

Season - The sign of presence

The verification of the way of being of furniture according to season

And

The quality of space

Konstfack

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1. Foreword

We have four different seasons, and clearly each season has each character's signature.

Each country often has some tradition and custom related with season and we change many interior stuff according to season.

For example in Japan, we have tradition to change not only clothes and interior stuff but also plate ware.

The main reason to change some stuff according to the season is because of function and needs, but the most important reason may be that we have emotions that admire and enjoy each of the seasons.

We don't change the furniture according to season but I want to look how the season is connecting our mentality and life, with the furniture.

2. Summary

Cloth and food change themselves and show the difference of season according to the season but furniture doesn't change itself and doesn't show the difference of season without people's behavior according to season.

It means furniture can show and reflect the difference and the change of season secondarily. Then we can feel the season and we can get this feeling by looking the change we did without thinking in most case.

And to think the design of furniture we always have to think about the space (architecture) because furniture should be connected with architecture and give us the comfortable and the function. It means furniture should be defined up the quality of space (architecture) and a part of architecture, not like a just object.

Also the quality of space will be changed by the way of being furniture in the space.

By focusing the behavior of without thinking and the way of being furniture in the space, I am going to research how season give the influence to furniture and space and as a result, I'll show the furniture which can define up the quality of space.

3. Background

3.1. Season at home

What I can say as the background is I felt there are some differences to deal with, and respond to the season at home in Sweden, even we live in a kind of similar country which have the some season in a year. I couldn't see how season reflect the life at home as I can feel that in Japan much more.

3.1.1. Equipment different

If I talk about the difference to respond to the season only in architecture between Japan and Sweden, maybe one of the biggest differences is the heating system. In Sweden every house and building are equipped with heating system, so people can live in almost the same temperature in a whole year. Even in winter, inside the building, is always warm even when there is nobody.

On the other hand we don't have it in Japan, so we get some influence by that. For example, the corridor is very cold in winter because there is no heating equipment, so this space becomes a place you should not stay long, but in summer the corridor becomes as cool space. And also in winter, the inside of house is still cold when we come back from the outside because our heating system is not on automatically.

That is to say the character of space is often changed according to the season.

3.1.2. Structure different

Another reason is about structure composition. Japanese house composition has between space (fig.1 Japan) the outside and the inside, and maybe I can say that's the biggest character of a Japanese house, and the biggest difference from Sweden. (fig.2 Sweden)

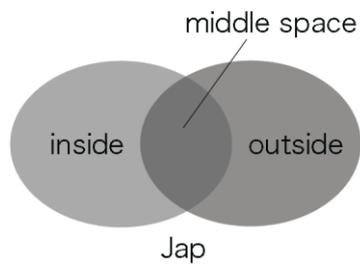


fig.1 House structure of Japan

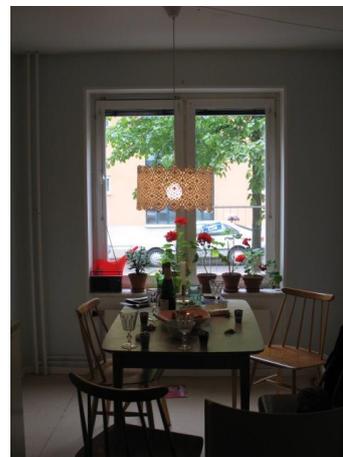
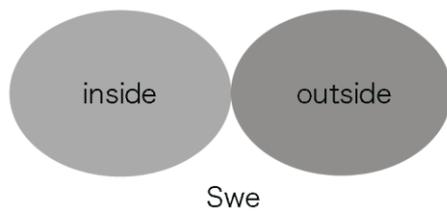


fig.2 House structure of Sweden

That's why we often put up a bamboo blind over the window to avoid the strong sunshine during the summer, and the table we use as normal is put new function, as a KOTATSU (small table, with an electric heater underneath, and covered by a quilt. (fig.3 KOTATSU) in winter.



fig.3 KOTATSU

In other words, a standard Japanese house doesn't have so much comfortable function for physically because we put some function when we need it at the time. This means how we can take the nature and season to inside of house is more important than how comfortable it is physically.

