



O'NASHIA OLISE

Architecture Portfolio

**Columbia GSAPP
2023-2026**

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01 THREADED FRAGMENTS

Class | Semester: Core 1 | Fall 2023

Faculty: Mpho Matsipa

Location: 125th Street, New York

In passing through thresholds on 125th street, I noticed how my afro-feminine body attracted African diasporic hairdressers as they attempted to gain a customer. This introduced me to the African hair braiding culture on 125th street.

The Braiders Pod was designed to create a system that supports the hair braider by speeding up the braiding process, through pod-integrated feeding hooks informed by the hand gesture of 'feeding in' hair in African hair braiding.



El Monte Sweatshop Case of 1995

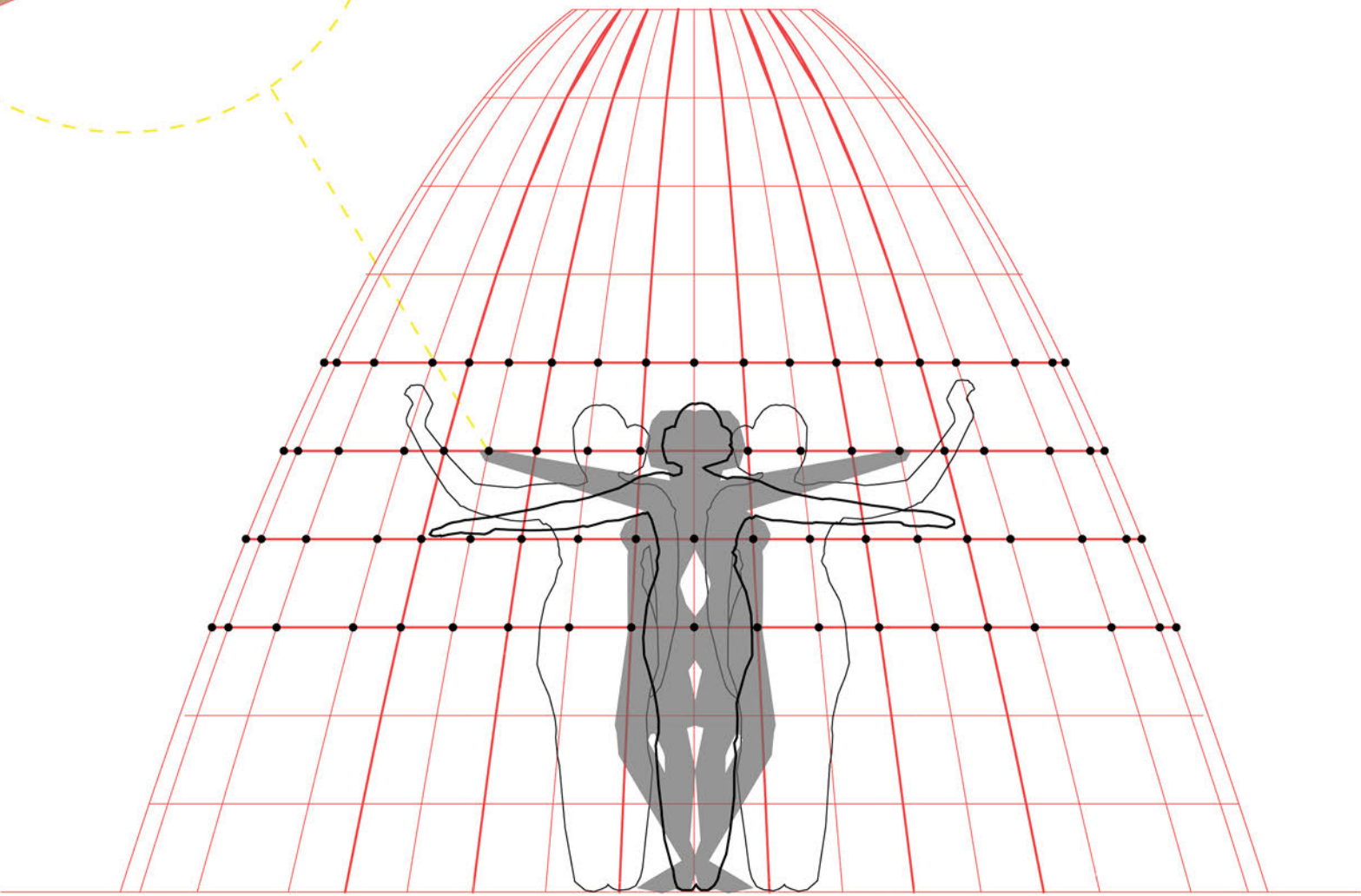
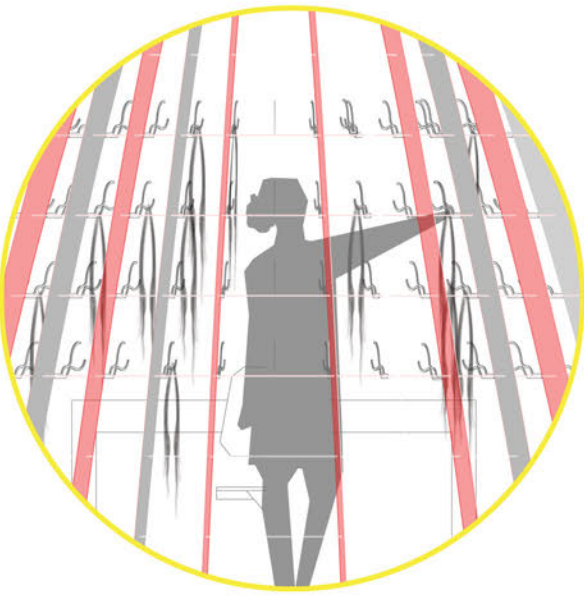
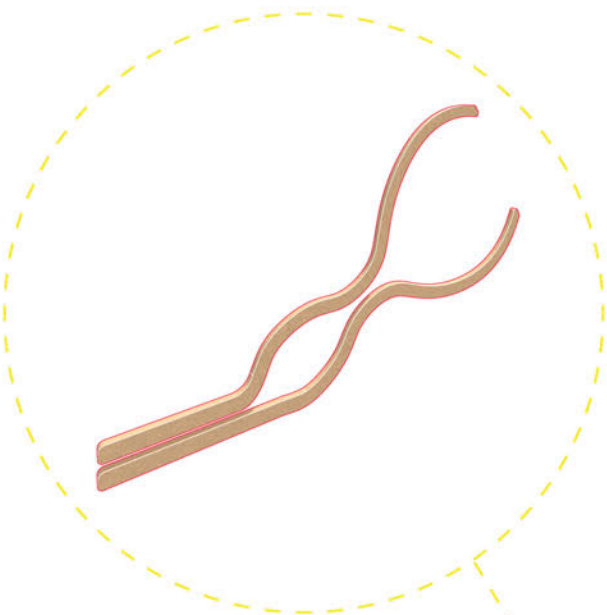




My research uncovered the invisibility of African hair braiding salons on conventional mapping tools like Apple and Google Maps.

To a degree, this invisibility is intentional. **Business cards, street posters, and word of mouth are the maps of 125th street African Hair Braiding.** Many hair braiders operate from their home and the personal extension of the business card is your invitation and mode of accessing your hair braider.

The form of the pod was derived from my afro-feminine body proportions which does not conform to the Vitruvian man, the European male body, as the normative reference for architectural proportions.



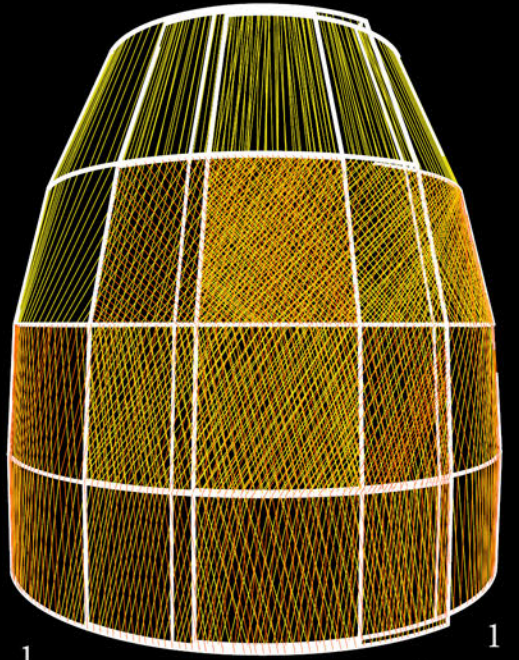


At the very back of Apollo Beauty Land (bottom plan and section), 7 diasporic African hairdressers managing what they have been presenting with spatially to operate their hairdressing businesses. The hair braiding space is the least accessible space in the beauty supply store, devoid of natural lighting, ventilation and ADA access.

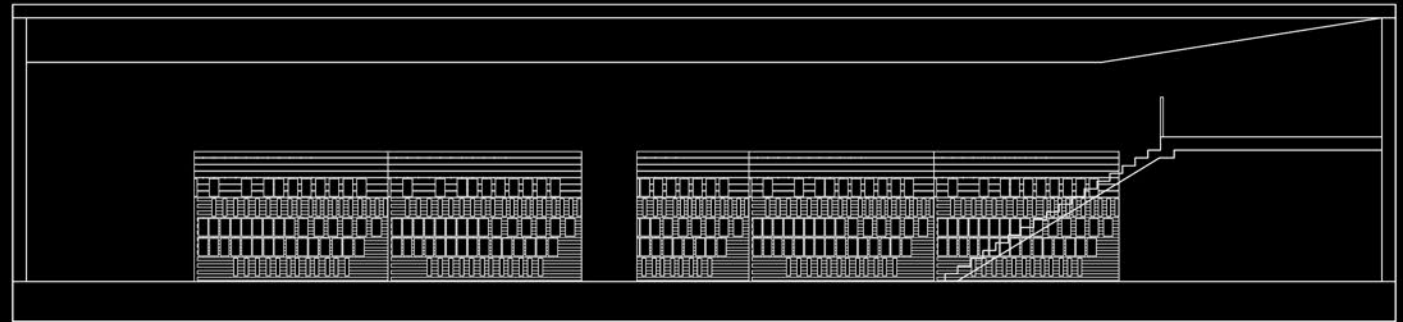
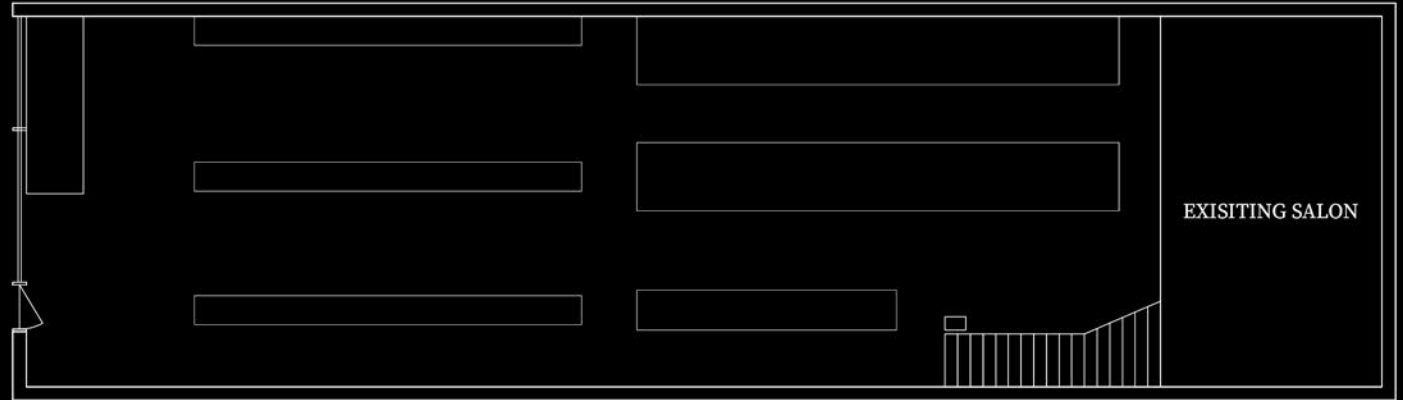
There is a classic example of how historically, **Black women have been subjected to making do with structures that are not designed for them.** I needed to address this.

What does it mean to claim space as black women?

How do you define a space that is symbolic and fitting for the rich, cultural practice of African Hair Braiding?

