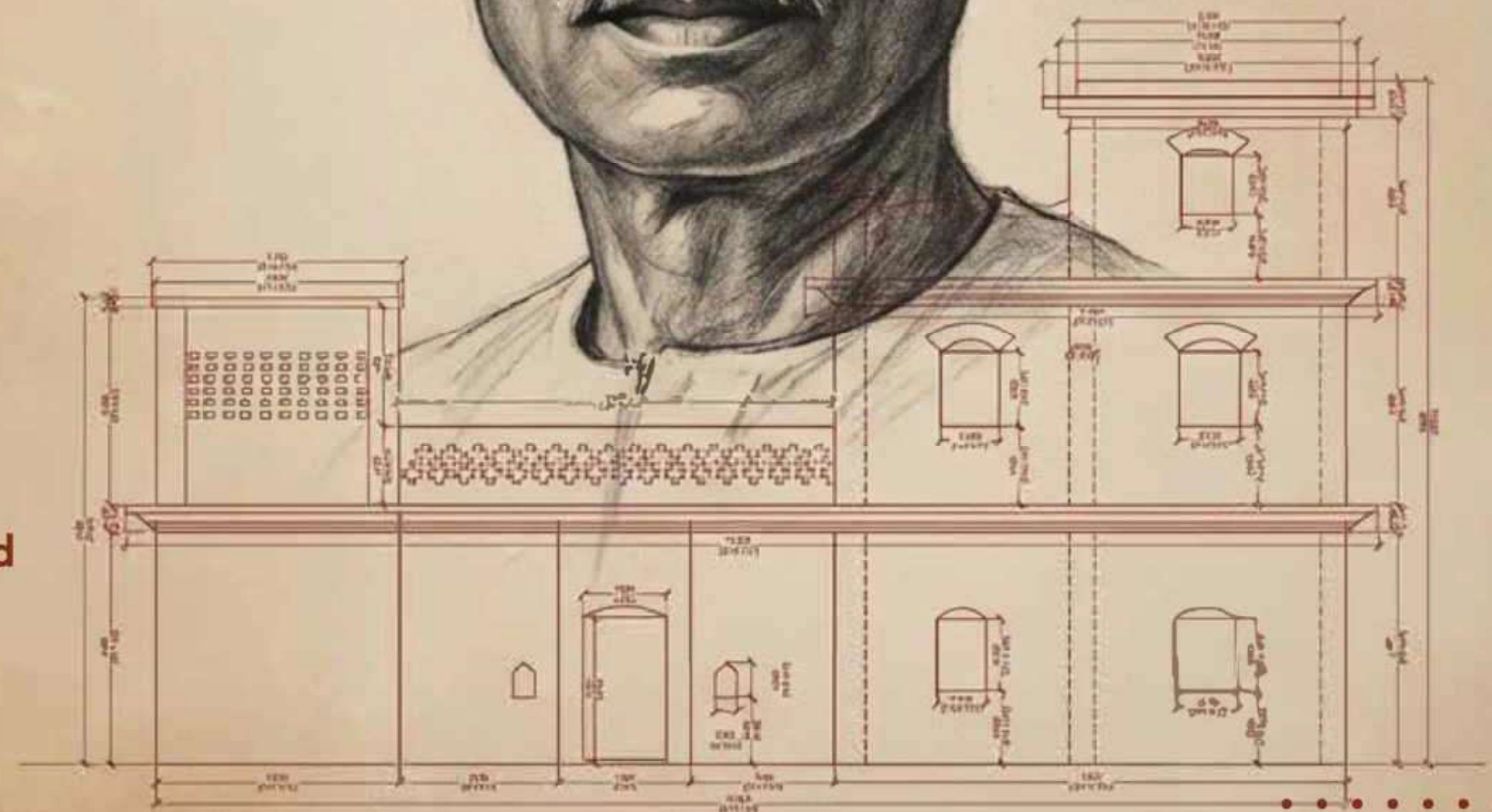


The Munshi Premchand Museum, Lamhi

A Journey into the Heart of India's Storyteller

A comprehensive, research-based experiential museum dedicated to the 'Emperor of Novels' (Upanyas Samrat). Located in his birthplace of Lamhi, Varanasi, this project transforms a legacy of literature into a dynamic spatial narrative.



Interpreting Colonial India from Below

Concept & Rationale

The Lens

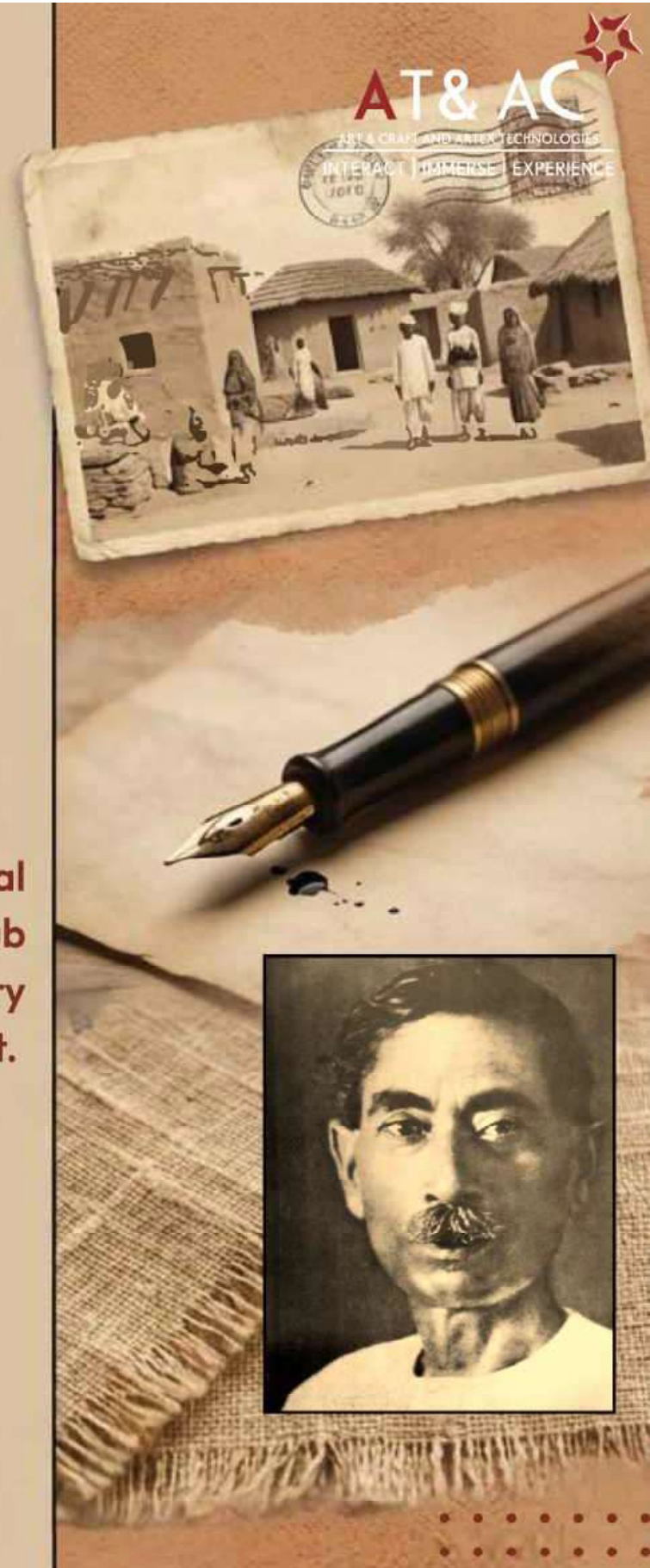
To view history through the eyes of peasants, women, and clerks rather than elites. Premchand's lifespan (1880-1936) mirrored India's transformation from British rule to organized nationalism.

The Context

Interpreting his writings not just as fiction, but as direct responses to agrarian distress, caste oppression, and patriarchy in North India.

The Goal

Moving beyond a static memorial to create an experiential hub where biography and history intersect.



The Legacy of Lamhi

The Context :

Lamhi is not just a location; it is a character in Premchand's stories. Born here in 1880, this village provided the raw material for his narratives of rural North India.

The Reality :

Despite being a pilgrimage site for writers, the ancestral home faced neglect and ruin, with only a small bust marking the site. The nearby Saraswati Press building stands as a testament to his struggle for expression.

The Intervention :

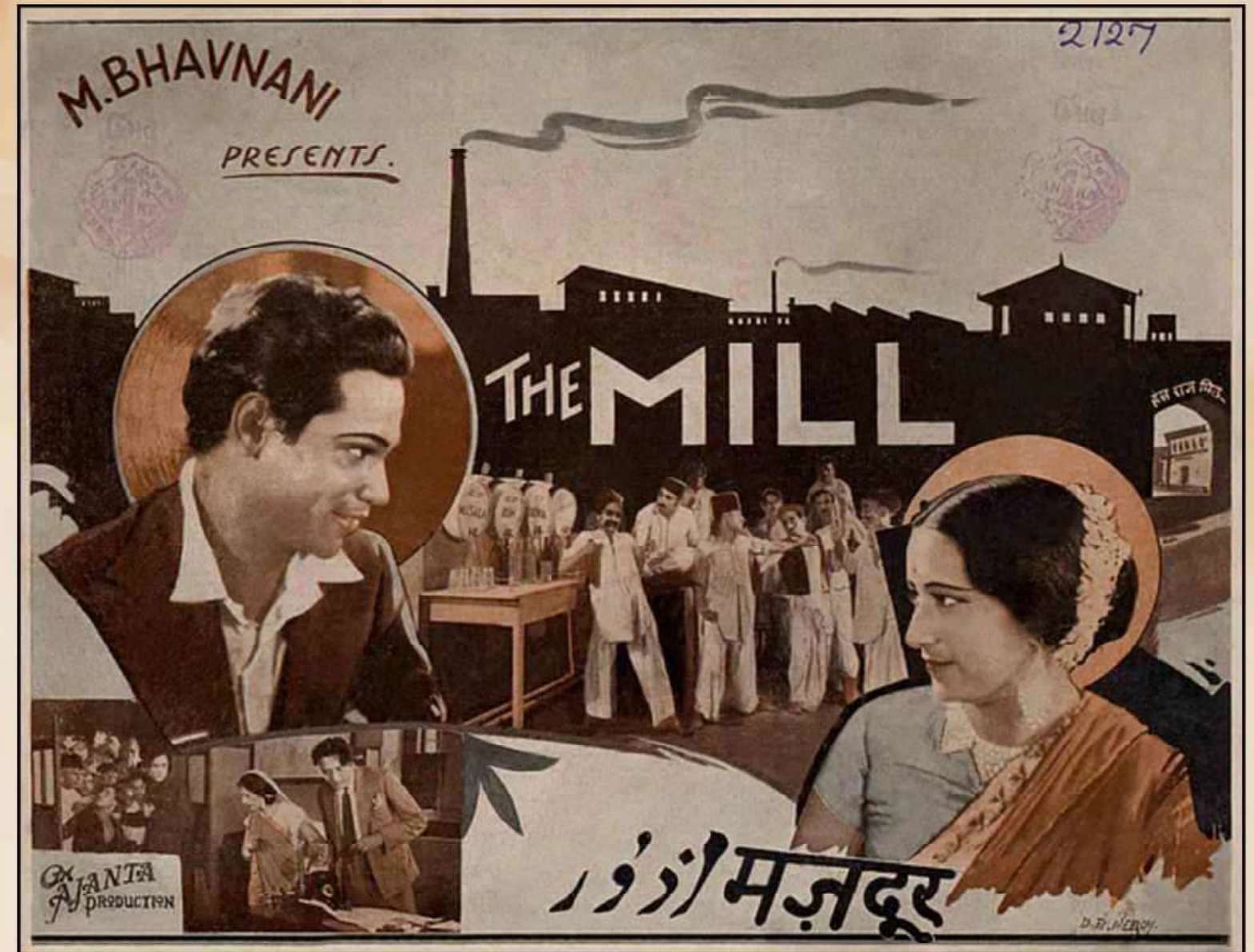
This museum addresses the debt of the nation to its greatest storyteller, replacing neglect with a world-class cultural landmark.



