

The history of humanity is but a speck of dust compared to the lifespan of Earth. Even before we set foot on this planet, the forces of nature were pulling and pushing, creating the mountains, the rivers, and the valleys. It is at the convergence of these silent but powerful forces that the site lies, isolated from the high-tech delirium of the surrounding urban fabric. The relentless and uniform blanket of concrete and glass conglomerations obscuring the dynamism that lies underneath.

*The Scape* seeks to refine the outdated “tower in the park” urban typology. Instead of creating a monument detached from the context, the park and the tower are integrated into one cohesive landscape. The site is dissected into glulam strips that follow the flowlines of the confluence and the surrounding urban fabric. The strips are then warped and lifted by longitudinal forces to generate a landscape within the city, a manifestation and homage of the forces of nature. The topography underneath this new canopy is transformed into an enclosed urban oasis for the people of San Jose, the oculus of the entrance facing the river.

The curvatures of the glulam beams outline a distinct urban figure while maintaining structural integrity. As the slope approaches the apex, the increase in slope exposes slits in the structure that allow natural light and air to circulate throughout the structure. The subdued slope of the lower areas grant access to visitors and this observation deck provides a panoramic view of the confluence and the San Jose skyline, at a wide spectrum of vantage points.

*The Scape* is a mass timber structure composed of recycled wood particles that are laminated and prefabricated into modules off-site and assembled on site. This greatly reduces the construction period and minimizes the impact on the natural environment and the carbon footprint of the structure. The glulam beams are bound together with tensile cables and a substructure inspired by the form of intertwining trees, the ‘branches’ adding lateral bracing and additional support to the main structure, transferring the load to the ground via four ‘tree trunks.’

The wooden beams weather with the flow of time; natural patina desaturating the tan of the wood into an ash grey. The grass and ivy continue their slow ascent up the slope, blurring the boundary between nature and man. Instead of resisting the erosion of time, *the Scape* embraces it, maturing and enduring.