

Bosque del Apache national wildlife refuge

Bosque del Apache translates to woods of the Apache. It was named after the Native American tribe that often camped in the once vast woodlands now established as a refuge for wildlife. Overtime, the land naturally grew to welcome luscious plant life and various different animals, including migratory birds from many different parts of North America and Central America. The Rio Grande played an important part in the development of the land known today as the Bosque del Apache. It's water supplied animals and plants the nutrients they needed to grow and during flooded seasons, provided swamp lands for insects, reptiles, and birds, both migratory ones and those native to the land.

Before the Apache, however, the land shared its abundant wealth with Piro pueblo dwellers. They often came to the valley to hunt the natural wildlife, search for fruit, herbs, and plants, as well as use its lands for its fertile soil. In the 17th century, they were driven out of this land by Apache raids, and during the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, they fled with the Spanish to El Paso and never returned.

During this period, as well, Spanish explorers and Colonists established El Camino Real, "The Royal Road." This road served as a crucial trading route between Mexico and Santa Fe and remained in use for approximately 300 years. Today, remnants of the El Camino Real and evidence of the Piro inhabitation is preserved inside Bosque del Apache.



dematerialization from water to sky

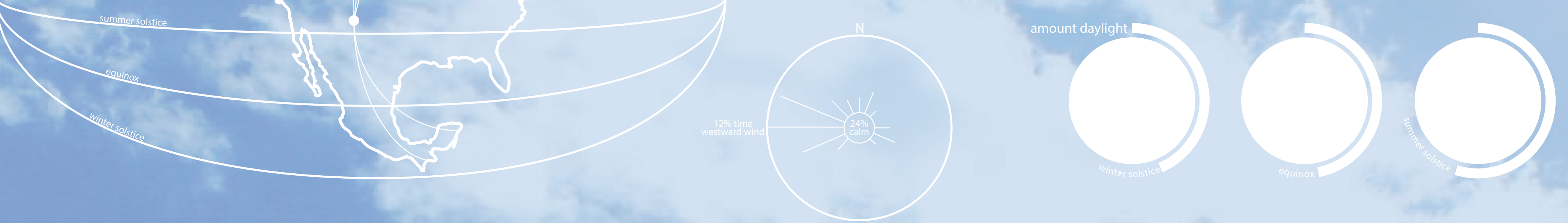
Richard Pham

The Bosque felt like a world of its own: a little world in the desert state of New Mexico. As a natural wildlife reservation, it has the ability to connect people back to the natural environment and reveal the little things that are hidden behind everyday pedestrian routine.

The sky itself is extremely impactful. Its openness has a powerful and moving gesture; so much so, it can almost be overwhelming. At the pier location, the reflection of the sky on the water made it even more so. Standing on the pier, looking out into the distance, it is like being caught in the middle of two worlds: the sky, and the water. The distance reveals a threshold; the horizon that connects these two worlds. And even without realizing, the pier itself may be called a threshold, suspended between the worlds.

Thinking of these worlds, the birds of the Bosque become one to admire. The birds take flight, soaring through the realm of the sky, yet they may land and swim along the water, freely traversing through the realms, passing the threshold as they please. To recreate this experience, an ornithology annex is transformed into a three-leveled building. The building becomes progressively lighter in form to represent the ascension into the free and open sky.

solar position



winter

spring

summer

dominant migratory birds by season

70°F average yearly high

42°F average yearly low

2in august rainfall

168 clear skies per year

61 rainy days per year

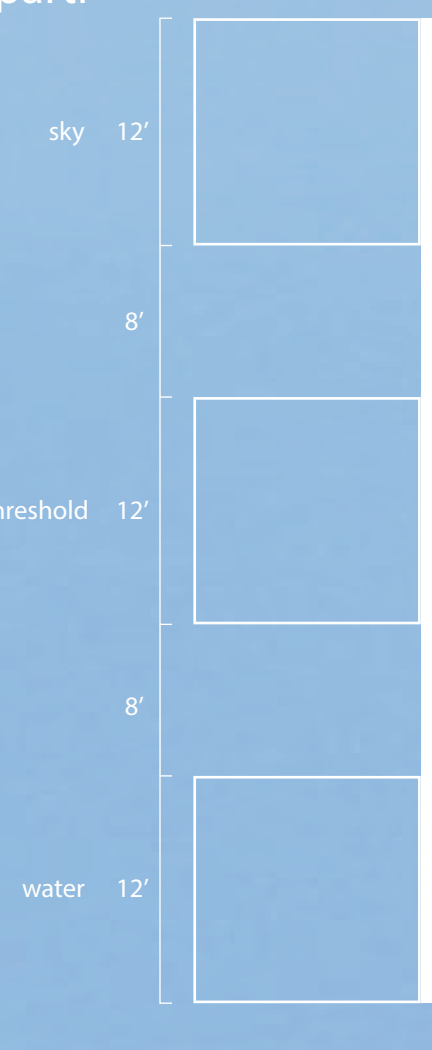
9 annual precipitation

animals year-around

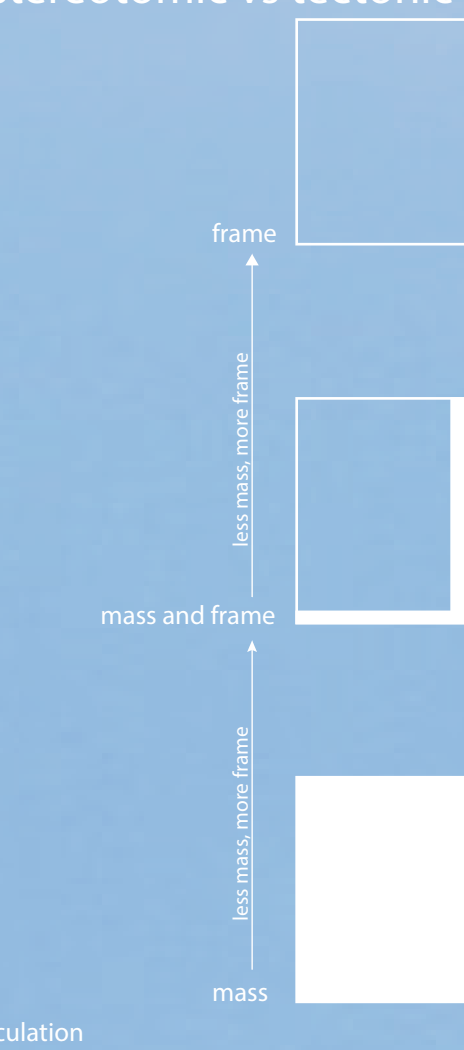


schematic planning: diagrams (elevation views)

parti



stereotomic vs tectonic



regulating lines



bound to the earth : we may enter the threshold, but we may never pass it