Interpretive Approach

The interpretive framework for the Munshi Premchand Museum is conceived as an immersive visitor journey—one that begins with empathy and gradually unfolds into critical reflection. Rather than presenting Premchand solely as a literary icon, the museum situates his life and writings within the broader political, social, and economic transformations of his time.

This approach positions the museum not merely as a site of remembrance, but as a space of inquiry and dialogue. Through carefully curated objects, narratives, environments, and interactive experiences, visitors are encouraged to reflect on injustice, moral responsibility, social reform, and the continuing relevance of Premchand's vision in contemporary India. The goal is to create an experience that is emotionally engaging, intellectually rigorous, and socially resonant.



Core Narrative Arc

The interpretive strategy is grounded in four foundational principles:

1. Biographical Immersion with Critical Distance
2. Contextualized Realism
3. Dialogic Storytelling
4. Past–Present Continuity



Narrative Structure

The overarching interpretive narrative interweaves three interconnected strands:

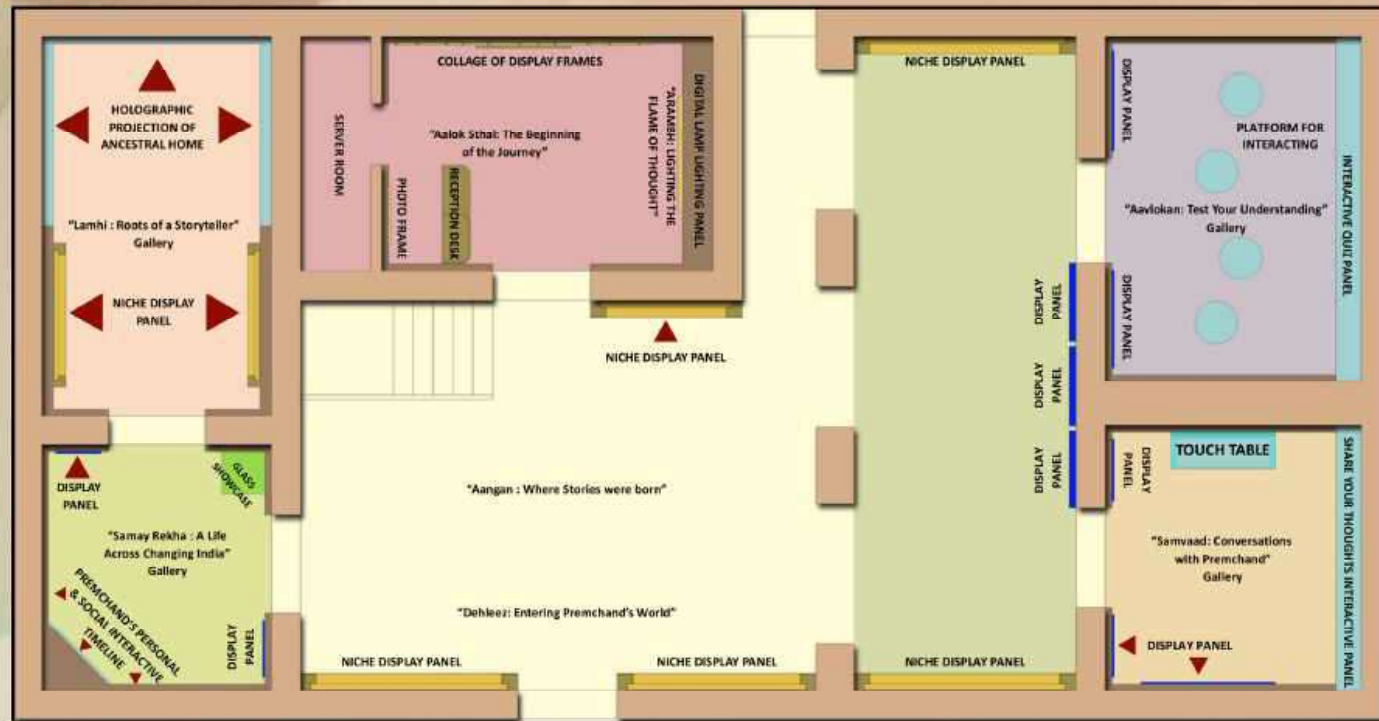
- **Life Story** – The personal journey of Dhanpat Rai to Munshi Premchand.
- **Historical Context** – The colonial, social, and political transformations of early twentieth-century India.
- **Literary Response** – How his fiction engaged with and responded to these realities.

Together, these strands create a layered storytelling experience in which biography, history, and literature continuously inform one another.

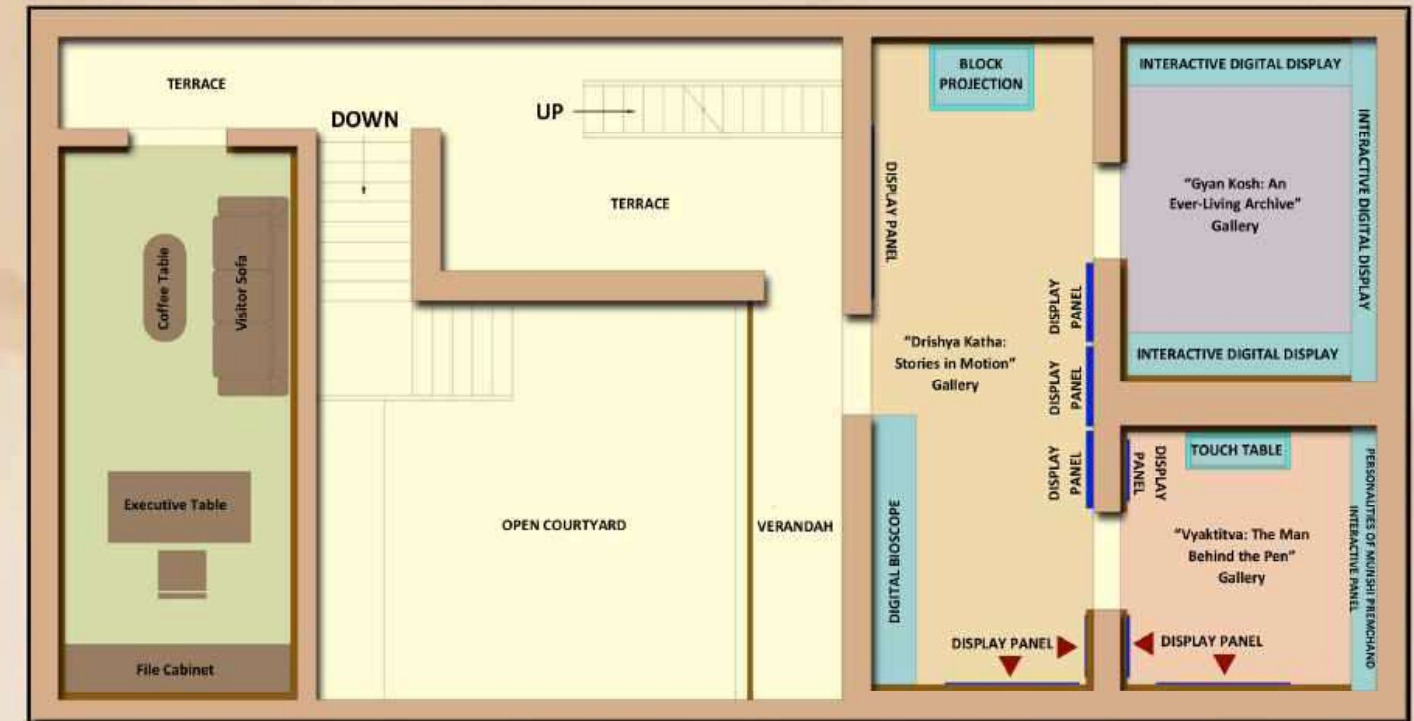


Architectural Drawings



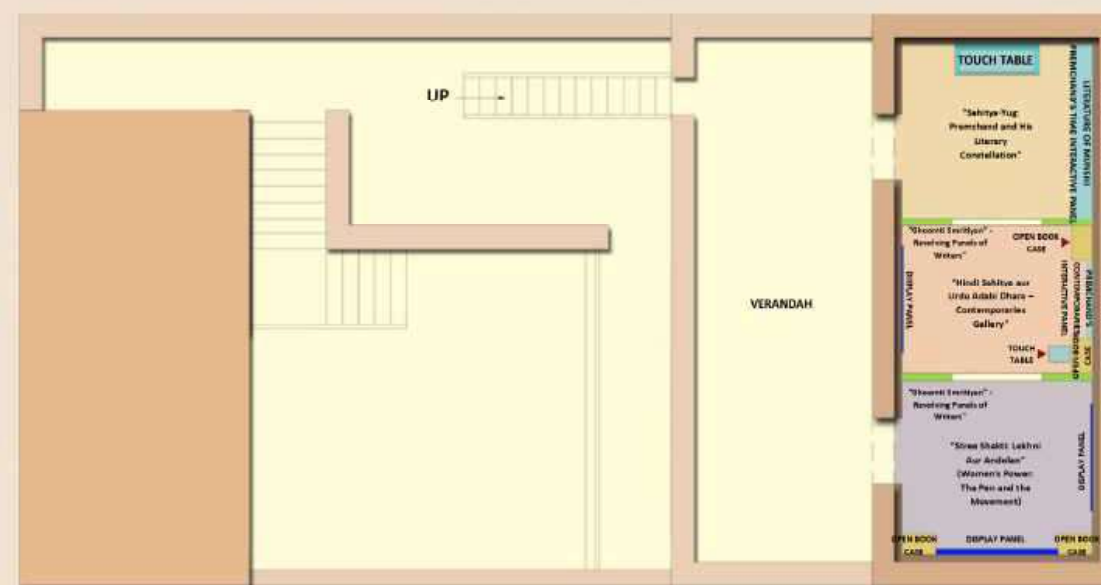


Ground Floor Plan Gallery Area 719 sq.ft.



