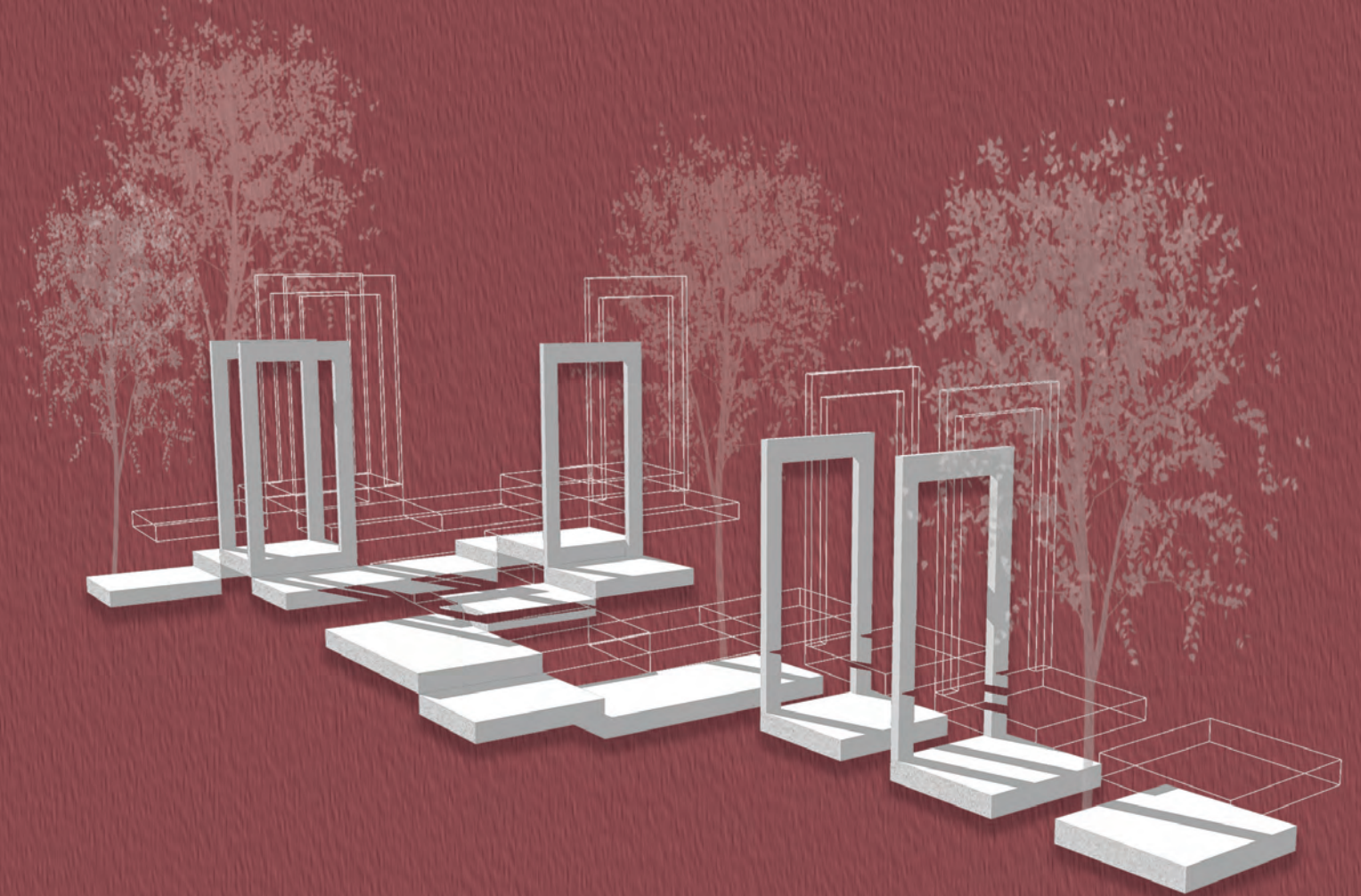


# site and sequence

*farnsworth house visitor center*  
*alabama forestry association competition finalist*

**Location** Plano, IL  
**Date** Spring 2016  
**Program** Arts and Culture  
**Area** 7,500 sqft  
**Type** Academic  
**Professor** Justin Miller

Site and Sequence was designed to revitalize the architectural pilgrimage site of Mies Van der Rohe's Farnsworth House. The project features three main aspects: the preservation of the Farnsworth House, the priority of light and view within the structure, and the visitors' experience through the landscape. These aspects were studied through a series of thresholds that mitigate the transition from the visitor center to the house.



