

Statement of Design Intent

Mirage

This outdoor sculpture, by Katie Paterson and Zeller & Moyer for Apple Park, will be created from cylinders of pure cast glass, made of sand collected from deserts across the Earth.

Sand from subtropical deserts, coastal, rain-shadow, interior, mountainous, volcanic and fossilized deserts will be melted into glass. Over four-hundred cast glass columns will combine every desert on Earth into a clear, wave-like form, mimicking a desert dune.

The glass columns connect Earth and sky. Six-and-a-half feet in height and human scaled, olive trees and grasses grow inside the sculpture creating an interior garden. The sculpture weaves through the existing olive tree grove, its form fading in and out of view, creating an endless space - the vastness of every desert in microcosm evokes limitlessness.

Mirage will highlight California's astonishing geological history. Sand will be collected from the Mojave Desert, the Sonoran Desert, the Great Basin Desert, and from across the world's fifty-eight deserts. *Mirage* will be cast in whole single glass cylinders by expert glass makers, with guidance from material scientists. We will create unique recipes of glass combining each desert composition. Sand will be acquired ethically and sustainably through global collaboration with institutes such as the Desert Research Foundation of Namibia and the The Sonoran Desert Network in Arizona. Innovative methods of working with glass at this scale will be used.



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Visitors can interact with the artwork, meandering alongside and through it, where the glass will subtly melt into the landscape, like a desert mirage. Inside, visitors gaze into deep time and space through each of these distant epochs and places, the material of time literally fused together, millions of years merged.

Participants will feel the sun, hear the birds, see one another and the reflected greenery as they walk through the syrupy glass. Their impressions will change from day-to-day, and season-to-season. The artwork continually offering a new experience. Mirage blends art, architecture, science and nature. It will have strong material and elemental presence. Social and connective, it will create an unexpected gathering place for visitors and staff. Mirage will invite visitors to encounter the park in a new way, allowing them to slow down and relax on the grass in the sculpture's inner space and various nooks. The curved walls will frame selected views, directing the visitor's attention up to the tree tops, the birds, and the sky.

Mirage seeks to expand our time horizons. Art can connect us with the fundamental, the transformative and the transcendent. From early childhood we understand that sand marks time. *Mirage* will create a moment of pause, inviting visitors to slow down, and tune into the immensity and preciousness of our planet. It will spark wonder and awe, and create meaningful connections to nature, deep time and the more-than-human world. Nothing of its kind will exist anywhere else on Earth.



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Mirage will be simultaneously monolithic and minimal, rooted in antiquity and contemporary experience, creating a space for contemplation, and a connection to the beyond. Only glass will be visible, focusing attention to the purity and authenticity of the material. The artwork will be entirely integrated with its surroundings, with every detail considered.

The glass columns can be seen through the trees from the visitor center, Tantau avenue and beyond, evoking a sense of curiosity and discovery. Local residents, staff, and tourists from across the globe can touch the artwork. This tactile, sensory experience will ignite the imagination across generations, each piece of glass acting as a portal to otherworldly landscapes. The practice of watching the light fall through the columns will encourage meditation.

The desert is often experienced as sublime, endless, and harsh. In this sculpture the desert expanse is unexpectedly transformed into liquid-like, translucent material, flowing like a dune shaped by the wind. The cast glass will be smooth, with characteristic light bubbling marked by the hand of the maker. The unique desert mixes will create pillars tinted clear to very subtle blue-greens. The artwork appears like an apparition: blurring the visible and invisible, inside and outside, near and far. It combines great weight with lightness, transparency with depth, and melts into its environment. In daylight the sculpture will vary in iridescence, and in the evening the sculpture will gently glow.