First Floor Plan Gallery Area 574 sq.ft.

**Total Building Footprint
970 sq.ft**

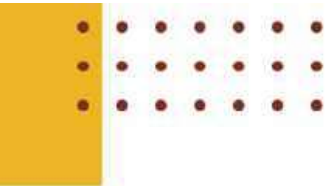


Second Floor Plan
Gallery Area 412 sq.ft.

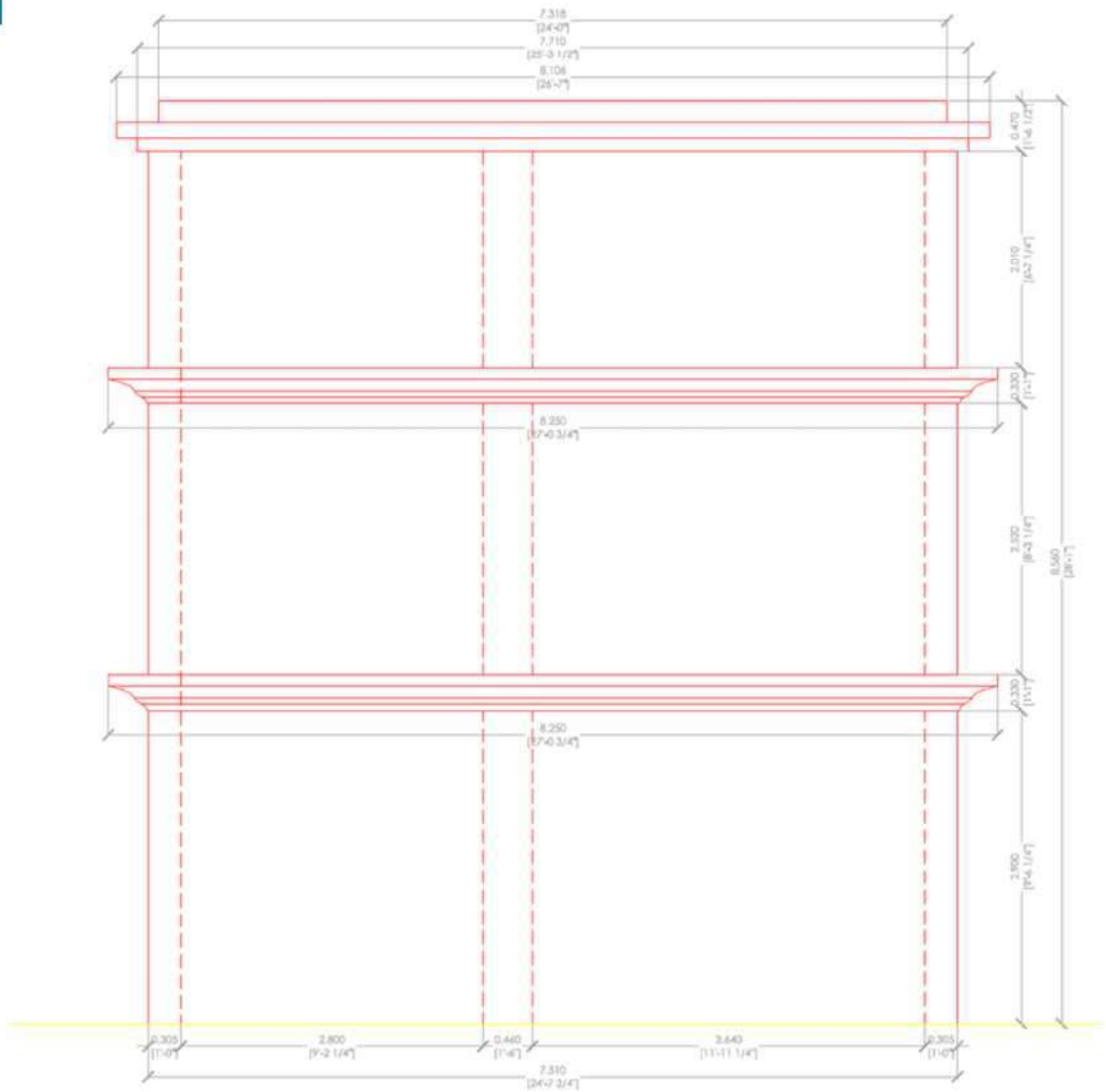


Front Elevation

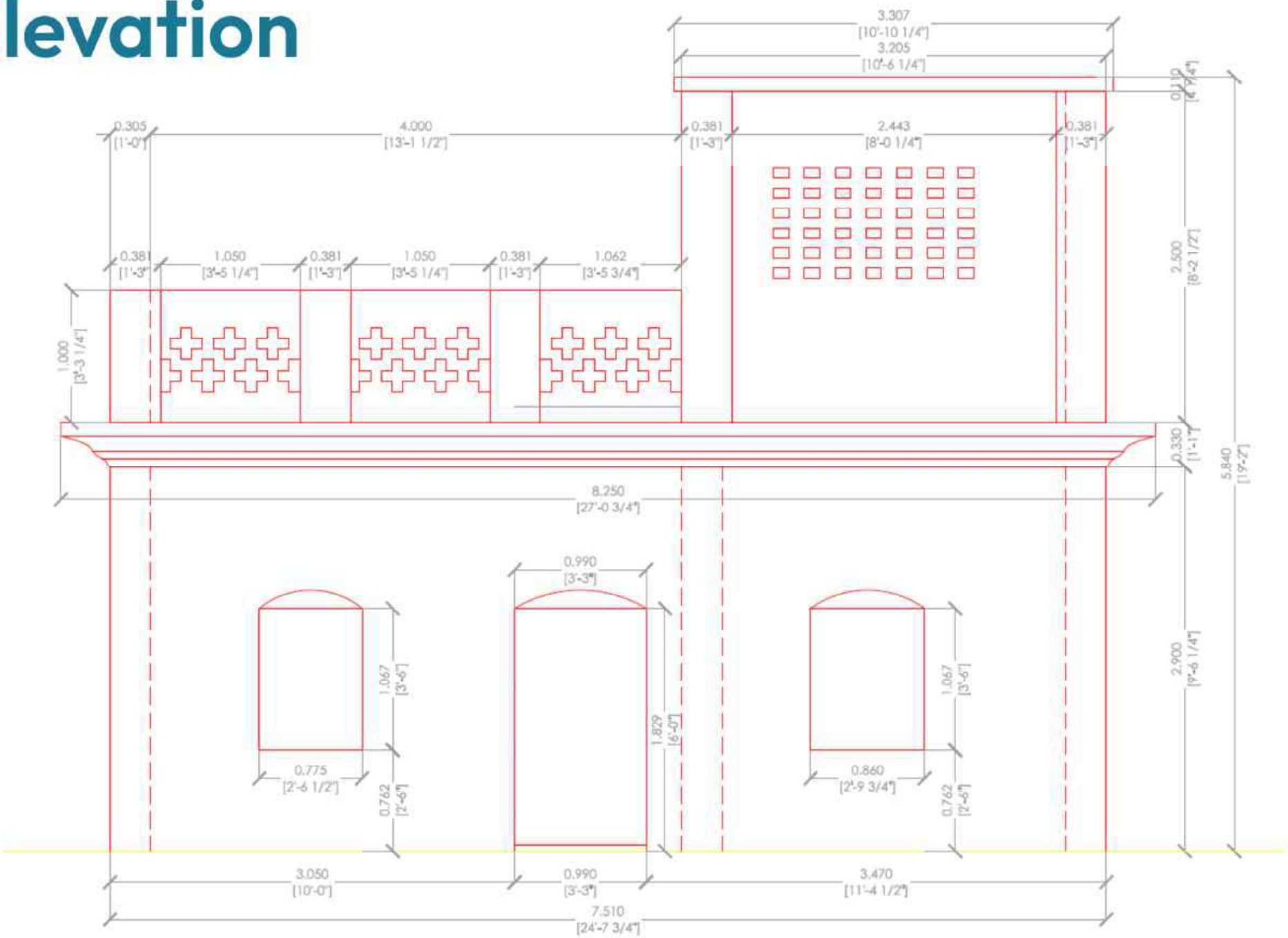




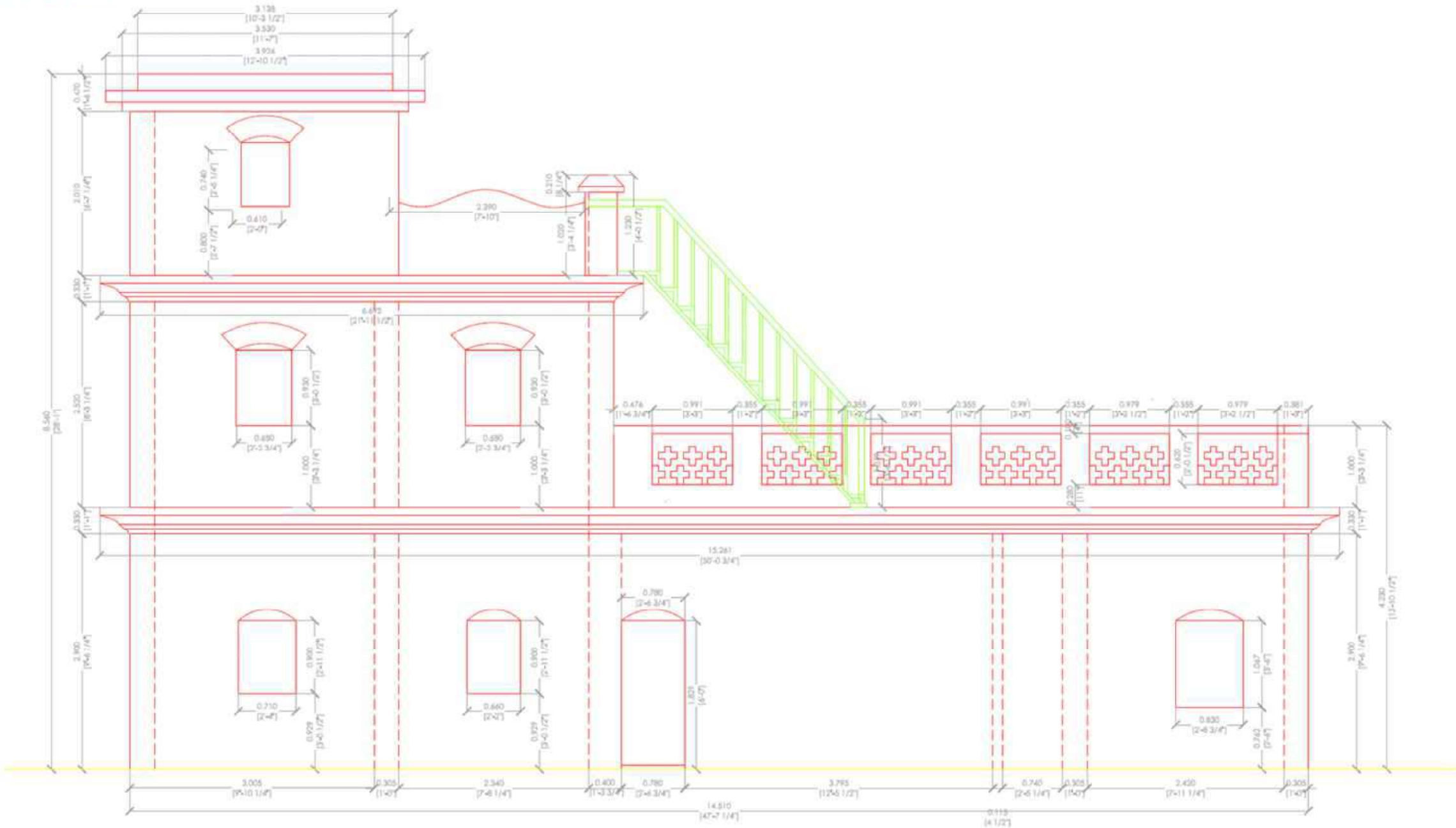
Right Side Elevation



Left Side Elevation

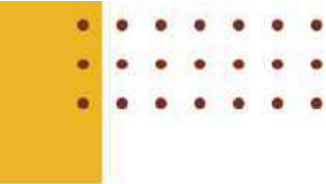


Rear Elevation

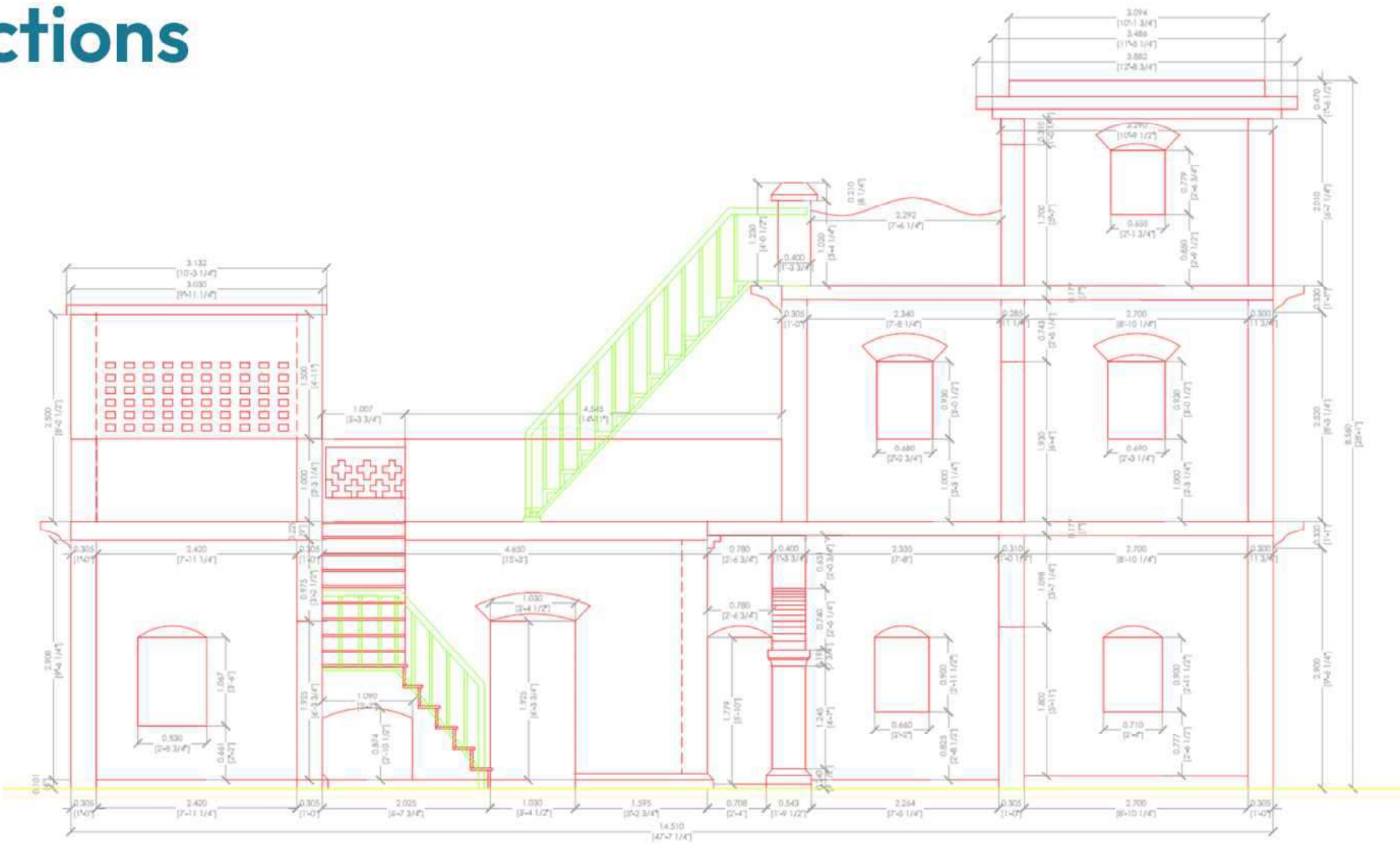


Interior Sections





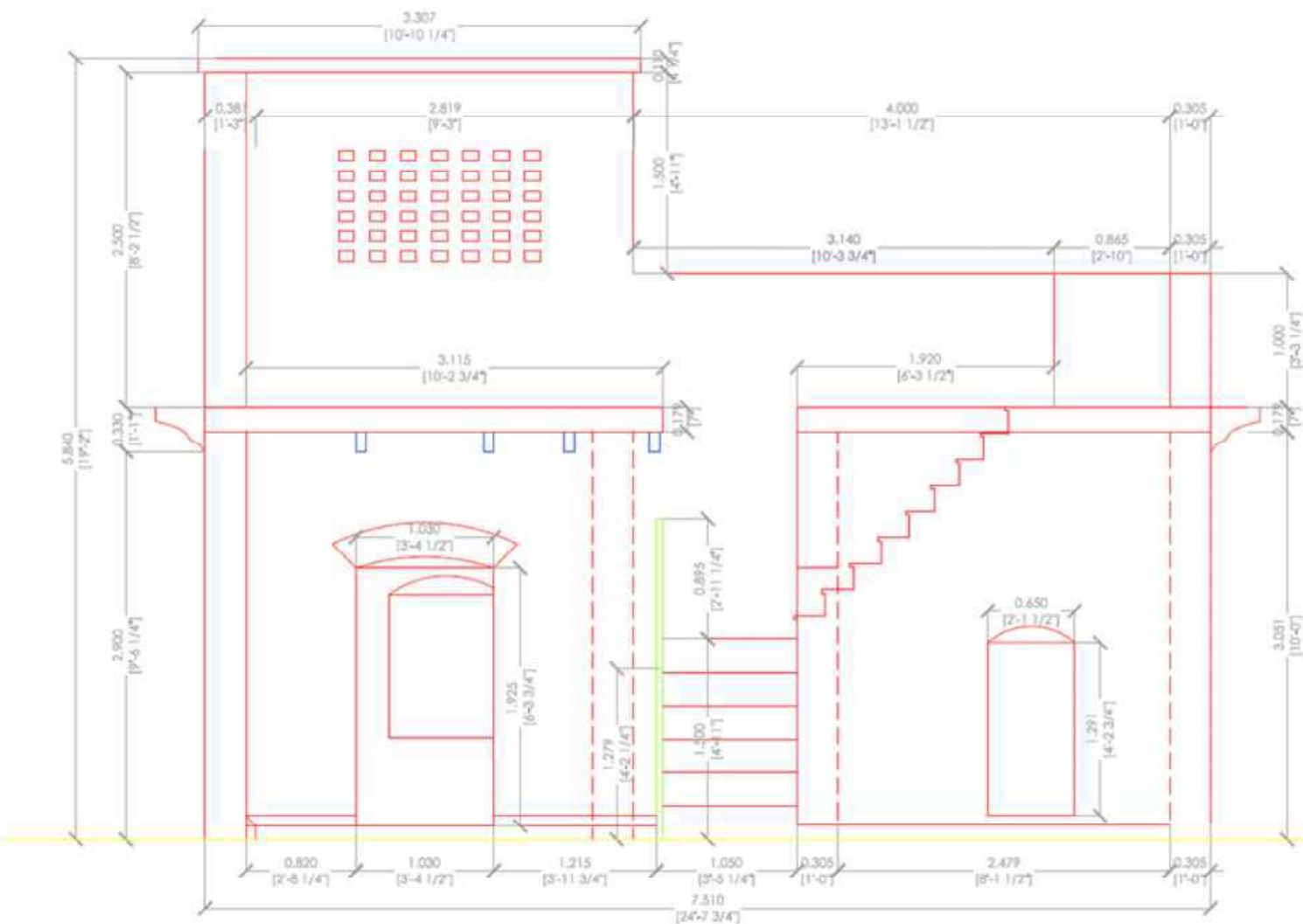
Interior Sections



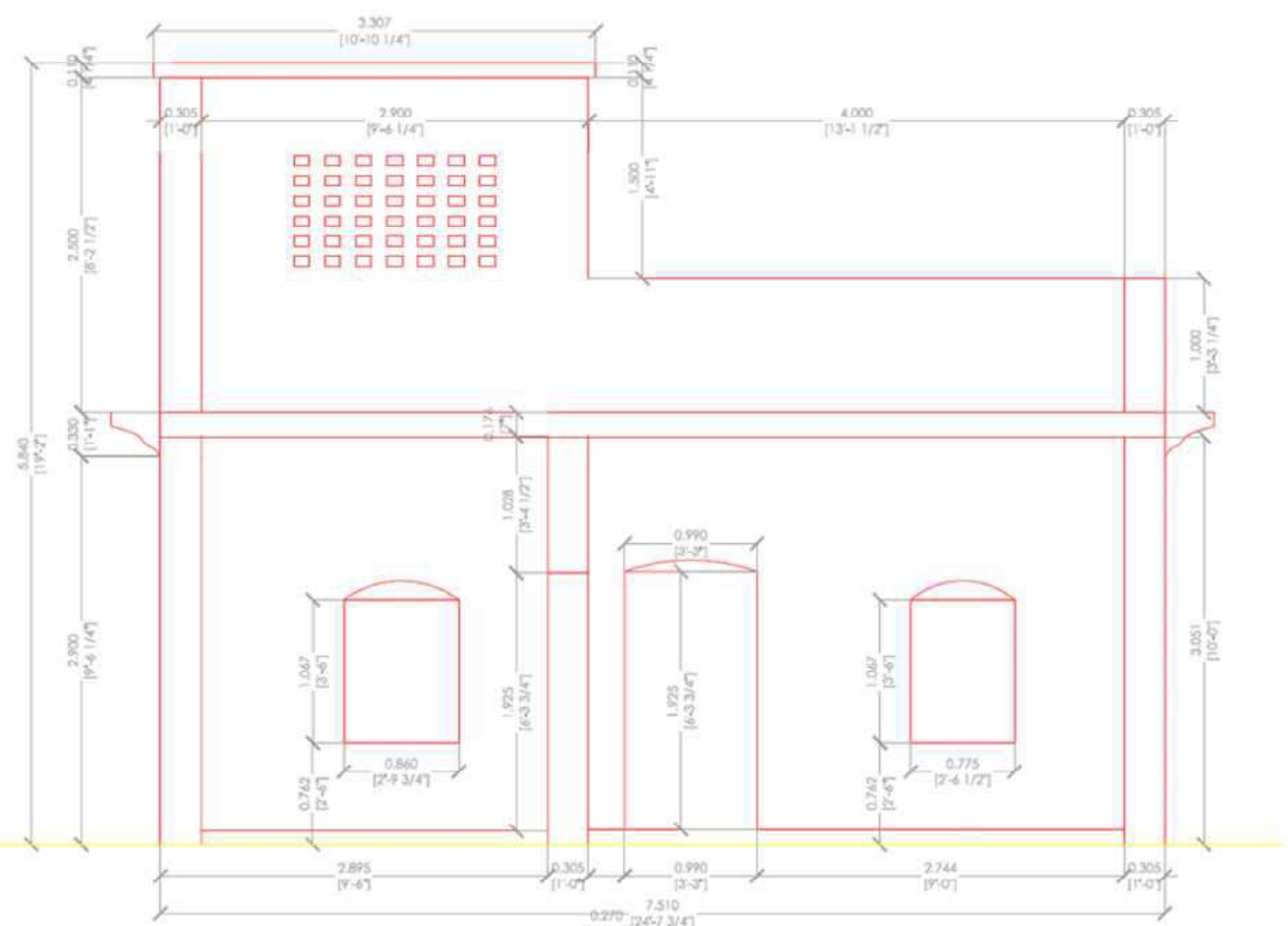
SECTION 'B'



Interior Sections



SECTION 'C'



SECTION 'D'



Design Philosophy

Multi-Sensory and Multimedia Interpretation

To reflect Premchand's commitment to lived experience, the museum employs immersive and multi-sensory strategies:

