2022 JON McKEE PRIZE

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LYCEUM

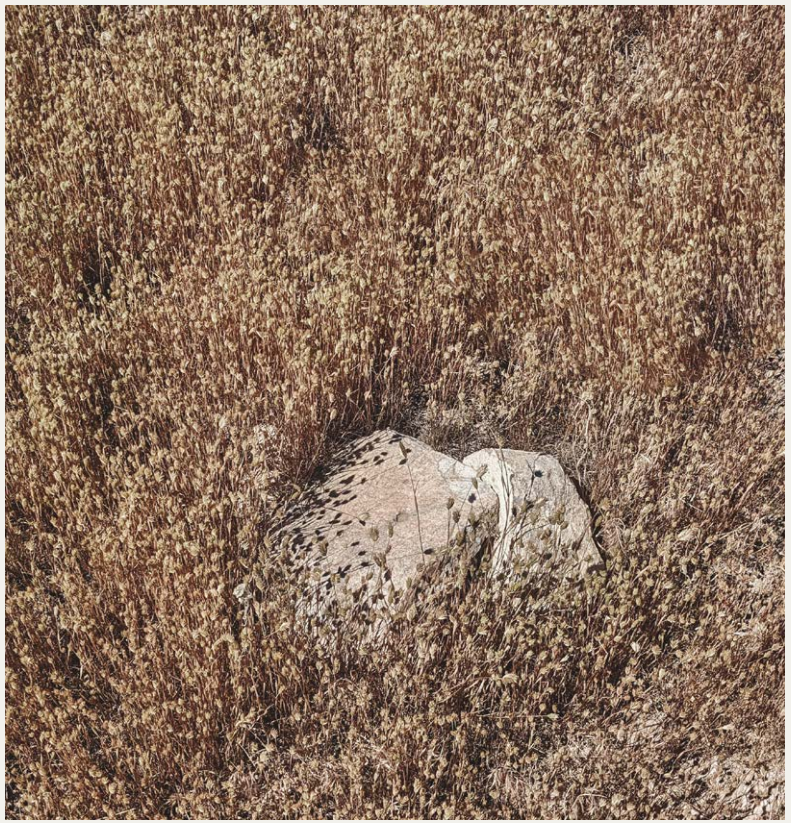
A traveling fellowship in Architecture

TEMPORAL THRESHOLDS

A Somasthetic Journey
into Deep Time

LF-9858

JOURNEY INTO DEEP-TIME



Geological formations shrouded by natural unencumbered flora; silent and frozen in time
Pleistocene site in Utah (*Photo by Author*)

Friesenhahn Cave Preserve, one of the most important Pleistocene treasure troves in the United States, allows us to journey back into the deep time by almost 20,000 years. Being a site of both unexpected and quintessential qualities, the act of extracting and surfacing information (a 'glimpse' into the past) proved fascinating - revealing the stories of a hidden world intricately sculpted by the natural elements over time. With a plethora of opportunities, the question evolved into how the 'spirit of the place' could be captured and brought to the foreground for the visitors to learn and experience.

Informed by the site and an understanding of haptic and somasthetic perception, the departing point of this proposal was the intention to be a silent extension in the landscape, embodying the natural, and allowing accidents of material beauty. A series of choreographed moments emerged on the site that corresponds to the three 'temporal thresholds' - Present, Past, and Deep Time. As one moves from the Present (outer) to the Deep-Time (inner), time slows down and eventually freezes, which simultaneously influences the experiential journey and the concretization of the spaces. The result is a deep-time journey of a multi-sensorial nature that emphasizes the site's scientific, atmospheric, and tactile qualities.

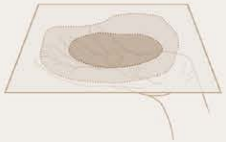
The proposed intervention concretized as a site-specific typology that holds a conversation with the orography and grows over time through formation of new embodied spaces of haptic experiences - mediating between urbanization and a place frozen in time through a variable temporal threshold.

TOPOLOGICAL SURVEY

The atmospheric essence of the site derives from an understanding of what concretized today's Friesenhahn Caves. The continual erosion by the Edwards aquifer sculpting curated strokes of Karst formations beneath, and the robust strands of Ashe Junipers on the surface which serve to maintain the integrity of the 20,000+ year old topography are key contextual elements that freeze the site in time, therefore worth preserving.