3.2. Sharing the feeling

Thus, our home environment is quiet different from each other, but the feeling to enjoy and admire the season is a universal feeling. So I want to look at people's behavior and feelings more than environment, at the same time people's behavior and feelings must be that everyone is able to share and understand.

4. Aim

I looked into the mentality, the behavior and the quality of space and I want to show the furniture like we can feel the season. At the same time, this feeling should be what everyone can understand.

But it doesn't mean to control it, because it's nonsense and pointless to control the seasonal changes. Of course sometimes we feel uncomfortable and inconvenient by the problem of seasonal change, but we live in seasonal changing countries. If we lose this, it means we also lose the seasonal feeling.

5. Stating the problem

5.1. Similarity between furniture and season

I researched the similarity to know how furniture is connected with season.

5.1.1. Furniture

The furniture has "the sign of presence", and makes a cornerstone to connect people and space. If there is one chair we can get the message maybe someone is there and get a trigger to meet someone naturally as the concrete clue. Maybe I can say this mean is furniture support human feeling.

5.1.2. Season

Season also give us the cornerstone for space and people. At the same time maybe I can say season itself is the sign of a presence. For instance, in public space the bench is the cornerstone for meeting spot in summer, but it's not like that in winter. So the character of space is changing by season.

And as I already have mentioned, the corridor can be a meeting spot for a Japanese family, because it will be cool comfortable space in summer.

5.1.3. Reslut

Then I noticed the characters is the case with a Japanese traditional home.

One of the biggest aspects of a Japanese traditional house, which the architectonics system is composed with column and doesn't have clear dividing, gives the space continuity and the between area, the inside and the outside. These columns and the between area are very important function for life.

Around the columns, the sign of the presence of space exist, and that's why we can understand and recognize what type and purpose of space it is by the sign of presence. Then we also can get security and calmness with it such as furniture support within the human feeling.

Then as a result, I can say the furniture and the season are the things that give the sign of presence(=trigger), in this project.

5.2. The purpose of the season in the furniture

Season gives us not only food, order, and rhythm, but also richness of the spirit and life, it makes up our life quality. It's just little things but it can be a little luxury.

I think it's same with the feeling we get when we eat a little bit more luxury dinner, or use nice dishes other than the regular ones, when we have a kind of special day.

That's can be the quality of life.

5.3. Relation with architecture

To begin with, furniture should be connected with architecture and space(room), and the quality of the space should be defined up by the furniture.

Then I researched what is "the quality of space", and what makes the quality of space relate to a particular season.

5.3.1. The quality of space / Questionnaire

I had a questionnaire survey about how they think about season at home for some Swedish people, the survey device was by email, and I got answers from 7 people.

The questions are as follows.

1. Where do you feel season in your home? And how?
2. What do you like in the changing season? And what do you not like in a changing season?
3. What do you think of the role of seasons?

I couldn't get enough answers, but I tried to look at what is the quality of space by those answers.

5.3.2. Answer

1. Where do you feel season in your home? And how?

- Christmas lightning in the window.
- The view from the window in kitchen
- I feel summer in kitchen because it's usually warm.
- I feel summer in living room, because it's usually bright.
- I fell autumn in dining room, because the colors are that way.
- The stuff in a hallway, because a jacket and a pair of sneakers or etc are changed.
- The window because I can see ice, snow, and rain.
- In living room because of the sound and smell from the window.
- It's mostly depending on the light.
- The fireplace in our summer cabin makes it feel more like the fall or winter.
- In the winter I change the sofa to warmer colours to make my living room more warm, as I have very white window blinds.

2. What do you like in changing season? And what do you not like in changing season?

- I don't like that they all end.
- I like the sense of renewal during changing seasons.
- I like the season changes because that way I never get bored of new season.
- I like the season, even though I live in a city, I can feel nature has its way and the earth is turning.
- Just because of the change! It's so much more interesting than to have the same stuff from month to month.