- Soundscapes recreating rural environments, marketplaces, printing presses, and protest gatherings.
- Listening Posts featuring dramatized readings and multilingual excerpts from key works.
- Projection Mapping and Subtle AR Layers to animate texts and archival materials.
- Tactile and Spatial Installations that evoke domestic, agrarian, and urban spaces central to his narratives.

Audience-Sensitive Interpretation

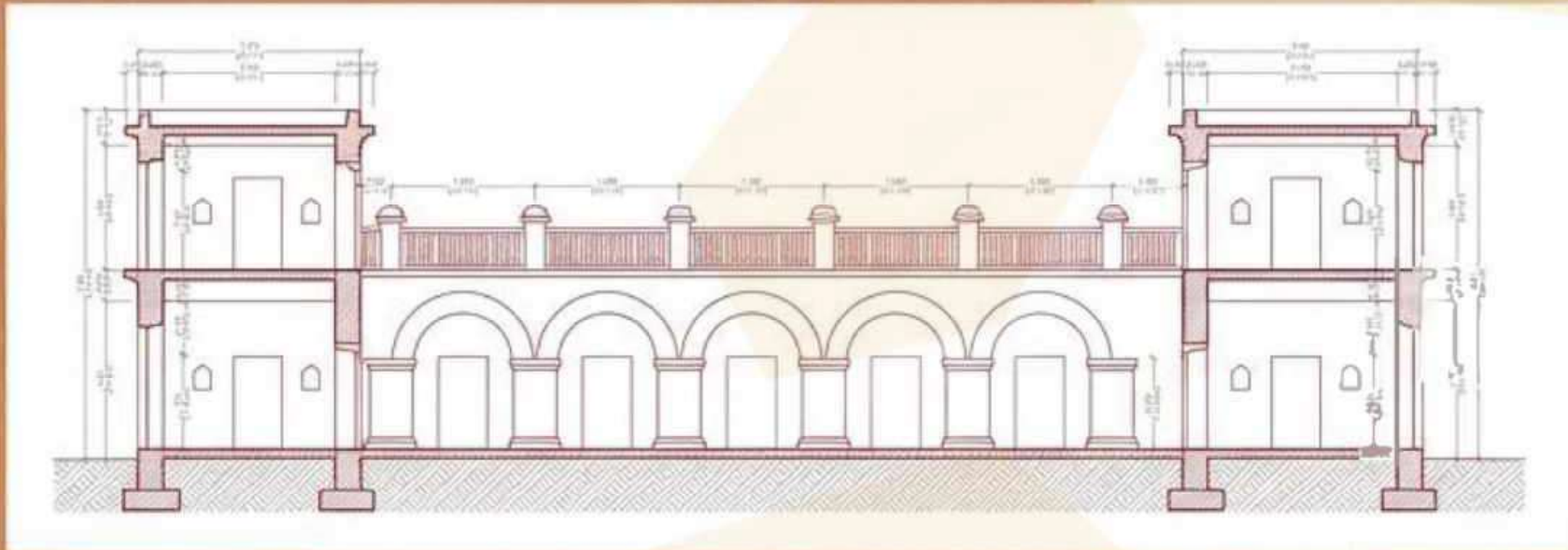
Interpretation will be layered to engage diverse audiences - students, scholars, families, and general visitors - through varied depths of information and interaction.

Ethical and Reflexive Interpretation

The museum acknowledges the complexities of representation, especially around caste, gender, and poverty. It encourages reflection rather than romanticization, fostering critical awareness.