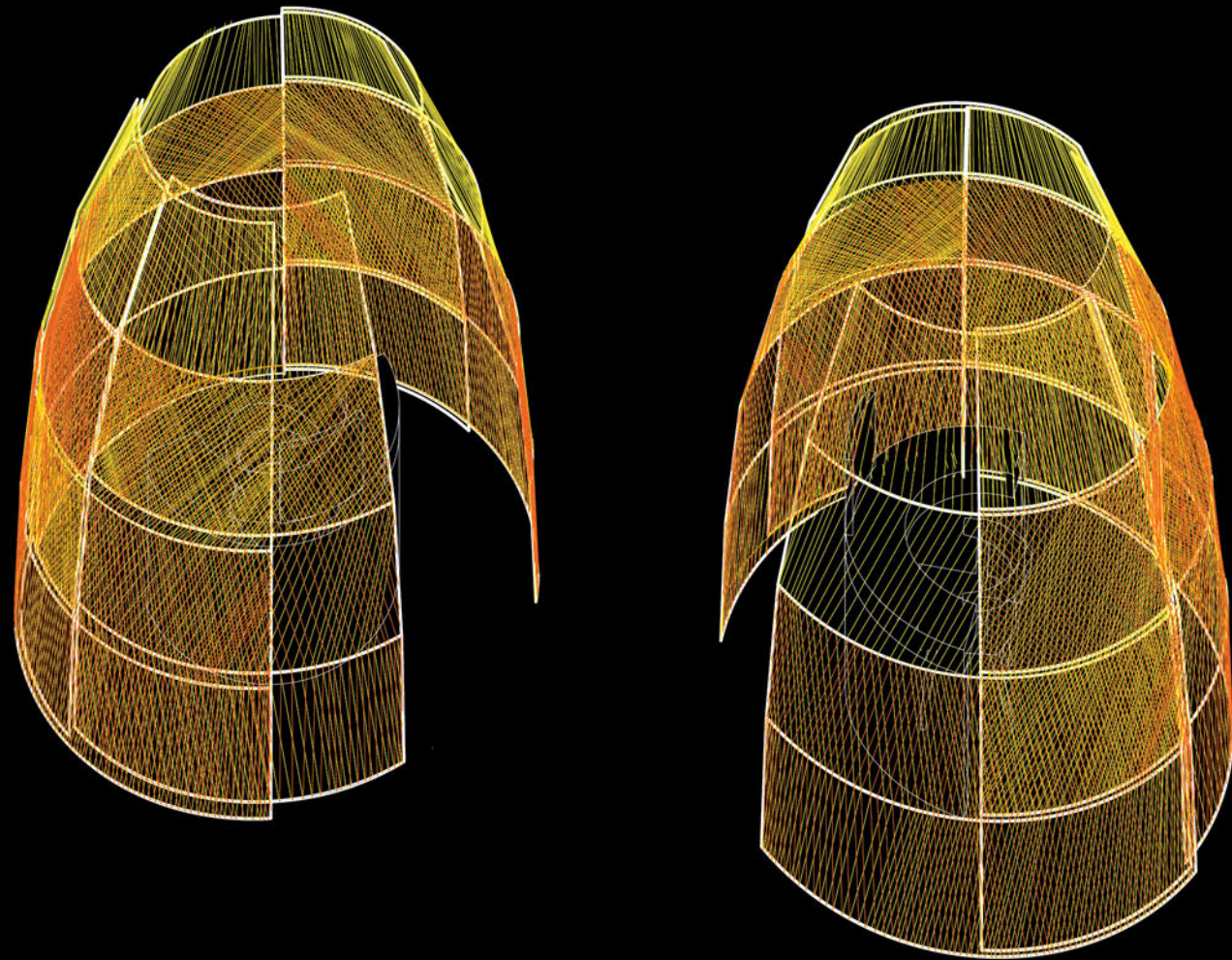


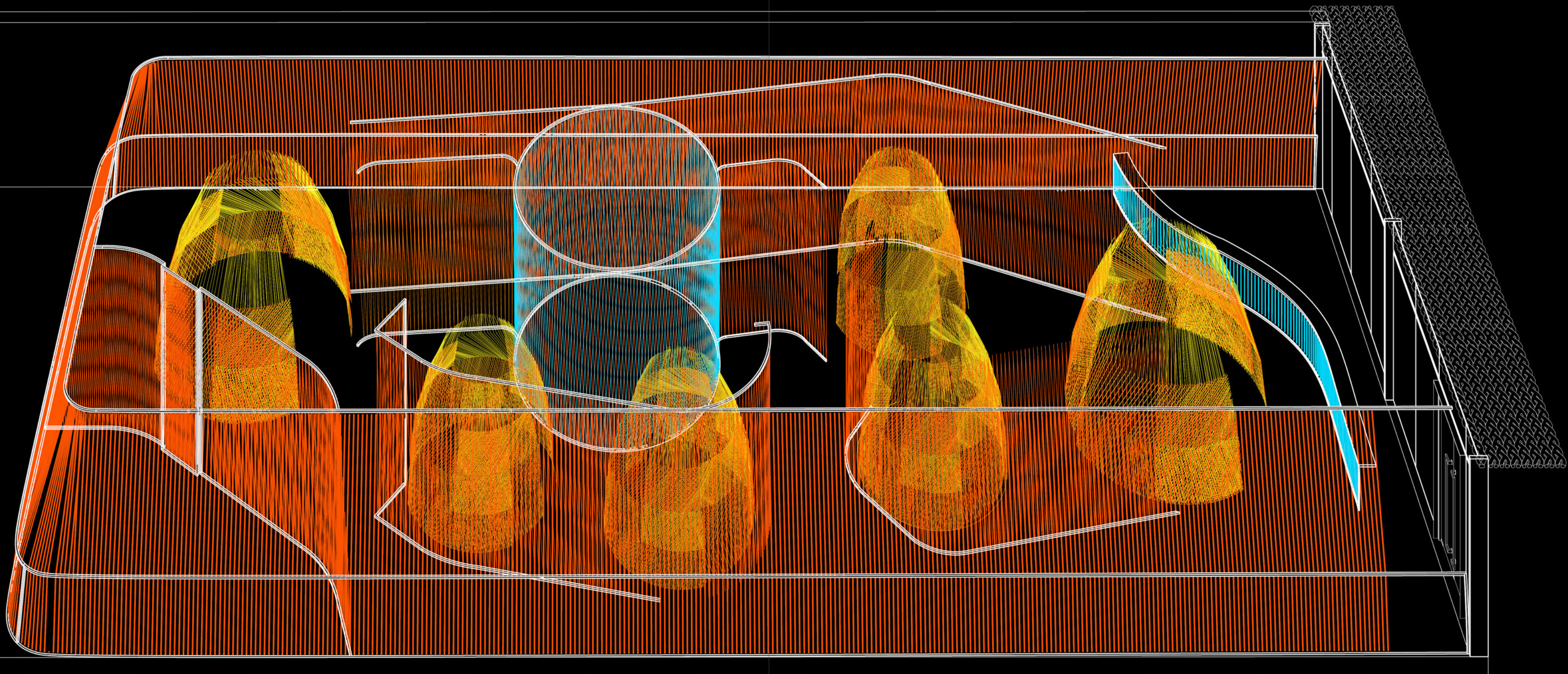
Layers of a Threaded Facade



The materiality of each individual pod explores **varying degrees of visibility and permeability, giving the braider agency of space.** It creates a private and more intimate space when needed, and moments of airiness and conversation when desired.

Threaded pods are oriented in pairs. Hair braiding can become a collective and enjoyable, because hair braiding is not an isolating experience, but sometimes it wants to be private an intimate. Each experience is unique, threaded pods support this.





02 'SLOW' FASHION

Class | Semester: Grad 1 | Spring 2024

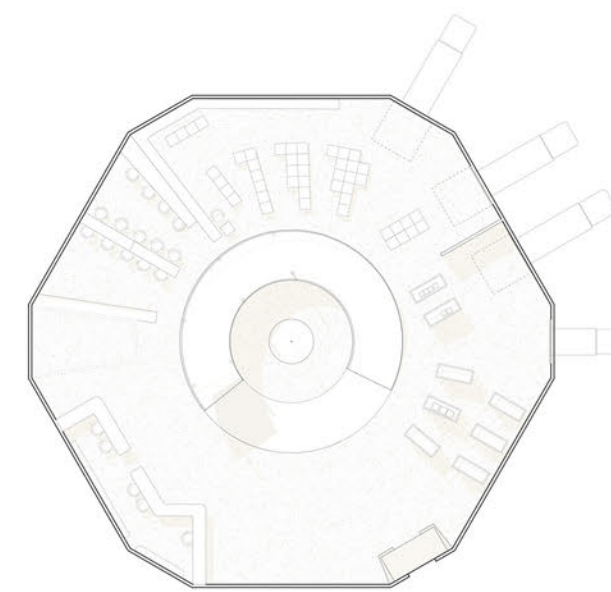
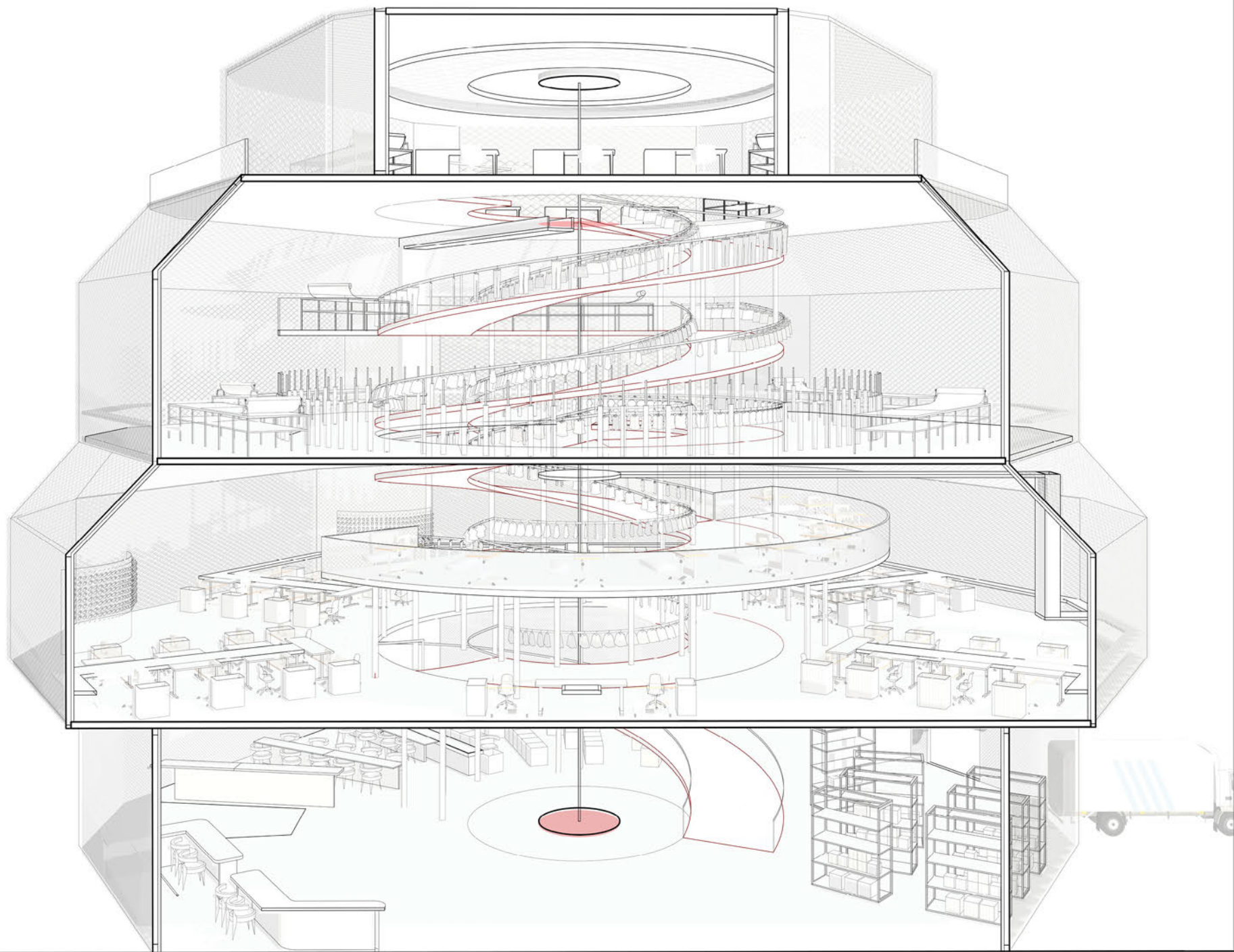
Faculty: Grace Alli

Location: Los Angeles, California

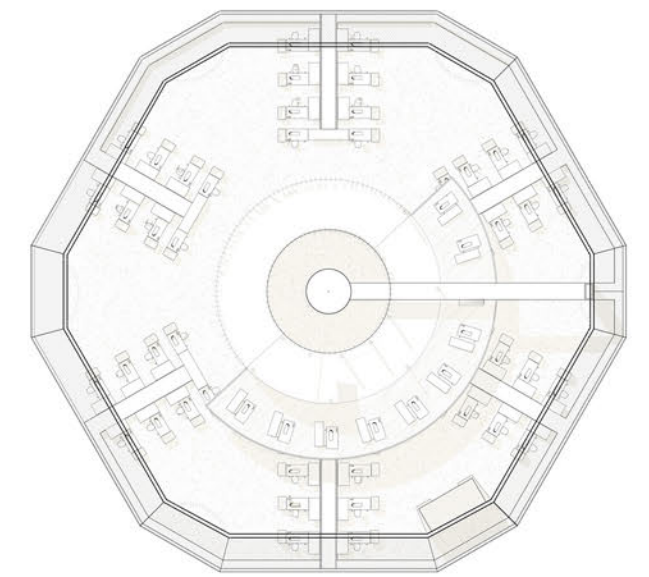
This project seeks to prioritize garment workers in the LA fashion district where numerous sweatshops exist today.

'Slow' fashion rethinks the shopper and worker relationship by inviting buyers into the space. Architecture of garment production is no longer one of concealment and confinement, but one that empowers migrant garment workers in the United States.

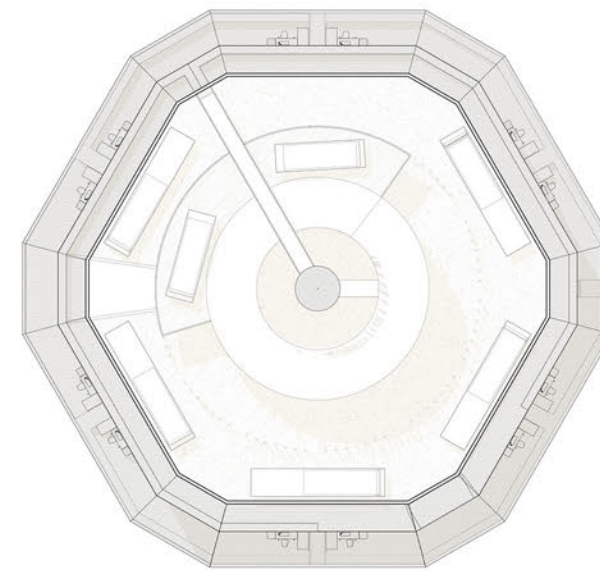




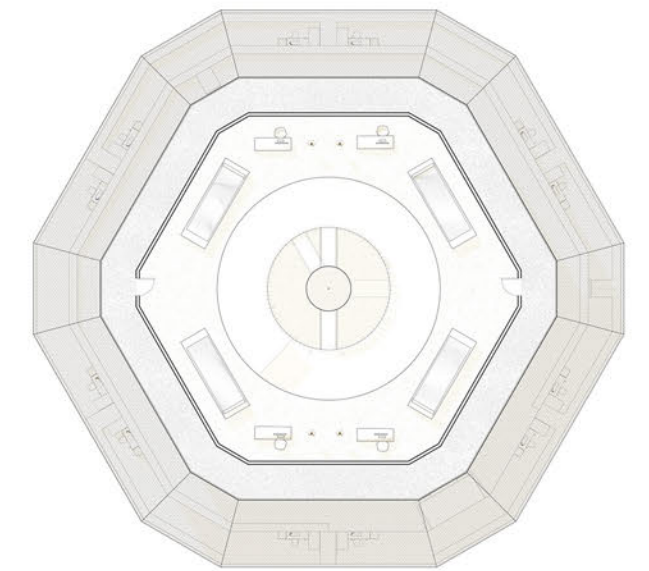
Floor 1: Product Assessment + Packing



Floor 2: Sewing



Floor 3: Pattern Cutting



Floor 4: Design + Pattern Making

03 Growing Futures

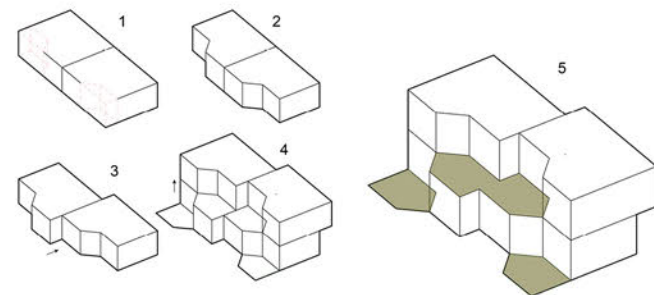
Class | Semester: Grad Yr 2 | Fall 2024

Faculty: Gary Bates

Location: Harlem, New York

Teammate: Adneth Marie Kaze

Growing Futures envisions growth of people and plants as the cornerstone of urban regeneration, centering children as active agents in shaping their environments. It reclaims a dead-end street and underutilized lots to transform them into networks of play, collaboration, and self-guided exploration. The design prioritizes shared spaces that foster collective care and intergenerational connection, reviving the ethos of “raising a child through the village”. This collaboration is cultivated through terraces, porches, and gardens, **creating environments where children can safely be, create, learn, play, and grow.**





