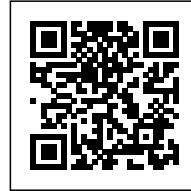




BAMBOO CLOUD

Posted on June 18, 2024 by Gabriel Sastre



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The Impression SanjieLiu, Yangshuo, Guilin is located in one of the most dramatic landscapes in China. Endless greenery surrounds the site filling space between large karst towers of rock. With a landscape so grand any moves to dismiss it, let alone compete would make little sense. With this understanding it was decided that the natural elements themselves would form the premise for what architecture would inhabit the site, one element in particular, bamboo.



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The Impression SanjieLiu is already well established, now in its 15th year of operation. The project presented a situation where most existing structures would remain untouched. Instead focus shifted to how introducing new intervention could support a pre-existing condition.



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In the daylight, the lanterns appear solid, the yellow of the shell in compliment with the green surrounding. Come night the personality of the lantern shifts from something more unyielding to a porous shell. The lantern itself is a diffuser of light, playing theatrics of scale and light with guests. As a whole, the lantern looks at home under the arching towers of bamboo in its peripheries. Almost by chance, when looking to the distance the lantern silhouette is echoed by the stone towers of the Yangshuo, Guilin landscape strewn along the immediate horizon.

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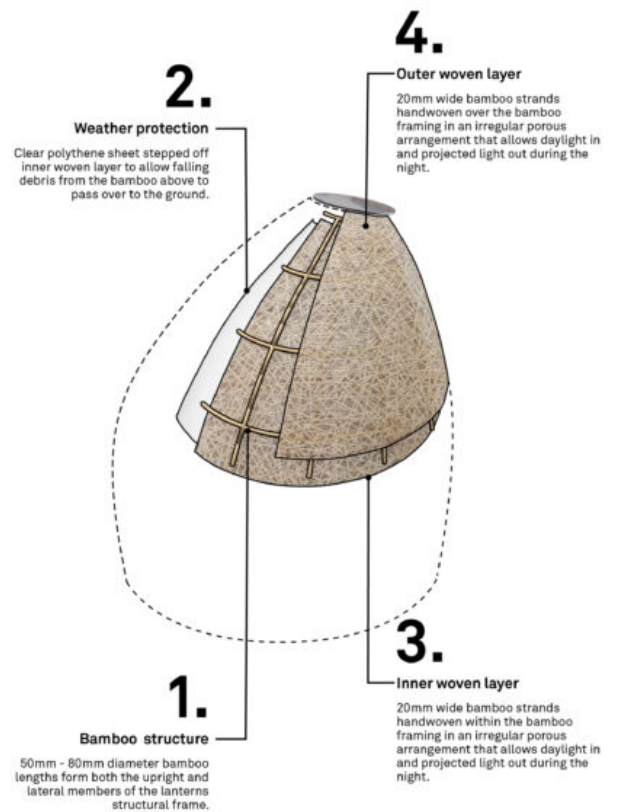
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BAMBOO LANTERN

