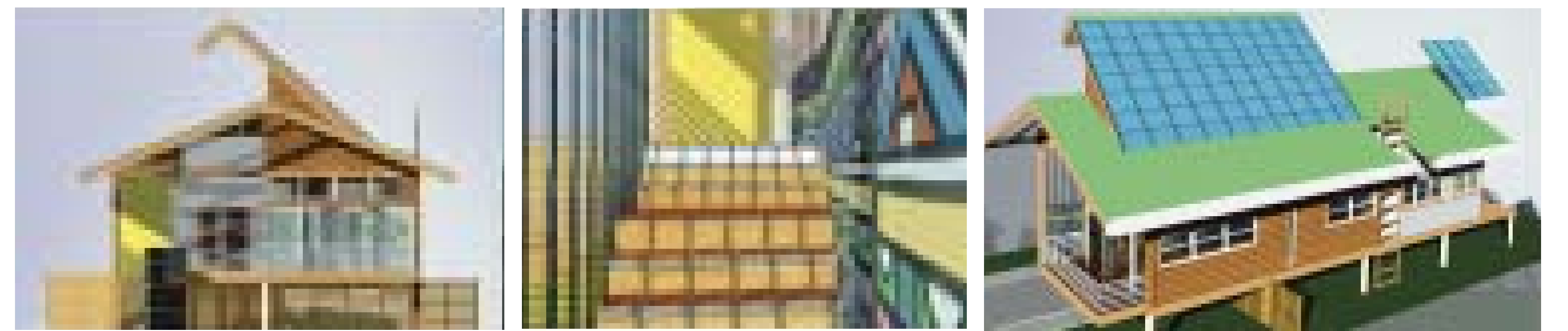
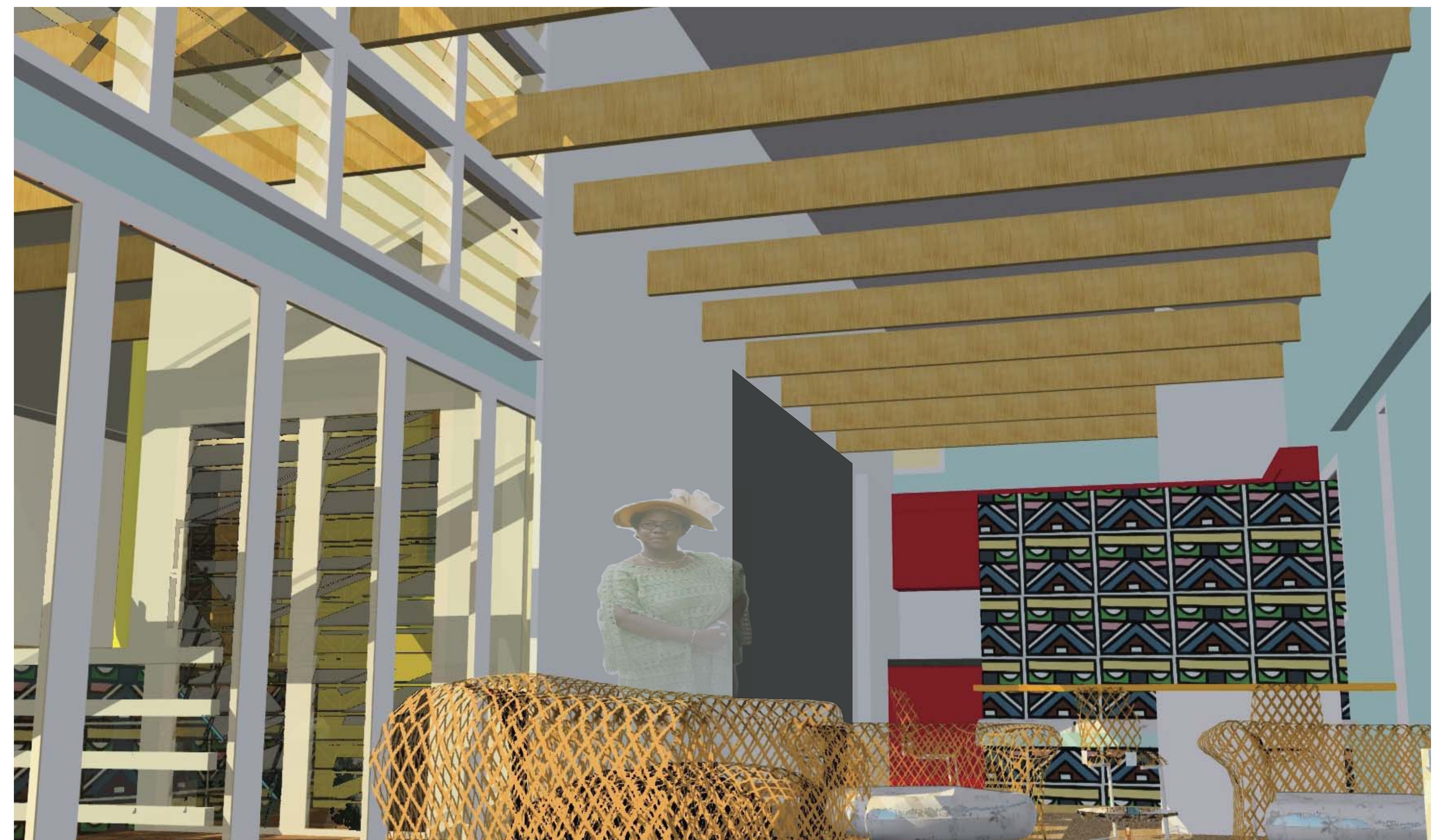


