***The Stack* – Project Statement**

When tasked with designing an icon for Silicon Valley, we came to understand that there is not an architectural object more emblematic of the place than a single-family residential garage. It is no secret that an unassuming detached garage in Paolo Alto is colloquially known as the birthplace of Silicon Valley. This led us to question, "can a garage be a monument?"

In considering the qualities of a garage, the operable door is the defining feature. With this aperture, garages act as interfaces between the home and the community, we knew our monument would need to become an interface between Silicon Valley and the world. In a quest for monumentality, a tower was the obvious solution. We stacked garage upon garage up to the 200'-0" height limitation, realizing thereafter that the height of an icon shouldn't be defined by an arbitrary flight datum, rather we looked to the valley's namesake, Silicon (Si).

In the Japan, the five stories of a Pagoda represent each of the five elements: earth, water, fire, wind, and void. We found this historic precedent to be helpful when considering the valley's critical element. Silicon's atomic number on the periodic table is 14, which means that there are 14 protons found in the nucleus of every Silicon atom. And so, our tower was developed into a 14-story stack with 14'-0" from floor to floor, resulting in a 196'-0" high landmark.

Through this process of designing an art object, we continued to look for and build relationships to make the structure even more contextual. In the tech industry, the "stack" is a foundational principal in computing with various meanings. It is an abstract data architecture made up of homogenous elements, based on the principal of last in, first out, as related to memory. There is also the concept of the "call stack" which shares information about subroutines of a computer program. Further, we are only scratching the surface of the stack's meaning in tech. Looking at these additional concepts, we knew that the form needed to remain abstract and simple.

The beauty of abstraction is that folks of all identities can look to *The Stack* and build personal stories with it. A pilot can look to The Stack and find that its rounded corners, doors, and entryway are all subtle nods to aviation. A space enthusiast can look to the glass photovoltaic cladding with gold inside and find a strong connection to the International Space Station. A historical buff can look to the same gold interior and find it to be a reference to the California Gold Rush in the Nineteenth Century. By the same token, an avid hiker can look to the tower as a stack of river rocks that will help them find their way home. And finally, a Chicano resident can look to the planted aeroponic core as a call back to the community's agricultural beginnings.