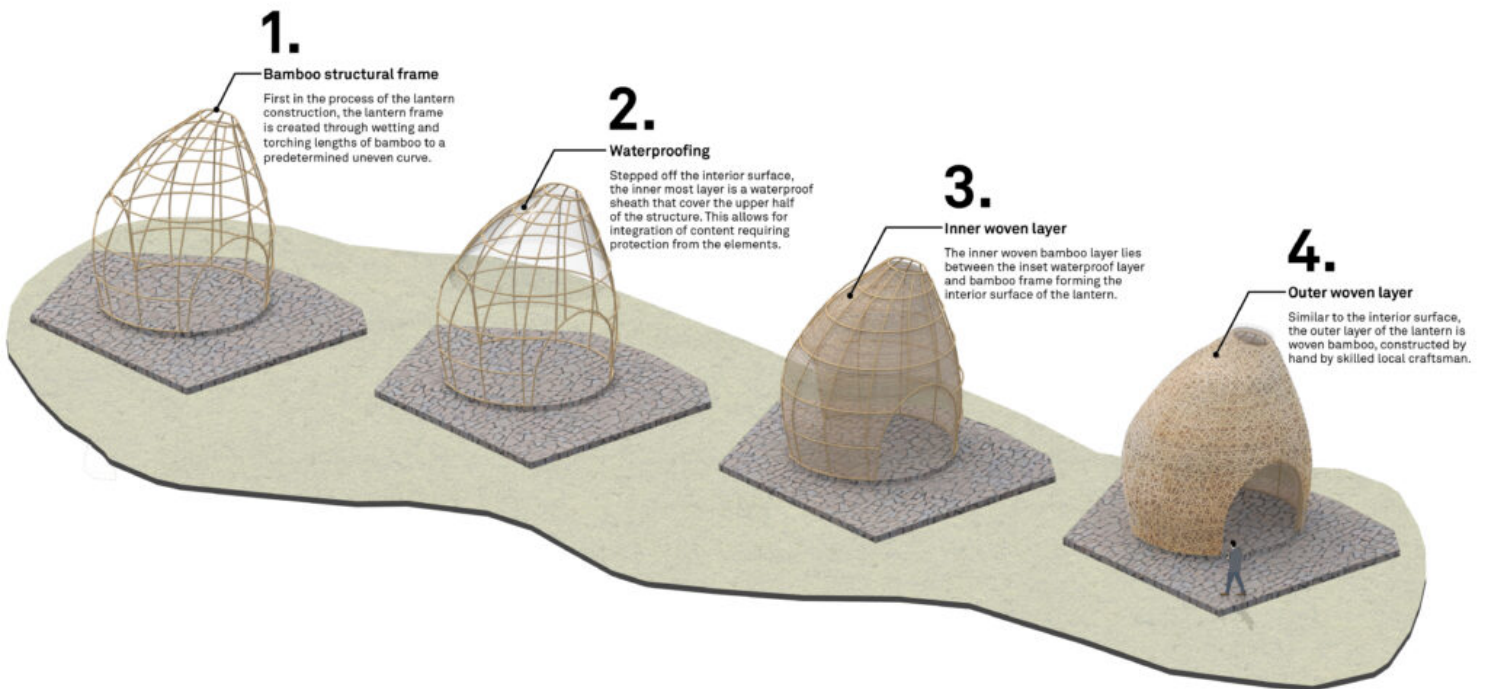
Layers of construction



Lab.

BAMBOO LANTERN

Layers of construction



Lab.