3. What do you think the role of seasons?

- They renew /recycle ideas, mood, nature, energy...
- You realize that change is a natural part of existence.
- The role of season is the balance of nature, and peoples way of living.
- We need to refresh one's mind and also to appreciate other seasons.
- It makes us humble to understand that there's something we can't change to what we want to.
- Changing of season is a time-keeping piece.
- I think one important role the seasons have is to make people to respect more and understand the importance of all of them.

5.3.3. Discussion

As a result, many people answered visual and decorative things like the view from the window, changing the sofa cover and Christmas lights.

We also have decoration in the Japanese house but at the same time these decorations often have functions, and in most cases we feel the season by using those things. That's to say, if there is function, this means there is inevitability and this inevitability is shown as behavior, and this behavior is reflected as a sense of the season.

That's to say, I think, "the things which we can feel the change by visual things and behavior" makes up the quality of space. Of course, smell and sound are also important elements. Which is not always the case with which to have a certain purpose, like for example, the industrial factory as in the case of a home.

6. The project plan and the realization

I then decided to design two type of furniture based on "the things by which we can feel change, by visual things, and behavior" with considering the sign of presence of furniture.

Both of them are designed by based on the changing of behavior and visual things, but one of them shows that more in directly way and the other shows that more in abstract way.

7. Results

Hanger chair

When I think about the changing of behavior and the moving in accordance with a season I found people use the chair as a hanger in winter without thinking.

This is an indication of people's seasonal behavior and change, so I decided to put this behavior on to the chair. What is the most important thing for this chair, is just to show the difference of behavior according to season, so it doesn't need to be complex or have a new shape to the chair. That's why I designed a very simple shaped chair and just put a hanger on the back.

And also I designed the hanger so it can be pulled out from the back because if it's fixed, this chair is still just symbol, and it doesn't create change. So if you have a long jacket or something similar and you don't want your jacket to trail on the floor, you can just pull the hanger out and hang it somewhere. (fig.4 Hanger Chair)

About the material, I don't think I should show something with special material for this chair because it's not important for it, and I want to show neutral looks in fact.

And I want to say I didn't look at only winter because I perceived this chair is an indication of people's seasonal behavior and moving.

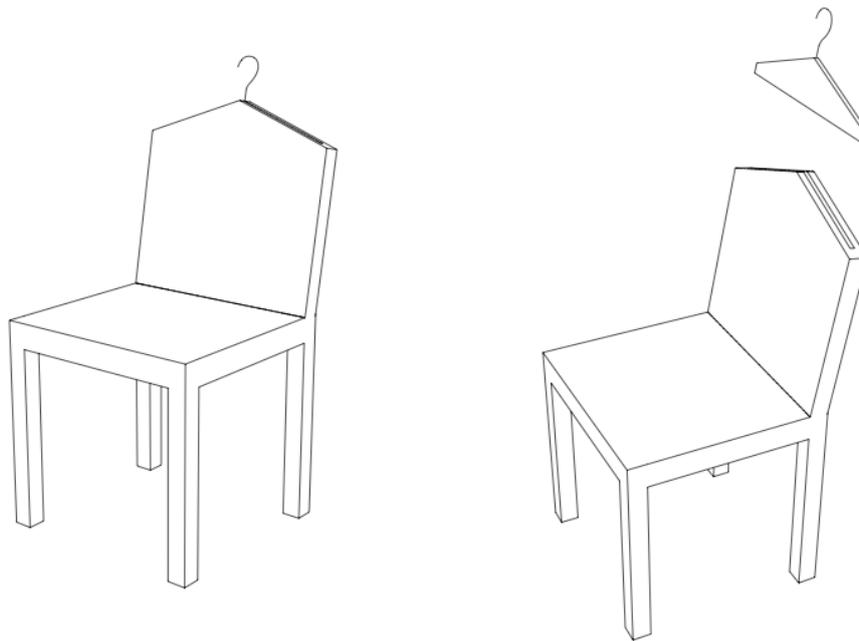


fig.4 Hanger chair

Shelf

In this theme I focused on space more and I found people always do take something and put something in the space in dairy life and then we can understand our behavior meaning and the space meaning by this acting. When I think about that, I thought the shelf is good example.

