

A CULTURAL PAVILION · EDWARDS PLATEAU · TEXAS

COMPETITION CONCEPT

THE

Cut Pavilion

A stone wall holds the plateau edge; a timber hall lifts off it and reaches over the shaded creek. You pass through a single slot, from sun into shade.

CONCEPT BOOK

THE CASE

Most buildings sit back on the flat, safe from the edge. This one lives on the edge, and reaches across it.

The site is a shelf on the western rim of the Balcones escarpment, where the flat, sun-scorched limestone caprock breaks suddenly into a live-oak ravine and a spring-fed creek runs thirty feet below.

The pavilion is built from that single fact of the land. One long stone wall lies along the caprock and stops the punishing south sun. A timber hall lifts off the wall and hovers north over the ravine, in the cool. Between them, one vertical slot is cut through the stone, and it is the only way in. Sun on the approach; shade within. That is the whole building, and the pages that follow make its case.

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Four materials only — Lueders limestone, board-formed concrete, white oak, bronze-framed glass. Two moves in tension — the wall and the reach. One threshold — the slot.

01

The Site

You leave the car in the cedar and walk a hundred and twenty feet across open caprock in the sun. The building is one long wall on the horizon, and it shows you no door.



FIG. 01 — THE SITE FROM THE NORTH-WEST. The wall lies east–west along the caprock edge; the hall reaches north off it and cantilevers over the green ravine on a single row of piers. Plateau in warm sun, ravine in green shade — the site's two conditions in one frame.

Read the land in the registers a body feels here. The buildable ground is the caprock shelf, level and hard, thin soil over limestone: you do not dig deep here, you sit on the rock. The shelf ends in a ledge that steps and then falls thirty feet to the creek. The plateau top is open and brutal — Ashe juniper, prickly pear, thin bunchgrass, cicada heat.

The ravine is its opposite: a gallery of escarpment live oak and bald cypress hugging the water, deep dappled shade, ten to fifteen degrees cooler in August. The design weaponizes the contrast. You arrive in the cedar scrub and the sun; you are delivered into the live-oak shade and the cool.

The creek floods. Hill-country flash floods are violent and fast, so nothing habitable sits in the creek bed. The building does not touch the water; it hovers the hall above any flood stage and lets the creek run wild underneath.

THE CONDITIONS

GROUND

Caprock shelf — build on the rock, minimal cut

DROP

~30 ft ledge to a spring-fed creek

WATER

Flash-flood ravine — the hall stays above it

SUN

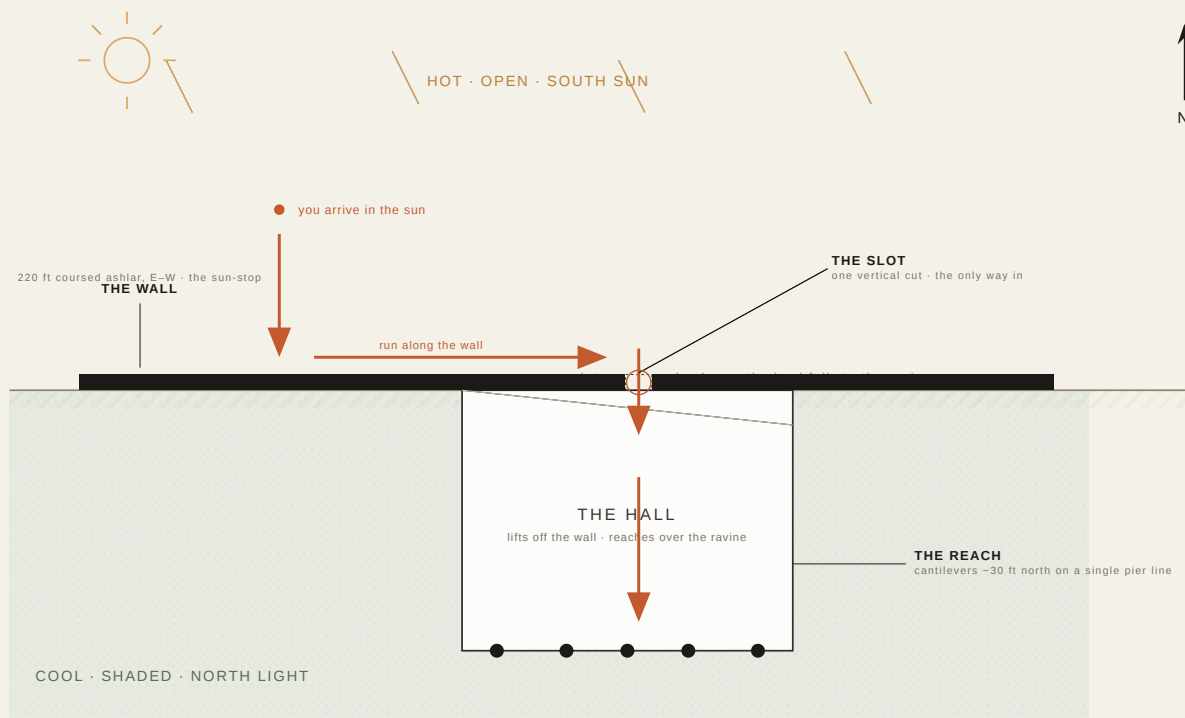
Punishing south & west; stopped at the stone

