

The Drape

From Farm to Table to Preservation

The 21st Century monumentality is one which should go beyond a monumental structure such as the Eiffel Tower, but also perform in a monumental way that can provide its citizens with the power of civic transformation. In this way, we decided to honor the very foundations of the city of San Jose with its agrarian settlements that very much defined the valley. As such, our proposal intends to create a monumental greenhouse, inside which citizens can come and grow crop species native to San José. Inside each of the three defined stacked volumes, we suspend three different programmatic components.

Inside the first block, we place suspended a farm to table restaurant in which the herbs and crops that grow inside the green house can be savored and prepared by the great many chefs of the valley. In the second block, is a space to access and learn from the agrarian history of the valley, as well as a small culinary school. In the last block, an interactive conservation lab and archive to collect the seeds of the area and its surroundings. All gardens are able to be accessed by the community, and the ground plane functioning as a weekly farmers market for all of San José to enjoy.

The skin is encompassed of a translucent curtain which is made out of a textured polyurethane skin which allows a vast amount of light to come in but in diffuse ways. In the evening, this translucent quality enables a highly dramatic iconic presence, like a glowing Christo piece.

In both growing and providing crops, as well as being composed of highly recyclable materials (polyurethane and steel), this structure aims net-zero energy efficiency, through its collection of solar heat gain, use of geothermal heating, use of the nearby river for irrigation of crops, and offset of carbon footprint in its production of vegetation.

This pyramid greenhouse is a celebration of the vibrant progress and foundations of the valley. It intends to both absorb but also disseminate the vitality of San José. On the one hand, a monument which grows out of a concern for place-making and harmony with nature. On the other hand, a monument that symbolizes a breathless and radical sense of possibility powered by edge technology and innovation. It has the ambition of being at the heart of its community, and act as the face to its international visitors.