Tomato



Hibiscus



Guajillo Chili



Callaloo



Eucalyptus Tree

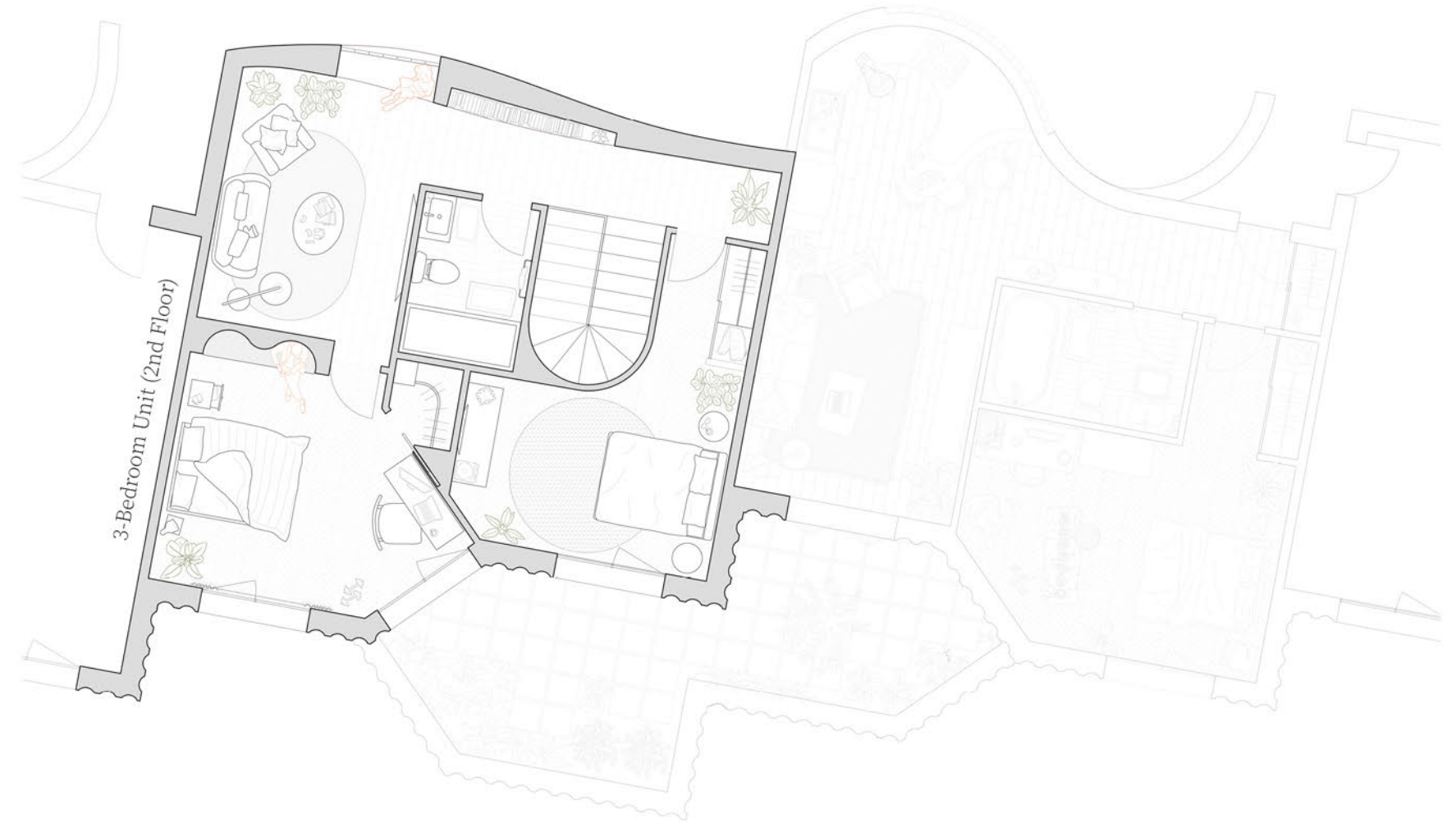


Sourwood Tree



Culturally Significant Crops Grown









04 Pavia-Edgar Art Center

Class | Semester: ADV IV | Spring 2025

Faculty: Robert Marino

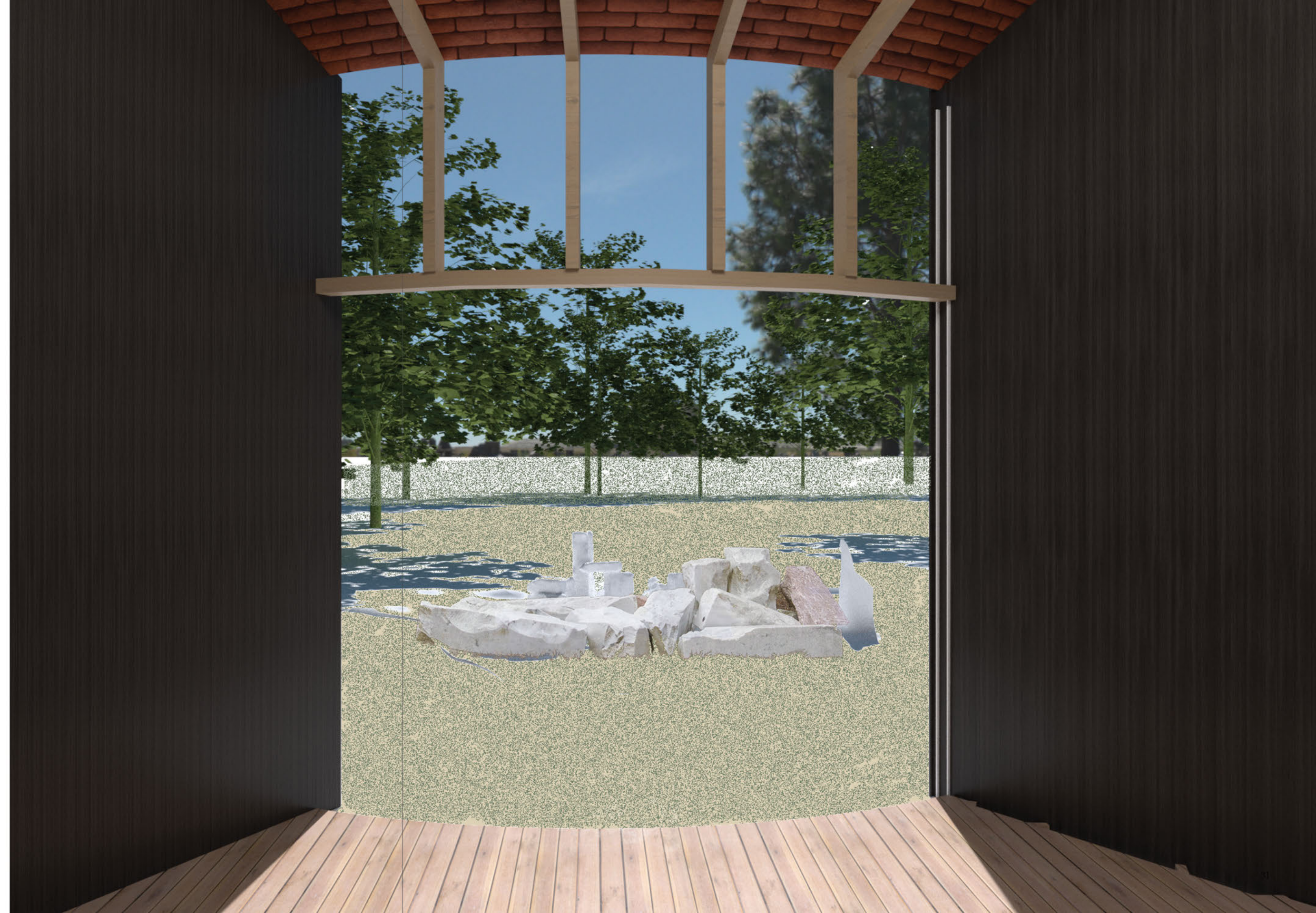
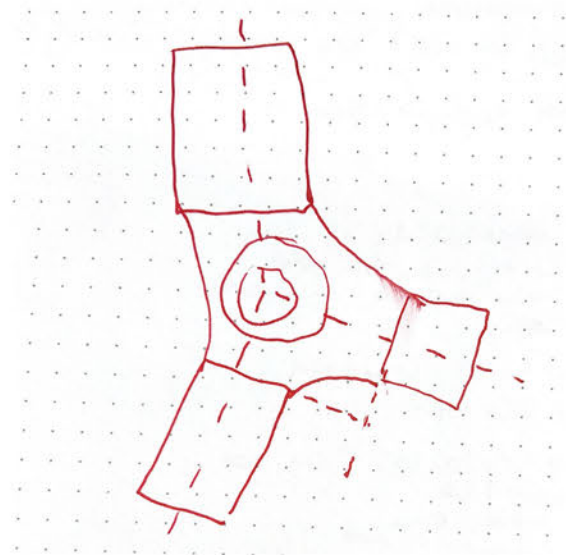
Location: Springs, New York

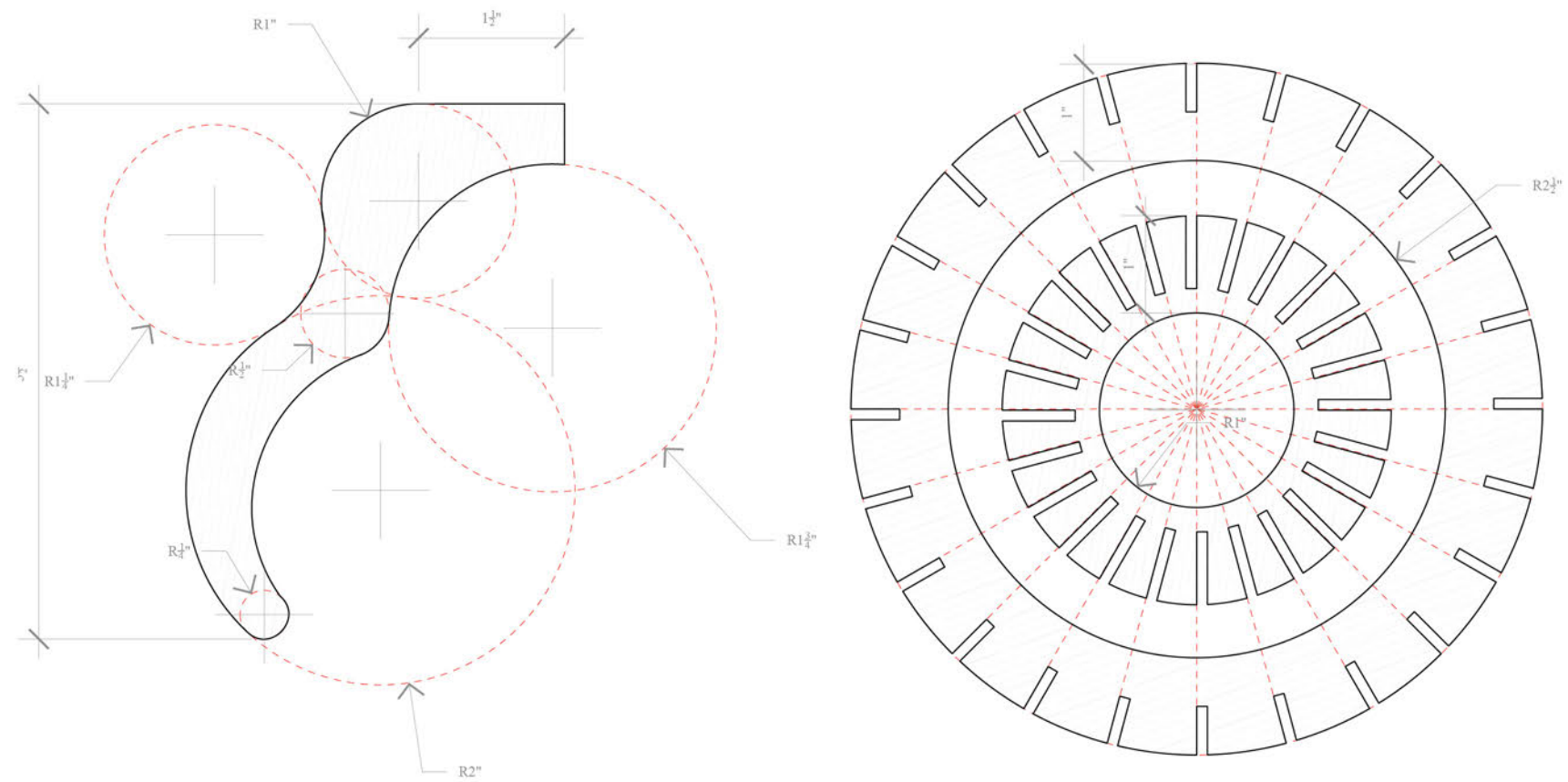
The works of Philip Pavia, abstract expressionist painter Natralie Edgar, and Paul Pavia need a home. I designed a Y- shaped barn to house the their works with respect to the vernacular architecture of East Hamptons. I prioritized ensuring that the buildings werw small and light.

A crucial aspect of the design of the art space was creating a central ‘eye cleansing zone’ for visitors to reflect while overlooking the sand pit before entering the next barn (art zone).

My second concept was treating the facade of a building as a back drop for artists to paint in the summer.

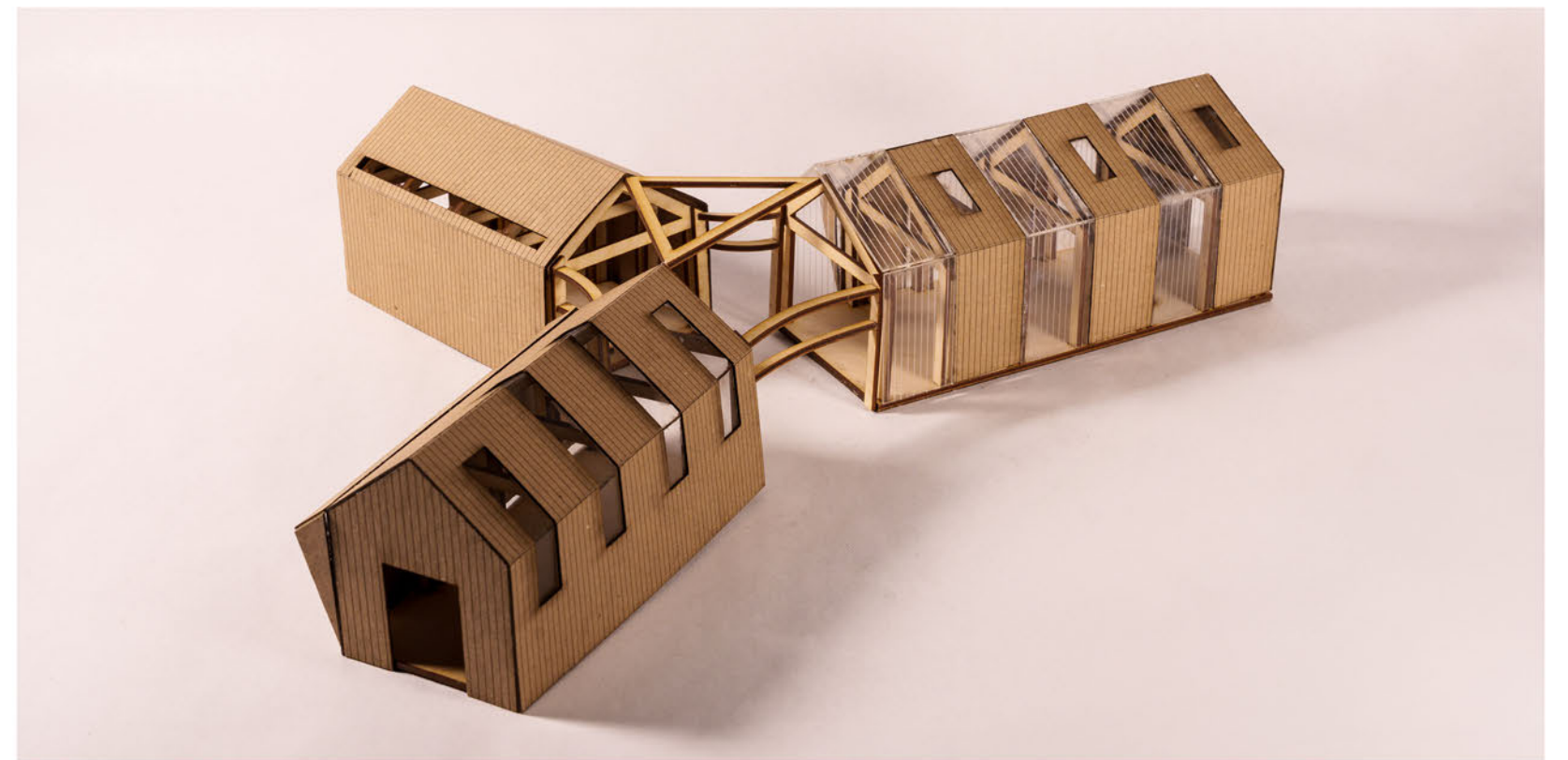
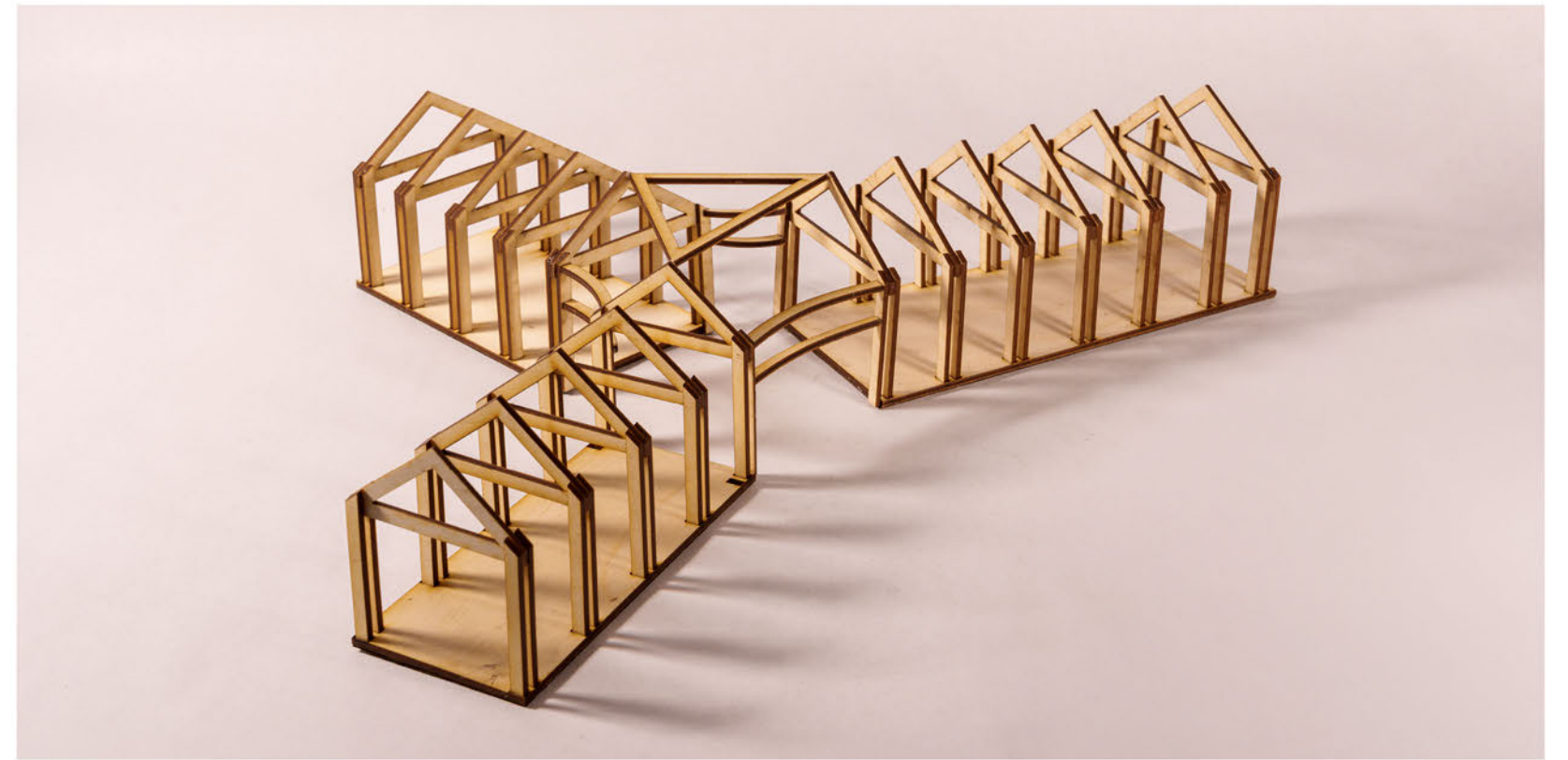
A residence was also designed for 2-4 visiting artists to stay.