Architectural Language & Materiality



Arches :

The design acknowledges the blend of Colonial and Mughal influences prevalent in the architecture of Banaras.

Earthy Tones :

The color palette utilizes mud-like textures and warm ochres, paying homage to the village aesthetic of Lamhi and the peasant life Premchand championed.

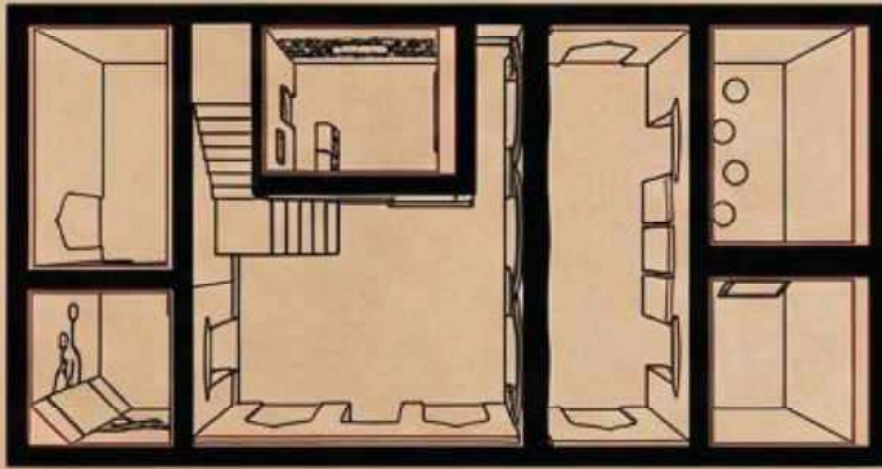
Minimalism :

Clean lines ensure the architecture serves as a canvas for the content, not a distraction.



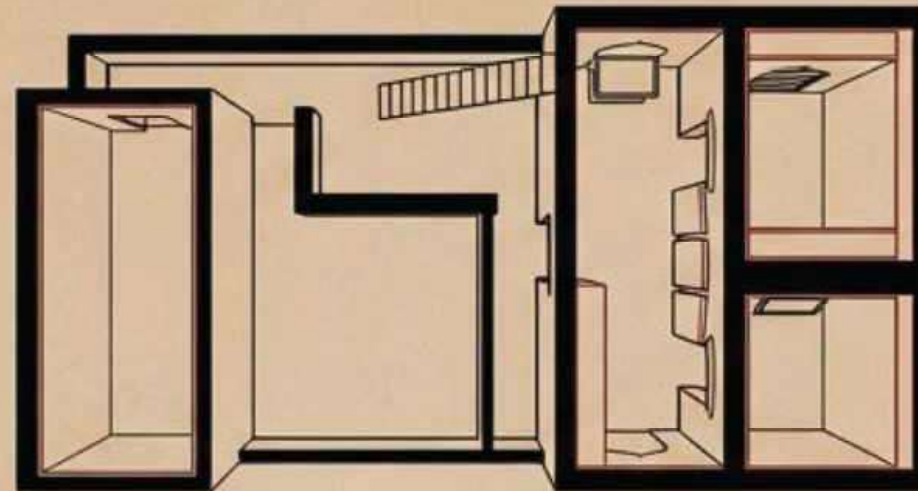
Spatial Layout & Interpretive Themes and Zones

Curating the Visitor Journey



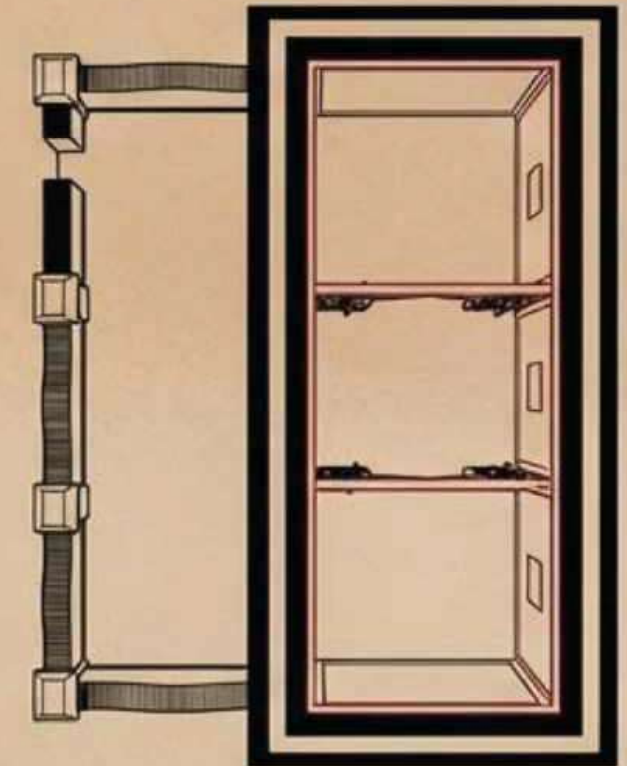
Ground Floor : The Roots

Immersion, atmosphere, and the ancestral home (Reception, Holograms, Interactive Timeline).



