

## Bamboo Beta

Can we weave our society back together? Can we bridge divides and spiral together in an intertwining dance? Can we discern a free form of free agreement? That is the test performed by Bamboo Beta, a cloud of sustainably harvested large grass elements swarming over the Guadalupe River to create a moment of delicate sense. A bridge between two parts of San Jose and a gateway that marks the entrance to the downtown area, this carefully calibrated structure gains immense strength out of many elements. It is a clear form that does not impose itself on its environment.

Created by lashing together bamboo that has been treated with the latest technology so that no single piece will have to be replaced for at least twenty years, Bamboo Beta is a testament to the continuity and rediscovery of ancient craft combined with the latest technology. Building on recent advancements in bamboo technology that range from methods of internally strengthening members, to stronger forms of attachment, to biodegradable, but durable coating materials, and combining traditional construction techniques with computer-aided design engineering that uses the latest in stress modeling, this structure both evokes and can withstand the ages.

Bamboo Beta starts out on either side of the Guadalupe River as a grove, some of whose pieces will be planted in place. It then develops a rhythm of open and closed elements and bundled sheathes that come together to support a ramp made of the same material. As this walkway rises up out of the grove, its gentle slope invites visitors to explore the intricate patterns and rhythms of the structure, all the while curving up and around, reaching ever higher, until you will find yourself suspended over the water to view both downtown and the surrounding hills and Bay.

From this vantage point, the ramp descends back down to the other side, though the particularities of each side make the trip a different one. Along the way, visitors can enjoy places of respite and contemplation where they can shelter both from the sun and the urban scene around them.

Bamboo Beta is large and complex enough to take its place in the history of triumphal arches, urban monuments, and iconic structures, but so delicate and complex that it will always remain an open-ended and delicate urban marker that reminds us not only of human, but also natural ingenuity and beauty.