

# Space Analysis

## Greenhouse Botanical Garden

### “The Tropical Room”

#### Group TiMaDaLa

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As a part of our paper we will use Lise Beks model to analyze the tropical room in Botanical Garden. Bek argues that the first hand impression of a space is created by the different senses. These experiences is often based on what you see, but also other senses such as hearing, smelling and the cognitive sense. In addition, Bek presents five aspects, which she uses to describe how a place is perceived. Furthermore Bek elaborates that these 5 aspects together creates a sequence of transitions without being irreversible.

#### The following five aspects provide the framework:

##### Context

The space that will be analysed in the following is called the tropic room (see figure 1) and is an area within the greenhouses in the botanical garden in Aarhus. The space consist of different areas that are all connected through a large path with smaller path interconnecting the main one. The space offers the audience with the opportunity to explore and see different sorts of plants in a tropical climate, which represents plants from both asia and africa. There is also a tower from where the audience can get an overview of the entire area.



Figure 1: Overview of the Tropical Room.

## The form aspect

The space is enclosed by a big dome that works as a greenhouse. The dome is almost transparent so most of the light in the greenhouse is natural. It is a circular space with symmetry because of the paths that leads you around in a circle in the tropic area. There is two levels of the space; on the ground and in the tower. The tower is made of mostly natural materials and therefore feels like a natural part of the space. When you stand on the top of the tower you have an overview of the entire space, the treetops, some of the paths and the small pond in the back (see figure 2). When you are back on the ground it is only possible to see what's in front of you, because of the dense vegetation. By following the different paths in the tropic area it is possible to see all of the trees, bushes, plants, etc. There is both big and small paths wherest the smaller paths leads you into the middle of the space, this is where you are closest to the plants and therefore more connected with them. In the small pond in the back you can find fish and lotus flowers. The water where they live is parted from the woods by one of the big paths and is also illuminated by ekstra lamps and not only the natural light. The heat in the space and the butterflies that just flies around connects the space which makes it feel natural that this tropical area is living under a dome.



Figure 2: Picture of the pond

## The practical functional aspect

The main functional aspect of this room is to let the visitors see the different plants in this type of climate, this is both done with a practical aspect but also with an aspect that leads to exploration. The room is divided into minor different areas which are all connected through a path system, which uses a large main path and smaller sidepaths to connect the different areas (see figure 1). These smaller paths lets the audience decide whether or not they want to explore the entire space as it is, or they only want to follow the main path. This could be either positive or negative, by which all of the important things that the audience needs to see are placed by the main path. Lastly, one of the first things you will see when entering the room is a tower, which you can walk up in and provides you with an overview of the room (see figure 3). The size of the tower lets about 20 people be up there at the same time, which clearly should be taken into account when designing for this area.



**Figure 3: View from the entrance of the room with the tower in the back**

### **The scenographic-social aspect**

The space is a public space where people can come and go in opening hours. The space offers different forms of usage by which type of visitor you are. You can come and enjoy the different types of climates and explore their respective plants. You can also come and explore each of the different plants closer if that is of your interest. There are many possibilities because the scene invites to an open form of exploration. All of the elements that are placed within space are designed with its context in mind. The style and choice of material for the different elements are all kept within the frames for this type of climate and location.

### **The iconographic-semantic aspect**

The architecture does not seem to build upon a higher religious, philosophical or ideological idea. Instead the architectural decisions has been made accordingly to fit the survival of the plants and trees within the room. These decisions include a dome of inflatable “windows” that both allow for a high rate of light to come in and the possibility to adjust the temperature so the plants and trees can grow in both the summer and the winter.

The arrangement of the trees and plants within the room is divided into regional zones and does not reveal any kind of iconographic ideals as well. The only iconographic item, although we believe it is not intentional, is the pond which can be referred to the japanese lifestyle of zen buddhism.

### **The visual-experiential and aesthetic aspect**

The intention behind the room is to pass information about the trees and the plants to the visitors. Furthermore, the arrangement let them explore the environment where each of these plants would grow if it lived in the “real” nature like the dessert or in our case, the tropics. They do this by letting the visitors explore the space on their on own through narrow and intimate paths(see figure 4). The Trees and plants surround them so they most of the time

can't see the concrete walls and the inflatable windows. This combined with the temperature, humidity and butterflies creates an almost life-like environment.

When a visitor enters the space, she is met by a high tower created from organic materials and butterflies flying around. From the top of the tower, one can get an overview of the space and feel how it would be if they were Tarzan.

It is still difficult to make any conclusions about how the planners' aesthetical and visual ideas would work in real life since the tropical space is still under restoration. Although, the architectural decisions that already has been made creates aesthetic and visual experiences for the visitor when she walks on the paths.



**Figure 4: The main path**