

# Exhibiting our green souls

STORY: NAPAMON ROONGWITOO

It is not unusual for hotels to feature art installations. In fact, it is more unusual for hotels not to use art to reflect its design philosophy. Sofitel So Bangkok last year introduced “Nature vs Society”, a multi-disciplinary fashion and art event. The exhibition invited four artists — Thai designer Tawn Chatchavalvong, Phnom Penh-based designer Christine Gauthier, Filipino

designer Don Protasio and Madagascan designer Eric Raisina. For the second edition, the hotel decided to focus more on the home front. Titled “Nature & Society”, this year’s rendition brought back Tawn Chatchavalvong and invited three other local brands — Saprang, Sarran and Kamuilim Fine Art & Décor. The exhibition is ongoing until the end of October and admission is free.



Tawn Chatchavalvong and his exhibition *Fashion Playground*.

Tawn, namesake designer for the Tawn C women’s apparel brand, said he was very happy with the feedback from last year, and did not hesitate to join again. “This year, I wanted to focus on the fashion industry as a whole and the fact that maybe we are not doing enough to save the environment. Of course, there are many brands who do little things to help, but I think more awareness is needed,” said Tawn.

His piece is titled *Fashion Playground*, featuring a mannequin wearing a dress with a special print — money and feather.

He explained that our society needs freedom, and money is, admittedly, a necessary tool to achieve freedom in today’s world.

He also felt that fashion is, to many people, a wonderland. He was inspired by *Alice In Wonderland* and created large buttons, thread spools and measurement tape to make the mannequin appear small, like Alice when she was in Wonderland. His exhibition proved to be popular, thanks to being located right next to the elevator. Most guests snap a few pictures while waiting.

Supot Suwannasing of the Saprang brand interpreted the “Nature & Society” theme as happiness. He felt that everyone in the society wants happiness, and doing what one loves is the simplest way to achieve that feeling.

“I wanted to represent happiness by doing what makes me happy. I enjoy crafting accessories and they make me happy. I think other people can feel it, too, when they look at this series of work,” Supot



*Space Of Happiness* by Saprang.

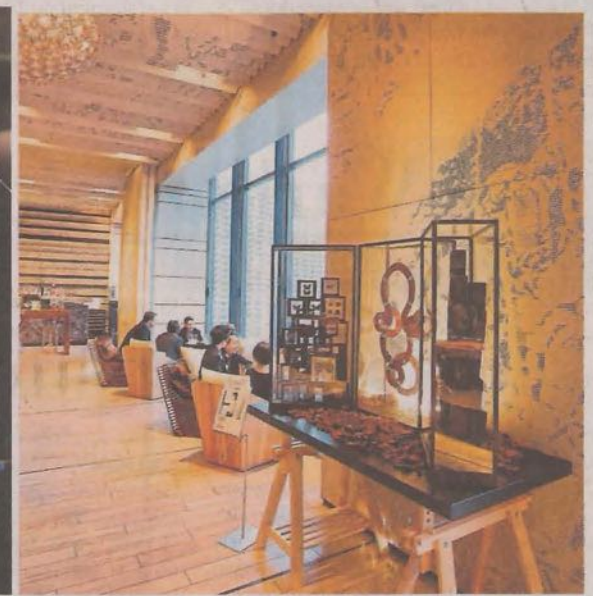
said of *Space Of Happiness*, by him and his partner Sirikarn Jirajbhaskornkul.

All handcrafted from 18k gold-plated brass, the delicate pieces borrow some elements from nature’s flowers, leaves and branches. The artists have also created a pair of gigantic earrings.

The blown-up size, according to Supot, is to remind people of how detailed handcrafted accessories can be.

“Sometimes, consumers today care more about jewels and precious metals. They forget about craftsmanship and skills,” he commented.

Sarran Youkongdee, an interior and product designer, grew up in this area, and felt like Lumpini Park, which is across from the hotel, was his home. He collected dried leaves from the



*Hide Bangkok* by Sarran Youkongdee.

park for this exhibition and used images of snakes and butterflies to reflect nature. *Hide Bangkok* explores the impossibility of trying to hide in the urban jungle.

Preecha Lim, designer for Kamuilim Fine Art & Décor, is known for his scarves and prints, as well as his favourite dog Chino, who appears in many of his designs. His concept in this exhibition is *Beauty Is The Truth In Nature*, which pays tribute to flora and fauna as the source of true beauty.

“As an artist, I am very happy that there is such an event, where people can see art with meaning,” Supot said.

- The exhibition on until Oct 31.
- Call 02-624-0000.