

BOOMING

Effervescence in the heart of the Silicon Valley

The Silicon Valley is already an icon for innovation and technology in the contemporary world. San José is a very plural city, where many cultures come together in the pursuit of this purpose. An original idea can often lead to innovation. Ideas multiply. Ideas merge into each other. Ideas grow when the soil is fertile. The project begins symbolically with the multiplication of ideas: from the union of hundreds spheres of light ("bubbles"), composed in an amorphous way, the complete design takes shape. The design proposes a journey through this path: from the ground where ideas blossom, through the union of many of them (and the power of the collective), culminating in the explosion that leads to the transformation of the universe.



CHOOSSEN SITE

The area chosen for the implementation of the project (west side area) is an important connection point between the powerful urban equipment in the region (next to the SAP Arena, the new future multimodal station and future Google Campus). On this side of the rivers confluence it is a wider and more comfortable area for the insertion of the iconic landmark. More so, the east area is very near the freeway that influences negatively the background of the project (in addition to the noise issues).



SYMBOLISMS



AN IDEA IS BORN

The capacity to create and understand the meaning of ideas is considered to be an essential and defining feature of human beings - that is what makes us grow together as a civilization. A new or original idea can often lead to innovation. And that is the goal of this design: to show the power of great ideas combined.

EFFERVESCENCE

In a popular sense, an idea arises in a reflexive, spontaneous manner, even without thinking or serious reflection, for example, when we talk about the idea of a person or a place. Ideas multiply. And no better place for that than on the heart of innovation - The Silicon Valley.

PLURALITY

San José has a population of 40% of residents who were born outside the United States. This is very significant and speaks volumes about the region's cultural plurality. A rich universe where ideas and people have their own space and their own shine.

BUBBLES! BUBBLES!

The project begins symbolically with the multiplication of ideas: from the union of hundreds spheres of light ("bubbles") the complete design takes shape.

* The archetypal symbol of a bubble exists in the psyche beyond time and space. It constitutes an invisible reality imaged by mystics throughout the ages, a round nothingness that is paradoxically the primordial source of all. The unseen forces within the archetypal bubble symbolize the oneness, which can be likened to the Tao as described in the Tao The Ching (ch. 25):

