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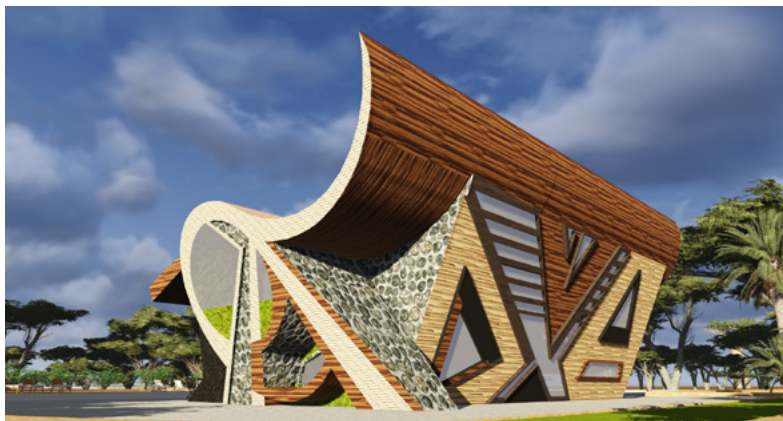
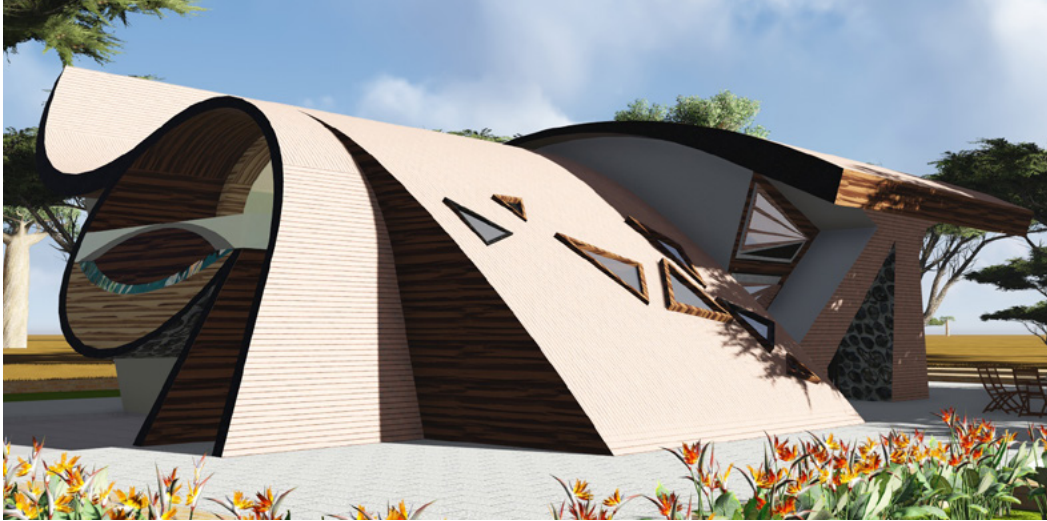
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THE MASK

by Marina Ryleeva
Architect | Russia

HONORABLE MENTION

Inspired by the symbolism of the African mask



The project was based on the idea of traditional tribal masks that bear four traditional symbols that represent the house, or family. A strong family stands on these four pillars:

Mother (the hostess) - homemaker

Father (the landlord) - protector of family and shelter

Ancestors - keeping the memory of deceased loved ones

Religion - keeps the peace at home

The masks of four tribes have been utilized as influences for this project. These are the Chokwe, Masai, Ceva (Nanyang), and Dogon, and each use fulfills one of the four pillars of a strong family.