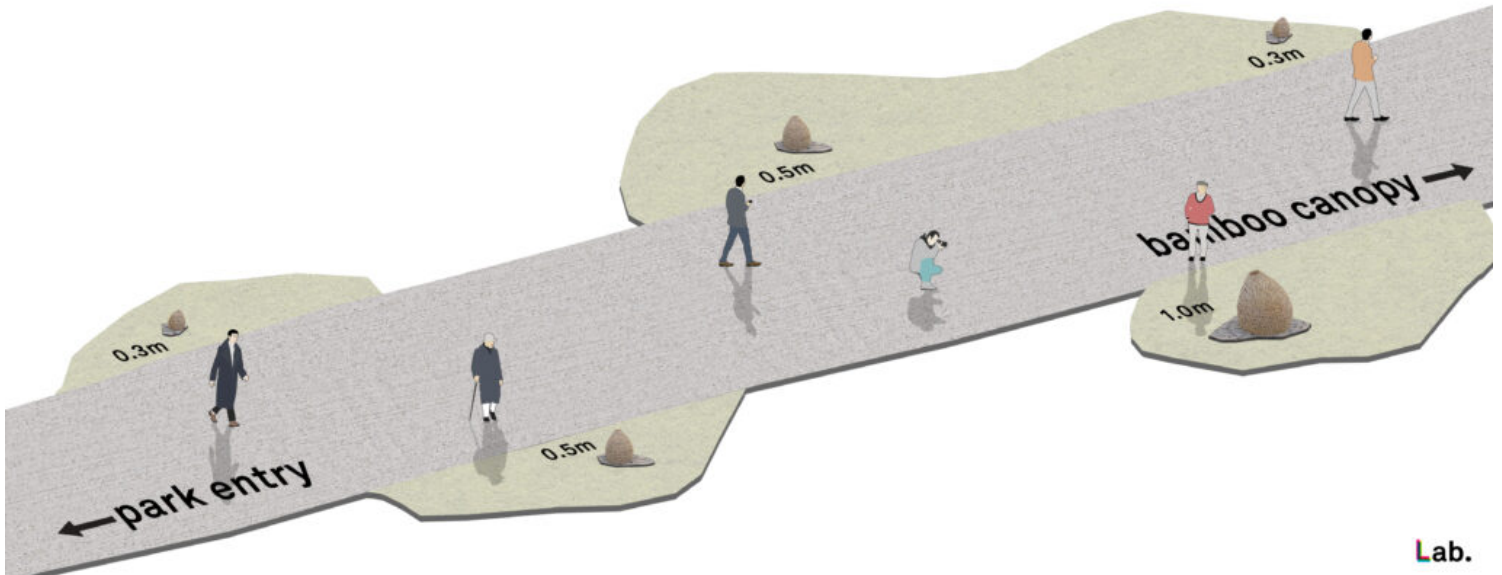
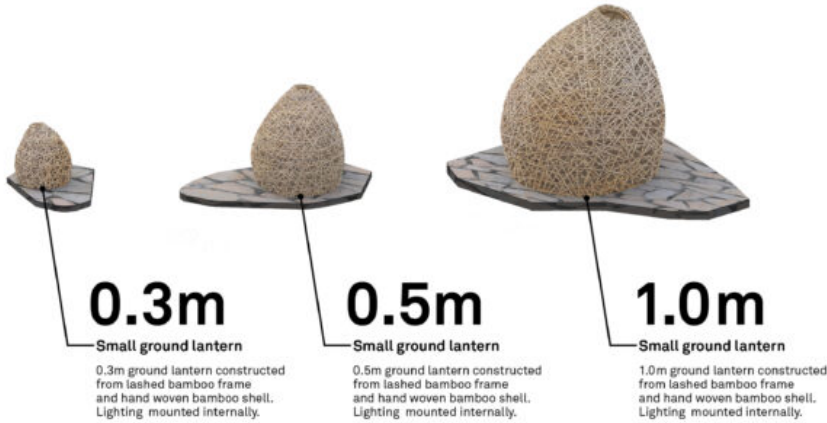
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BAMBOO LANTERN