# Constructs LLC Ghana



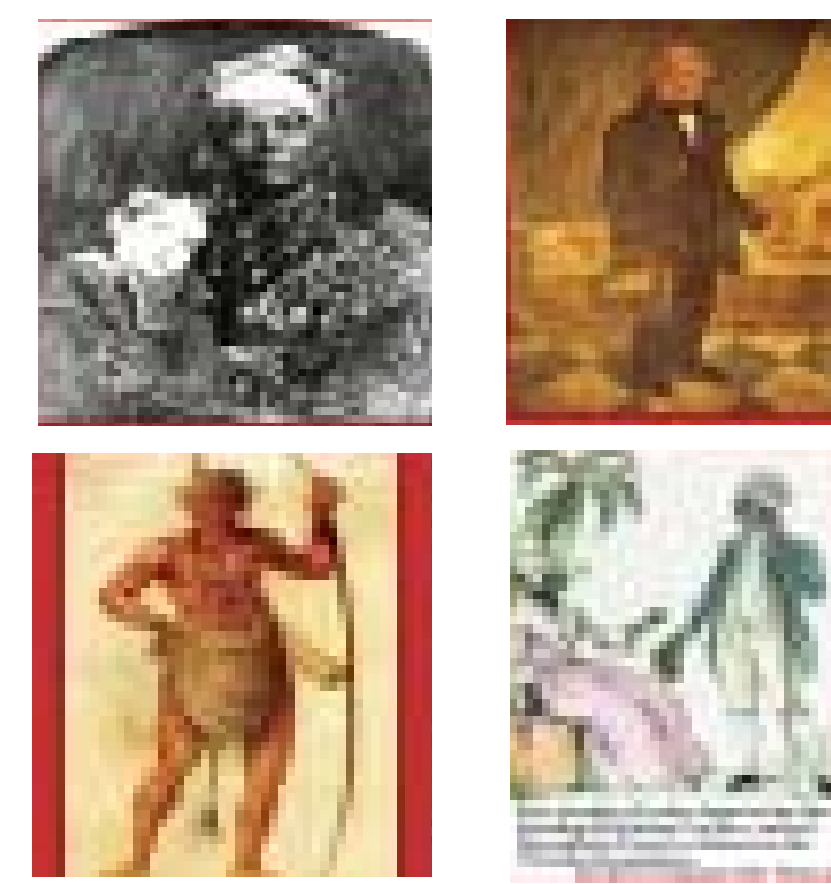
## SPHERES OF INFLUENCE

New Orleans must be revived. My recent visit re-informed this need. This is truly a unique place in the Americas, influence by many cultures be it Cuban, Native American, Spanish, French and most importantly African American descendants of slaves and have created a unique culture and experience which has established itself as an important part of America. We all view issues through the prisms of our interest and/or our profession and as an African who has lived in America, worked in Louisiana and currently practicing in Ghana, West Africa, my initial response to the project, among others, is about the "African Diaspora". Displaced people of African descent (yet again, after the initial traumatic experiences of Slavery) in New Orleans reconnecting to their roots in Africa and Louisiana via an architecture that is responsive and innovative.

## THE ARCHITECTURAL DIVERSITY OF THE TOWNS WITHIN THE DELTA REGION IS STAGGERING

In many cases they reflect Spanish, French, British, German, African, and early American influences, often having survived floods and wars, and having escaped urban renewal. The Lower Delta's architectural heritage evokes a sense of the past defined by scale, materials, and layout. An important element of its culture and architecture are the many styles of fold building throughout, including dog trot, shotgun, creole cottage, raised cottage, I-house, center passage house, and undercut galleries, plus barns and gins. It is here that direct connections can be made with Caribbean and African architecture. For instances the typical shotgun houses of New Orleans, (houses consisting of usually one room wide and several rooms long with a gable roof facing the main street) has been noted for its roots in Yoruba, West Africa.

new Orleans is considered the center of the shotgun housing development in the United States and the connection between the two is made via towns in Southern Haiti. Where houses were also one room wide and one story high with the shotgun in Haiti also associated with the shotgun in Louisiana, although not always to the same degree. Historians have linked the occurrence of the shotgun houses in Haiti and Louisiana to the trade links and immigration between the two. During the first days of slavery the Yoruba and Yoruba related peoples were brought to Haiti in sufficient numbers and thus they were able to preserve many traits of their African Culture. The shotgun house's transformed as they moved from rural to urban. However, one thing that remained the same was the need to group the houses in rows. This grouping reflects a West African method of houses working together, the "shotgun row" kept the houses cool in the summer time and warm in the winter. This again reflects the West African philosophy of a communal before individual architectural approach.