First Floor: The Work

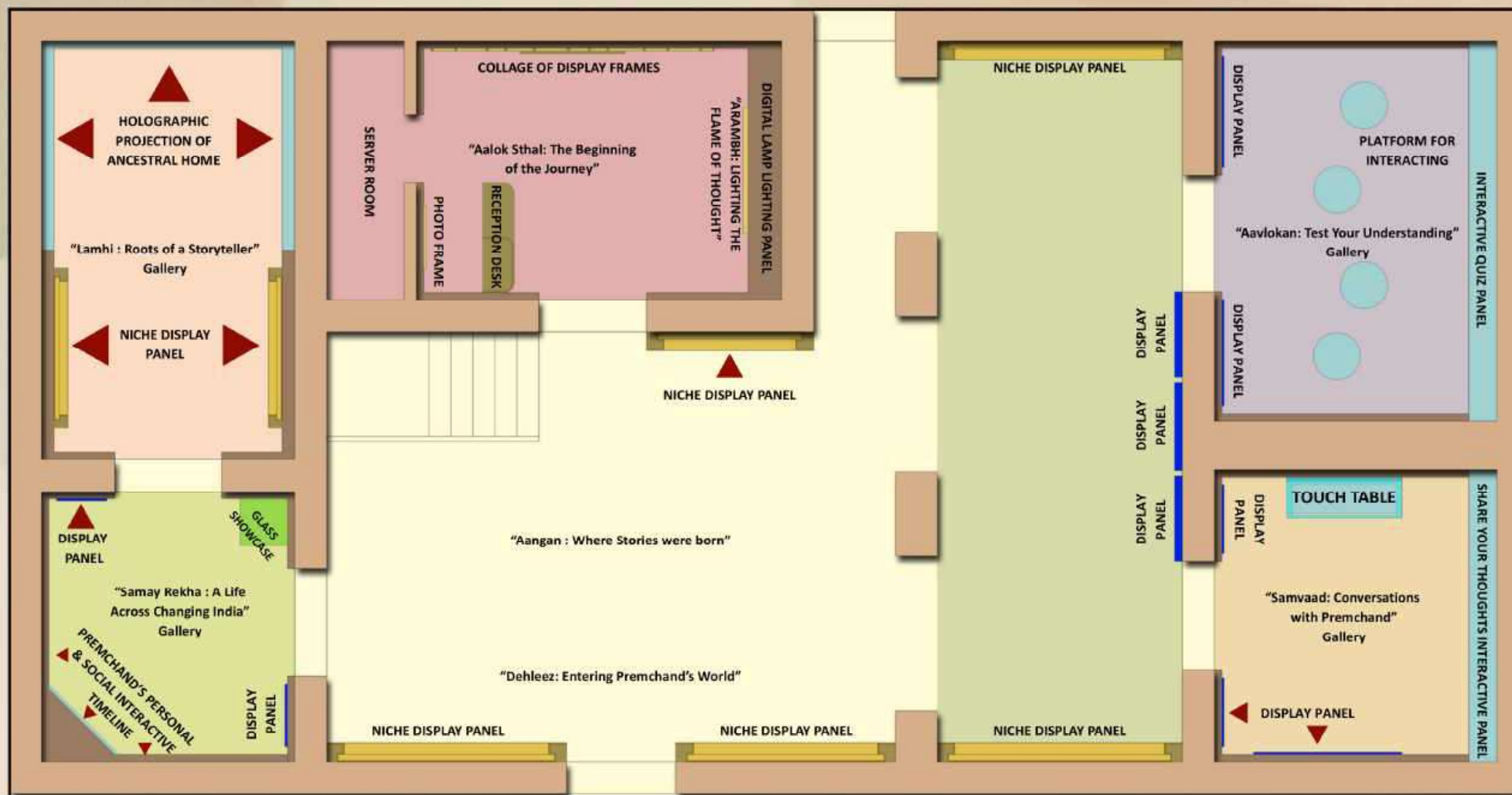
Visualising the stories and the digital repository (Bioscope, Flipbooks, Digital Library).



Second Floor: The Legacy

Context, contemporaries, and the bilingual tradition (Writers' Galleries, Revolving Panels).

Ground Floor Plan with Display Layout



Ground Floor – Foundations and Context

"Aalok Sthal: The Beginning of the Journey"
An introductory immersive space setting the emotional and intellectual tone.

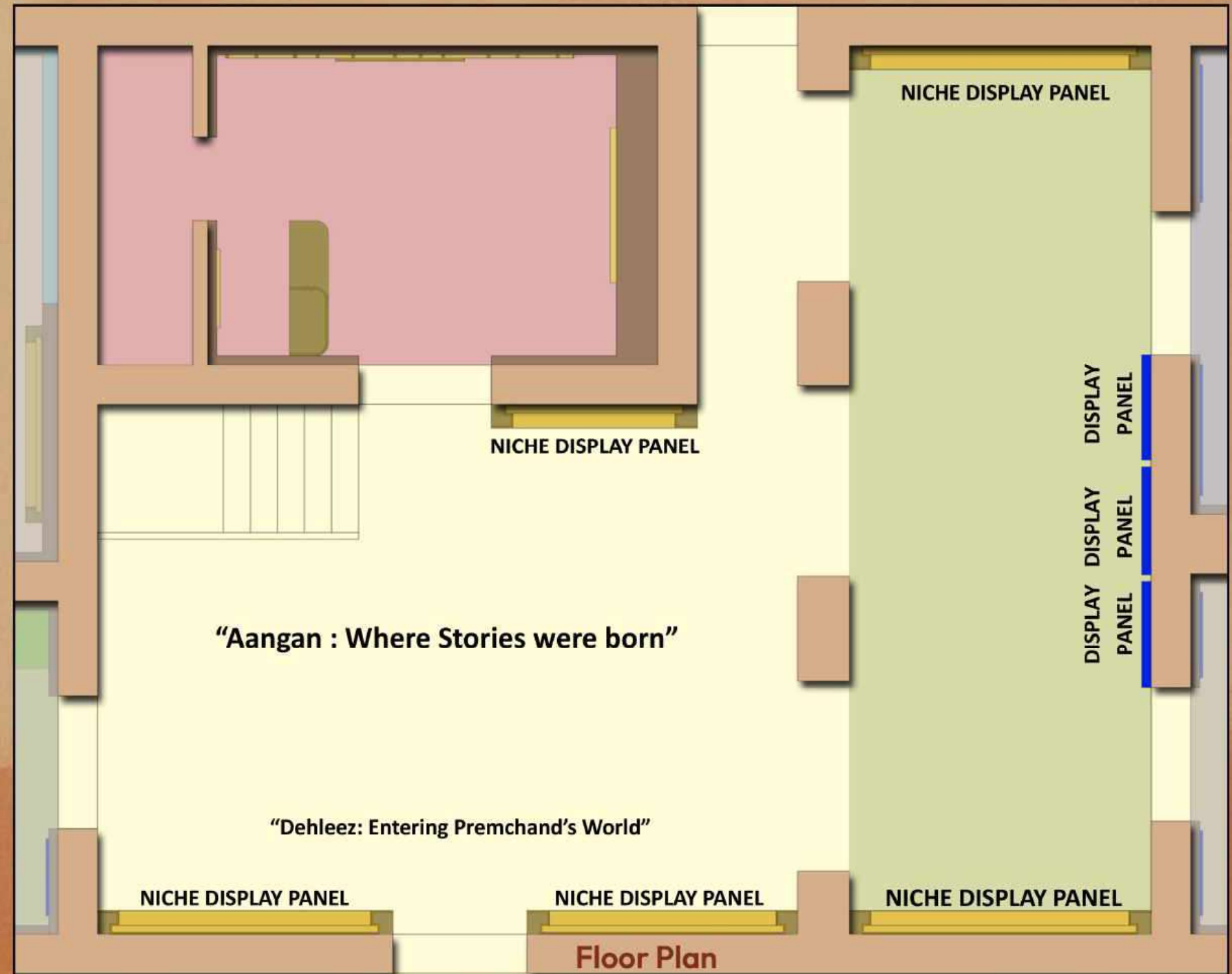
"Samay Rekha: A Life Across Changing India"
A chronological gallery tracing Premchand's life alongside major historical events.

"Lamhi: Roots of a Storyteller"
Exploring his early life, rural environment, and formative influences.

"Samvaad: Conversations with Premchand"
Interactive dialogues between his texts and contemporary questions.

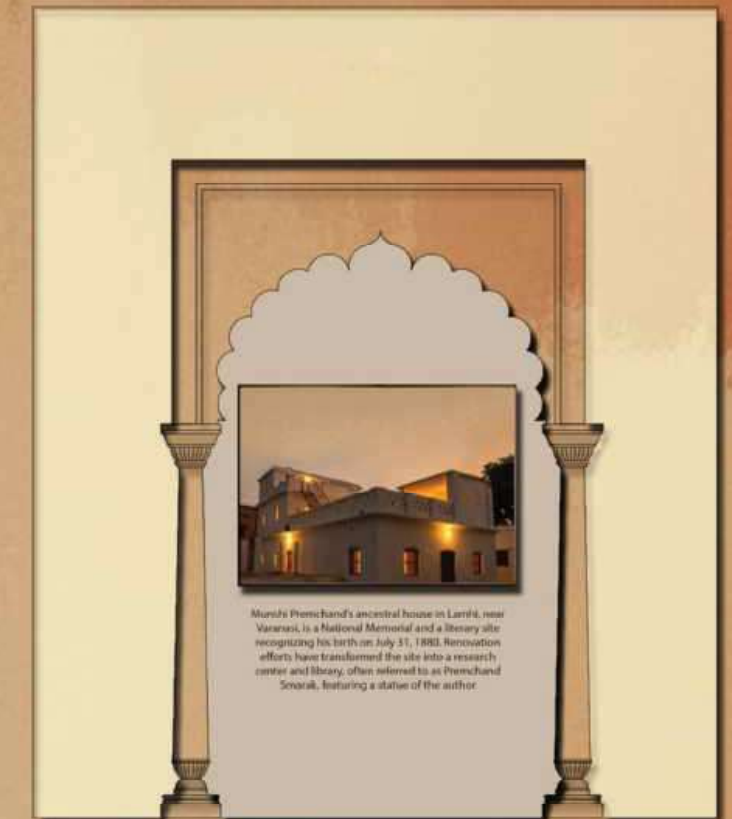
"Aavlokan: Test Your Understanding"
A reflective zone encouraging visitors to synthesize and question what they have encountered.

