**Venus’ Flower Basket**

**Initial thoughts**

We started with questions like how do you compete with the unique experience provided by the vastness of the Playa? How can we amaze the visitor of Fly Ranch and contribute in leaving a lasting impression of the place? How can we design a shelter without the perception of it being one. More importantly how can we become nature like and harvest energy sustainably so?

These questions pushed us to leave the confines of our usual routines and made us aware of the various ecosystems existing in harmony in nature. We were returning home. Something very uncanny to the Burning Man Project’s experience.

Furthermore, we investigated the importance of the 10 principle’s of the Burning Man Project and hoped to incorporate the same through elements, providing a gentle reminder of the principles to all without being apparent.

**The Process**

We dove deep into Burning Man’s history, its people and their imagination blew our minds. We wanted to create something likewise from the various inputs processed so far in to our journey. Having being moved by the openness of the Playa, we wanted to suggest a contradictory experience of confinement within a safe space, where a mind could hear, see, rationalise and grow with the community. We wanted to pay homage to the mind and its potential to do beautiful things by creating a space for it.

The Result: A meditation space called “Venus’ Flower Basket”

**Inspiration**

The journey towards Fly Ranch is an experience by itself and then to discover its geography is quite another. Likewise, the journey to the deep sea is an experience by itself and then to discover the various habitats and its creatures is quite another. In either scenarios, the mind is at the edge. The form for the meditation centre is inspired from the deep sea sponge that exists at the depths of more than 450 meters. It is quite astonishing to realise the ways of nature and its intricate work.

The cocoon like space doesn’t give an impression of a shelter from far. It seems like some kind of oversized organic fungi. As one approaches, one realises the scale from the people approaching the super structure. As one gets closer and closer the mysterious air gets more intense as this is an unknown territory and an unknown experience. The only inviting element being that of the visitors idea of experiencing something new. There are signs that read, breathe, just be, you are home.

And so, once in the cocoon, the visitor is home, to the confines of not the space but to their minds just about to be pushed beyond its known limits into the unknown through reflection and deep contemplation.

**Design**

The superstructure consists of a complex laser cut frame in timber inspired from the structure of the glass sponge. All different in shape and size to suit the sensibilities of an individual. It’s ironically modular.

**Environmental Impact**

The cladding material is a sandwich of ETFE-EVA-Photo voltaic cells-LEDs-EVA-ETFE (in the same order) panel. It forms a homogenous surface and harvests its own energy. The translucent ETFE membrane allows light to fall on the photovoltaic cells. The working temperature of ETFE films lie between 89 K - 423 K and can weather for more than 25 years. It is self cleaning and recyclable. The surface area of the meditation centre produces approximately 1000kWh/month. Enough to run the systems at night including the programmable LEDs.

The modularity and the weathering capabilities of the ETFE panels makes it extremely suitable for extreme ambiances.