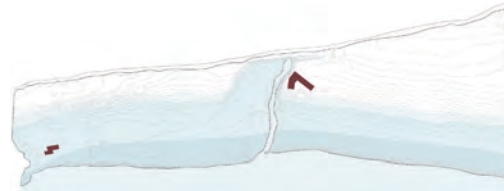
## site and sequence

### farnsworth house visitor center

The design for the Farnsworth Visitor Center began with a study of Mies Van der Rohe's work in Chicago, IL. In contrast to the city, the Farnsworth House is located in the countryside and is subject to the challenges of its rural site, namely flooding. The proposal for the flood mitigation technique is a buoyant foundation, designed to lift the structure out of the water in disaster conditions. The main concept for the design of the visitor center is the transition through a series of thresholds. The checkpoints within the center and along the prescribed path allow the guests to distance themselves from the outside world and experience the history of the house and site.

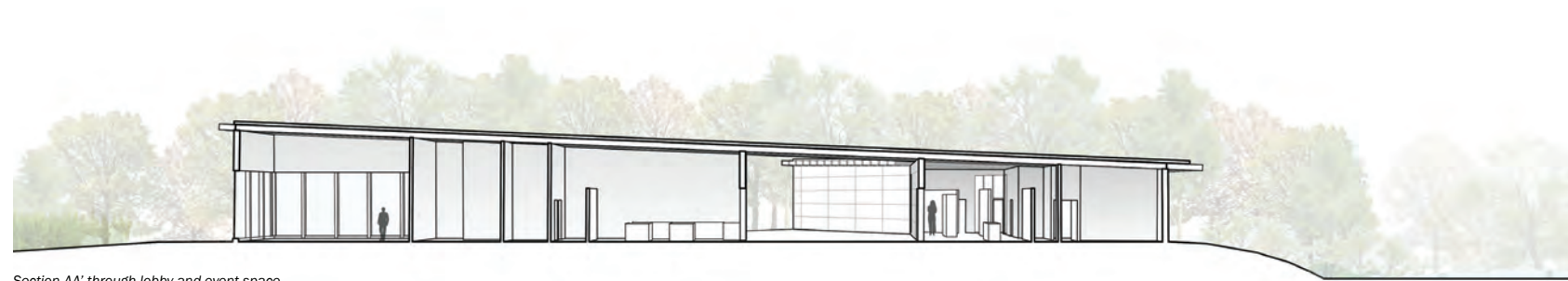


Physical model showing the visitor center's relationship with the undulating topography and water of the site

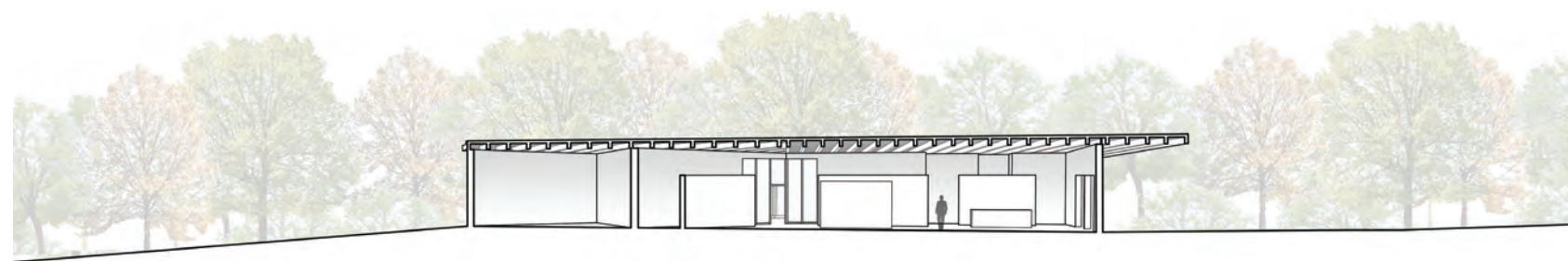


Site plan showing the flooding levels in relation to the house on the left and visitor center on the right



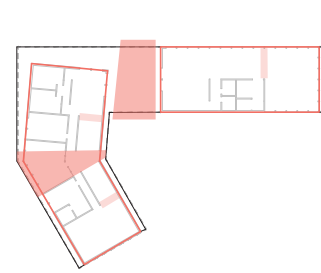


Section AA' through lobby and event space

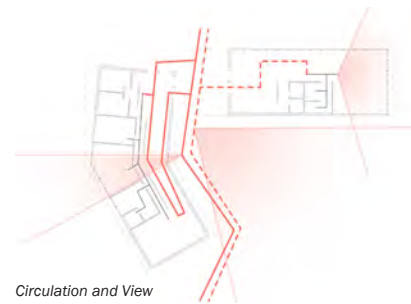


Section BB' through lobby and gallery

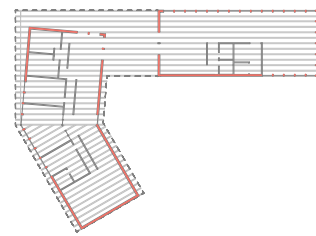
The new visitor center is located on the same site as the current visitor center due to the topographic advantage and its relationship to the adjacent cornfield. This allows the guests to experience multiple framed views of the varying site through the twelve vertical feet of glazing. The parti consists of two volumes that frame the main threshold of the path, the pedestrian pass-through. The roof line marks the entrance, while the form on the left is rotated toward the center and bent to direct the guests toward the tour pathway.