Small lantern arrangement



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Further along at the edge of the island, the canopy shrouds itself within the large masts of bamboo. At first glance it appears to rely on little for support, only the columns of bamboo shooting up and through circular openings. Hidden amongst these living clusters columns twist from their footing upward and outward mimicking the indecisive route of the bamboo to meet the structure above. Supported by the columns in a maze of tubes, the structure of the canopy while seen doesn't look

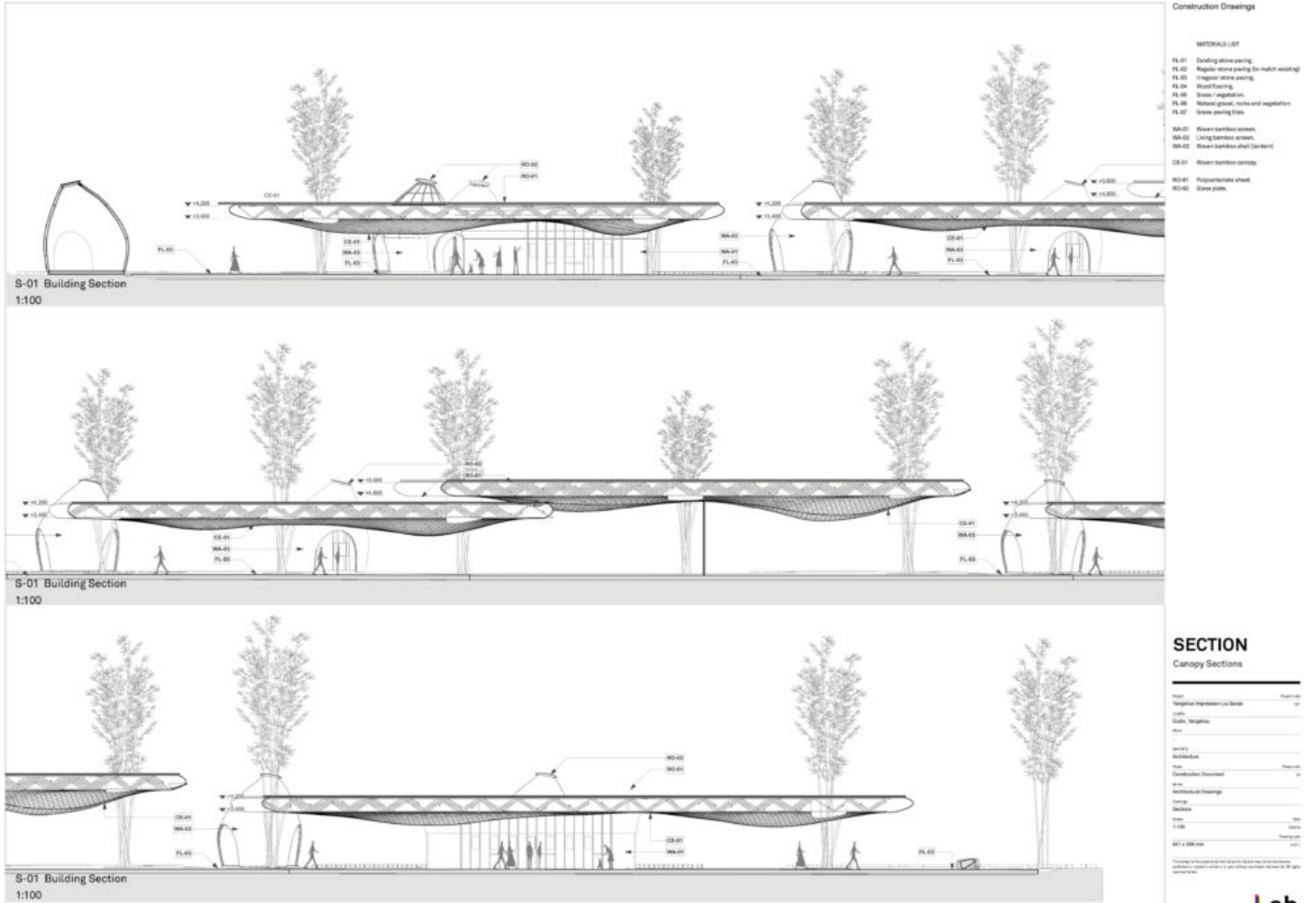
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out of place.