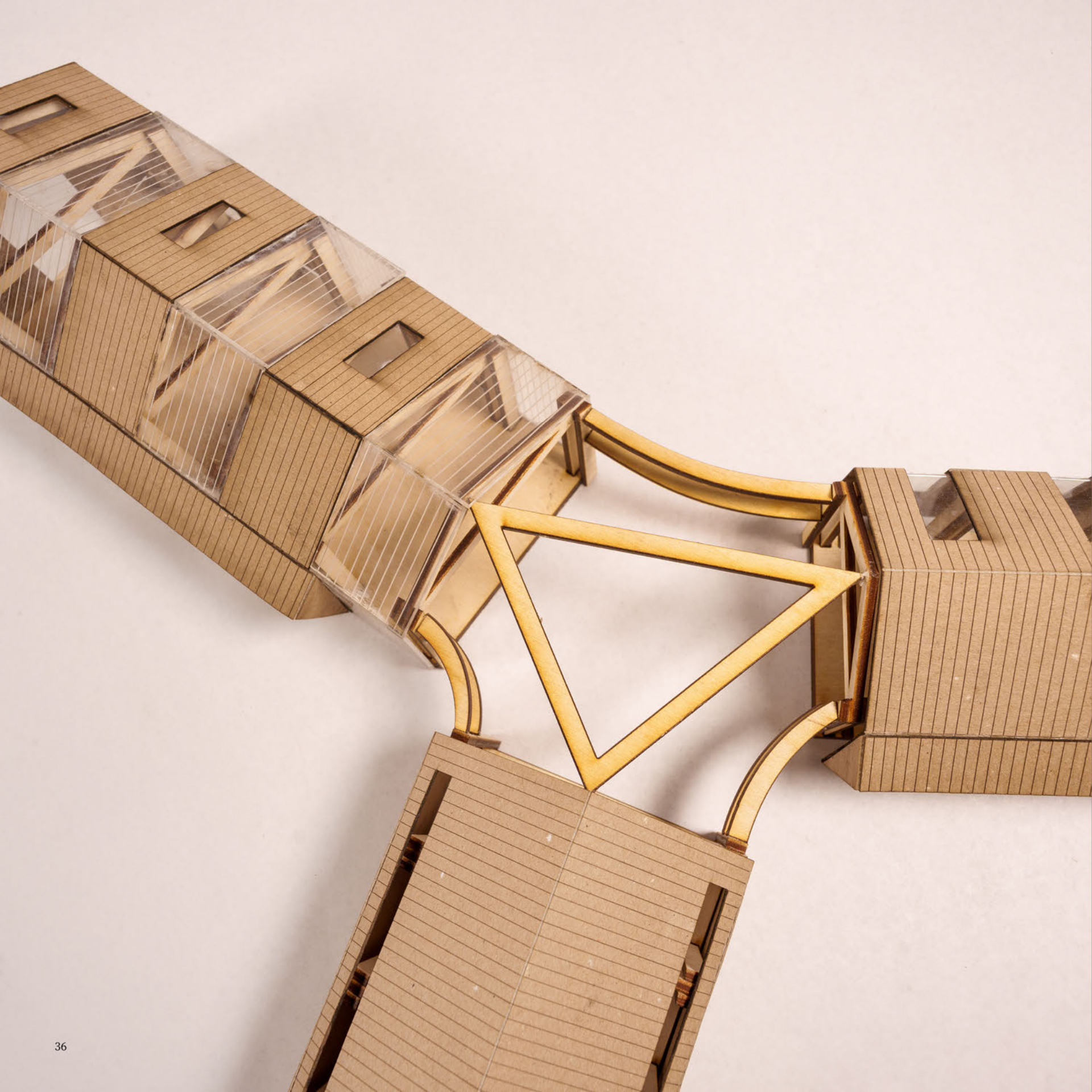


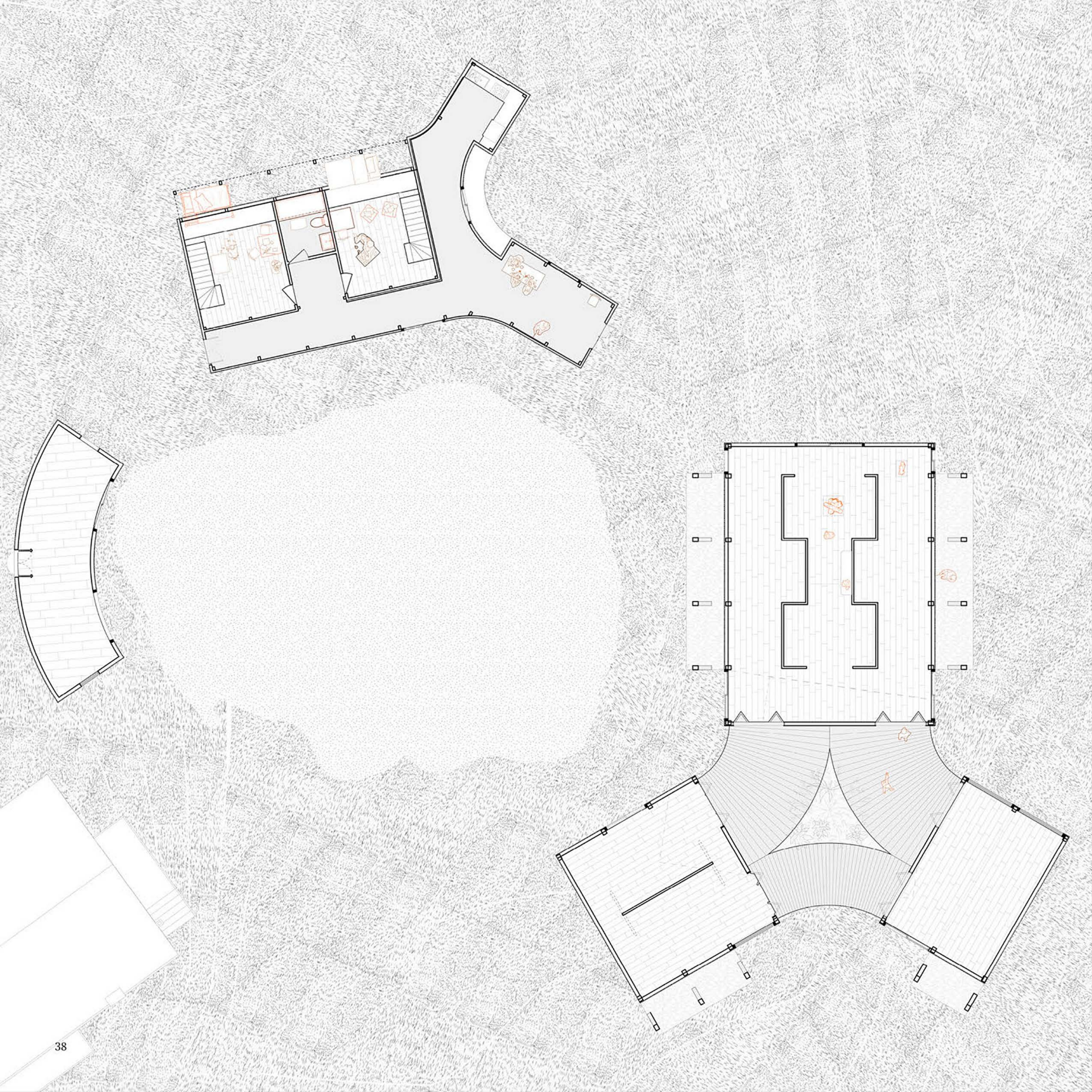


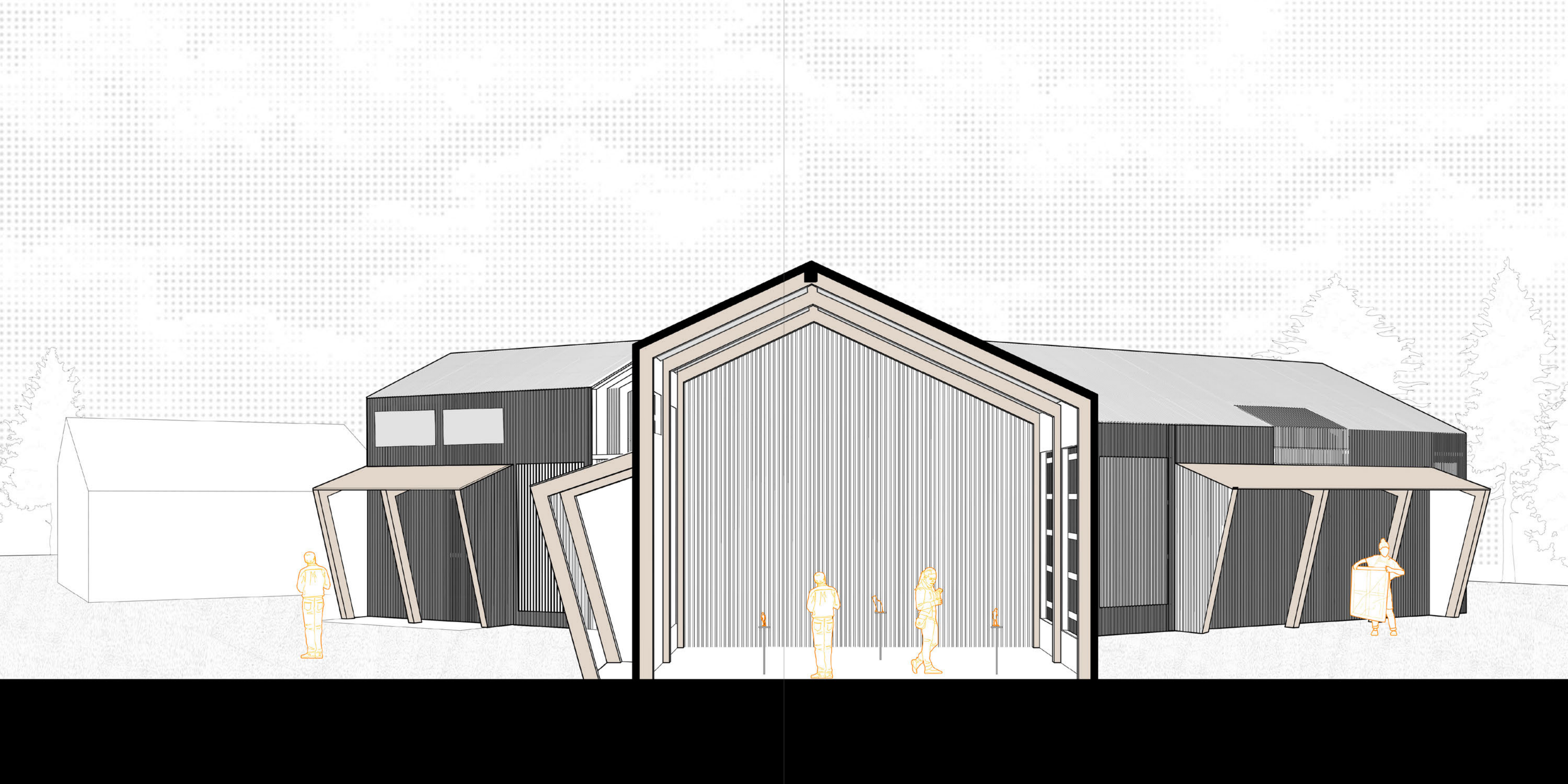
Light Anchor: Shadow as Direction of Light











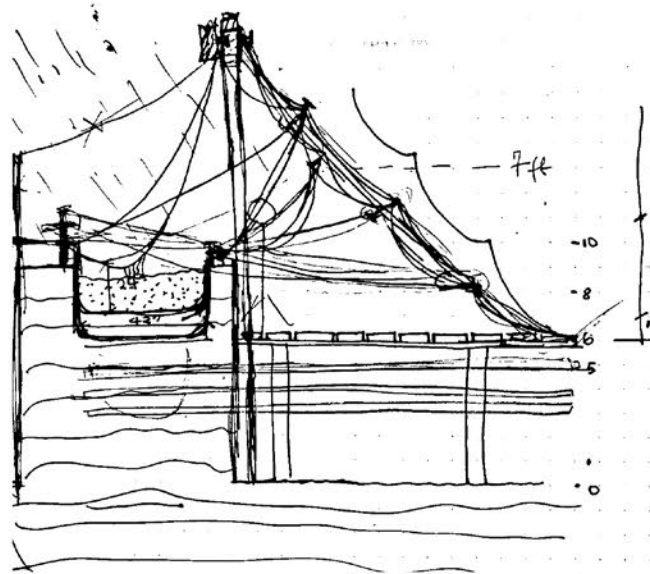
05 The Land Speaks Back

Class | Semester: ADV V | Fall 2025

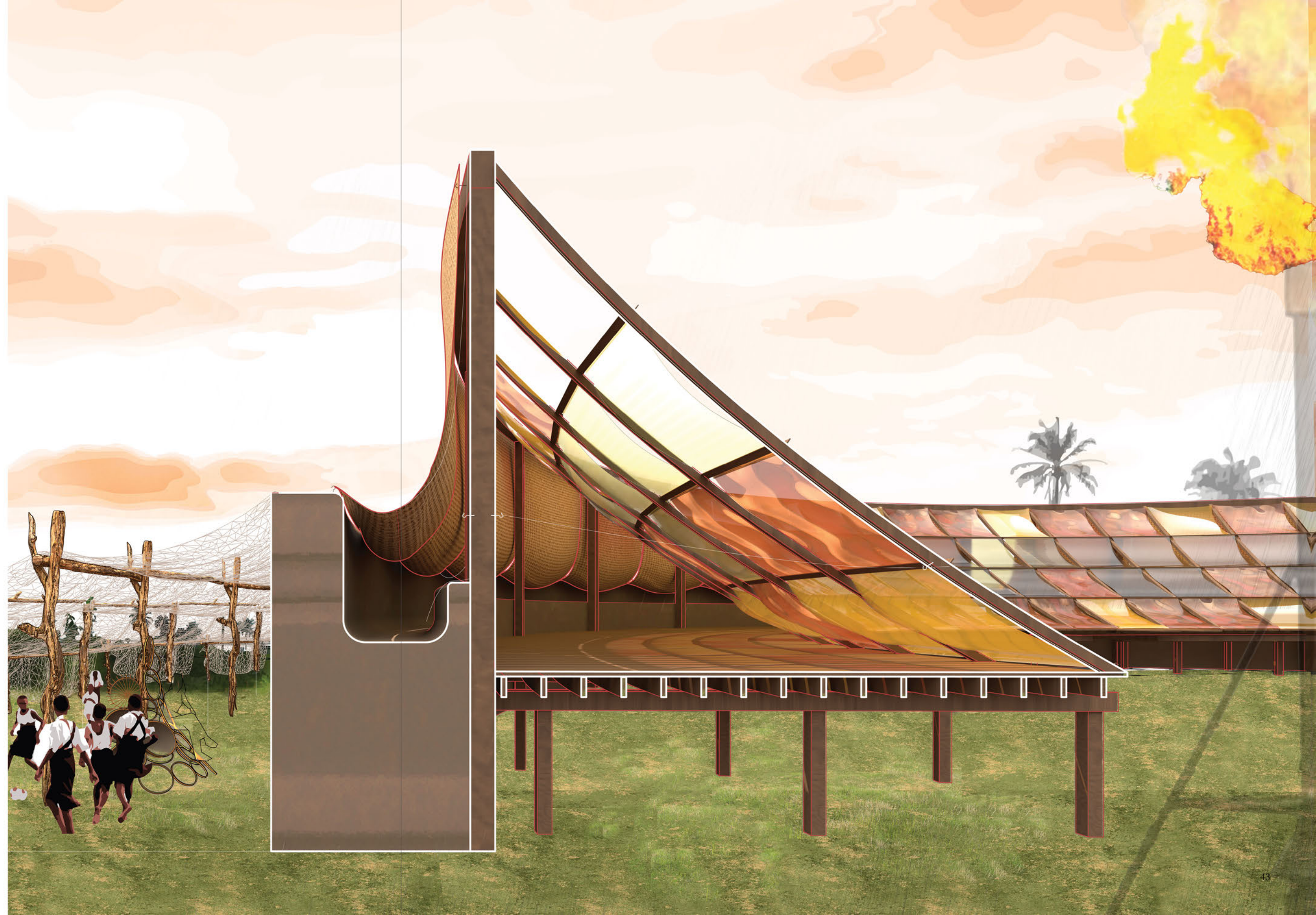
Faculty: Sumayya Vally

Location: Niger Delta, Nigeria

Across the Niger Delta, rivers run with crude, red-gold flames dot the sky and ancestral practices are rapidly endangered. **The Land speaks Back** draws from temporal and seasonal rhythms and the resilience of Niger Deltans in the face of extractive violence. Material becomes a landscape of histories and an embodiment of histories of the landscape.



