

San Jose KeyLight Tower

Vision

Our combined vision to erect a landmark in the heart of San Jose yielded two celebratory experiences through architecture and narrative: a landscaped ground plane, maze of rooms that approach an iconic tower with an inherently unique structural system, and the storytelling opportunities that arise with each experience of the exterior rooms and viewing platforms.

Entry Maze

The base of the 240' tower is submerged below the ground plane, creating an entry sequence that allows for a slow path through a maze of sixteen exterior rooms that descend 360 degrees around the tower and in 30" increments of descent (shortcuts exist via a glass elevator, two egress stairs and an alternate butterfly stair midway along the path). Onlookers may stroll through the rooms using the series of ramps or stairways that snake between the lush planters.

Program and Circulation

The tower is currently programmed habitable as a playful double helix of circulation (alternating tread stairways), viewing platforms and landings, but it's maze of offerings does not require one to necessarily enter it physically. The form alone invites an imaginary path both visually and meditatively along the cascading puzzle of exterior rooms. (If left unoccupied, we kindly will offer a revolutionary structural system and construction process that uses a unique construction material for the next round which includes our net-zero strategy).

KeyLight Tower Structural Components

Two intertwining trusses rise and rotate to create a unique signature landmark; their strength solely dependent upon sixteen cantilevered "KeyStone" structures that maintain balance between the compression from the legs of the tower and the tension belts at the top of every module – much like a keystone in a Roman arch. Each of these KeyStone structures is suspended and nested within a shear plane of tension belts; resulting in perfectly cantilevered viewing platforms to absorb views of the city and structure.

Materials and Lighting

By day, the tower is a transparent ghost of perforated metal and white powder-coated, tube steel that is animated only by the movement of the people inside it, moving from viewing platforms via stairways. In the evening, the tower is awash in a soft glow of various lighting strategies, all internally lit. There is

minimal light leakage due to the double sandwich of perforated metal – the materials of the tower are being lit from within, so all lighting is indirect and self-contained, thus reducing any general skyglow.