The generally function of shelf is that we can place something on it. That's to say, this means we can show something and at the same time hide something. I think it is very important the showing and the hiding in season in dairy life. We can understand the season by watching the object on the shelf and also we can understand what kind of room is here. This opinion is connected with that furniture has the sigh of presence as I mentioned.

Then I decided to design the shelf accepted many kind of space and behavior.

Then I focused on the entrance space and living room because the entrance space has a lot of change in whole year by season and the living room is the space we spend the most time as meeting space. That's why I thought I could relate with the character that furniture has the sign of presence, and the behavior changing by season.

The shape is composed with nine boxes (fig.5 Shelf) and those box scale is based on

book (magazine $300 \times 220\text{mm}$) and shoes, to accept many kind of room. And the surface is uneven because I think we can get many function's possibility by that. Maybe we can put or hang something on it. And I put one more element for function. One of boxes is possible to remove and you can use it as stool or so. (fig.6 Shelf and stool) One small stool is very useful in the slightest situation. For example, if you use it in entrance space you can use it when you get into or off shoes. And another reason is visual effect. When we look at this shelf we can get more strong first sight and then it may be easier to get season feeling by visual effect.

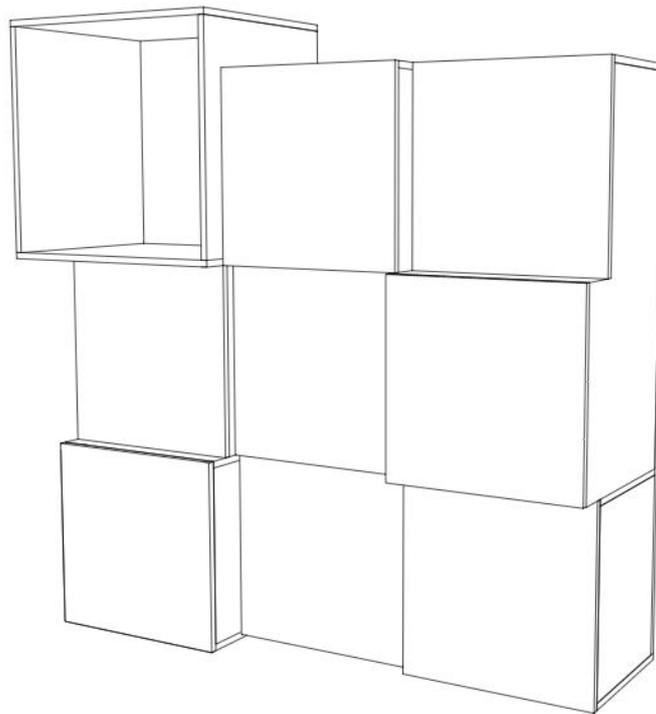


fig.5 Shelf

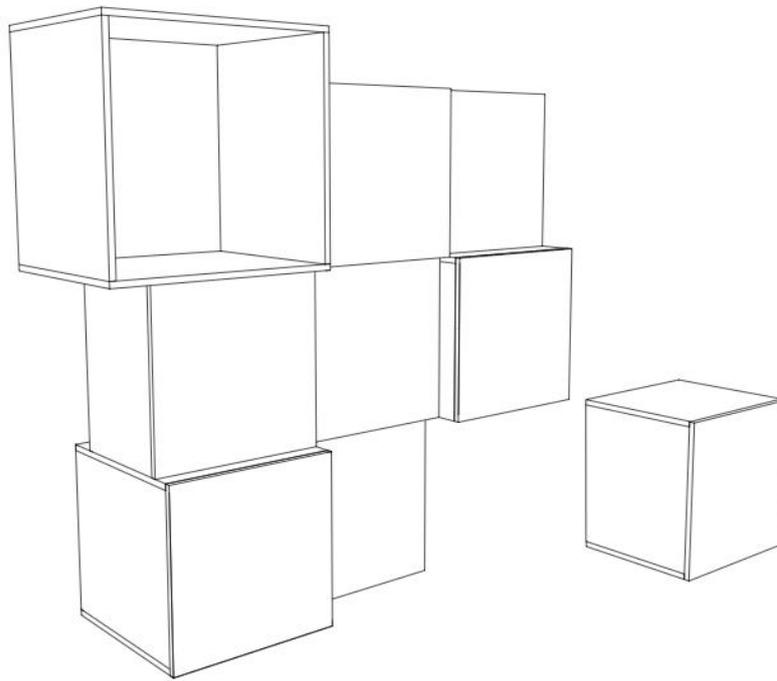


fig.6 Shelf and stool

8. Discussion

At first I tried to make something to connect outside and inside but I couldn't get into the kind of subject by my thought and research. What I made is still just objects. And it was difficult to decide and judge everything to design because there is no model space that those furniture is used and I had many compromise.

Also now I find out the meaning of "the things which we can feel the change by visual things and behavior" in another words.

I think it means we can get many kind of situations, that's why our feeling and behavior is also changing and we can enjoy and feel the season.

So the things which can make many kind of situations could be defined up "the quality of space".

The things which we can feel the change

by visual things and behavior = Getting many kind of situations

Getting many kind of situations = The quality of space

About the Hanger Chair, I think I could show the changing behavior according to season in correct way, but I think it is not enough to think how this chair can connect with the space. Maybe this chair doesn't make many kind of situations as I wrote down in above. Every furniture has some character as icon in the space but this chair's icon may be a kind of too strong. Maybe this chair is good as message for season but it is not good enough for space in wide view.

About the Shelf, I think this shelf match the key words, "the sign of presence of furniture", "the quality of space" and "getting many kind of situations" because I considered about the relationship with space more.

What I can say about those furniture is maybe I could work with material more. Especially about the Shelf, I didn't focus on material because the system is the most important. But I think the Hanger Chair can have many kind of variations on color and material, and in this case maybe it can be used in not only home but also restaurant or public space.