El Monte Sweatshop Case of 1995



► Needs Water



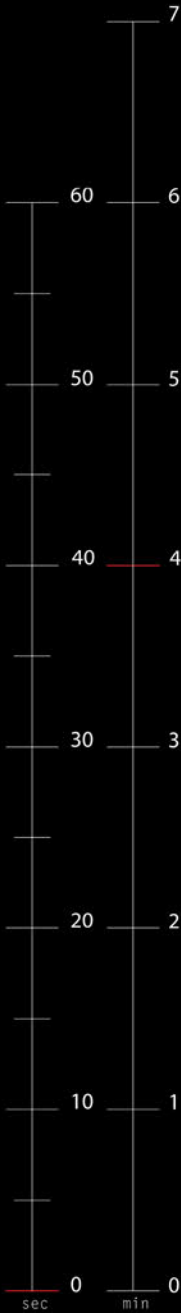
Hard, dry,
undercooked

NOTES:

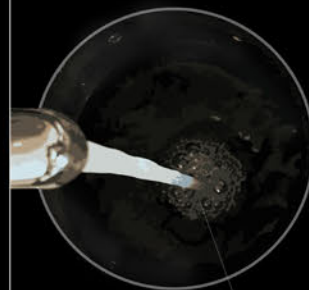
TEMPERATURE: 90.3°C
COLOR: 241 224 167

EQUIPMENTS

Handheld, round-bottom, lidded cooking vessel.
200mm diameter 1-2 litre capacity
Short Wooden Cooking Spatula
250mm Length 50mm blade width 10mm thickness



► Requires Heat



REQUIREMENTS:
TEMPERATURE: 90.3°C
COLOR: 241 224 167
EQUIPMENTS:
Handheld, round-bottom, lidded cooking vessel.
200mm diameter 1-2 litre capacity
Short Wooden Cooking Spatula
250mm Length 50mm blade width 10mm thickness



► Time to Add Fufu



REQUIREMENTS:
TEMPERATURE: 90.3°C
COLOR: 241 224 167
EQUIPMENTS:
Handheld, round-bottom, lidded cooking vessel.
200mm diameter 1-2 litre capacity
Short Wooden Cooking Spatula
250mm Length 50mm blade width 10mm thickness



► Keep Beating



REQUIREMENTS:
TEMPERATURE: 90.3°C
COLOR: 241 224 167
EQUIPMENTS:
Handheld, round-bottom, lidded cooking vessel.
200mm diameter 1-2 litre capacity
Short Wooden Cooking Spatula
250mm Length 50mm blade width 10mm thickness



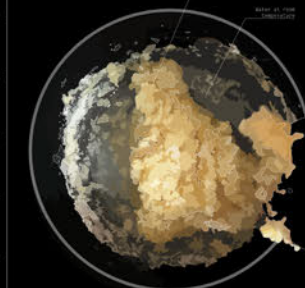
► Needs Water



REQUIREMENTS:
TEMPERATURE: 90.3°C
COLOR: 241 224 167
EQUIPMENTS:
Handheld, round-bottom, lidded cooking vessel.
200mm diameter 1-2 litre capacity
Short Wooden Cooking Spatula
250mm Length 50mm blade width 10mm thickness



► Spread Dough More Evenly



REQUIREMENTS:
TEMPERATURE: 90.3°C
COLOR: 241 224 167
EQUIPMENTS:
Handheld, round-bottom, lidded cooking vessel.
200mm diameter 1-2 litre capacity
Short Wooden Cooking Spatula
250mm Length 50mm blade width 10mm thickness



► Cook Longer



REQUIREMENTS:
TEMPERATURE: 90.3°C
COLOR: 241 224 167
EQUIPMENTS:
Handheld, round-bottom, lidded cooking vessel.
200mm diameter 1-2 litre capacity
Short Wooden Cooking Spatula
250mm Length 50mm blade width 10mm thickness



► Open to Observe



REQUIREMENTS:
TEMPERATURE: 90.3°C
COLOR: 241 224 167
EQUIPMENTS:
Handheld, round-bottom, lidded cooking vessel.
200mm diameter 1-2 litre capacity
Short Wooden Cooking Spatula
250mm Length 50mm blade width 10mm thickness



► One Last Turning



REQUIREMENTS:
TEMPERATURE: 90.3°C
COLOR: 241 224 167
EQUIPMENTS:
Handheld, round-bottom, lidded cooking vessel.
200mm diameter 1-2 litre capacity
Short Wooden Cooking Spatula
250mm Length 50mm blade width 10mm thickness



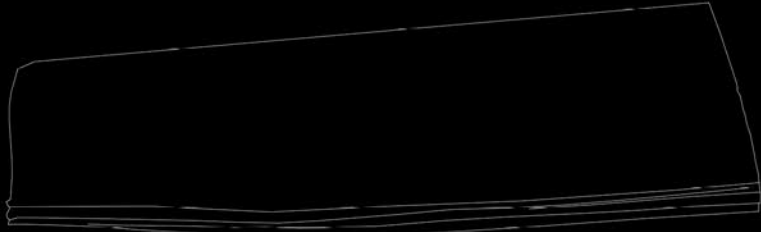
► Ready



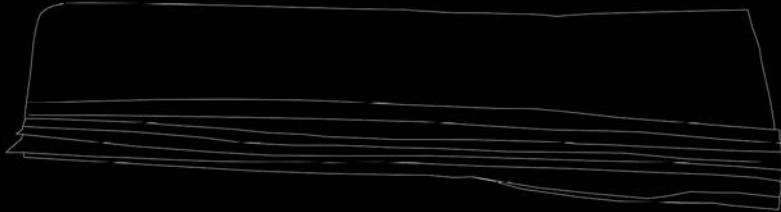
REQUIREMENTS:
TEMPERATURE: 90.3°C
COLOR: 241 224 167
EQUIPMENTS:
Handheld, round-bottom, lidded cooking vessel.
200mm diameter 1-2 litre capacity
Short Wooden Cooking Spatula
250mm Length 50mm blade width 10mm thickness

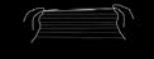


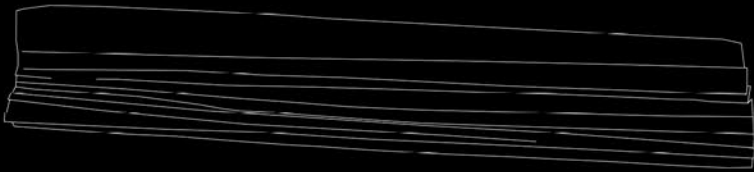
Pinch	Pleat	Crease	Pinch	Pleat	Crease	Pinch	Pleat	Crease
								



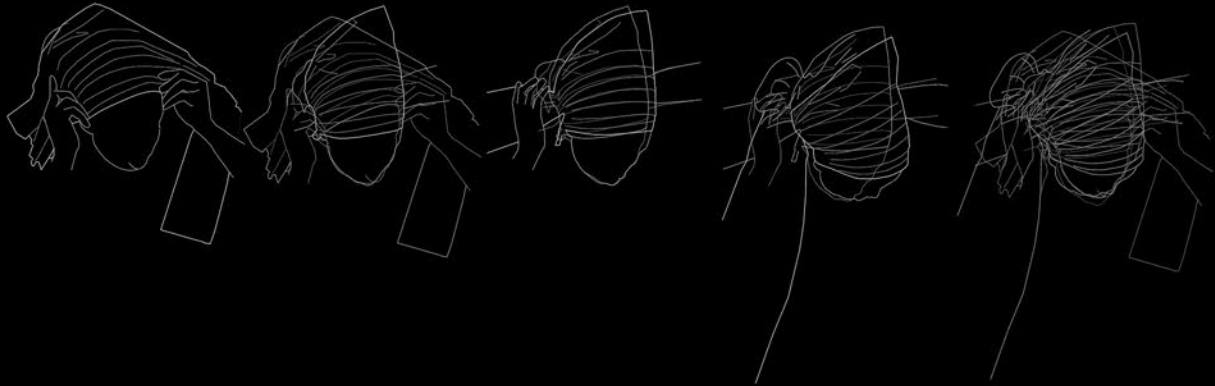
								
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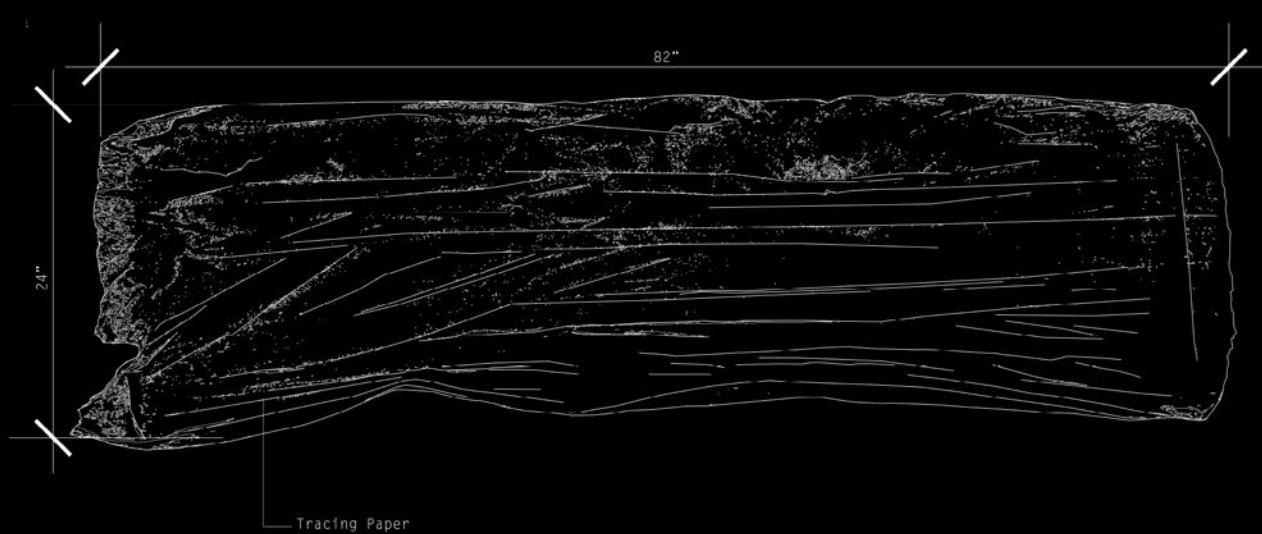
First Fold

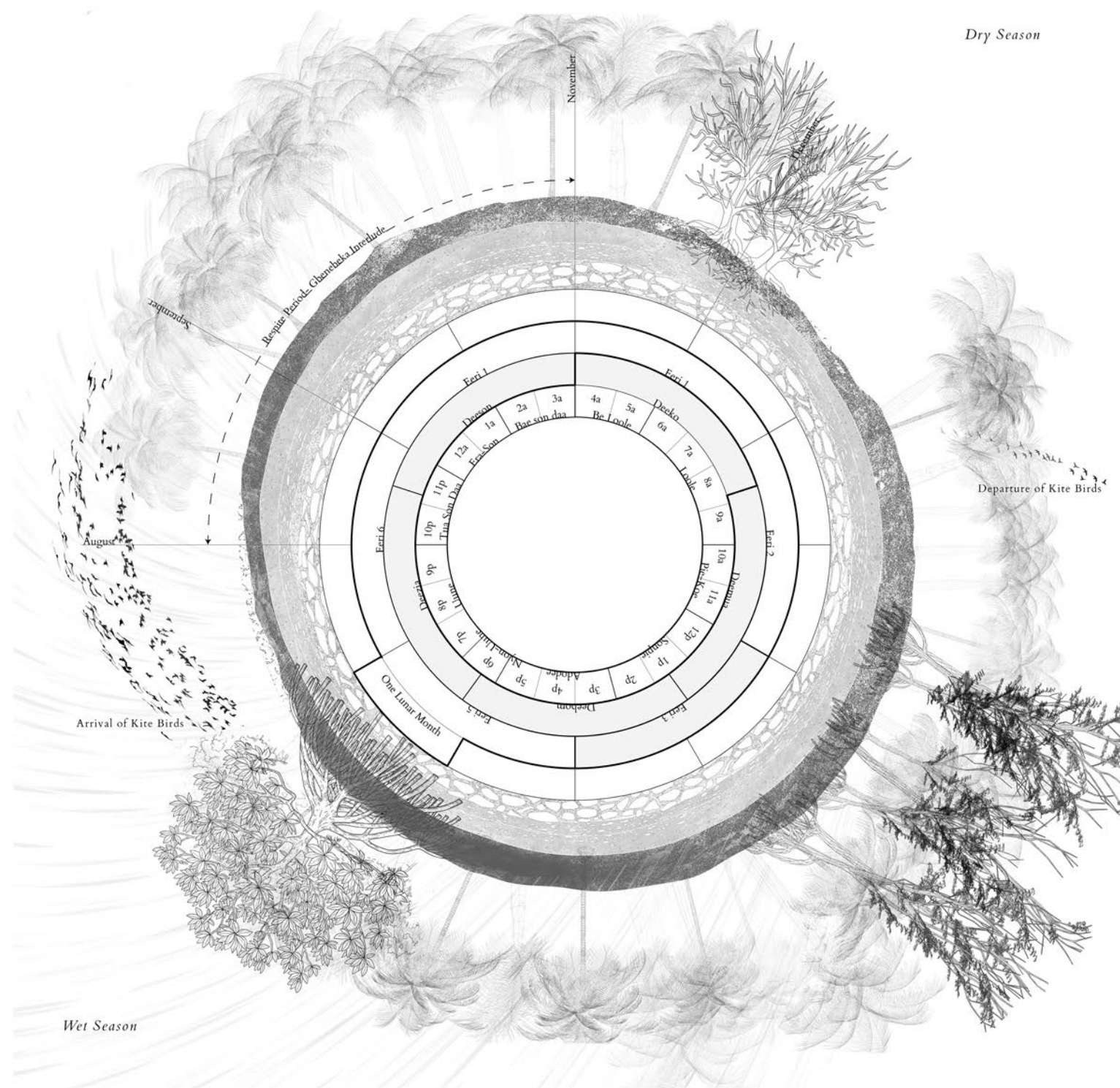


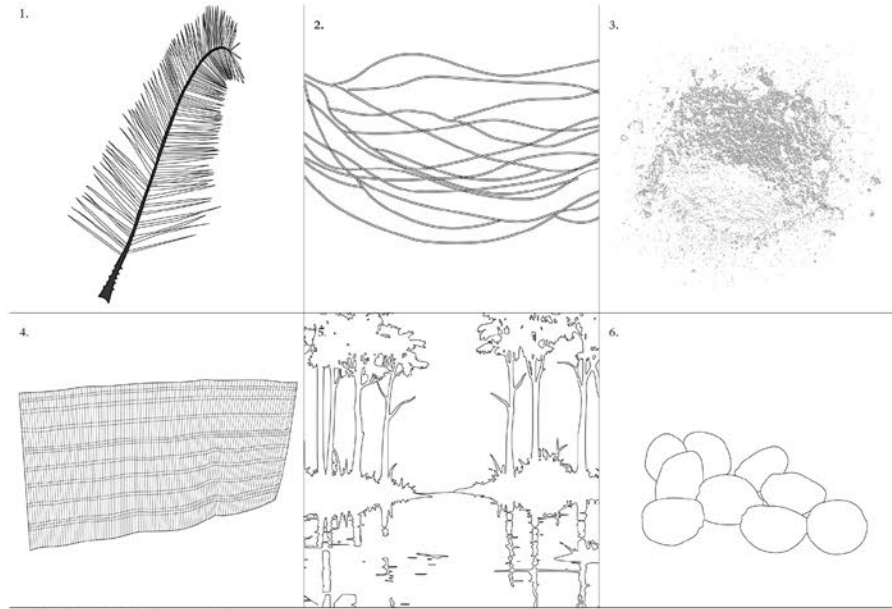
Second Fold



Result







1. Bodge- Slard inside layer of the frond of *Raffia Vinassa*
2. Eaze- Strands of dried and dyed raffia fiber
3. Carwood Uye- A pigment ranging from burnt orange, brown and pink; extracted from the heartwood of *Baphia Nitida*
4. Eghwere Opha- Beaded Mat
5. Ritual Bath Stream- Stream in community for For Ughwara (Ritual Bath)
6. Palmnut Cream- for decoration of bride after bath