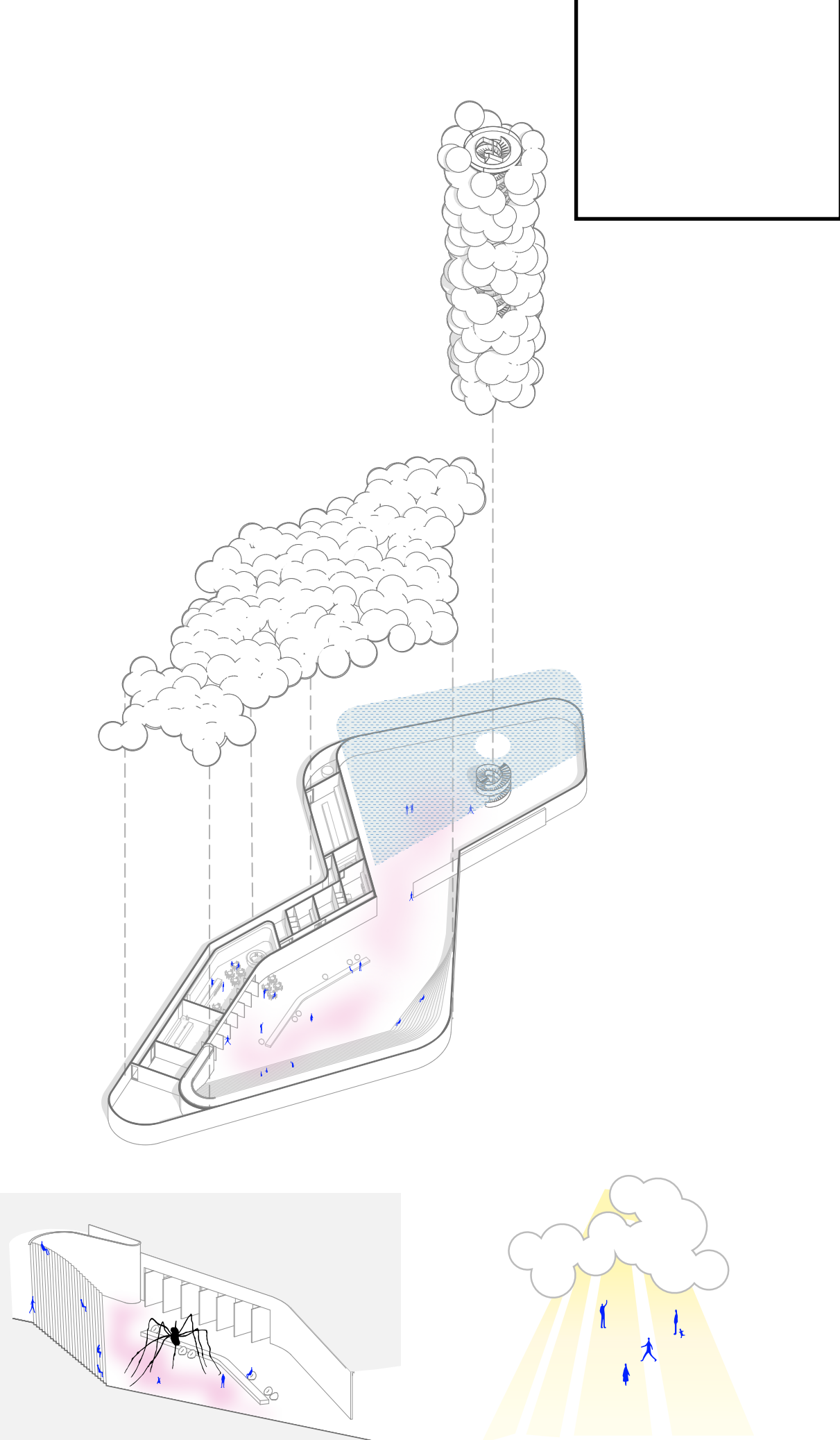
"There is something formless yet complete
That existed before heaven and earth.
How still! How empty!
Dependent on nothing, unchanging,
All pervading, Unfailing.
One may think of it as the
mother of all things under heaven.
I do not know its name,
But I call it 'Meaning'.
If I had to give it a name,
I should call it 'The Great'.

Cirlot, J.E. "The Book of Symbols. Reflections on Archetypal Images". 2019.

EXPLOSION!

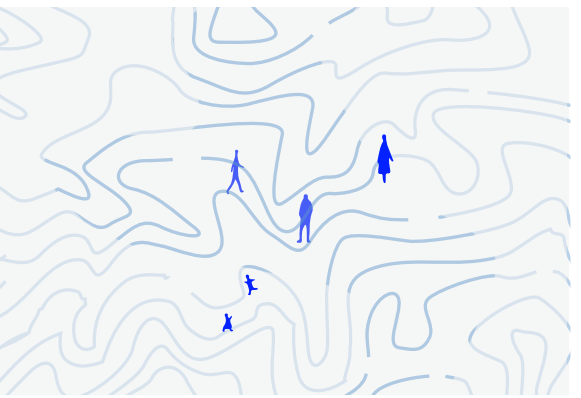
Kundalini is a physical energy, of a neurological nature and sexual manifestation. It means serpentine, one that has the strength of a snake. The snake represents the kundalini force at the base of the spine. When the snake is activated through meditation and specific energy exercises, it rises through the seven chakras, bringing intense awareness, enlightenment, powers, psychic abilities, and omniscience. It is so powerful that in Hinduism they consider her as a goddess, the Divine Mother, the Universal Shakti. In this design the Interlaced Staircase play an important role on this symbolism: ascending from the bottom to the top of the tower (the transcendent point of the journey).

