

WICKER TEMPORARY CITY

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We can understand imaginaries as long historical accumulation processes that are sedimented over time, shaping the image of a place. But sometimes progress breaks that bond between history and image, leaving imaginaries without actual support. This project not only rescues an imaginary about to disappear, but also renews it – so that its potential future is not hindered by nostalgia.

KEYWORDS · heritage, image, land, crops, production systems

Located 150 km south of Santiago and historically linked to artisanal activities,¹ the town of Chimbarongo was established in the early 20th century as the wicker capital, given its local cultivation and manufacturing. This activity is currently under threat, mainly because of poor circulation, the presence of imported fibers and land use to more profitable crops. Therefore, the amount of land intended for wicker production and crafts manufacturing has decreased significantly (from 223.2 ha in 1997 to 107.5 ha in 2007).² While the interest in natural fibers has recently grown, these changes have failed to reverse the situation due to the concentration of trade in major cities and the insignificant return of profits to its place of origin.

In 2015 we were appointed by the Municipality of Chimbarongo to develop a regional scale project to promote the city and safeguard wicker crops. Therefore, we undertook a general diagnosis of its current condition from the viewpoint of its image and its territory. We concluded that wicker

1 During the 80s over 3,000 inhabitants (approx. 10% of current Chimbarongo population) were engaged in wicker-related activities. Today there are only about 150 people linked to the development of this natural fiber products. Source: Study Municipality of Chimbarongo, 2012.

2 Comparative analysis between the 1997 and 2007 Agricultural Census.

Arquitectos / Architects
Domingo Arancibia, Pablo Casals

Arquitectos asociados / Associates
Alexis Quinteros Salazar, Stephan Puschel

Colaboradores / Collaborators
Osvaldo Sandoval, Alekos Vuskovic

Ubicación / Location
Comuna de Chimbarongo, VI Región, Chile

Cliente / Client
Municipalidad de Chimbarongo

Ingeniero agrónomo / Agricultural engineer
Diego Kirberg Sermini

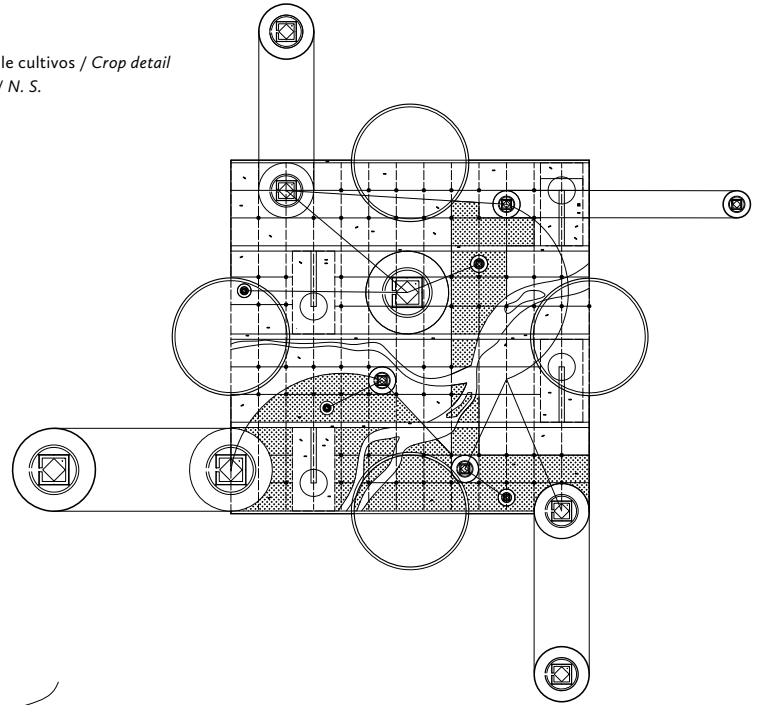
Superficie terreno / Site area
12.100 ha

Año de proyecto / Project year
2015-2016

Fotografías / Photographs
Pablo Casals

Visualizaciones / Renders
Domingo Arancibia

Detalle cultivos / Crop detail
S. E. / N. S.