AANGAN : Where Stories were born





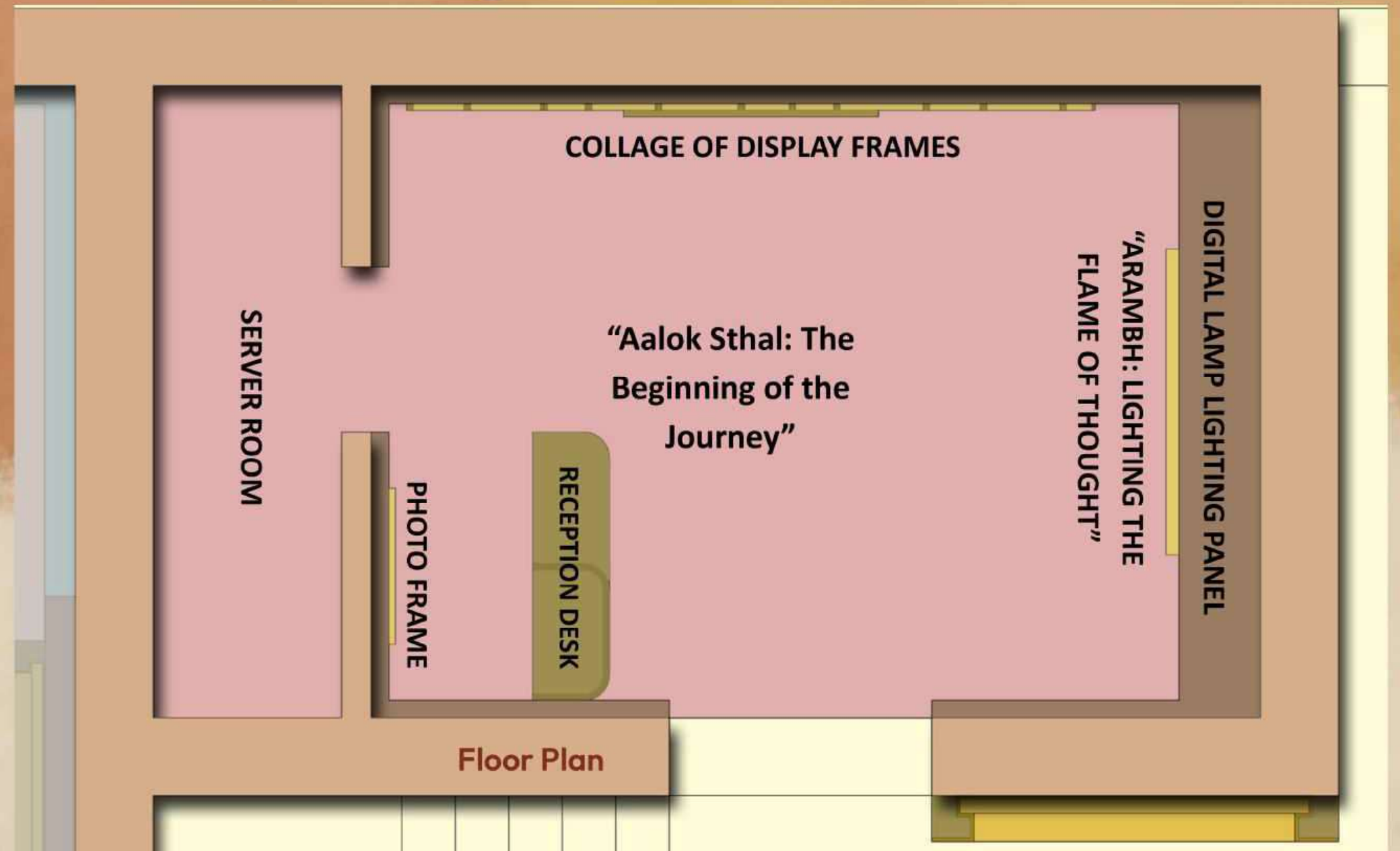
Display Panel in Corridors



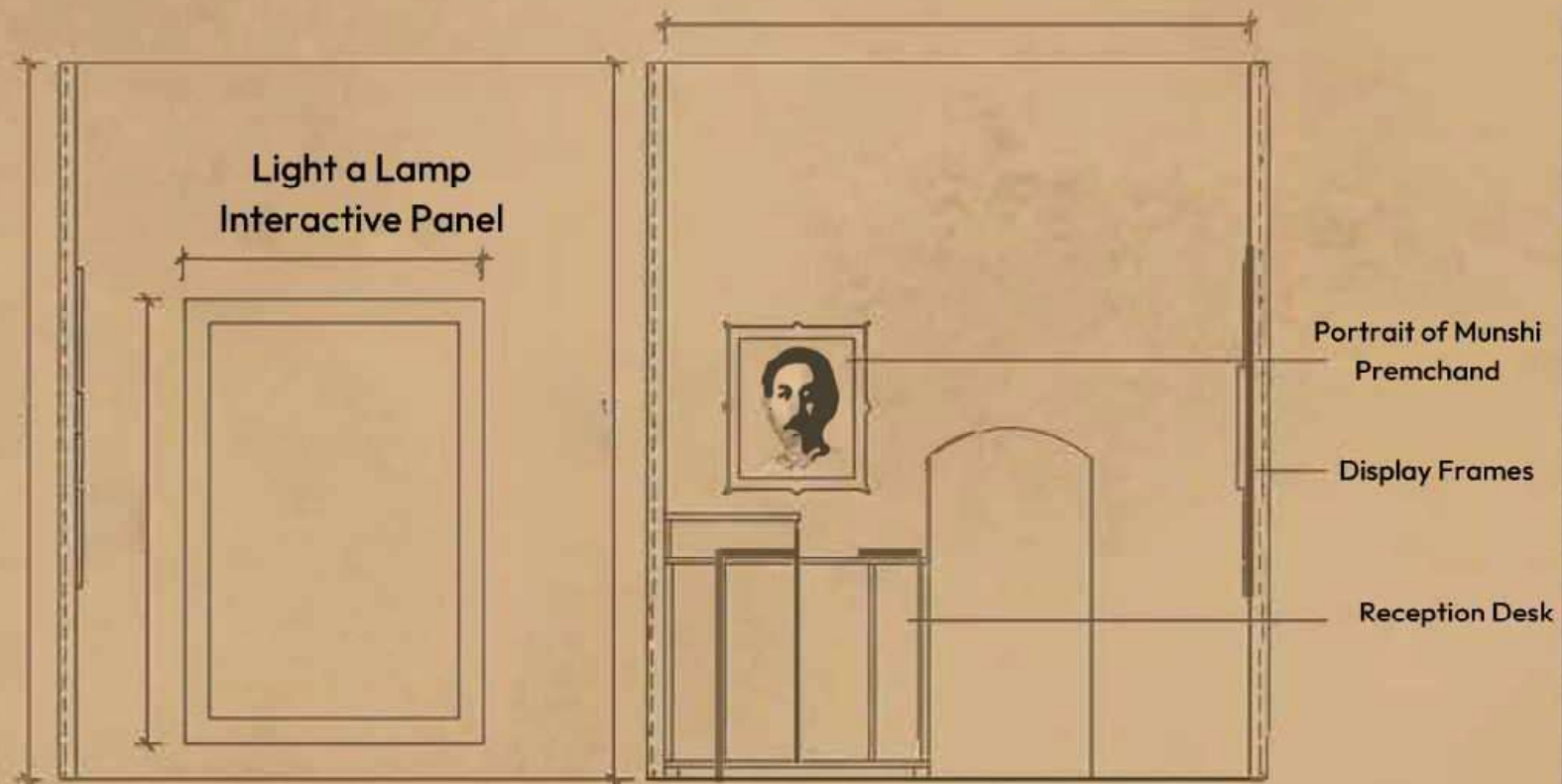
Niche Display Panel

Munshi Premchand's ancestral house in Larrki, near Varanasi, is a National Memorial and a literary site recognizing his birth on July 31, 1889. Renovation efforts have transformed the site into a research center and library, often referred to as Premchand Smarak, featuring a statue of the author.