DESIGN CONCEPT



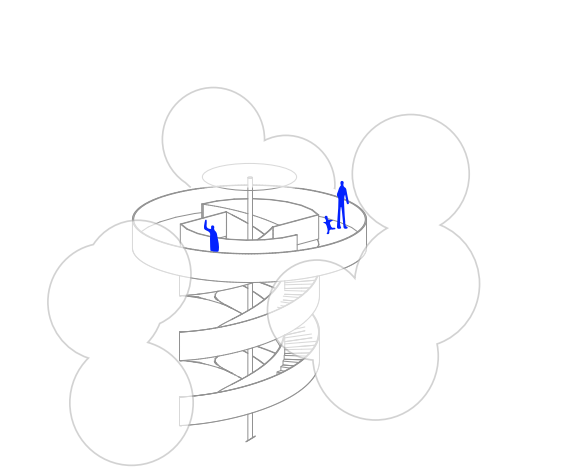
The Squares

The project proposes the creation of two underground squares - The Cloud Square and The Water Square - inviting the visitor to immerse themselves in a unique experience. The proposal here is really to promote an journey, almost like entering a universe of dream and fantasy. A grand staircase gives access to the space and eventually, convert itself into a grandstand to host shows and events.



Fluidity through the water

Covering the Water Square there is a water mirror. From underneath it creates a distinctive light effect, like the bubbles shell. This two items combined together create a mood preparation for the climax of the journey. The water serves as a visual filter for the outside world. On the park level, the water reflects the sky and the tower, creating a very dream like atmosphere.

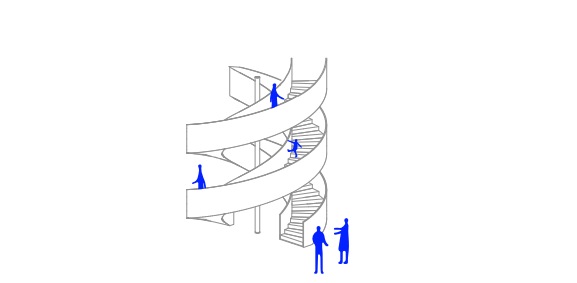


Tower of ideas

Surrounding the staircases, a tower composed of spheres of light rises towards the sky. On the way, through the gaps, the visitor can see the landscape of the city of San José in the distance. Reaching the top, a viewpoint allows for a 360 degree view.

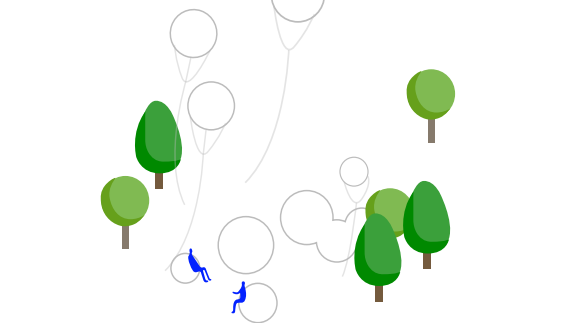
The cloud of light

The structure that covers the Cloud Square is composed of a set of translucent spheres ("bubbles") of light that are composed in an amorphous way, creating a cloud effect. The sunlight will play a very important role in this space - filtered through this 'veil', the light effect will be very different over the length of the day. At night, the spheres will be illuminated with LED RGB lamps, changing the atmosphere and color as needed.