Kerlpa Masquerade
 Imitation of two-moving, horn-bearing animals- antelope, elephant, lion and gazelle
 Stage: Main Town's square, school grounds, market place, open space in community
 Costume Materiality: colored raffia leaves, beads, rings of bell



Wache Masquerade
 Older as New you believe it is new
 Stage: Field, Moving, Every Celebrating community
 Costume Materiality: "Wage" (dried leaf green)



Rhizophora racemosa, Grevillea Giant Mangrove (Long Red Mangrove)
 Prominent at the edge of the swamps
 Grows up to 100m (330 ft)
 Used for construction poles and firewood
 Most heavily exploited specie



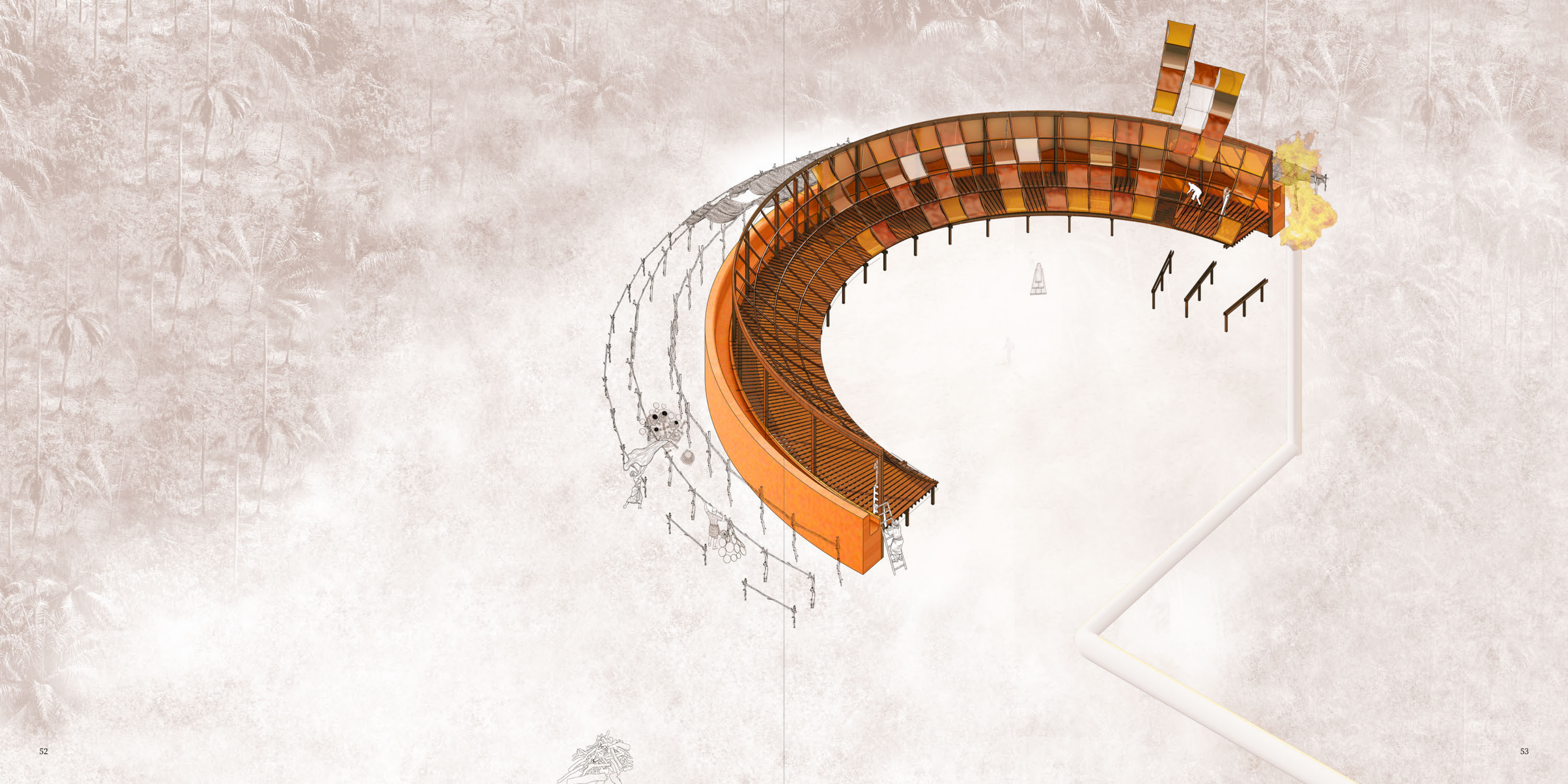
“ We have to fetch the water at the foot of a platform.

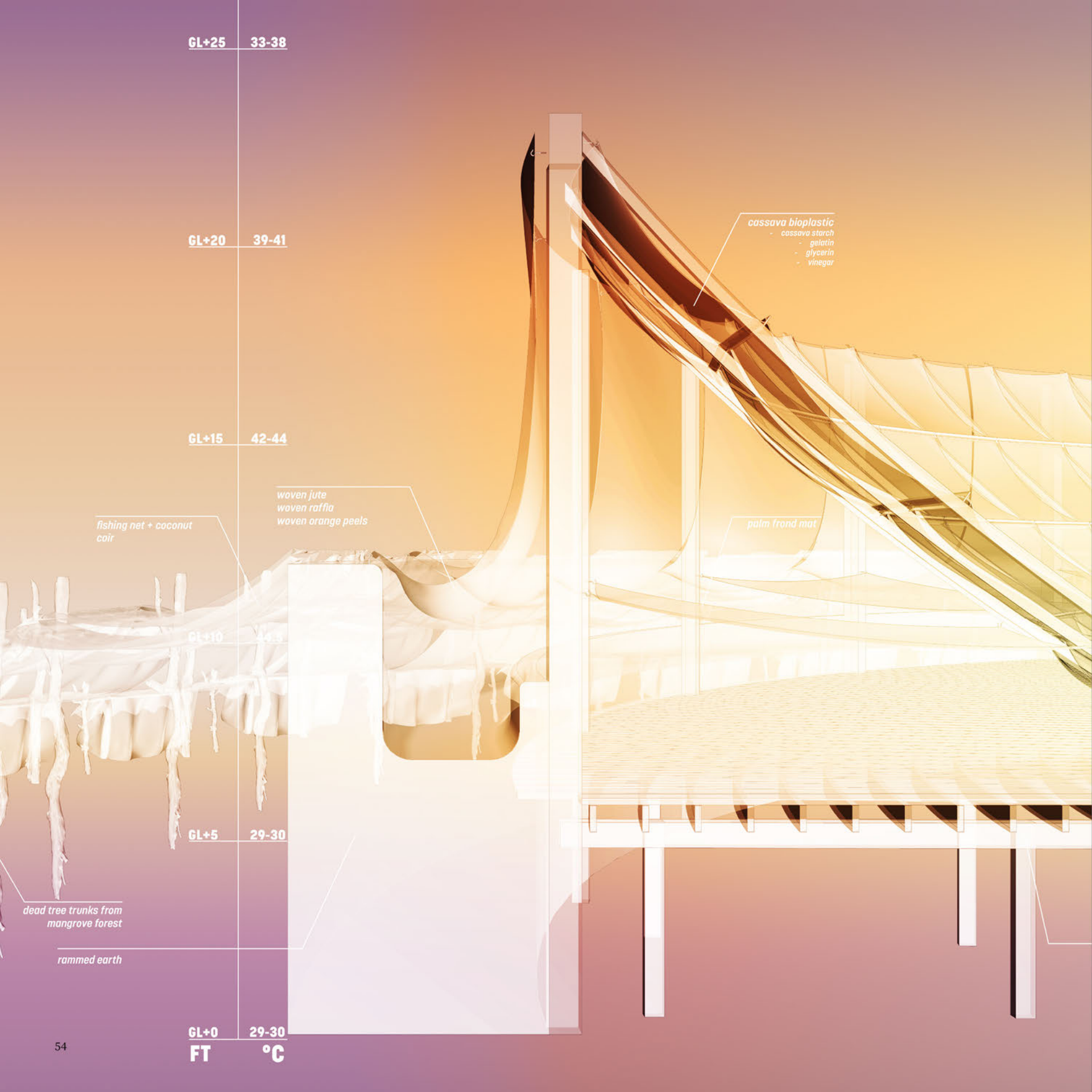
**Before the companies arrived,
 the river was pure and very good. We could drink it.**

**They have polluted it,
 we can't drink it like we used to.**

**So we are forced into drinking water
 that comes from a pipeline.”**







*The river does not forget its path,
It bends, it bleeds, it begins again*

*within the creeks of crude
We persist*

*North South East or West
There is no other paradise*

*The Niger Delta of my birth
will dance to a new rythm*

“Ohwo ro’ovie, oje mrore”

“Even in tears, the eyes remember to see”

06 A VENEZUELAN FUTURE

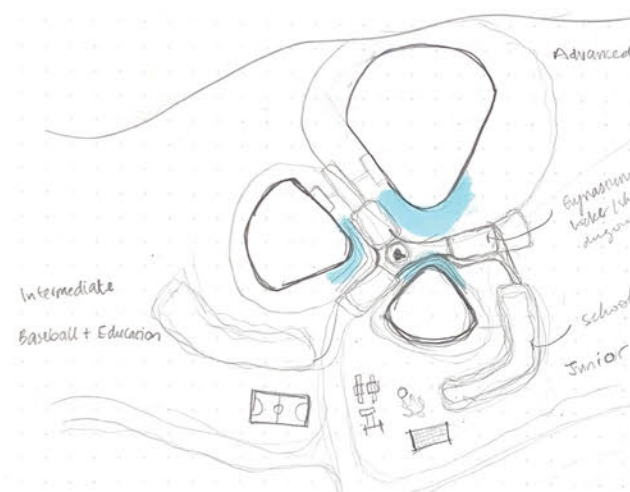
Class | Semester: ADV VI | Spring 2026

Faculty: Mark Wasiuta

Location: Amuay, Venezuela

Recent political events such as the **seizure of oil tankers carrying Venezuelan crude**, caused me to wonder why the U.S. feel they can claim and control Venezuela's resources. To understand this relationship, I researched the period of the oil boom. U.S. oil companies began to tap into Venezuela's largest oil bank, Lake Maracaibo. Creole Oil, the top producer, commissioned SOM to design a new self-sufficient company town for its U.S. and Venezuelan employees. The masterplan was an importation of the U.S. suburb to Venezuela's landscape. By the 1950s, **oil camps became symbols of a "U.S.-sponsored" modernity.**

This project returns to the oil camp as a site of cultural implantation and economic exchange. Centering baseball (the one remnant of U.S. cultural imperialism in Venezuela) in everyday life, this project proposes a transformation of the oil camp from a historical site of cultural imperialism to an **economic engine for Venezuela's future.**

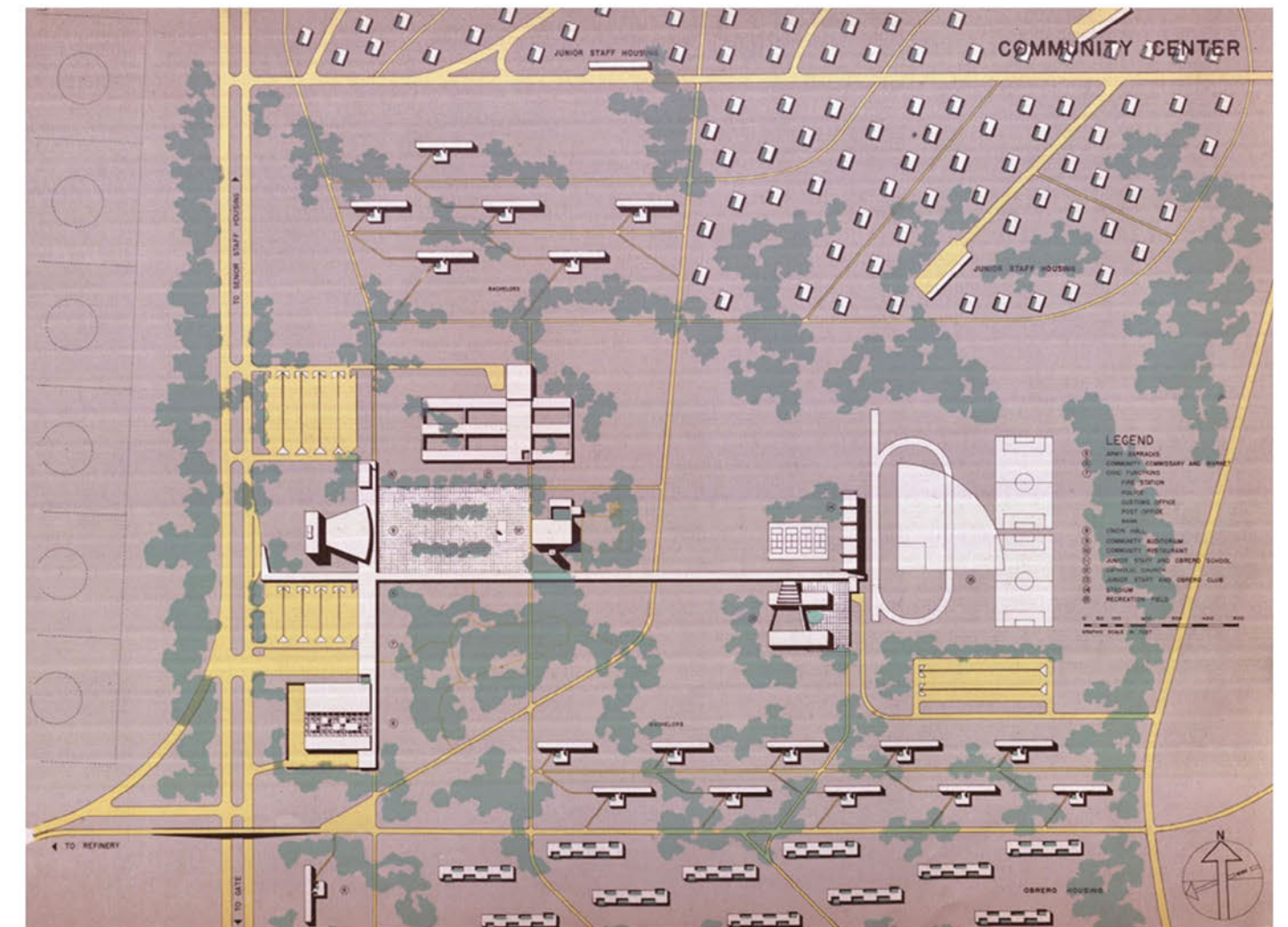
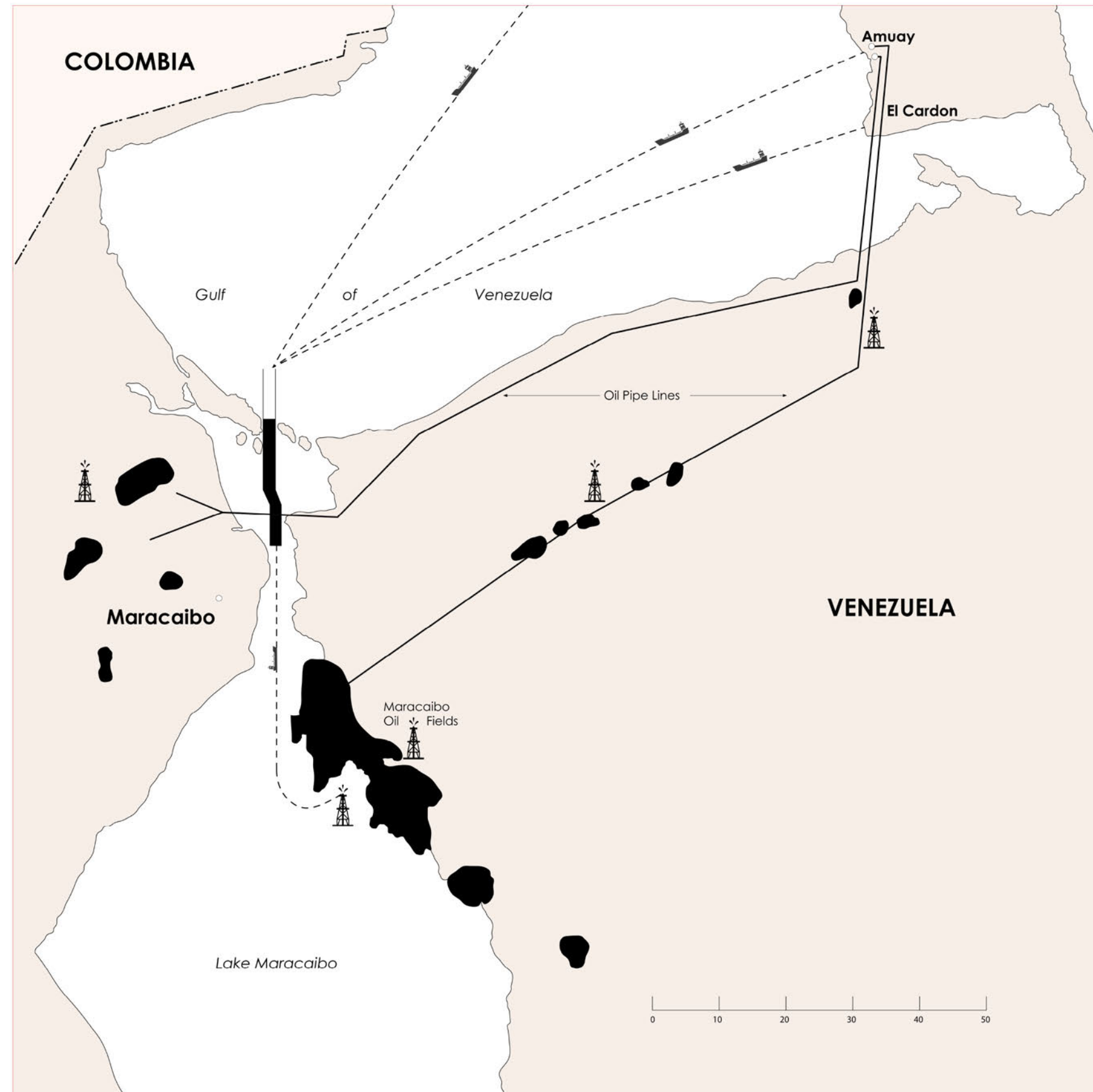