Ciudad temporal de mimbre /
Wicker temporary city
E. / S. 1: 250.000





Vista desde el embalse durante mayo / *View from the dam during May*



Vista de la cosecha del mimbre durante junio / *View of the wicker harvest in June*

was recognized and associated with the town, but the only references acknowledged were the craft stalls on the side of Route 5 South. Moreover, we identified two territorial features offered as an opportunity: Chimbarongo's regional positioning in relation to thematic tourist circuits and the presence of the Convento Viejo reservoir.

PROPOSAL

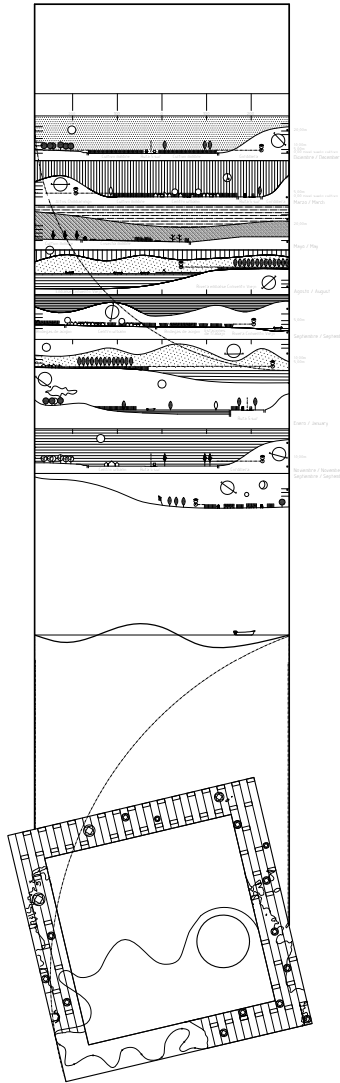
Time span. To wicker features were rescued: its ability to achieve considerable heights in a short time (5 meters in a year) and its varied morphology. Thus, we suggested using the crop as a green wall capable of varying across its different heights and colors, making the city and the landscape elements 'appear and disappear.'

The crop as container. We define a form capable of peripherally linking Chimbarongo's four sectors, managing to establish a zone for urban development (north sector) and one for the development of rural tourism (southern sector).

The crop as a fabric. The crop's dynamic properties allow it to meet different market requirements, being able to expand or contract according to production demand.

Production systems. We define a protected perimeter for wicker farming, working through cooperatives. In addition, we propose built infrastructure for its collection and processing, plus low-cost workstations for its manufacturing. **ARQ**

Perfiles ciudad temporal /
Temporary city sections
S. E. / N. S.



DOMINGO ARANCIBIA
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Architect, Universidad de Chile, 2013. His undergraduate thesis was awarded the prize for best national undergraduate project (2012-2014) and nominated for best world undergraduate project. He was awarded the Social Architect Expo 2015 Milan, Arquitectura Caliente, Obra destacada in the XIX Valparaiso Biennial and Archiprix Awards second place, among others. His works have been published in Italy, Germany, Spain, China and presented in various biennials and international exhibitions. Arancibia is professor at the Facultad de Arquitectura, Universidad de Chile and director of the office Estudio de Arquitectura Normal.

PABLO CASALS
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Architect, Universidad Andrés Bello, Chile, 2007. In 2009 founded his own architecture and photography office, a platform from which has developed different projects in Chile and Mexico, in collaboration and partnership with T3&studio. Has been professor at the Universidad Andrés Bello, Universidad Finis Terrae, Universidad Diego Portales and Universidad San Sebastián. His work includes the exhibition *Blanca montaña*, a record of Chilean contemporary architecture for the last 20 years, distinguished at the 5th Budapest Architecture Film Days as Best Landscape Architecture Film. He currently serves as a professor at the Universidad Andrés Bello.

Estaciones de trabajo /
Seasonal activities
S. E. / N. S.

