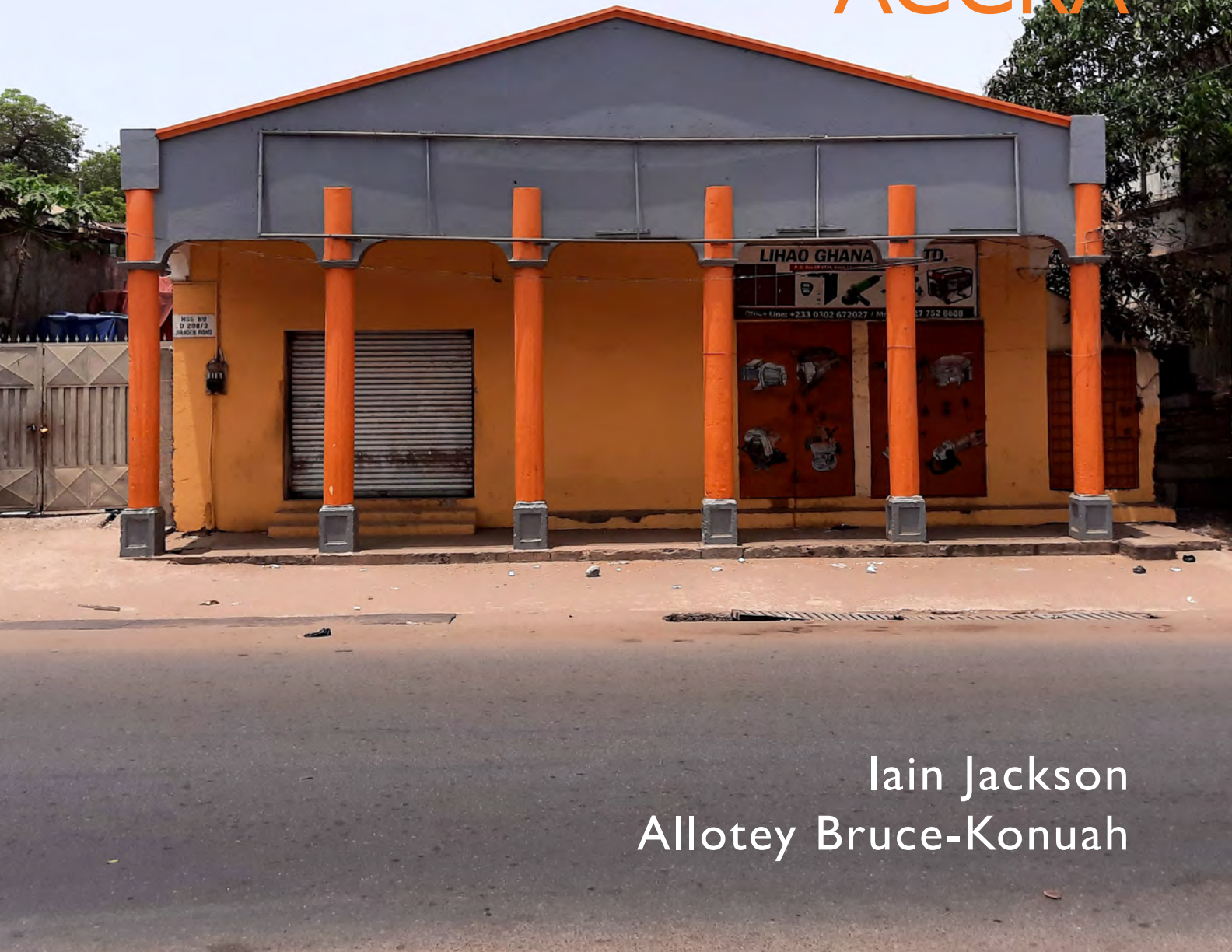


My City INVISIBLE

ACCRA



Iain Jackson
Allotey Bruce-Konuah

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Published by Liverpool School of Architecture
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John Allotey

Marcus Allotey

Mary Barnor

Rebecca Barnor

Allotey Bruce-Konuah

Naa Dedei Quaye

Purdy Hammond

Joyce Lamptey

Joshua Lartey

Thomas Odudu

Foreword

Hidden, forgotten, overlooked, or perhaps invisible – there are parts of the city that only a ‘local’ can ever know and appreciate. These are the ‘private domains’, side streets, and ignored neighbourhoods that seem to hold little attraction to the visitor, or remain ‘off-limits’ and ‘off-grid’. Equally, locals can become somewhat blinkered to the familiar and everyday, overlooking the novel, intriguing, and successful aspects of the environment they shape through their everyday lives. ‘Fresh eyes’ and a new perspective can spot these phenomena and identify what makes them special. The My City InVisible project set out to consider multiple understandings of ‘good’ and liveable cities.