Conceptual Sketch

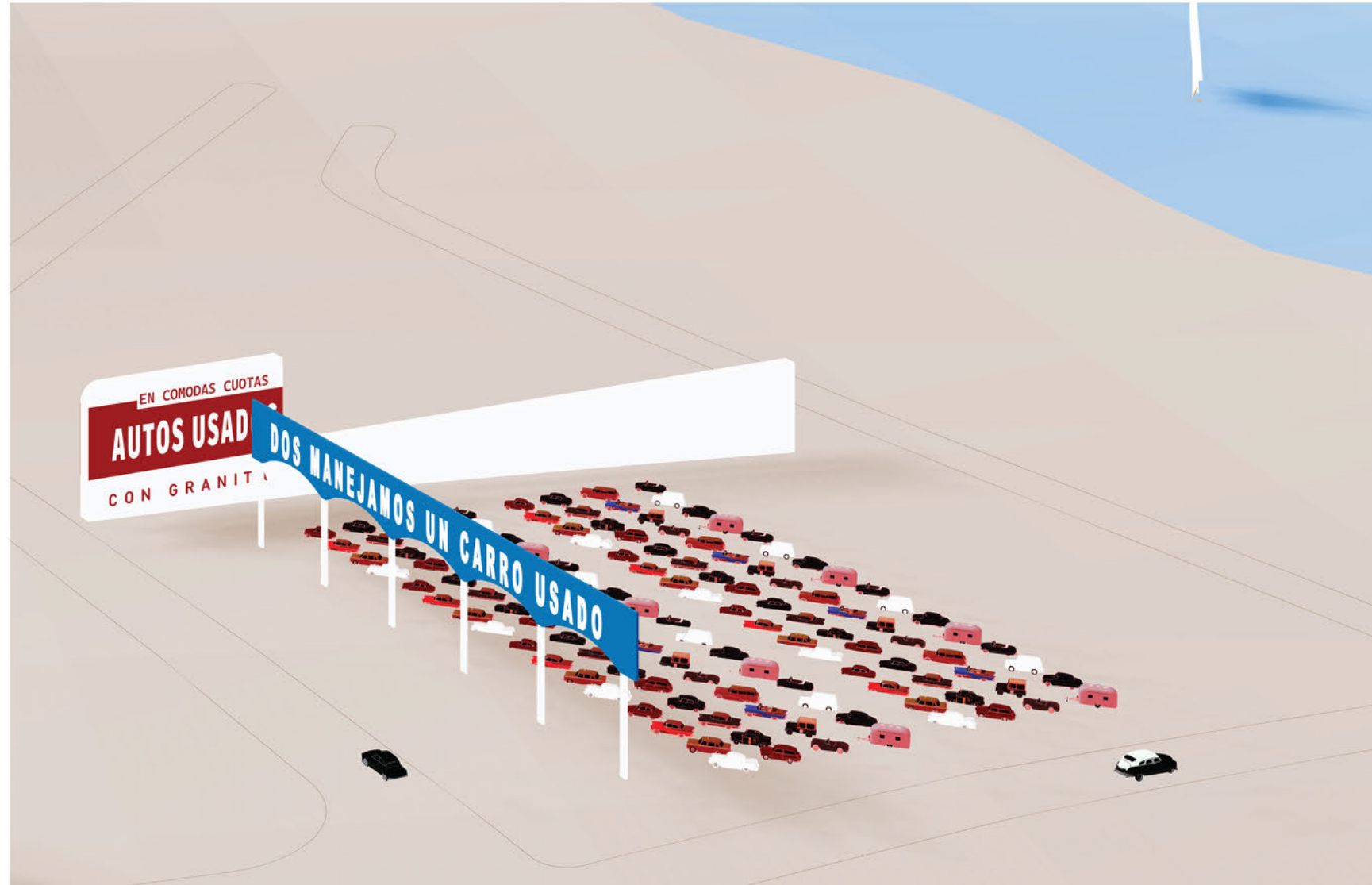


ECONOMIES OF BÉISBOL

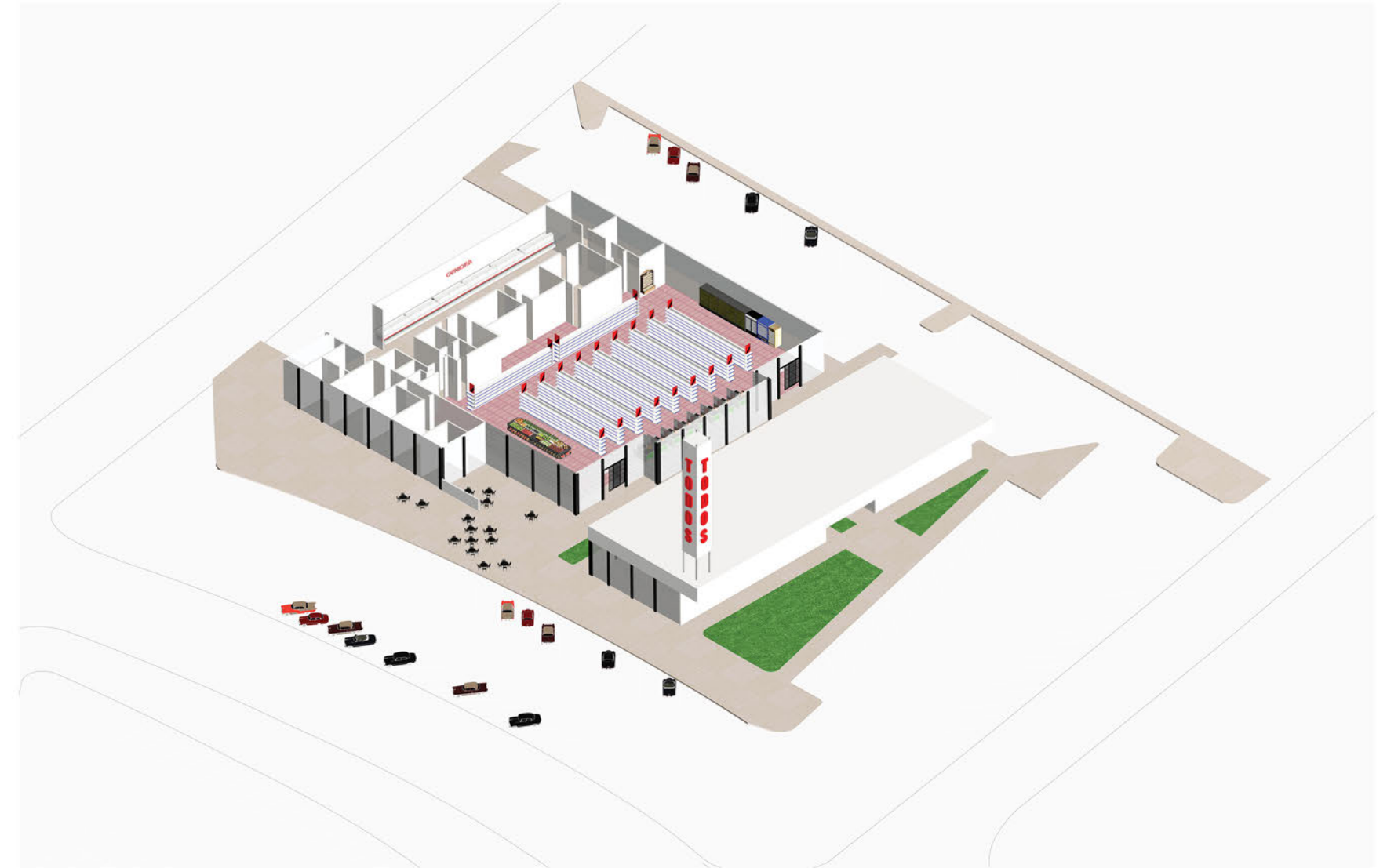




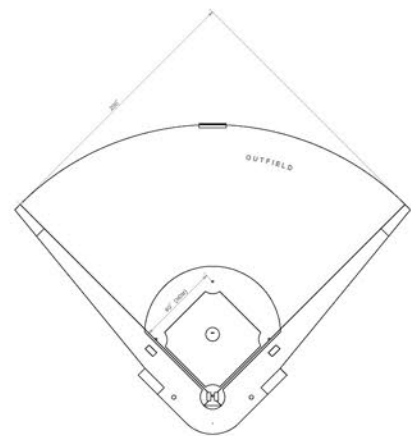
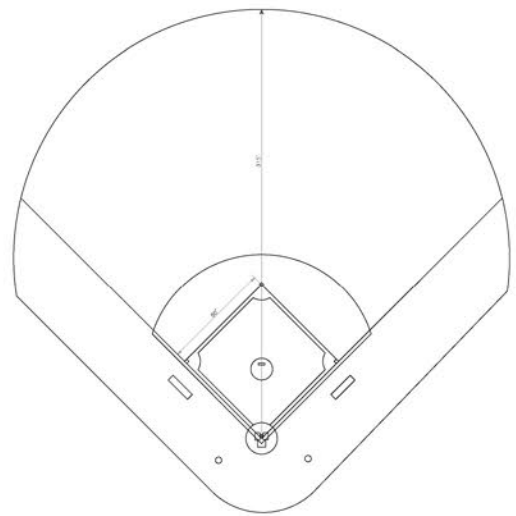
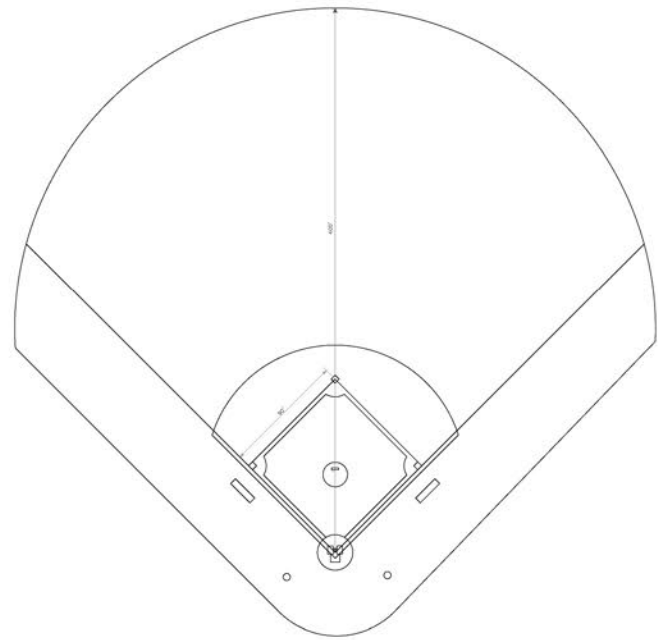
Creole oil, a subsidiary of the standard oil company of New Jersey commissioned SOM to design this company town for its workers, both U.S. and Venezuelan. The town was designed in emulation of the U.S. suburb, it included housing for workers, a commissary, a bi-lingual company school, and leisure facilities for the staff and their families. The senior staff clubs included a pool, golf course, tennis and basketball courts, as well as bowling alleys while the workers' club typically had a bocce court, a bar, a dance floor and a baseball field. Local baseball leagues were composed of a mix of amateur players and those that were compensated. It was very common for players to toil in factories or in service industries to earn their daily bread while playing in the league. Shortwave radios allowed expatriates—and some oil camp Venezuelans—to keep track of events in the United States and important news quickly spread. The soda fountain at the company club regularly served the "all American meal" consisting of hamburgers, fries, and Coke. Celebrations of the 4th of July melded with Venezuelan independence on the 5th of July, becoming shared events that symbolized solidarity. The oil camps were sites of cultural, social and economic explorations, with the "American way of life" absorbed into everyday life.