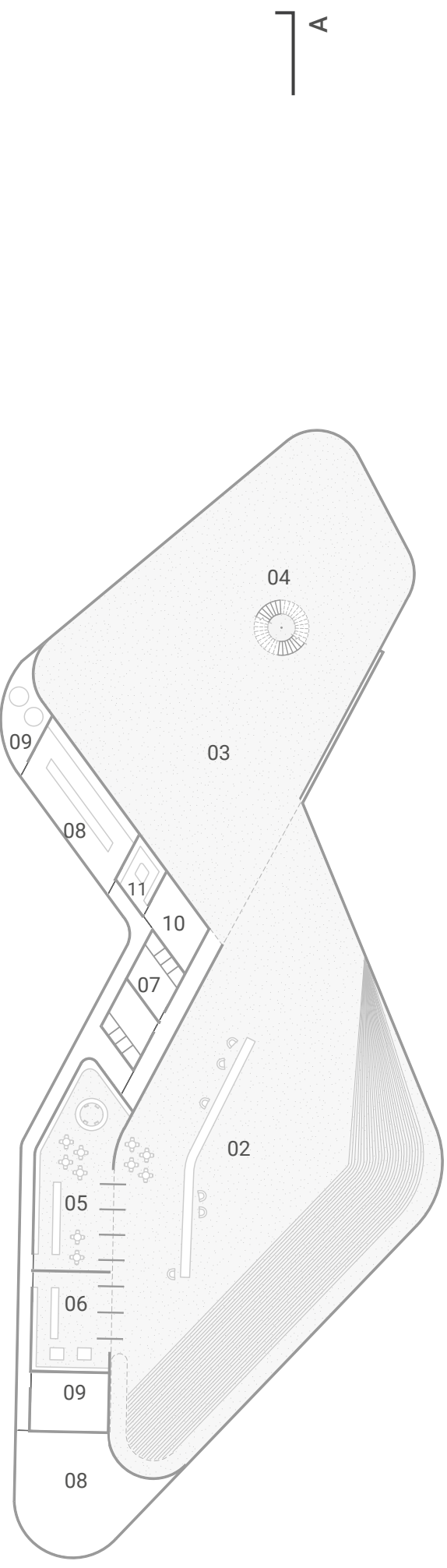
Energy rising

The Interlaced Staircase is an extremely important element in the project. They create the user's path from the base of the underground square to the top of the viewpoint. As the energy that goes all the way up, the user is guided to go through this ascent surrounded by the atmosphere of the spheres of light, absorbing and letting himself be carried away by the experience. In two different sections, the stairs never touch each other: one goes up and the other goes down.



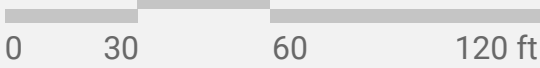
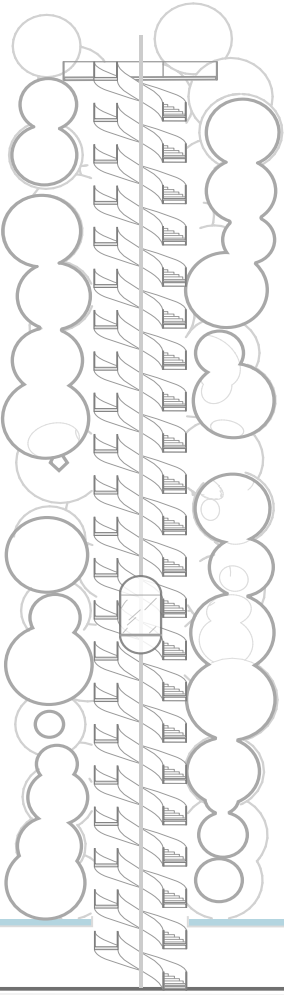
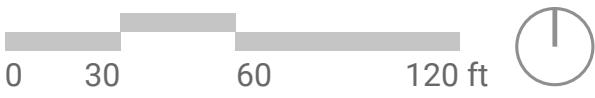
The land of ideas

The long term plan is that the concept of these 'spheres of ideas' exists symbolically throughout the entire park. Ideas multiply: they become cafes, comfortable sofas for sunbathing and maybe even keychains as souvenirs in the store in the landmark. The possibilities are endless and as big as your dreams.



