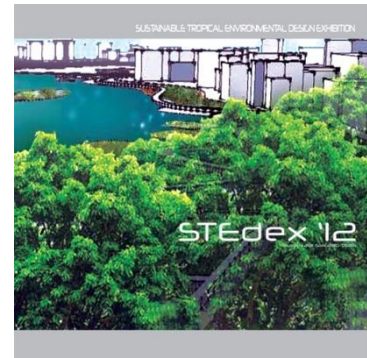


**Jury Review: Marine Info Kiosk:
A Reflection On Innocence**

Sustainable Tropical Environmental Design Exhibition 2012

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MARINE INFO KIOSK: A REFLECTION ON INNOCENCE

The Marine Info Kiosk is the second project for Year One and in its very brief has succinctly spelt in all clarity the programme of an information kiosk for 10 to 30 people with an outdoor communal area for 20 to simply promote awareness of Redang Island as a snorkelling haven and a place to hang around. Other than these, it is mainly to fulfil perfunctorily mundane facilities; public toilets and a single caretaker's flat.

Let us not fuss but concentrate instead on some of the simple ideas explained in the brief. First and foremost, the brief calls for the appreciation of nature on Redang through its marine presence and the snorkelling activities. Secondly, it is quite simply a kiosk facility; a small visitor centre promoting marine life awareness. Next, it aims for some level of physical gratification and to put it quite simply, a place to hang around. To summarize, deploy the K.I.S.S.* factor.

I definitely can relate with all the fun associated with such site investigation, having gone through a few myself in the last 30 years of my architectural education and I believe most of us on many levels share similar sentiments. The groups of six despatched for site investigations have indeed done much extensive good work combing the beaches of Redang, as evident from the analyses on the walls. The students' subsequent departure to higher levels of their individual spatial consciousness as compared to the previous project is highly regarded and deserves credit.

There are some marked improvements too in the level of presentation techniques. The level of formalistic experimentation is evident here; on a certain level it can be regarded as a testament to the young students' transformative experiences. Whether these experiments in one's individual spatial and formalistic consciousness are deployed to reflect the seeming innocence of nature and the Redang eco-system are indeed grounds for many further healthy debates. Ultimately, when does design become an experiment in self-indulgence as oppose to attaining a purpose – especially the green, sustainable purpose? Can we put a full-scale Sydney Opera House on Redang without having a disastrous impact on the environment? What happens to context?

These are some of the crucial directions that students need to ask themselves and again, make the appropriate greener design choices. Having said these, there are exceptions nonetheless. As one of the more prominent juries, Ar Wooi Loke Kuang expresses potentials for one of the shingle-roof kiosk as a design that can be sustainable and suitable against the sensitive eco-system of Redang.

Finally, there are indeed scale issues that are unresolved; as to how big can a kiosk be or for that matter, how small. In exploring form, there are issues on simplicity and intrusiveness to context which are not properly addressed here. The brief, after all, is very clear on this. A kiosk is a kiosk and in a delicate eco-system, size, or the lack of it, does matter.