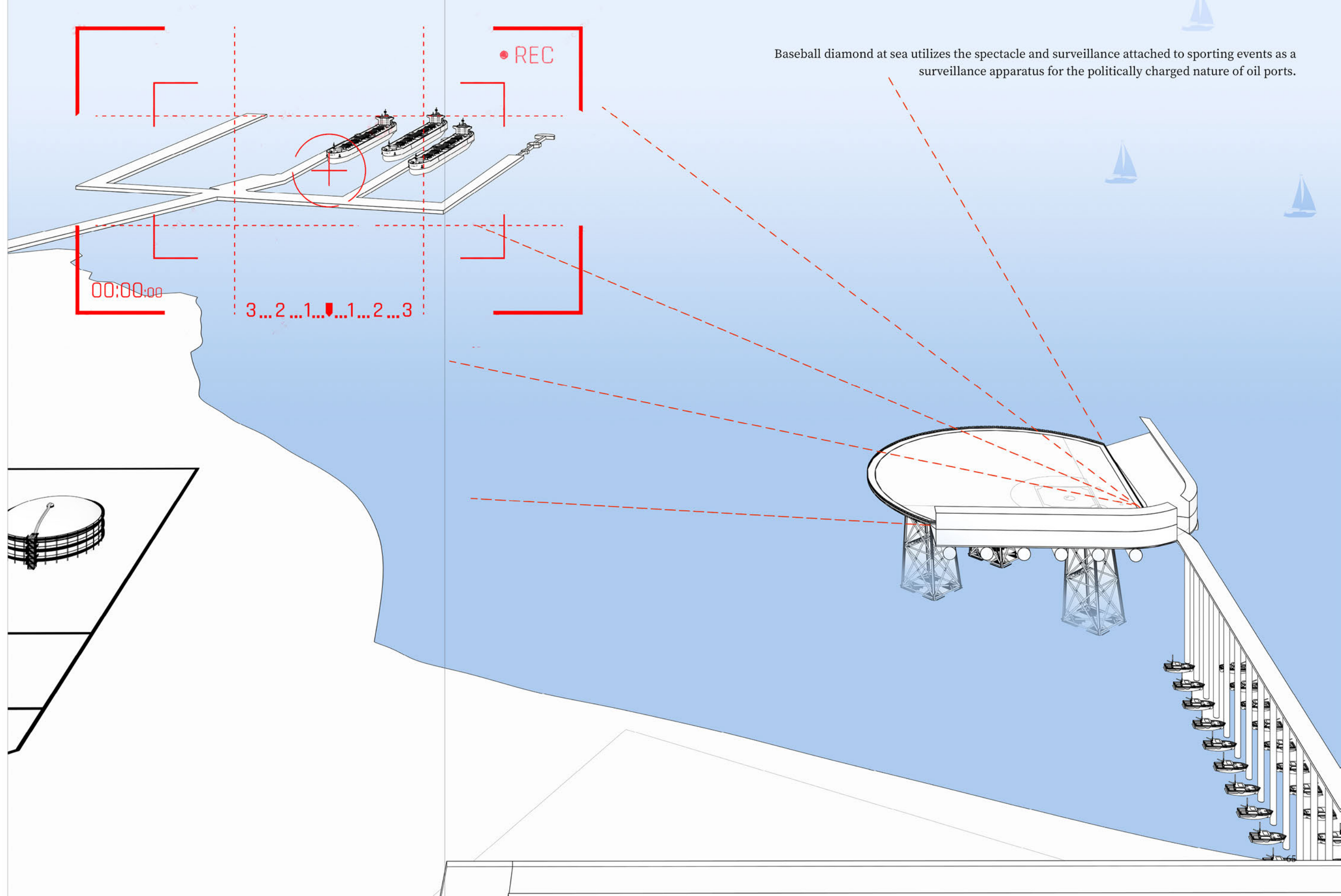
U.S. Used automobile Showroom



U.S. Style Supermarkets Displace Bodegas

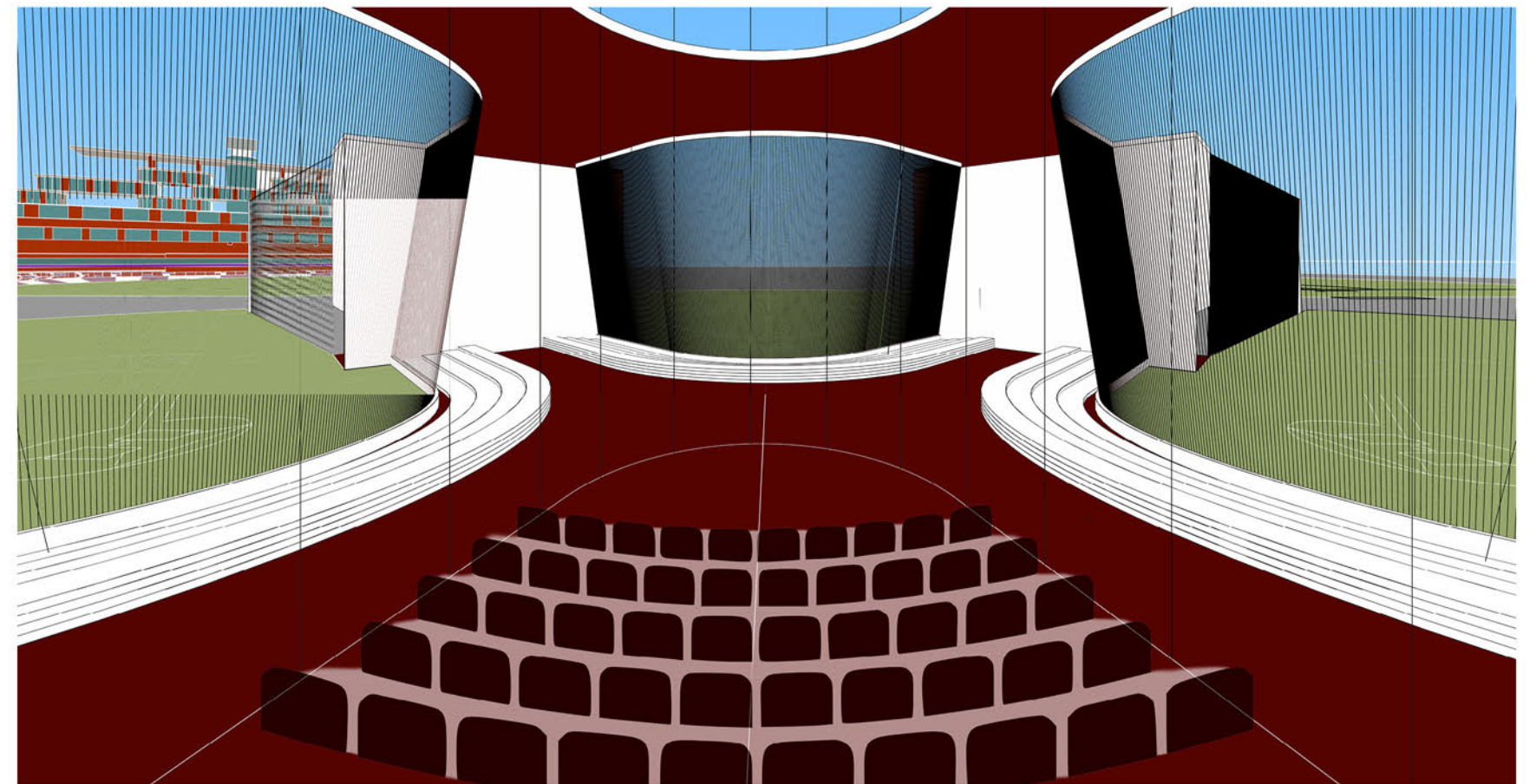
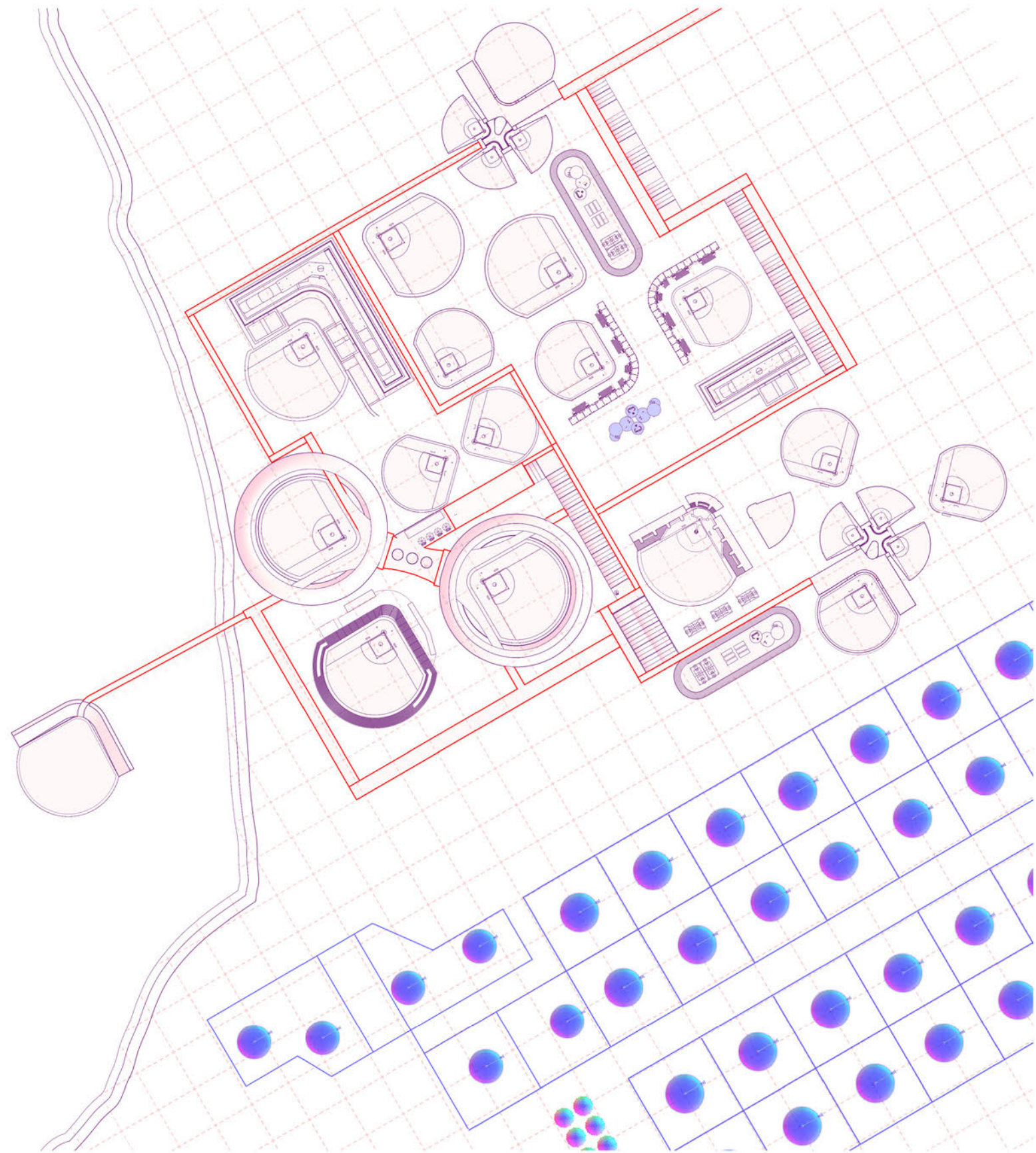


Advanced, Senior and Junior Diamonds

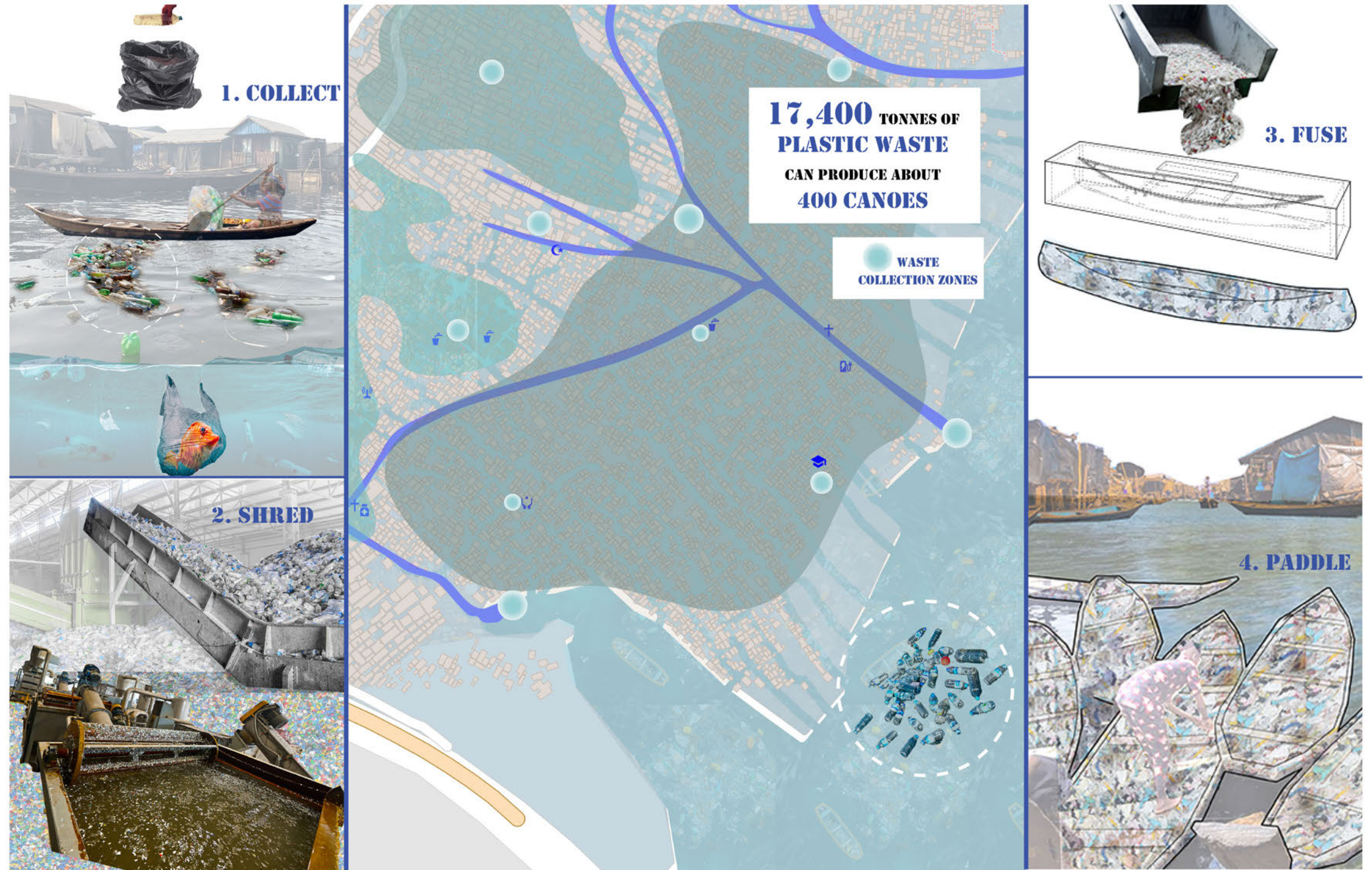
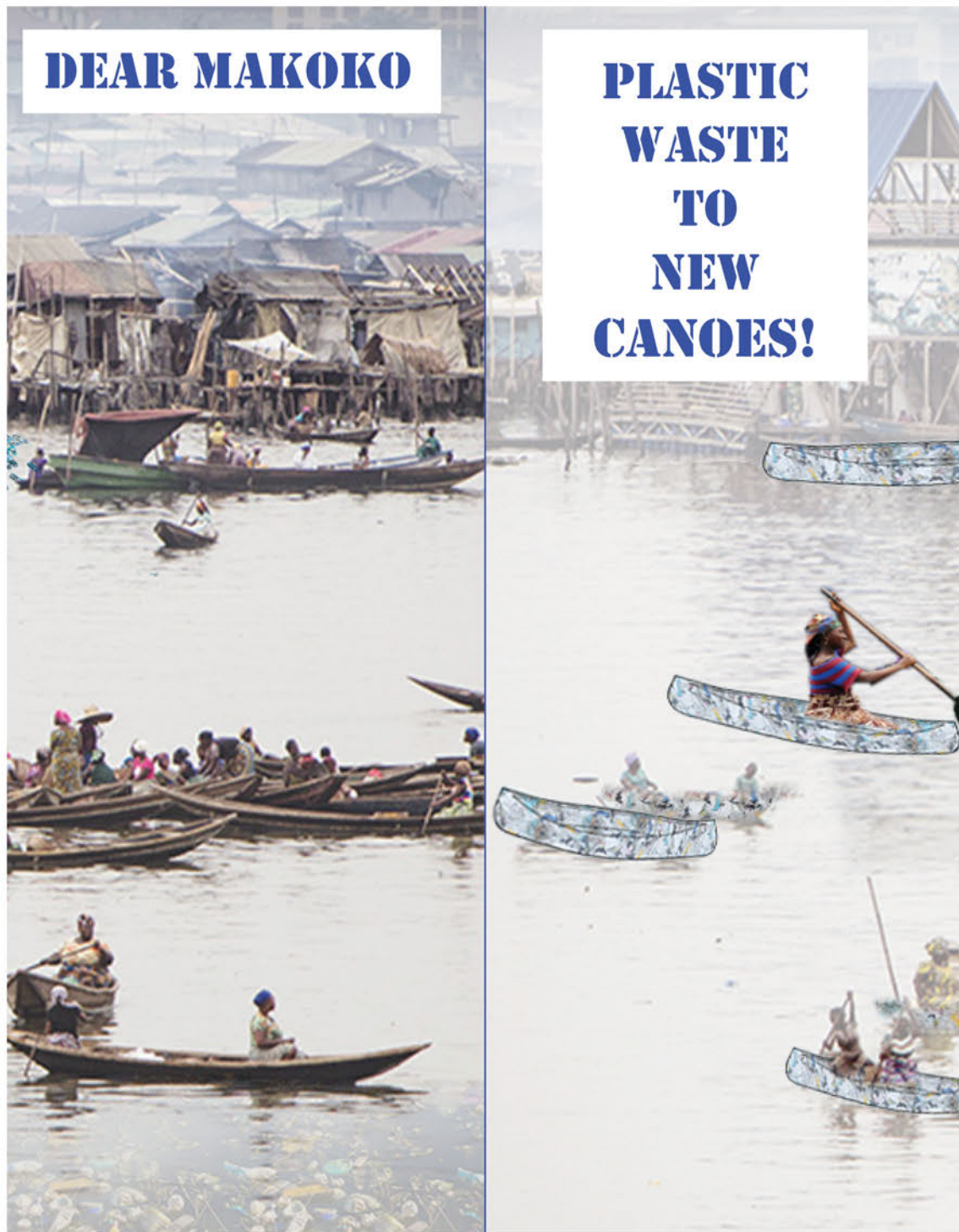


Baseball diamond at sea utilizes the spectacle and surveillance attached to sporting events as a surveillance apparatus for the politically charged nature of oil ports.









**PLASTIC
WASTE
TO
NEW
CANOES!**

...

DEAR MAKOKO