9. References to table, pictures and figures

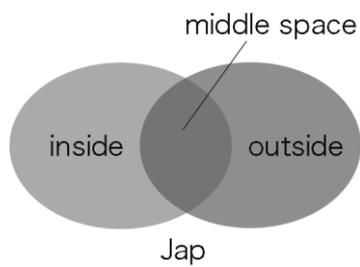


fig.1 House structure of Japan

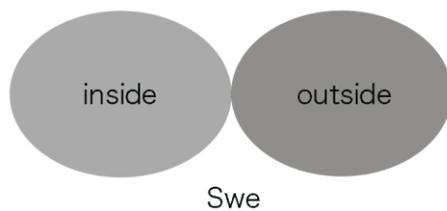


fig.2 House structure of Sweden



fig.3 KOTATSU

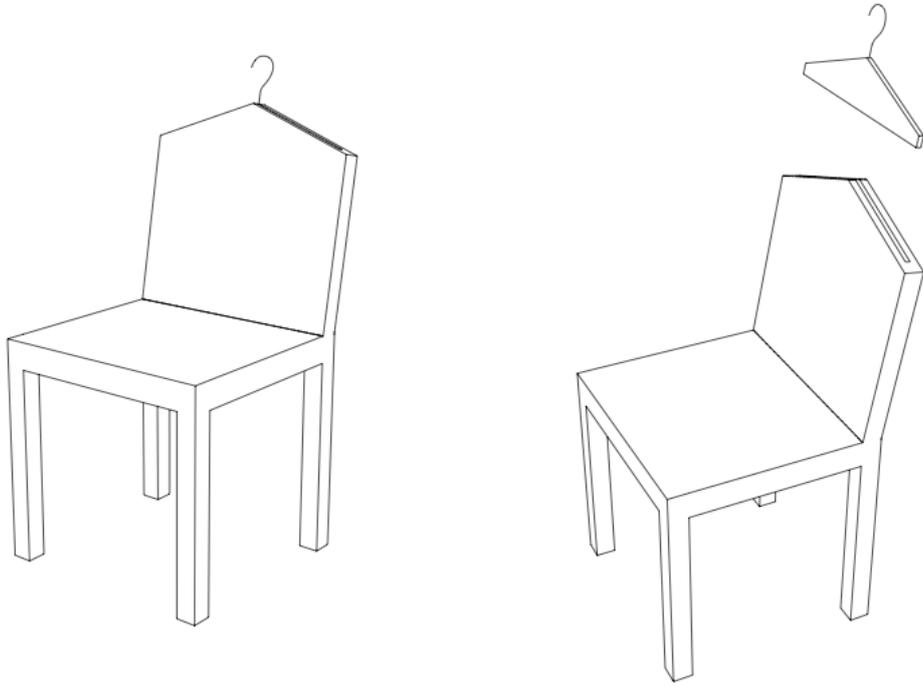


fig.4 Hanger Chair

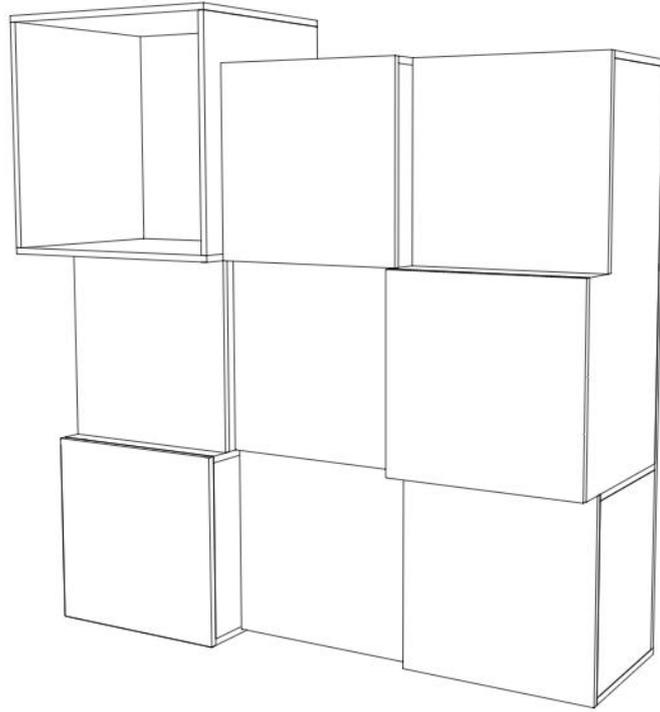


fig.5 Shelf

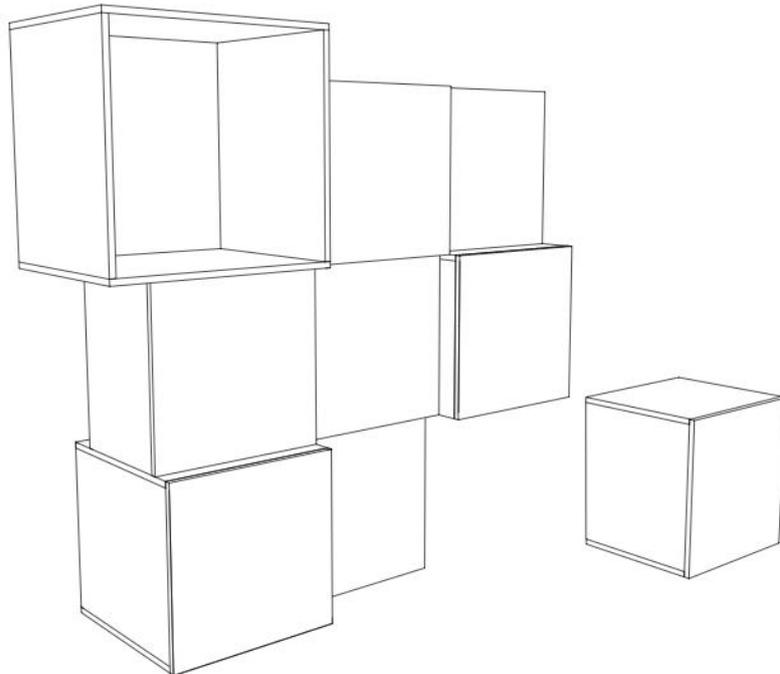


fig.6 Shelf and Stool

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