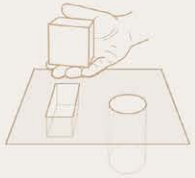
- Discovered Caves
- Potential Karst formations
- Natural Drainage Patterns

METHODOLOGY



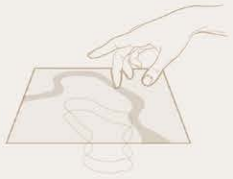
1 | THRESHOLD

The site is divided into three concentric 'temporal zones' - Present, Past and Deep Time. As one moves from the outer to inner zone, time slows and eventually freezes.



2 | PROGRAM

Each zone holds a program that fosters different experiences. Starting from the Present being 'on grade' to Past 'below grade', and finally Deep-Time 'deep below'.

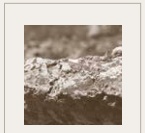


3 | CIRCULATION

The choreography between the zones are informed by the electrical resistivity mapping - the circulation path on the surface resonates the Karst formations underground.

4 | PHASED EXPANSION

As the site is mapped and more caves unearthed over time, the circulation grows and responds - never static, new programmable spots and experiences are formed.



A
Site Elements, Hue Earthy and rich

B
Textures on stone dictate the water flow in the past, hidden stories

C
Material Study, sand casted concrete and its rich texture

D
Material Study, analyzing form aggregation of normal earth

E
Material Mockup, stabilized rammed earth inside Preserve

F
Material Study, analyzing form aggregation of stabilized earth

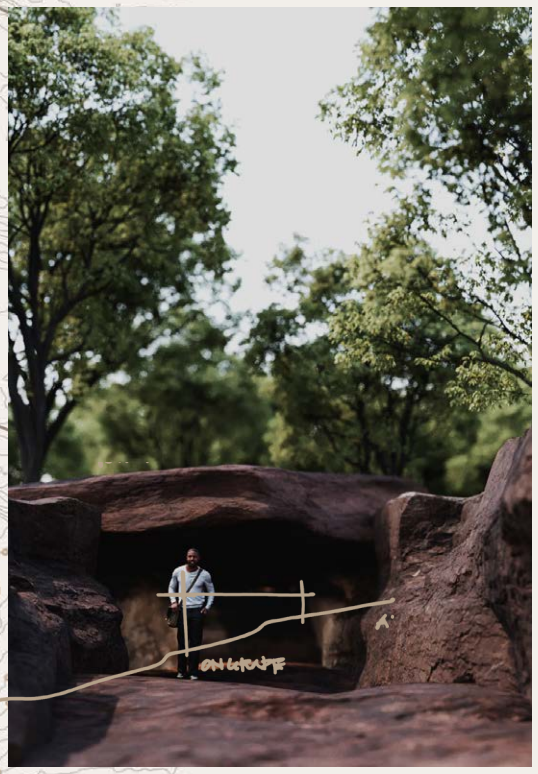
G
Site Elements, unadorned beauty of Ashe Juniper trunks

SITE PLAN

The Preserve sits silent in the landscape - embodying the qualities of the site and challenging the visual perceptions throughout the deep-time journey. Arriving on the site as a researcher or visitor, you experience the haptic qualities of the site strata as you walk through it. Once in the inner zones, the dense juniper strands disrupt any line of sights, elevating the other senses which guides one on their journey to the caves.

CHAPTER 01

THE PROCESSION



Catering to first time visitors and the local researchers, the procession had to be clear - especially considering the density of flora on the site. The journey therefore starts off with a stroke into the ground where the visitor experiences the site's geological strata before emerging out into the Past and Deep-Time threshold where the cavernous edges dissipate to reveal the caves within the strands - leading to a sense of 'discovery'