FLOOR PLANS

- 01. SQUARE COFFEE
- 02. CLOUD SQUARE
- 03. WATER SQUARE
- 04. INTERLACED STAIRCASE
- 05. COFFE / TOURIST CENTER
- 06. SOUVENIR STORE
- 07. RESTROOMS
- 08. WAREHOUSE
- 09. TECHNICAL AREA
- 10. TICKET OFFICE
- 11. CLOAKROOM



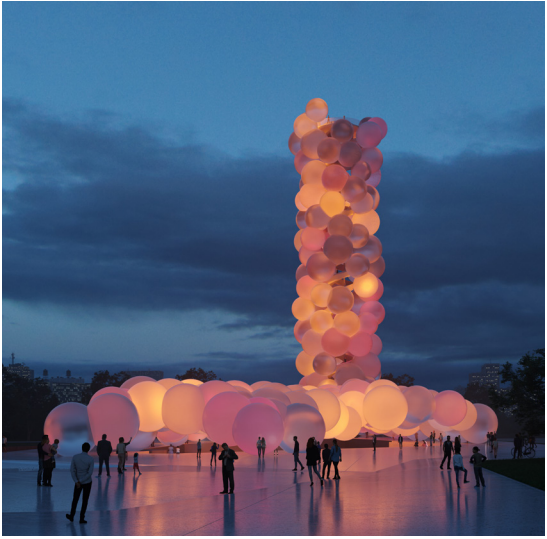
AA SECTION

MATERIALS

The main concept of the project was to really bring a feeling of extreme lightness. Although it may look ambitious, the structure is relatively simple: The 'cloud' and the tower are composed of 260 translucent spheres made of ETFE (ethylene tetrafluoroethylene) - ETFE has a relatively high melting temperature, excellent chemical, electrical and high-energy radiation resistance properties. Since San Jose has 300 days of sun, this will work mainly as a shading element. The Cloud Square is covered with a monolithic material - Terrazzo or similar (floors and walls). The idea is to have a cohesive feeling to the space. The same floor is used on The Water Square, but the walls have a metallic (stainless steel) covering. The choices of materials were based on a modern concept and feeling, but the main point was durability, avoiding choosing technologies that are quickly obsolete or require frequent maintenance.

