Nationalmuseum Design: A Development Project in Practice

Nationalmuseum Design@Kulturhuset Stadsteatern, Stockholm
Susanne Eriksson
Project Manager, Nationalmuseum Design
Nationalmuseum Design: A Development Project in Practice

Nationalmuseum Design@Kulturhuset Stadsteatern, Stockholm
Susanne Eriksson
Project Manager, Nationalmuseum Design

The Venue

The section consisting of design exhibitions, a museum shop, and a small project room in the form of a building container, and a lounge, was installed at Kulturhuset Stadsteatern in February 2015, in premises that had not been used previously for public events. The approximately 840 sqm venue is dominated by the glass facade overlooking Sergels torg and a large glazed spiral staircase that partly divides the space in two. But the uncovered ceiling, with its fittings for a sprinkler system, ventilation and other amenities also draws the visitors’ attention. The new long-stave parquet seemed initially to be far too lavish when one’s eyes flickered from the raw ceiling to the fine floor. What to do?

The premises were simply divided into an exhibition space and a lounge area by building a new wall and an inner entrance door to the actual exhibition. Two new rooms with entirely different purposes were achieved in this way. The circular stairwell was incorporated in the lounge, and a new articulated wall with built-in security monitors was erected in the exhibition space, to show objects that require a more controlled museum climate. After the refurbishment, the exhibition space was shaped like a fat “L”, which turned out to be a visually robust and amenable format for the different needs and styles of our exhibitions. We soon got used to the many ceiling fixtures.
The Lounge
We wanted the lounge to feel temporary – to emphasise that Nationalmuseum Design is only visiting for a few years. Mobile scaffolding forms the display units for the Design-to-Go Shop. The project container is a space for showing projects with guest designers or our own events, for shorter or longer periods. The front desk is built on site to give visitors an open and welcoming reception. In addition, the area is furnished with a few armchairs from Hay, a sofa from Blå Station, two tables on wheels, and some stools. A black, circular board on the floor marks a potential "stage" for various events.

The lounge furniture is easy to change and move around, inviting visitors to open and generous potential activities. In this relaxed environment, visitors can let themselves be dazzled by the spectacular panorama outside the windows, browse the design shop, and look at the current presentation in the project container. Those who wish can move on to the main exhibition further in.

The circumstances mean that public events that take place here will have an informal nature; chairs are placed between the scaffolding, with everyone close together, and the discussion can begin.

The Project Container
In the first year, six different projects, installations and mini exhibitions have been presented here. This 12-cubic-metre space turned out to constantly deliver surprising new exhibition-related challenges, possibilities and solutions. The original idea of having very short presentations of new projects, designers and installations, however, proved too difficult to achieve in practice – we simply could not do it. Longer project periods have made it possible to develop a dynamic and varied exhibition language in a small space. We have gained new experience that will hopefully be incorporated with the Museum’s future activities.
EXHIBITIONS/NATIONALMUSEUM DESIGN

Interior from the Project Container, Thórunn Árnadóttir, Sipp og Höj.

Interior from the Project Container, Contemporary Swedish Silver.

Interior from the Project Container, Finn Ahlgren, Nattdjuren (Night Creatures).

Interior from the Project Container, The Glass Factory; Ten Artefacts from Boda.

Interior from the Project Container, DesignNU 2014.

Interior from the Project Container, The Bengt Julin Fund.
Interior from the exhibition *The Torsten and Wanja Söderberg Award.*

Interior from the exhibition *Everything Must Go! Ann-Sofi Back.*

Interior from the exhibition *Glass is Tomorrow.*