



venue™

\$9.95 inc. gst



Greenhouse by Joost

Down in Federation Square, without doubt by now recognised as Melbourne's progressive cultural hub, a remarkable venue has emerged that challenges all our practices of consumption and production from the ground up, most significantly the waste generated by these practices. Corina Baldwin of bffb (bigger than ten bears), an event coordinator who has collaborated with Joost (flower man and designer) in the past, approached the well-known artist and 'waste wizard' to design an event venue that is also an embodied critique of a culture hell-bent on an unsustainable lifestyle.

The result is not only incredibly beautiful but awe-inspiring in the attention paid to the details of the life-cycle of each and every object utilised in the construction. While the term 'footprint' has become the catch cry for attempting to trace the origins of the products we consume, Greenhouse exposes some of the limitations of the term, in drawing attention to the future of those products and the inevitable waste they imply. This is achieved most dramatically perhaps in the fact that the venue was built in under two weeks and can be dismantled in an equally short period of time, with each and every element able to be recycled elsewhere.

Constructed from straw bales within a 100% recyclable steel frame and with a collection of furniture made from recycled products ranging from pallets to advertising posters to fire hydrants, Greenhouse operates as a bar/café during the day and private function space. The inspiration for the venue was partly Corina Baldwin's desire to 'push the events boundary'

but more importantly to mount a challenge to the event industry in terms of the waste it generates. And the companies that are booking Greenhouse for events are companies that are themselves addressing issues of sustainability. In spending their function money at Greenhouse they are assured that it is being spent in a good way and with a lasting impact. "It's not lavish, it's not over the top," says Corina. "But the message is quite big really; it's a message about sustainability. It's about building houses, about different ways of doing things. Our message is here." And here it is, from the abundant veggie garden on the rooftop from which much of the produce is used in the delicious café fare, to the grey water toilets, even to the fact that the waiters and bar staff are from Holmesglen TAFE, giving the future hospitality industry a thorough induction into the possibility of doing things another way.

Greenhouse appeared in November and will probably disappear at the end of January, though there is the possibility of an extension. The goodwill from all parties that attended its conception and construction, particularly from the City of Melbourne, is evidence of its significance. Its message doesn't end with its deconstruction, Greenhouse raises all sorts of possibilities for sustainable and low-cost housing, and indeed for more sustainable venues. As Corina says, "It's a testament to having a vision and not giving up."
— *Sophie Gebhardt*.

» **Greenhouse:** Federation Square, Melbourne VIC
(03) 9429 9277 or www.greenhousebyjoost.com

