

Rain Water Catcher

The "Rain Water Catcher," a competition design proposal for an iconic tower in San Jose for the San Jose Light Tower Corporation, aims to address the global impact of climate change by advocating the role of water conservation towards the reduction of carbon footprint guided by net-zero design principles. "Water" equals "Life," and the "Rain Water Catcher" aims to celebrate the role and importance of water in our lives.

Designed as a receptor to "catch" and transport water into a safe, shallow rainwater harvesting pool connected to a larger tank, the proposal for the tower celebrates the sensory experience of water through its iconic form. The "Rain Water Catcher" shares a sacred relationship with the site; in particular, the Guadalupe River, its historical context, and role with respect to water conservation and climate change.

The idea of "place-making" is central to the tower design and is generated both as an "inside-out" construct. The central atrium, 200 feet high within the tower's interior, creates a sizeable informal assembly aimed at hosting events and fostering interactions aimed at addressing issues such as water conservation and climate change. This central void aims to serve as an experiential installation space to evoke the human senses of touch, sight, sound, and smell—a space for learning, discovery, reflection, and dialogue.

The tower can be scaled up to safe heights by accessing its "stepped" formation for a unique engagement with the tower and its surrounding landscape. The "stepped" configuration varies from 0'4" to 2'6" prohibiting visitors from scaling up the tower. The stepped cells beyond permissible safe limits are defined as water reservoir cells that store and distribute water to the water harvesting pools. These pools form a definitive feature of the landscape.

The "Rain Water Catcher" true to its concept is derived through fluid, flowing lines and geometries that create an interlaced pattern defining the tower as an extension of the landscape. The tower engages with the existing site context and also responds to the same through the creation of spaces for interaction. It is also critical to retain / transplant trees existing on-site without damaging the site's ecological balance.

The "Rain Water Catcher" aims to address the multiple narratives of the "role and importance of water," "place-making," "interaction," "modern technologies" at the intersection of art, architecture, and sustainable engineering to create an icon for the future.