COVER

Cedar & prickly pear above; live oak below

02 The Parti

A long limestone wall holds the plateau edge; a timber-clad hall lifts off it and reaches over the shaded creek; you pass through a single slot in the wall, from sun into shade.



Parti diagram — schematic. Not to scale. North to top.

i THE WALL

A 220-foot solid Lueders limestone wall, load-bearing, running east–west along the plateau edge. The datum, the sun-stop, the horizon line. It belongs to the land — the caprock made vertical.

ii THE REACH

The hall and its single-pitch timber roof cantilever thirty feet north off the wall, hovering over the ravine on one row of five piers. It belongs to the sky and the shade.

iii THE SLOT

One full-height vertical cut through the wall — the only way in, the compression point between hot and open, cool and held. The whole experience pivots on passing through it.

THE PROCESSION

03 SUN INTO SHADE — THE SEVEN-BEAT WALK

ALONG THE WALL

The Procession

06

The path meets the wall and turns to run along it, eastward, in the wall's own narrow shade. Split-face Lueders limestone at arm's length, the courses raking in the low light. Ahead, a single dark vertical line begins to resolve into the slot.

BEAT THREE — THE SLOT

The only way in

A full-height vertical cut through the limestone wall, floor to roof, its inner cheeks smooth board-formed concrete with the grain drawing the eye up and through. You step from bright open heat into a compressed, cool, shadowed passage.

The temperature drops. The sound changes — cicadas fade, water appears. Ahead through the slot: green shade, glass, the ravine. Compression, then release. This is the hinge of the whole building, and it holds four of its materials in a single view.

WIDTH	HEIGHT	POSITION
5 ft	18 ft, full	Offset east of centre

FIG. 02 — THE THRESHOLD. The compressed passage, dark to light. Limestone outside, board-formed concrete cheeks, a ridge slot of top-light at the crown, oak and bronze-framed glass beyond.

BEATS FOUR & FIVE — THE REACH

Two temperatures, one room

You emerge into the great hall — the timber room lifted out over the creek. The white-oak ceiling slopes up toward the north glass; the board-formed floor is underfoot; the honed stone wall glows behind you under the ridge skylight.

At the long dusk, low gold pours over the wall and floods the underside of the oak ceiling so it burns amber, while the ravine outside the glass goes cool blue. Warm within, cool without — the two temperatures of a hill-country evening, held in a single room.

FIG. 03 — THE MAIN HALL. A flexible cultural hall for lecture, performance, exhibition, and assembly — roughly 180 seated, 400 standing.



**BEAT SIX — THE OUTDOOR ROOM**

Off the east end of the hall, a board-formed terrace steps out onto the limestone ledge itself, half-shaded by the deep roof soffit and the heritage live oak the roof is notched around. Railed at the ravine edge, the creek running below. The building's exhale — an outdoor gathering room between the built shade and the raw land.