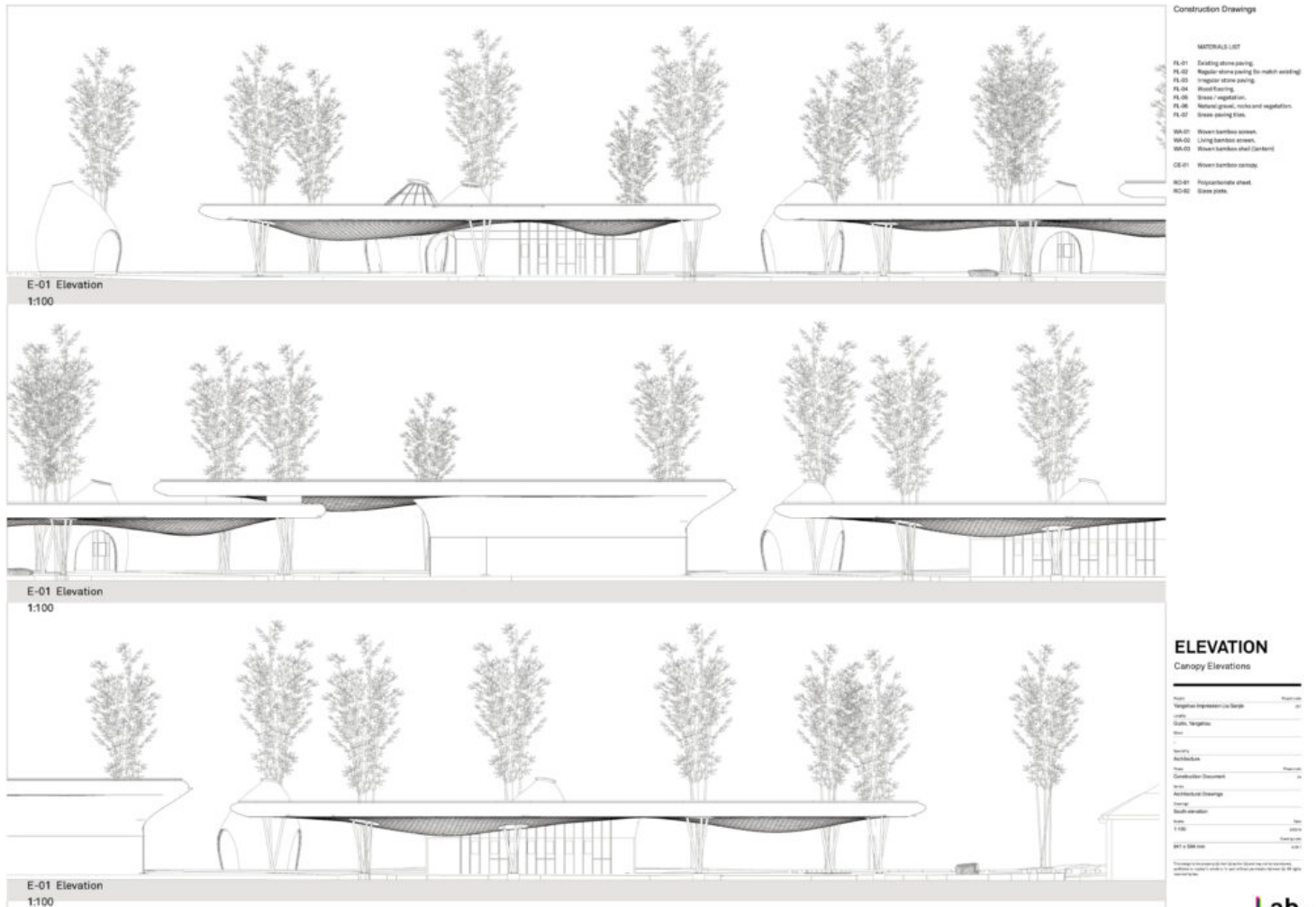


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The hand-woven layer obscures what is in front and what lays behind. Stretching 140m from where you stand the woven ceiling takes on a shape of an inverted landscape, undulating between different levels of surfaces. The stepping surface of the canopy is pieced together entirely in the same irregular hand-woven bamboo as the lantern, but on a scale that seems that it should be seated in fantasy. The resulting intention means to enchant while still extending recognition to the natural condition of the site.

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Under daylight, light streams through to the woven canopy bringing patches of dappled light to the ground below. While reprieve from the sun is apparent when walking underneath, in an unexpected compliment when looking up the ceiling appears illuminated, the entire canopy giving off a temperate glow. In the transition to night, introduced light within the volume rises in intensity focusing the spattering of light in a more vivid pattern on the pathway. Fragments of bodies dip in and out view as light streams down through the ceiling above onto guests making their way the stage.

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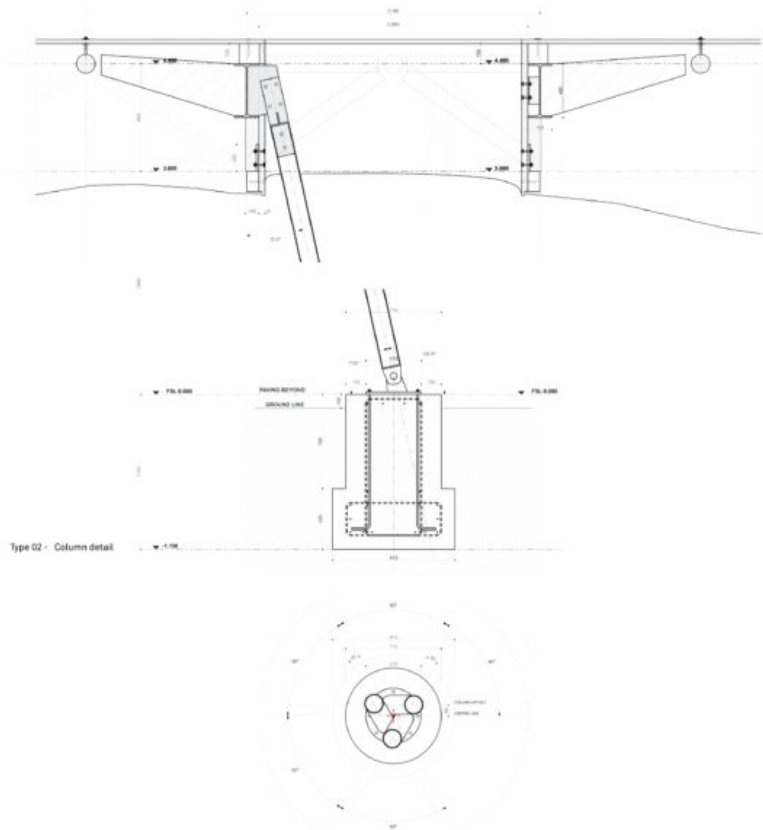
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CANOPY DETAIL

Concealed structural layout



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In acknowledgment to the theatrical spirit of the Impression SanjieLiu, moments of performance make its way into many parts of the design: The hand weaving, bamboo playing off the tension of one another. The topography of the canopy ceiling dancing between columns of bamboo as if unsupported. Even the way guests are intended to move from lantern to lantern, in a narrative of interaction. Together these subtle hints encourage a particular frame of mind, readying the guest for the main feature.

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