

## The mighty stainless steel artwork sculptures of Mr Somsak Kongnapakdee

### History of the project

Mr Somsak was selected to develop the artwork which includes Kotchasarn, Hongsa, Kinnaree, Kinnara, Hemaraj, Nang-Yai, and Hun lakhon lek puppets, etc. All of these are decorative artwork sculptures under the main design concept of preserving Thai culture and extending it to the international level. They are installed at passenger terminal SAT-1 of Suvarnabhumi Airport, Bangkok, Thailand. The sculptures' principal material is 304 stainless steel, with thicknesses ranging from 1.5 to 15 mm. The Kotchasarn is the project's juggernaut, weighing more than ten tons.

He and his team are honoured to have the opportunity to work on this project because the work they have done with dedication has become well-known and has brought prestige to Thailand by

winning the Prix Versailles 2024 award for the most beautiful airport in the world in 2024 by UNESCO. It allows everyone to see the value and importance of contemporary art that still preserves the beautiful identity, beliefs, and traditions of Thailand.

The Kotchasarn elephant sculpture is one of the most talked about and admired works because it takes the traditional Thai elephant form and creates a new perspective with contemporary art. A father and a toddler elephant symbolize a welcome to tourists visiting Thailand. With their cheerful and kind demeanor, they make viewers feel loved and warm, like family.

The elephant sculpture is distinctive and imbued with ancient beliefs. By presenting the elephant from Himmaman, a magical

**Category:** Art, Culture and History

**Location:** Passenger terminal (SAT-1) at Suvarnabhumi Airport, Bangkok Thailand

**Environment:** urban

**Use:** stainless steel sculptures

**Material:** 304

**Material thickness:** 1.2 - 15 mm

**Material quantity:** > 20 tons

**Artist:** Somsak Kongnapakdee

**Fabricator:** Vision in form company

**Photographs:** Somsak Kongnapakdee

**More information:** [vifsculpture.com](http://vifsculpture.com) or [Visioninform@yahoo.com](mailto:Visioninform@yahoo.com)



and in the Thai epic Traiphum Phra Ruang, in a new way, the elephant sculpture has become a landmark that everyone perceives as magnificent and beautiful, and it represents the development of art and culture that is beneficial to the mind. It conveys a positive message to the airport area. It also shows the use of industrial materials such as stainless steel to reflect the modern era very well, with the craftsmanship techniques of handicrafts that perfectly reflect the identity of the Thai way of life.

### Competing or alternative material(s)

Aluminium



Kotchasarn Artwork sculpture  
Picture © Somsak Kongnapakdee



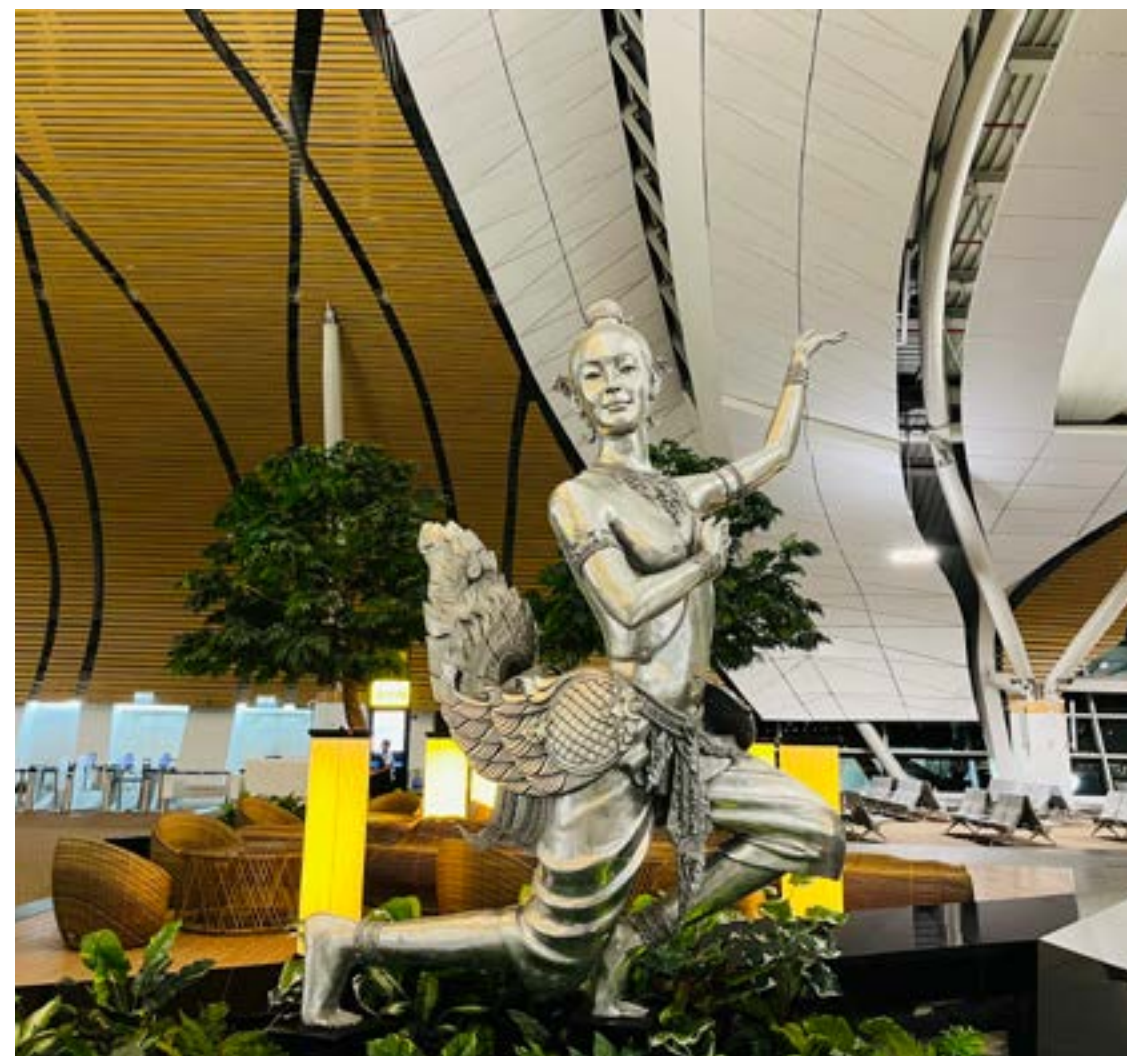
Hemaraj Artwork sculpture  
Picture © Somsak Kongnapakdee

### Why was stainless steel chosen?

Stainless steel was chosen for its easy maintenance, resistance to rust, and versatility in shaping. Its lightweight nature and availability in various forms, such as tubes, sheets, and meshes, with a variety of finishes like hairline or mirror, enable speedy fabrication and sophisticated patterns. These benefits provide artists with more creative flexibility, allowing them to constantly innovate and create distinctive pieces. Furthermore, stainless steel's modern appeal complements the design of Suvarnabhumi Airport.

## How did stainless steel contribute to the sustainability of the structure?

The sculptures' interior construction is built of extraordinarily thick stainless steel to safely support their weight. Rust resistance contributes to the structures' long-term durability.



Kinnaree Artwork sculpture  
Picture © Somsak Kongnapakdee



Kotchasarn Artwork sculpture  
Picture © Somsak Kongnapakdee



Kinnara Artwork sculpture  
Picture © Somsak Kongnapakdee