Entrance into Friesenhahn Preserve
The Arrival and Circulation

CHAPTER 02

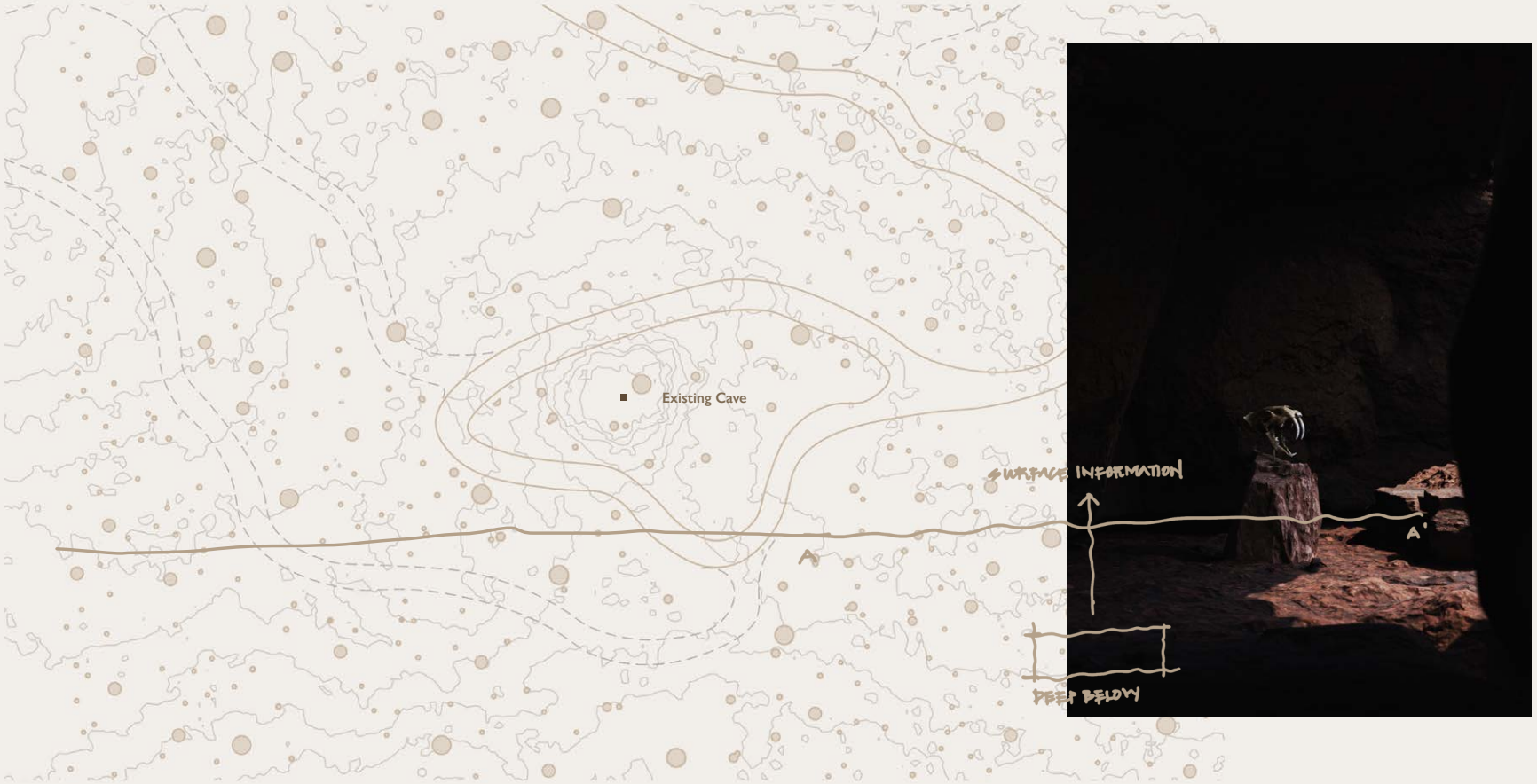
THE GLIMPSE

Responding to existing site elements, the intervention is tucked and buried underground in the south west corner. This allows for a compact organization without the risk of digging deep down and disturbing potential Karst formations. Entering into the preserve, the idea of surfacing information continues. Although programmatically the public/private zones are separated, there is always visual connectivity between the two - as a visitor, you are able to see what is going on behind the scenes in the labs and the field house, thereby offering a glimpse into the past.

^ **View atop Friesenhahn Preserve Oculus**
The Confluence of Research and Education

CHAPTER 03

THE DESCENT



The Descent is the most temporally static and tactile rich point along the deep-time journey. Based on current electrical resistivity mapping, it is evident that there are other Karst formations on the site. As the subterranean layer is mapped and uncovered over time around and outside the SPZ, the researched caves need not be static - it can be opened up to adaptive programming such as galleries, interactive classrooms and other curated events.

^ **Cave functioning as a gallery**
Potential Karst adaptation

FRIESENHAHN CAVE PRESERVE
Conceptual view from one of the adapted caves