THE TERRACE

~40 × 25 ft board-formed deck, off the hall's east end. Bronze guardrail at the edge.

THE RULE

The building hovers, never floods. Nothing habitable sits below flood stage; the creek runs free underneath.

04 The Materials

Four materials, no more. Each does one honest job; the assembly is legible; nothing is a finish over something else.



Lueders limestone

The wall. A hard blue-grey-to-buff Texas limestone, coursed ashlar in bands of varying height that read as the land's own strata. Split-face where the sun rakes it, honed where a hand touches it. Load-bearing mass, never veneer.



Board-formed concrete

The floor slab, the piers, the slot's inner cheeks. Rough-sawn cedar boards pressed into the grey, so even the concrete carries the land's timber. Board runs horizontal on the piers, vertical in the slot — a cool foil to warm stone and warm wood.



White oak

The roof, the ceiling, the hall's warm skin. Glue-laminated white oak beams span the reach, exposed underneath; close-spaced slats line the soffit. Honey-to-tobacco within, silvering to grey where it weathers outside.



Glass, in bronze steel

Only where the shade allows it. The entire north wall of the hall is glass, in slim bronze-anodized steel mullions, open to the live-oak canopy. No west glass. Steel appears only as the joint — never as a surface.



05 The Light

The sun is felt on the approach and stopped at the wall. Only shade, north light, and controlled slots of gold are ever allowed inside.

● MORNING

Low east light rakes the length of the split-face wall, throwing every course into relief — the wall at its most sculptural. A single high clerestory lays a blade of gold across the slot. The arrival hour.

● MIDDAY

The shade machine. Almost nothing given to the south, everything to the north: the hall is a cool, even, timber-glow room lit off the live-oak leaves. A ridge skylight drops one soft line of top-light down the inner stone all day. Cool and lit, without the sun.

● EVENING — THE EVENT

The long dusk sends gold in low from the west. It cannot enter through walls — there are none facing it — so it skims the wall top and pours through the ridge slot, flooding the oak ceiling amber while the ravine goes blue.

FIG. 04 — THE SHADE MACHINE AT MIDDAY. Cool, even, north-bounced light with a single blade dropped down the stone. The proof that the hall is lit without the sun.

06 The Drawings

I — SITE PLAN · THE PARCEL



THE READING. A heavy stone bar lies along the plateau (south) edge, the small cave rooms carved into its thickness. The slot pierces it near the centre.

The light timber hall crosses the wall and projects north off the caprock, cantilevering over the hatched ravine on its single pier row. The terrace hangs off the hall's east corner.

The gravel path arrives from the south and runs the wall's face to the slot. Rainwater sheets off the roof to the stone cistern at the court's edge — caught, in drought country.