Parti and Threshold

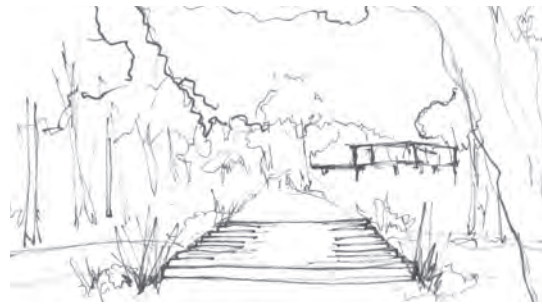


Circulation and View



Structure and Roofing





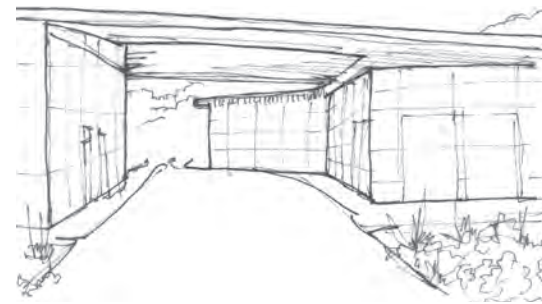
**6 FINAL FOOTFALL**  
The last threshold that the guests experience before they reach the Farnsworth House is a small bridge, located at the base of Lord Palumbo's Drive. This is the first time that the guests see the house clearly. It also marks the return from nature into the designed landscape.



**5 PLACE OF PAUSE**  
As the guests travel toward the Farnsworth House, they are greeted by a small seating space. This space is designed to serve as a moment of rest in the journey and can be used to regulate the timing of successive tours.



**4 CROSSING THE CREEK**  
The first bridge in the sequence marks the transition from the built environment to the wild forest. The action of crossing over water emphasizes the movement from one realm to another.



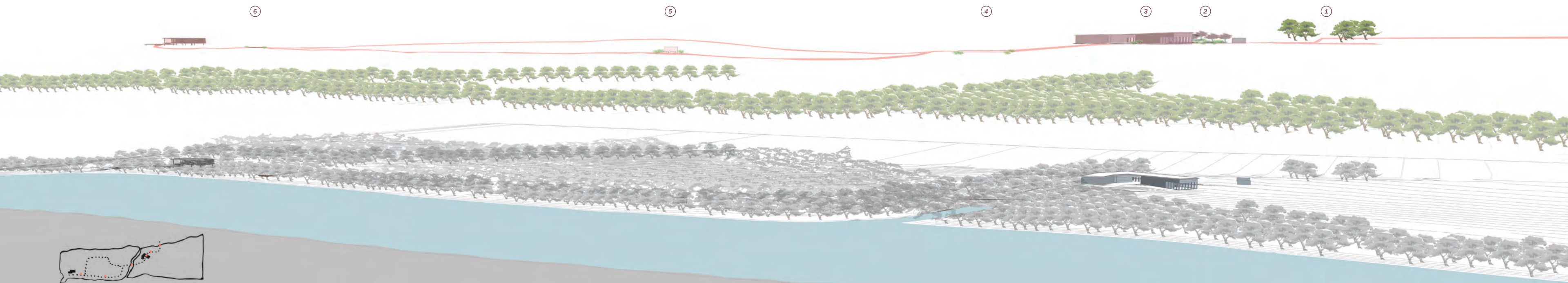
**3 FORM FOR FOCUS**  
The official entrance to the visitor center is marked with the roof that spans across the buildings. The left building is set back and turned inward to funnel the pedestrian circulation towards the next threshold and focus the guests towards the path.



**2 GARDEN GATE**  
As the guests park their cars and advance towards the visitor center, they are greeted with concrete sight walls and a colorful garden.



**1 TIMBER TRANSITION**  
The visitors' experience commences the moment they turn off River Road into the parking lot. This change is denoted by tall trees that frame a view of the cornfield as well as the treeline beyond.



Exploded site diagram showing the thresholds crossed between one's arrival and view of the Farnsworth House