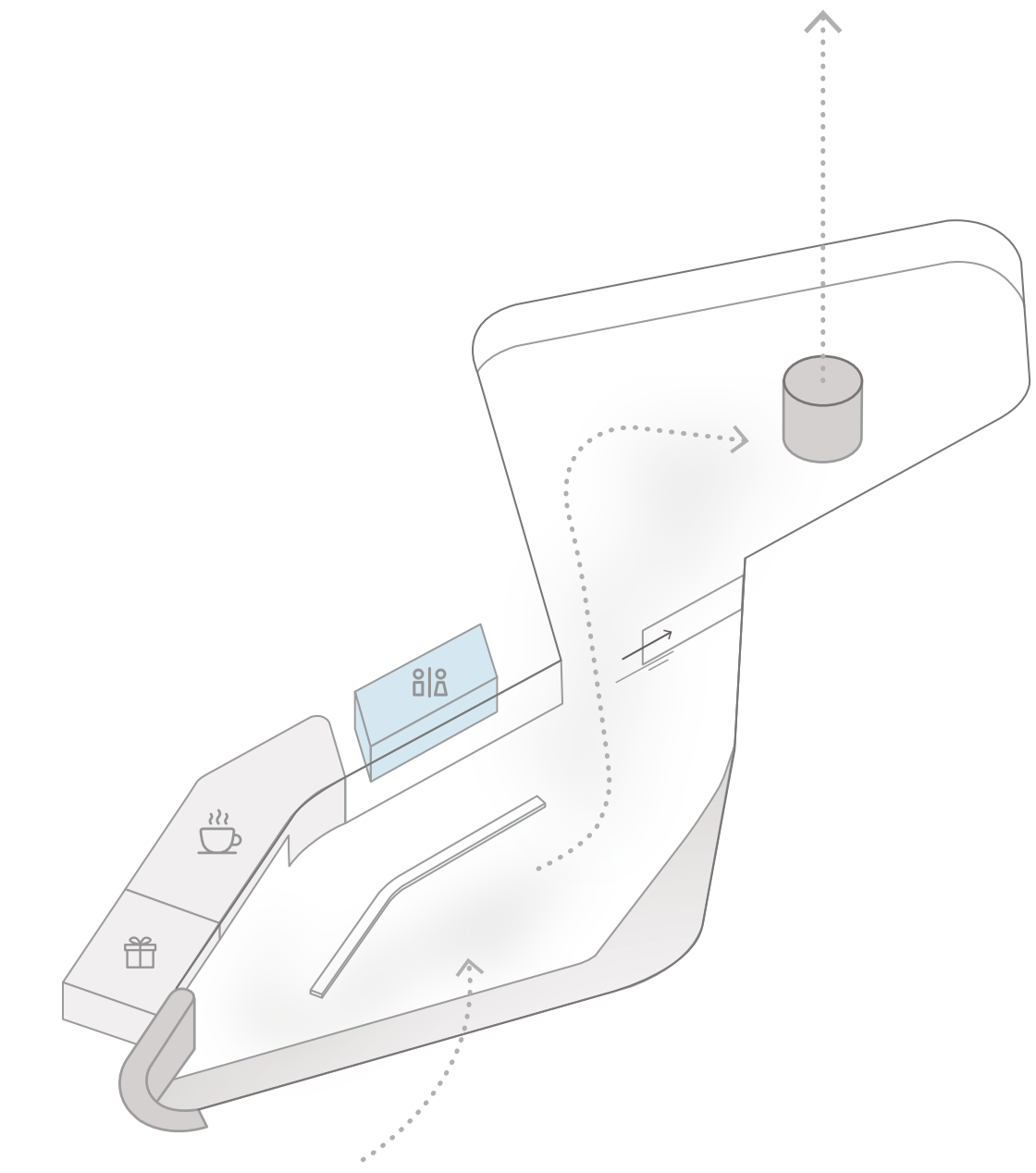
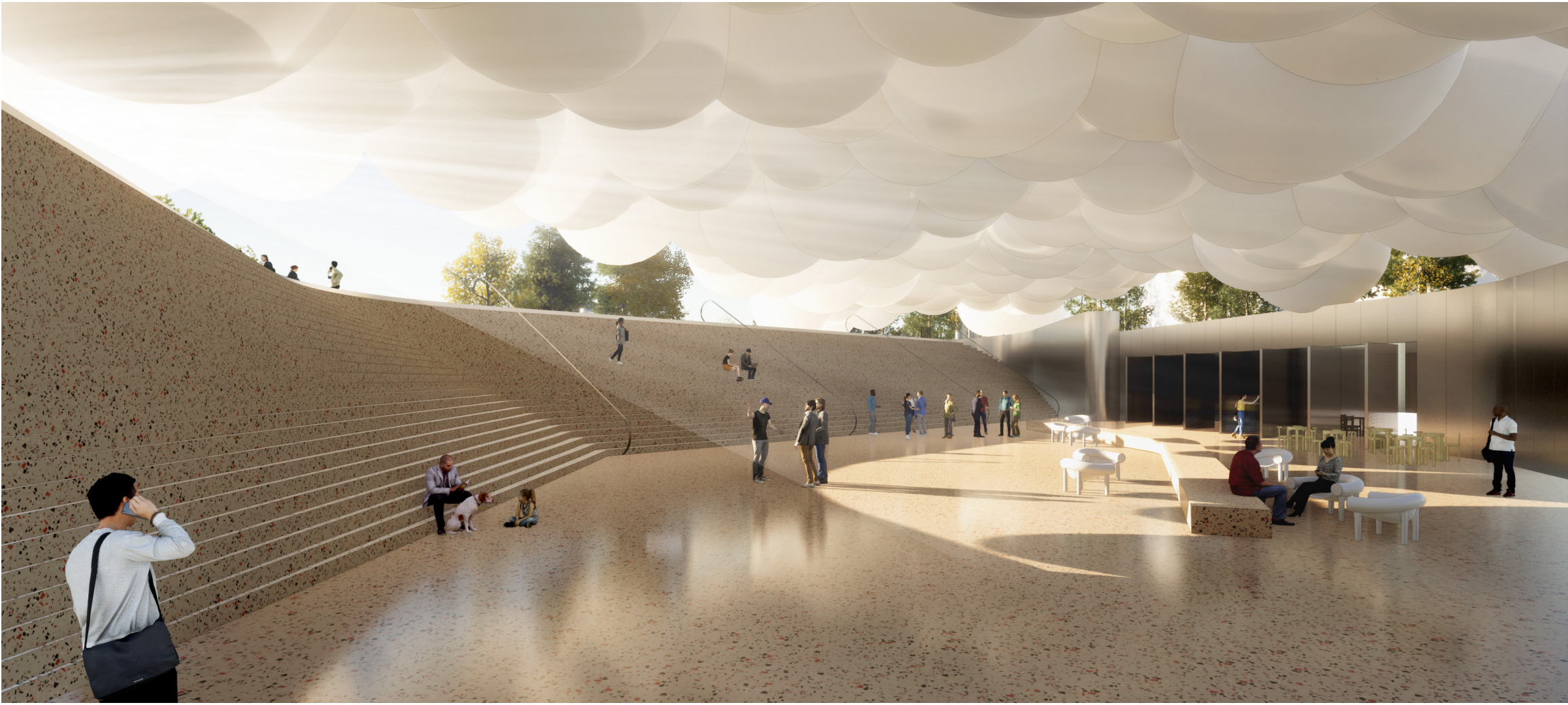
LIGHT EFFECT