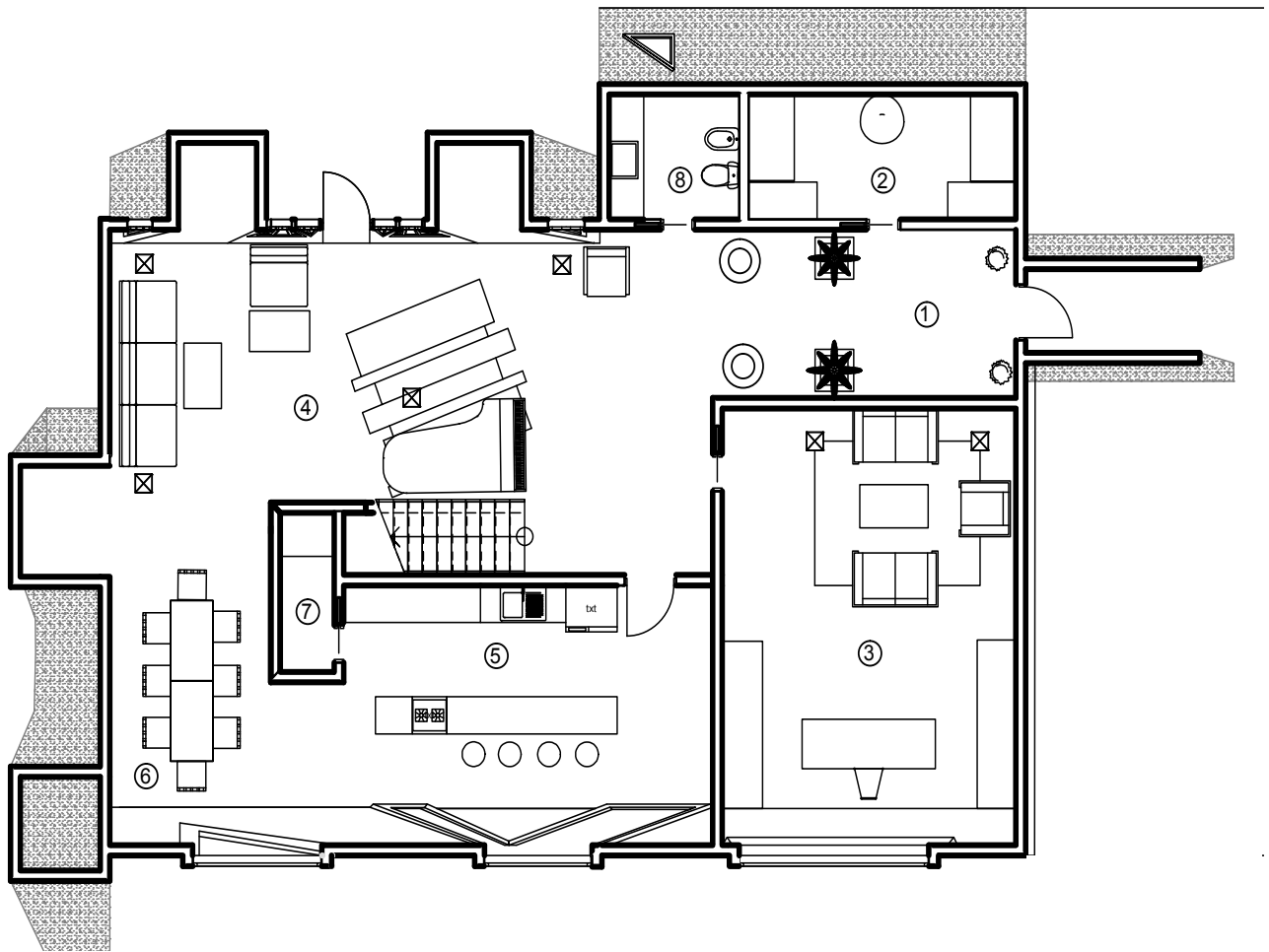
The Chokwe tribe lives in eastern Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and South Zambia. All Chokwe masks have similar features of protruding eyes with drooping eyelids, planted in large hemispherical orbit; and a chin groove or heavily decorated protruding appendage. Images from the Mwana Pwo mask have been used for the north facade to represent the Mother. All features of the mask can be traced in the detail of the facade. The entrance is in the form of nasolabial folds, and the naves and shape of the balcony in the form of almonds. The mask is a young woman who represents the younger generation of girls dedicated to the tribe into adulthood, ready for marriage. The laughter and joy of children fill the house, bringing comfort and warmth to the owners. The project brings home an aura of wealth and fertility, and connects the household with the spirit of the female ancestor, favorable to fertility and family happiness.

The Masai tribe lives on the savannah in southern Kenya and northern Tanzania and their warrior mask was chosen to represent the father pillar on the eastern facade. There are two features of the mask found in the facade: solid glass has the shape of an "X" that can be seen in the transition from the brow arches to the nasolabial fold, and the certain decorative elements can be found in the form of glazing.

The Ceva live in south-eastern Africa and have a god mask named Chautu that was chosen to represent the religion pillar of family on the southern facade. Chautu created all living things and the facade on the project acts as a portal between the worlds of the living and the dead. The visual resemblance between the facade and the mask can be seen in the glass balcony in the form of Chautu's ears, and the roof that mimics the forehead wrinkles of the mask.

The Dogon live in the Republic of Mali and they utilize masks shaped like antelopes to communicate with their ancestors. The design of the mask includes a rectangular box with slits for the eyes and horns. The facade has the characteristic features of the antelope mask: windows with triangular folds to symbolize ancestors, pillory-sheds associated with upturned horns of an antelope, and an entrance door that creates the effect of the whistle.

FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

