# STAGING RELATIONSHIPS WITH HISTORY:

## THE CULTURAL, NATURAL, AND ETERNAL RUINS OF BEARS EARS NATIONAL MONUMENT

Janus Keystone | Federica Goffi | Time Matters

How can we, as designers of the built environment, use history as a means of transforming the future, here and now? Rooted deeply within the canyons and mesas of the 1.3-million-acre monument in southeastern Utah, the endangered ruins of Bears Ears hold ancient stories of human interconnectivity with the environment – narratives central to Native American spirituality that unfold the earth as a living, breathing entity with an eternal pulse. In reinterpreting and transforming these stories, can modern visitors reimagine a different place in nature that might even inform the survival of humankind into the future?

In response to the current treatment of history as something in the past, this project aims to create a threshold between the distant past and the untold future by framing present experiences with additions to the Bears Ears National Monument. Standing as an architectural repository of many mythologies and narratives about the world, this interpretive center and corresponding observation platforms aim to direct us back to the core narratives and structures of feeling in the universe. The central intention focuses on the visitors' participation with the history that carries us forward in ways that may benefit us all.

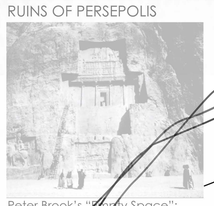
"To encounter the sacred is to be alive at the deepest center of human existence. Sacred places are the truest definitions of the earth; they stand for the earth immediately and forever; they are its flags and shields. If you would know the earth for what it really is, learn it through its sacred places. At Devil's Tower or Canyon de Chelly or the Cahokia Mounds, you touch the pulse of the living planet; you feel its breath upon you. You become one with a spirit that pervades geologic time and space." - N. Scott Momaday

ARTEFACT VIDEO

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL THRESHOLD THAT BRIDGES HISTORY AND THE PRESENT THROUGH THE REIMAGINATION OF MYTH, STORY, AND THE GHOSTS OF A PRIMORDIAL LANDSCAPE

BRIDGING THE DISTANT PAST AND THE UNKNOWN FUTURE THROUGH PRESENT EXPERIENCE

RUINS OF PERSEPOLIS



Peter Brook's "Empty Space": Orghast at Persepolis
Negin Djavadghan

NORTH PLATFORM BELOW

PROJECTION ROOM

BEARS EARS BUTTES VIEWING PLATFORM

"...ALIVE AT THE DEEPEST CENTER OF HUMAN EXISTENCE."

VIEWING ROOM

RESTROOMS

SOUTH PLATFORM BELOW

NEWSPAPER ROCK
Etched into sandstone, recording over 2,000 years of early human existence, this historical site contains roughly 650 petroglyph symbols depicting migration patterns, natural cycles, and environmental connection through spiritual practice. It is a "rock that tells a story."

MULE CANYON KIVA
Occupied around A.D. 750, the Kiva/pit-house and watch tower were built and utilized by the Ancestral Puebloans for shelter, storage, and spiritual practice. The Kiva, a subterranean structure used for prayer, submerged the user in the ground emulating the mythological movement between worlds and creation.

BUTLER WASH COMPLEX
Occupied around A.D. 1200, the Ancestral Puebloan cliff dwellings and ceremonial Kivas are tucked within the cliffs of Butler Wash canyon and represent a full range of Anasazi daily activities. While using the naturally formed caves for habitation, storage, and ceremonial practice, the base of the canyon was used for farming, further telling a story of human survival and spiritual use of the land.