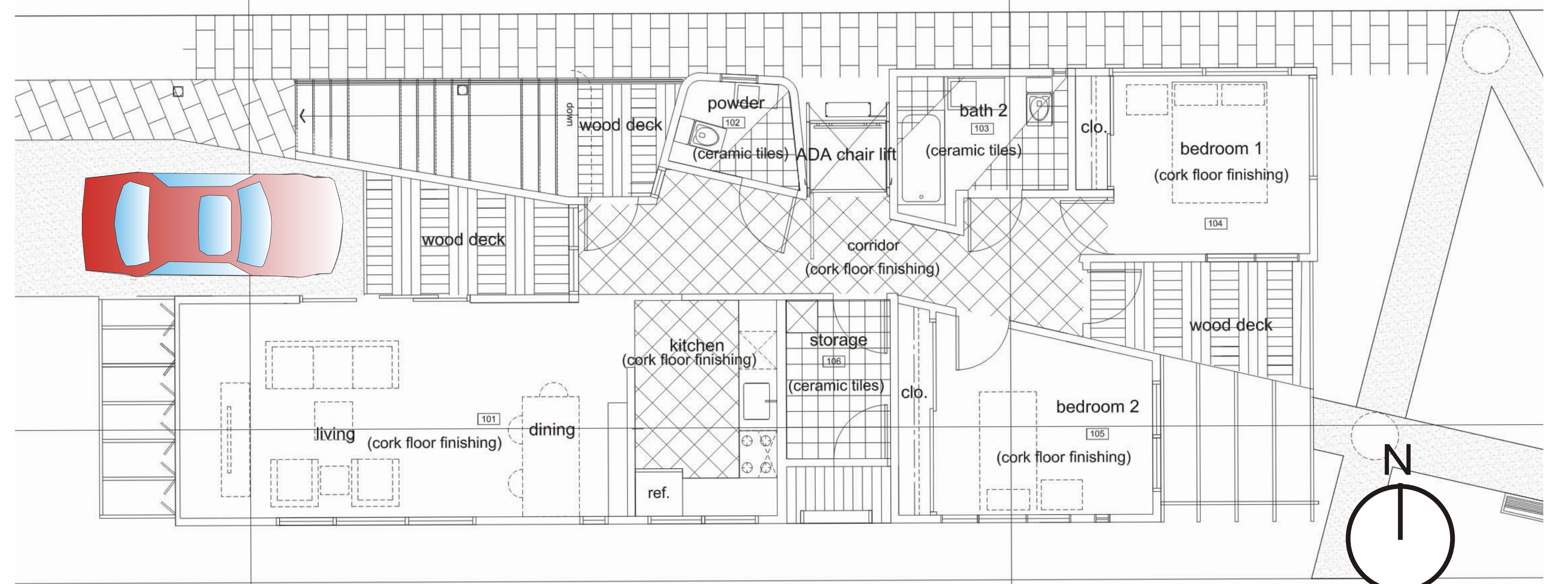
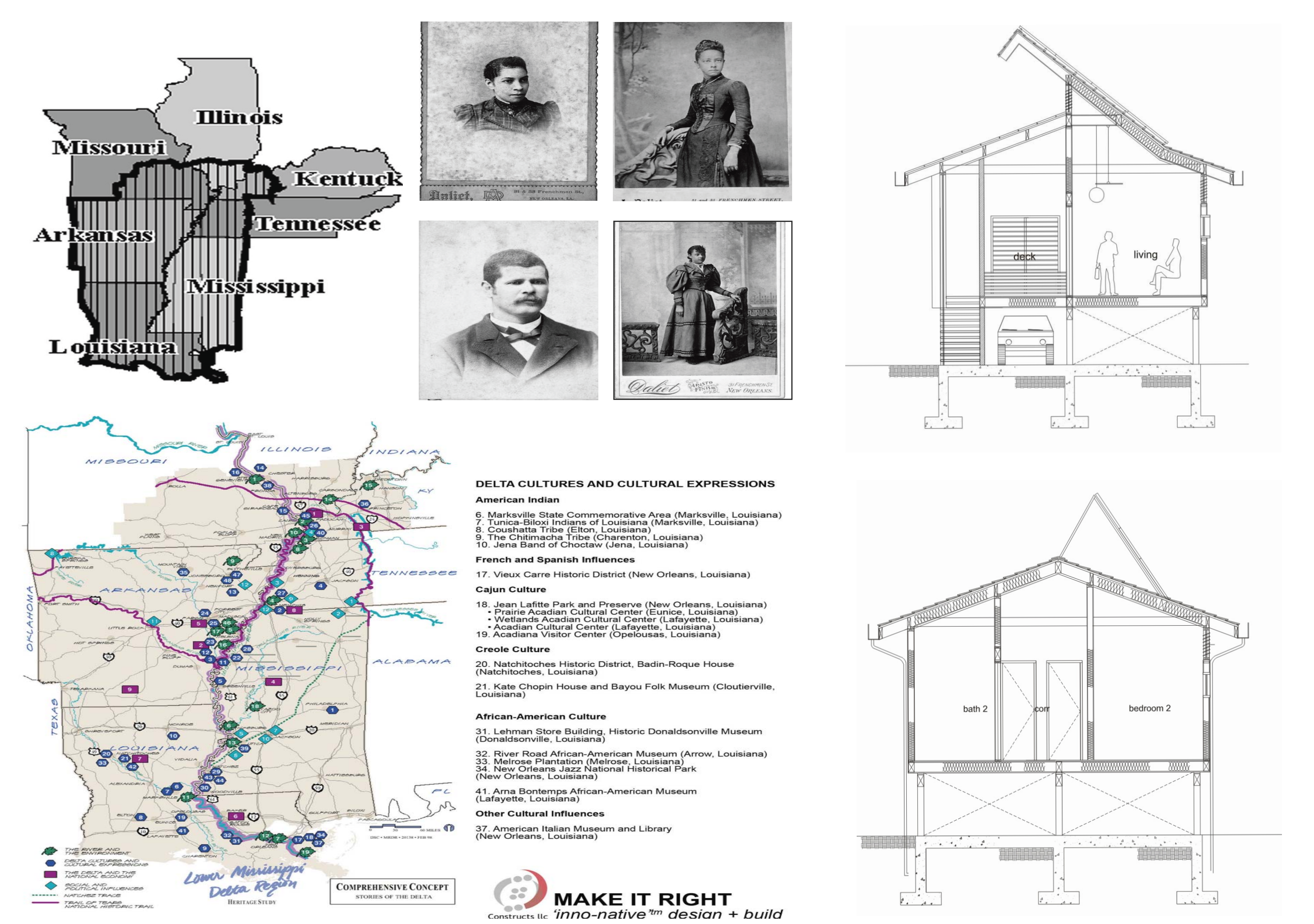
The evolution of the "Shotgun" house from West Africa, to the Caribbean and into New Orleans. The Yoruba house had the shotgun structure without the porches. During the slave trade, West Africans were brought to the Caribbean for sugar cane production in 1503. The Tainos, the original inhabitants of Haiti, lived in simple houses made of thatched walls and roofs. When the Africans arrived in Haiti they combined the house of the Tainos with their own. These houses, called Calles, were made of mud, straw, wood and thatch. The Calle was usually a thin, narrow building with a gabled entrance, with plastered, stucco walls, a thatched roof, and shuttered windows. Houses such as these may still be found in rural Haiti, where villages without monetary resources are limited to using only natural materials. But more commonly one will find a shotgun house made of wood the next logical transformation.

