected area which call for innovative design solutions; precisely what *Greenhouse* offers. Atelier 2+ place greenery on a pedestal and protect it with glass as the delicate and beautiful item that it deserves to be — even in public places.

Redefining the tradition

Design House Stockholm works within a Scandinavian tradition as to aesthetics, materials and product characteristics. But the company also seeks to develop and renew the concept of Scandinavian design and to establish it firmly in the globalized world of today. Currently it is neither a designer in our part of the world, or the producers, who have exclusive right to the concept of Scandinavian design. The Scandinavian approach to design is a tradition that appeals to Atelier 2+. And we Scandinavians have reason to be grateful



“Our cat is always attentive to what we do and when we are discussing a project he usually sits on the table as if he’s attending a meeting. Here he’s observing Worapong Manupipatpong doing some initial sketches for a model.”
Ada Chirakranont



Small pieces of moss found at a local market in Bangkok are spread out to see which pieces will fit one another. Ada Chirakranont use them to build small mountains, put together like a puzzle.

for this since it shows that our design tradition, like other traditions, can be maintained in a vital state thanks to influences from outside sources. The fact that *Greenhouse* has ended up in Design House Stockholm’s product range is an indication of the benefits we reap from the fact that, thanks to globalization, the world is shrinking. Worapong Manupipatpong and Ada Chirakranont originally created *Greenhouse* for the magazine *Wallpaper’s* annual Handmade Exhibition. The *Greenhouse* was their way of interpreting the concept of ‘handmade’ as a term that does not just concern the manufacture of the item but also the way that it is cherished. Which is to say the care which we often afford to plants. And this is how *Greenhouse* should be viewed: the physical expression of a broader use of the term ‘handmade’.

Love at first sight

Greenhouse was shown at the *Wallpaper Handmade Exhibition Thai Edition* in September 2014 and then, in March 2015, at the furniture fair in Bangkok. It was here that it caught the eye of Anders Färdig who fell for it immediately. The fact that Worapong Manupipatpong and Ada Chirakranont are attracted by the tradition of Scandinavian design, which Design House Stockholm is seeking to renew, is not as strange as it



“*Greenhouse* encourages people to create miniature worlds.”

might seem. They both studied at Konstfack, University College of Arts, Crafts and Design in Stockholm, though Anders Färdig was not aware of this when he started his collaboration with Atelier 2+ on the floor of the Bangkok fair. We live in a very small world.

Playing with scales

Like many other people who visit Sweden, or who live there for a period, it was nature and the Swedish approach to nature that made the strongest impact on Worapong Manupipatpong and Ada Chirakranont. For a duo coming from Bangkok what was most memorable about the years spent in Stockholm was always having nature on one’s doorstep.

“*Greenhouse* is a product of our stay in Sweden,” Worapong Manupipatpong explains. “When we were living in Sweden we felt the need to get closer to nature and to make room inside our dwelling for the nature that surrounds us.”

“But,” they point out, “perhaps the size of *Greenhouse* encourages people to create miniature

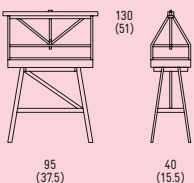
worlds because it is not large enough for people merely to plant just anything in it. It makes demands on the user, perhaps requiring green fingers or the sensitive touch of a sculptor.”

“Usually we work with larger-scale projects,” Ada Chirakranont adds, “projects that are in the borderland between art and design,” she continues.

The activities of Atelier 2+ range from buildings to interior architecture and furniture. The *Greenhouse* represents a sort of scaled-down version of the installations and interconnected huts with pitched roofs that they showed in Bangkok and that had their origin in *Space In-between* which was the title of Worapong Manupipatpong’s graduation thesis at Konstfack in 2009.

Like all good art, *Greenhouse* speaks to our feelings in a way that furniture do not. There are many labels that fit *Greenhouse*: furniture, object, sculpture. Regardless of what we decide to call it the initial reaction of everyone who comes into contact with it is for their faces to split into a big smile.

Daniel Golling



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