During the day, artificial lighting will be minimized as much as possible, allowing the effect to be made by solar lighting through the spheres. The translucent spheres will be illuminated with LED RGB lamps for controlling and programming the use of color at night. The idea is for the building's atmosphere to change as needed: in special days the building can take on any color necessary to celebrate or bring awareness.



ECOSYSTEM AND NET ZERO

The building will be an icon for the region, but above all, it shall have the least possible impact on the surrounding ecosystem based on net-zero energy design principles. The choice of placement of the building aimed to reduce the risks for damaging the preservation area and rivers. A few examples of strategies that will be developed on the evolution of the project: the lighting system will be entirely controlled by time-clock controls (using pulsating light) and without the use of strobe light; there will be a maximization of natural lighting; a power generation system should be developed to work together with the shell structure; passive cooling will be achieved by maximization of natural ventilation in suitable periods by cross ventilation throughout the building; the underground squares have more thermal stability due to the lower temperature of the soil and this feature will be further explored; the water collected on the roof (shell) of the building will be stored in underground tanks and will be used on the restrooms.



THE JOURNEY

The visitor enters the building from the park level, going down to grand staircase/ grandstand. On the underground level, the project is organized into two main areas: The Cloud Square and The Water Square. In The Cloud Square, access is opened to all visitors of the park.

There is a café that contains a tourist information center and a souvenir store that opens to the Square. Between the two squares is a ticket office that works with the administration of the complex - there is also a cloakroom, restrooms and support and technical areas.

On The Water Square (which has controlled access), the space is contemplative. There is the entrance to The Interlaced Staircase, which conducts the visitor to the viewpoint at the top of the tower (the climax of the journey).

FLEXIBILITY

The Cloud Square is prepared for different uses. On a regular day, it serves as a lounge area. But due to its size, it is also prepared to receive seasonal events: art exhibitions, fairs or other types of events. Its staircases become a grandstand and the area can be prepared to receive shows and lectures.