Out take on the next step of evolution Manipulations of the circulation path relates to the city grid shift which takes place in the lower 9th ward. This new axis combined with penetrations and voids creates a more unique experience while moving through the space.



The lower Mississippi Delta Region and it's array of cultural connections...

The Mississippi Delta is a vast and vital part of the American landscape. This broad, alluvial valley encompasses all of parts of seven states bound together by their ties to the river. Broadly defined, the delta region spans the entire lower portion of the river beginning in Southern Illinois, covering portions of Missouri, Kentucky, and Tennessee, and including all of Arkansas, Mississippi, and Louisiana. It is a land of converging cultures with a unique complexity and density of history, prehistory, and cultural expression. Over the centuries, American Indians, French, Arab, Spanish, African, German, English, Irish, Scots-Irish, Jewish, Italian, Chinese, Mexican, and Southeast Asian people have established and maintained their distinctive ethnic identities. Often these cultures intermingled to form discreet, new cultural elements found only in the Delta. The delta region offers one of the best examples of



## CONSTRUCTS HOUSE CONSTRUCTS LLC GHANA

Joe Osae-Addo was born in Ghana, West Africa, and trained at the Architectural Association in London. He worked in Finland, the UK and the USA, setting up his practice in Los Angeles in 1991. His work has been influenced by 'genus-loci', and how architecture can/should respond to this in creating pieces which are both site specific and meet the needs of people who will interact with it. He is a founding partner in the A + D Museum, Los Angeles, whose mission is to advance knowledge and to enable people to appreciate and understand architecture and design. He moved back to his native country Ghana in 2004 and is currently the CEO of Constructs LLC, an 'inno-native' design firm based in Accra and Tamale in Ghana, West Africa.

Constructs LLC is currently working on several projects as both developer and architect, with a primary focus on developing manufacturing, using and promoting indigenous materials and technology for construction, in a contemporary way. The firm has expanded its mandate to become a think tank of sorts, to engage in the discourse of economic development in Ghana and Africa as a whole. They have become self-described 'DESIGN- SOCIO-ECONOMISTS', using architecture as a platform to engage in Projects ranging from re-branding of Towns and Cities, Product design (as an economic empowerment tool) to targeted urban planning initiatives.

