

Hey everyone,

Here is a small, but hopefully helpful conclusion of our Päivi Magga's meeting last Wednesday (3.3). We want to stress that she wanted it to be a discussion, not an interview and what we will here present as a conclusion for you is our interpretation of the discussion. Please do not cite this as her sayings, more like our take inspired by her. She wanted to especially stress that these likings are only hers and in some cases those who she knew. But cannot be extended over all Sámi. We all surely know to take that in count, but pointed here, just to make it sure for once more. :)

There were two topics we straight out avoided: talking politics (like how Sámi land should be in future) and western architecture, where she said she did not hold much of an opinion. Many things she also commented that she had never thought of, which was really interesting to realize: we have already deep-dived into this matter quite wholesomely, thinking stuff that might not even cross the Sámi people minds.

We chose our topic to be the thema two, type house combined with theme one, Siida transportable building with the intention that we could use the same structure. Thus the questions were mostly circulating around trying to understand what contemporary Sámi users would want from the house. And here is what we concluded from it all:

*"Is there something in Sámi homes, that doesn't usually appear in Finnish homes. Or vice versa?"*

*"Yes. The Sámi people."*

After the Finnish Lapland got burned as the war withdrew, there was no built legacy left in most of villages. Sámi live in type houses built for that extreme need for housing like Finnish families. Little con might be that all the villages look the same. No special features of different places are felt. The plots were pointed for previous generations, who later divided those with their offspring to live close with their family. Living close to relatives is liked, but privacy is also appreciated. Best plots have easy access to nature i.e with snowmobiles and are not next to a road with a lot of passing traffic.

The most interesting and important features of the house were the split between "dirty" and clean spaces and that everything in the house, as well as all square meters, serve a purpose. Also all items ought to have a purpose. If a fireplace does not contribute to warming the house, some might consider it useless. Items which hold memories are held dear, whereas items that you need to be careful to use might feel troublesome.

The most used entrance would be the back door, where you would enter through housekeep spaces to let off dirty clothes after being out working the whole day. The places to dry many layers of clothes is crucial especially in wet seasons. Also guests come often with dirty clothes as they are passing by. So pretty much all use the back door, not the clean front door. The clean spaces start from the kitchen including living and bedrooms. When you would get there you would have already dropped the working clothes to wash or dry. Rooms are multipurpose in a way that the kitchen table can serve for sewing and the living room for crafting. Having special rooms for all activities is not recognized as economically smart.

Not all items are kept inside. Only the ones that are needed during this specific season. Other items would be kept in the storage buildings outside, around the yard. Yard is important, living, playing, working, all kinds of action occur at the yard. However not all Sámi work outside all the time. Sámi are very specialized people who might like more sticking to what they mainly do. Thus duodji master Sámi might as well spend most of the time at their workshop inside. Reindeer herding Sámi mostly outside. And of course the contemporary professions where ever is suitable for their work - i.e distance working on the kitchen table.

The home is the base for all life. Even reindeer Sámi don't spend that long time away from the house in Finland. Maximum time we spoke during the conversations was a few days and extended to an extreme week or two. Neighbours can be asked to look after the house if needed. And in Finland all Sámi have at least one permanent house they live in. Belonging to the electricity, pipeline, waste disposal etc. network is also releasing Sámi to use their time from worrying about the house to focus on their work, i.e with reindeer. The transportable structure to follow the reindeer does not seem to be useful in Finland, where the herding areas are strictly marked and also all buildings there are already assigned. Also if not moved during winter, moving a structure like that could be hard if even impossible without snow. However in Norway it seems that some Sámi have container-like transportable units that can be dragged after a snowmobile when moving with the reindeer. These kinds of moves with reindeer seem not to be common anymore in Finland.

When discussing the differences between Finnish and Sámi use of buildings, overall the feeling was that there is not that much difference. There are Sámi fascinated by design having instagram homes as well as reindeer herding Sámi having more functionality based homes. But overall, there was no great dislike for these Finnish type houses and they seemed to be thought of as just houses and homes. Not necessarily reflecting anyone's cultural views. Interior on the other hand, with Sámi soft duodji might be the way to state who the house belongs to. We did discuss that when living somewhere one might come blind for what could actually be improved and there the courage of an architect, to try to vision the better, comes in.

We were sent off with words of acknowledgement that we already have considered the weights of our actions and accepted to know only a little - which is good. One cannot be always afraid and in this matter too, we should not be scared to make these designs. Afterall, we are having all these conversations, we are asking and researching and we are not accepting anything given or fully true without many confirmations. We also have new views to offer - from the point of view of architects and designers.

Group 1

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