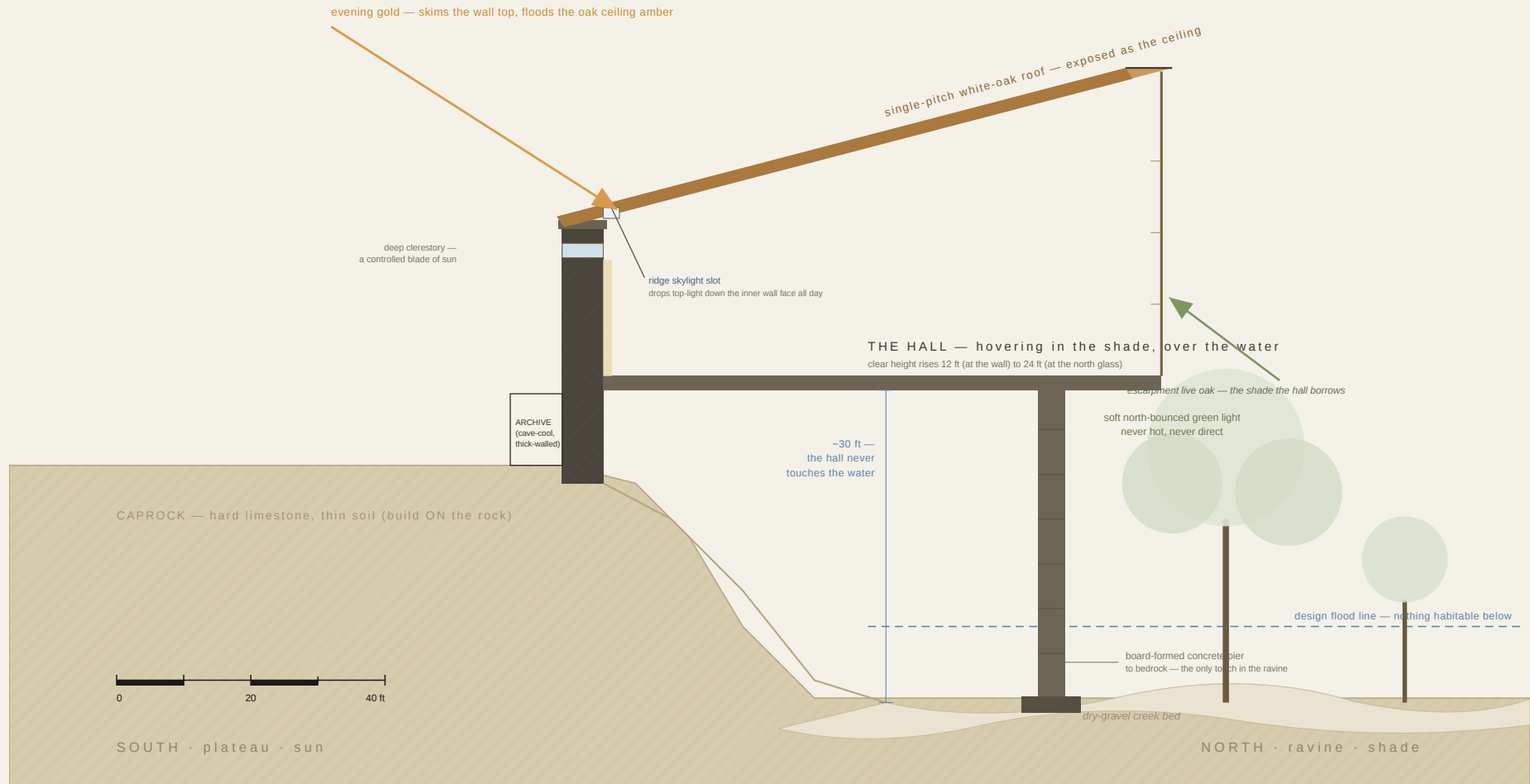
TWO HALVES OF HILL-COUNTRY DWELLING

The secondary program — archive and reading, workshop and classroom, prep, service, restrooms — is tucked into the thickness of the limestone wall on the plateau side, lit by deep clerestory slots. Cave-cool, thick-walled: the opposite condition to the light-filled reach.

WALL	220 ft × 18 ft, coursed ashlar
HALL	~90 × 45 ft, single-pitch
SLOT	5 ft wide, offset east

REACH	~30 ft cantilever north
PIERS	Single row of five, to bedrock
TERRACE	~40 × 25 ft, east end

LONG SECTION — cut north-south through the slot, hall, and ravine



SOUTH, THE WALL. Solid caprock; the thick limestone wall rises straight from the rock with a cave room in its base and a deep clerestory high up. Minimal excavation — the wall belongs to the plateau.

THE REACH. The white-oak roof slopes up and out to the north; the board-formed floor slab cantilevers off the wall and the ledge, carried by one pier dropped to bedrock. Clear height rises from 12 ft to 24 ft.

NORTH, THE RAVINE. The creek runs thirty feet below the hall floor, its flood line marked well beneath the slab. Two light arrows: low gold over the wall into the ceiling; soft green bounce off the oaks through the glass.

Back into the gold

Leaving, you pass back through the slot — and the sequence reverses its gift. From cool shade into the warm gold of the evening plateau, the wall's split face lit orange, the cistern catching the last light, the long walk back across the caprock with the big sky opening overhead.

A cultural pavilion on the burning edge of the Edwards Plateau: built to carry a visitor from the open heat, through a stone wall, into cool filtered shade held out over the water — and to send them back to the land it drew them from.