Spatial practices in cities of the Global South are complex and varied; often viewed as challenging and problematic in planning and design discourses. In the context of established planning orthodoxy in the Global North, facing unprecedented functional and environmental challenges in a post-pandemic Climate Emergency, cities of the Global South can offer an interesting lens for re-imagining city environments. The rich everyday socio-spatial narratives that characterise Global South urbanism demonstrate opportunities for adaptation, negotiation and transformation of diverse societies, and can inform social innovations, imaginaries, and the development of new policies addressing environmental and economic inequalities in cities not only in the Global South but in the Global North as well.

Existing city planning, policy and design discourses often overlook the heterogeneous needs, aspirations, perceptions, commitments, preferences, identities and capabilities of citizens in favour of generic top-down initiatives. The My City InVisible project moves beyond the dominant ‘western’ framings of ‘what is a good city’, and renders visible the invisible characteristics of successful communities.

Jamestown

Accra is the capital city of Ghana, located on the Western coast of Africa. It became Ghana's capital in 1877 when the British moved the seat of government there from Cape Coast. By that time Accra was already a thriving port and market town centred around three former slaving and colonial trading forts built by the Danes, Dutch, and British.

Behind the old British fort is Jamestown which is where most of the images in this volume were taken. Following a large fire in 1895 Jamestown was replanned with a series of linear streets and large plots that are still mainly intact today. Centred around Salaga Market the various merchant trading companies built their warehouses, stores, and factories. Many of these structures from the early 20th Century survive today, although repurposed and often dilapidated.

When a new deep-water port and harbour was built at Tema in the 1950s international trading at Jamestown was dramatically reduced. The neighbouring High Street was redeveloped as a banking centre with large new banking offices, but the trading and markets moved away from this coastal town and along Kwame Nkrumah Avenue. Here new department stores, parking lots, and supermarkets with the latest goods and fashions were developed in anticipation of the booming opportunities of the Independence era of the late 1950s and early 1960s.

Jamestown fell on hard times, and many of its residents returned to fishing and petty trading to survive. The architectural and planning infrastructure remained however, and today it forms one of the most exciting and intriguing parts of the city. Amongst the colonial period housing and warehouses are boxing rings, football pitches, and performance areas. Music videos are shot here along with arts festivals and cultural events. Ussher Fort has also reopened to visitors and displays important artefacts from the slaving period, as well as more recent history on the fight for independence. Some 18th Century architecture survives along Brazil Lane, including a ruin known as Franklin House. In one of the former department stores is Jamestown Café and Gallery that broadcasts a radio programme, live music, and hosts exhibitions. It also liaises between local guides and visitors.

My City INVISIBLE

There is a rich and important history in this part of the city – yet it's being allowed to slowly crumble, and only just manages to survive. The historic Sea View Hotel was located here until it was recently demolished, and many other important historical buildings are also at risk. There needs to be a fresh vision for this heritage district – it could be one of the most beautiful parts of Accra. Whilst just a mile away the new Cathedral and Marine Drive development (both designed by Sir David Adjaye) promise high-end design and high-rise real estate, it is important not to overlook what is already there and with so much promise.



Iain Jackson
Architectural landmarks of Accra.



Joyce Lamptey
Sea defences for the new
fishing harbour.



Joyce Lamptey
Salaga Market regeneration.

Mary Barnor
Grand merchant
house in
Jamestown.



Mary Barnor
Ebenezer House, Jamestown,
built in 1929.





Mary Barnor
Timber market.



Naa Dedei Quaye
Zongo Lane, Accra.



Naa Dedei Quaye
Old houses and new developments.



Naa Dedei Quaye
Music festival and parade
along the High Street.



Mary Barnor
Passageway into
inner courtyard.



Purdy Hammond
Akotoku Boxing Academy.



Purdy Hammond
Dunk Basketball court.



Purdy Hammond
Jamestown.



Rebecca Barnor

New developments between
delapidated merchant stores.



Rebecca Barnor
Streetscape in Jamestown.



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FAMILY HOUSE**

**CALL TO
GLORY**

Call to Glory

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Rebecca Barnor
Amankwah Tetteh Fio family house.



Rebecca Barnor
Okomfo Saape Lane, Ussher Town.



Allotey Bruce-Konuah
The beach, Jamestown.



Allotey Bruce-Konuah
Fishing boats at Jamestown harbour.



Allotey Bruce-Konuah
Colonial period trading house
and warehouse.



John Allotey
Oforiwa House.



John Allotey
Bank Lane.



Marcus Allotey
Betting shop.



Marcus Allotey
Iron House.

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Marcus Allotey
Bannerman Road.



Marcus Allotey
Jamestown War Memorial.



Marcus Allotey
Akumajen Palace.



Thomas Odudu
Traders.



Thomas Odudu
Street food.



Thomas Odudu
Food stall.