AALOK STHAL : The Beginning of the Journey



Ground Floor: Arrival & Atmosphere

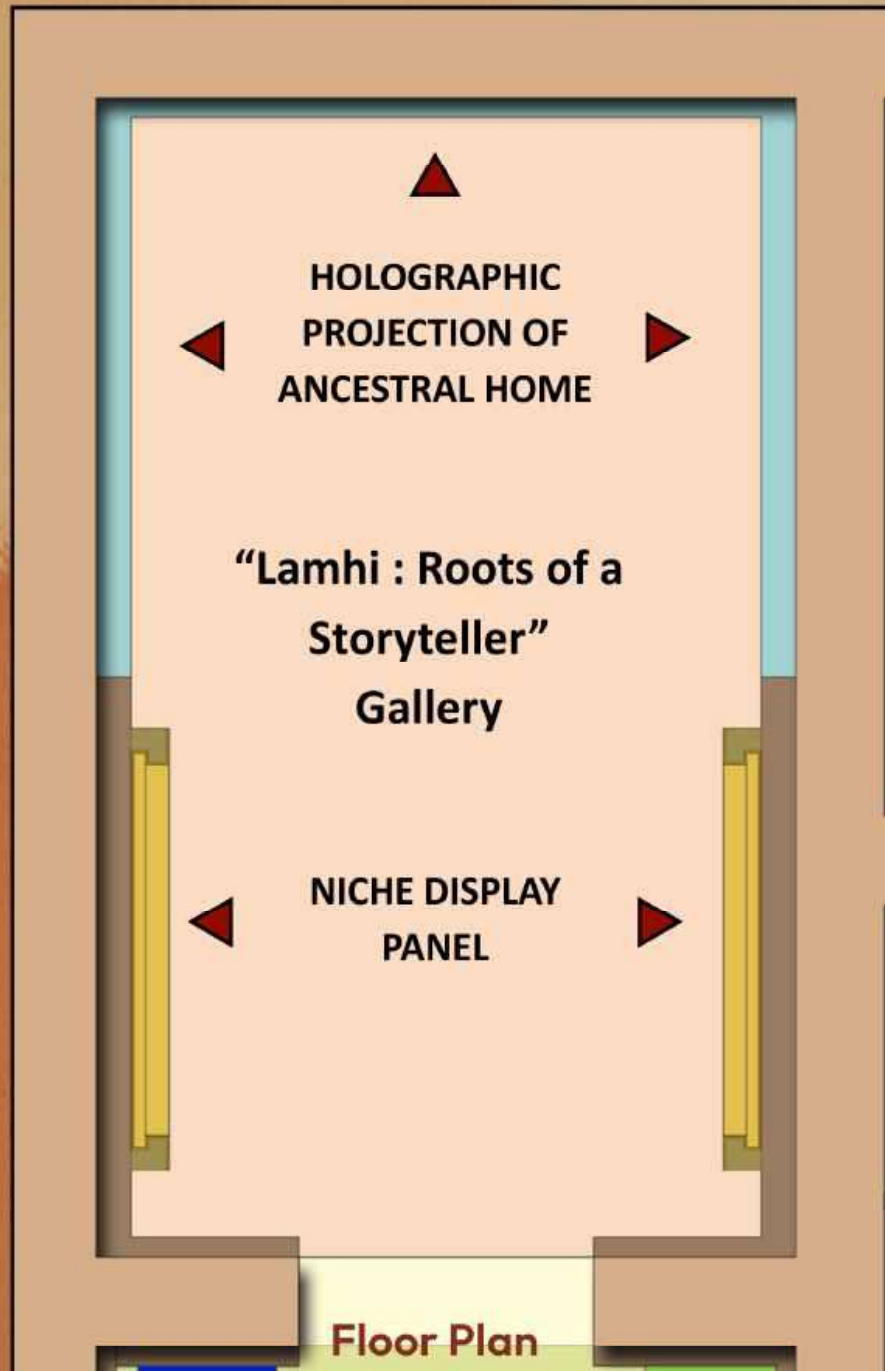


The Transition : Visitors move from the outside world into Premchand's universe.

Feature Wall : Adorned with archival newspaper clippings and portraits, grounding the visitor in early 20th-century print culture.

Interactive Ritual : The 'Light a Lamp' installation allows visitors to digitally ignite a flame, symbolizing the enduring relevance of his work.

LAMHI : Roots of a storyteller



Resurrection of the Ancestral Home



Resurrection of the Ancestral Home



The Experience :

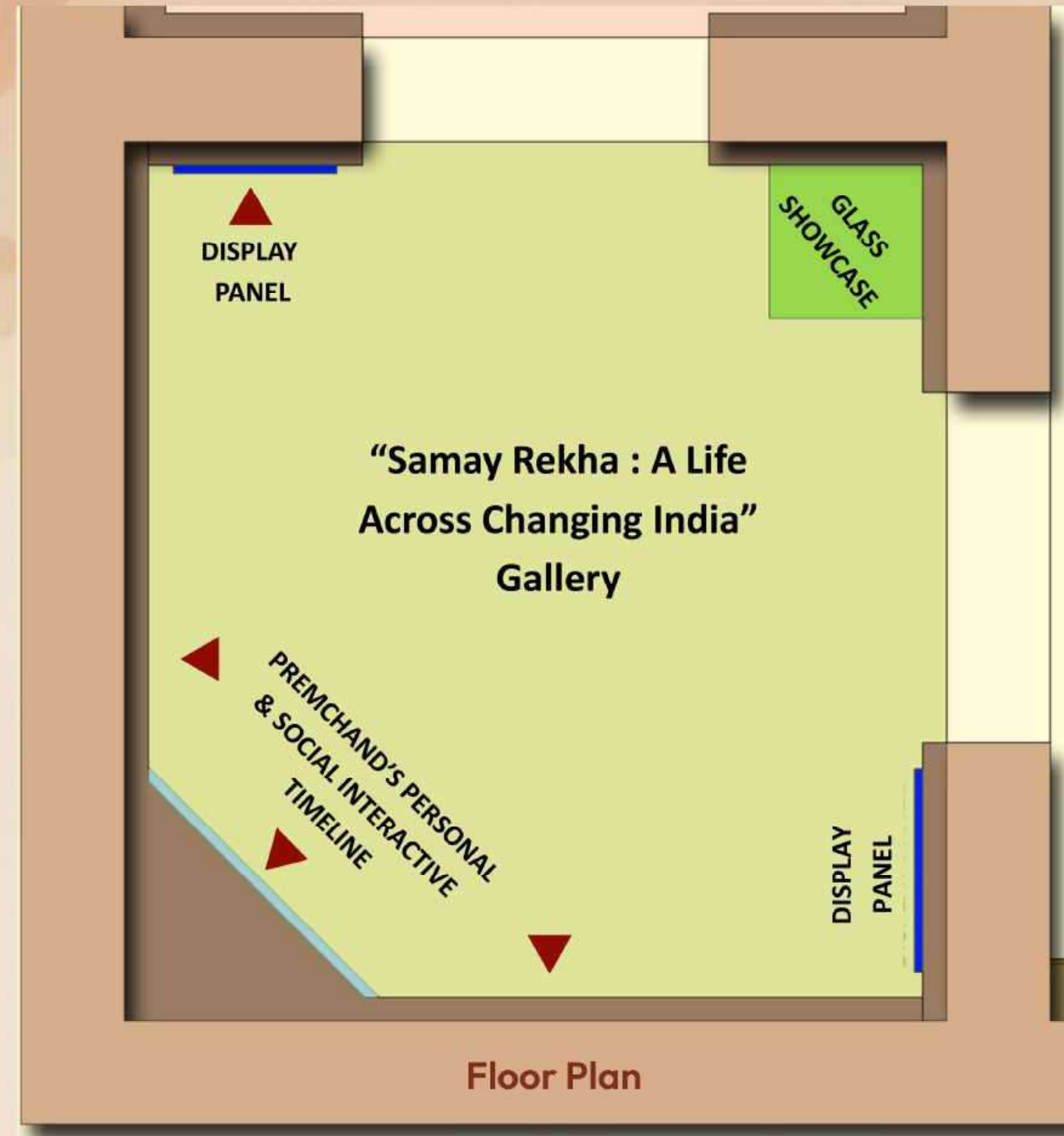
Using 3D holographic projection to create the interiors of Premchand's original house.

Narrative Connection :

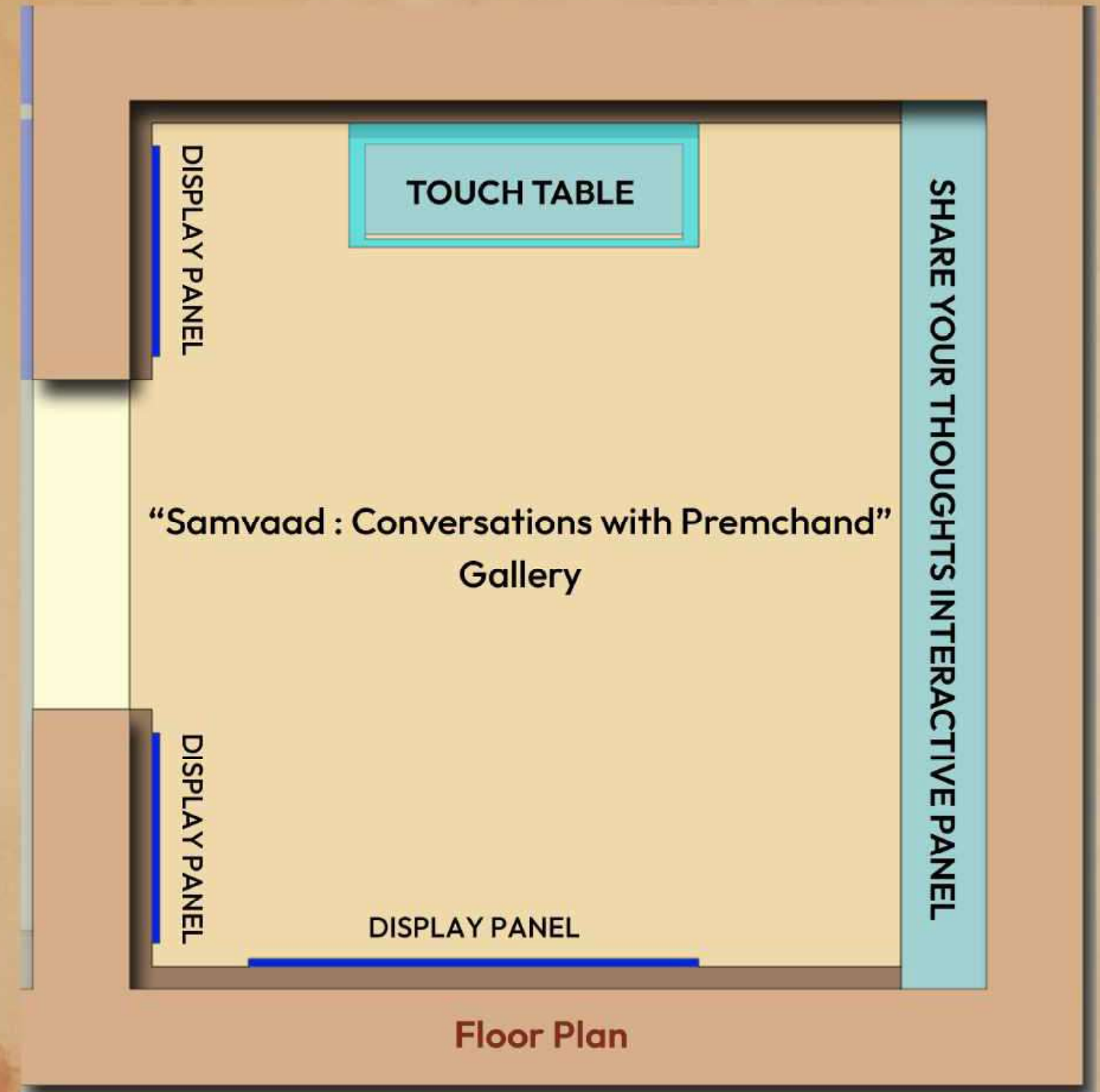
Evoking the “small room” and “earthen lamp” describing in his biography, this space allows visitors to be immersed in the history surrounded by the rustic simplicity where his masterpieces were penned.



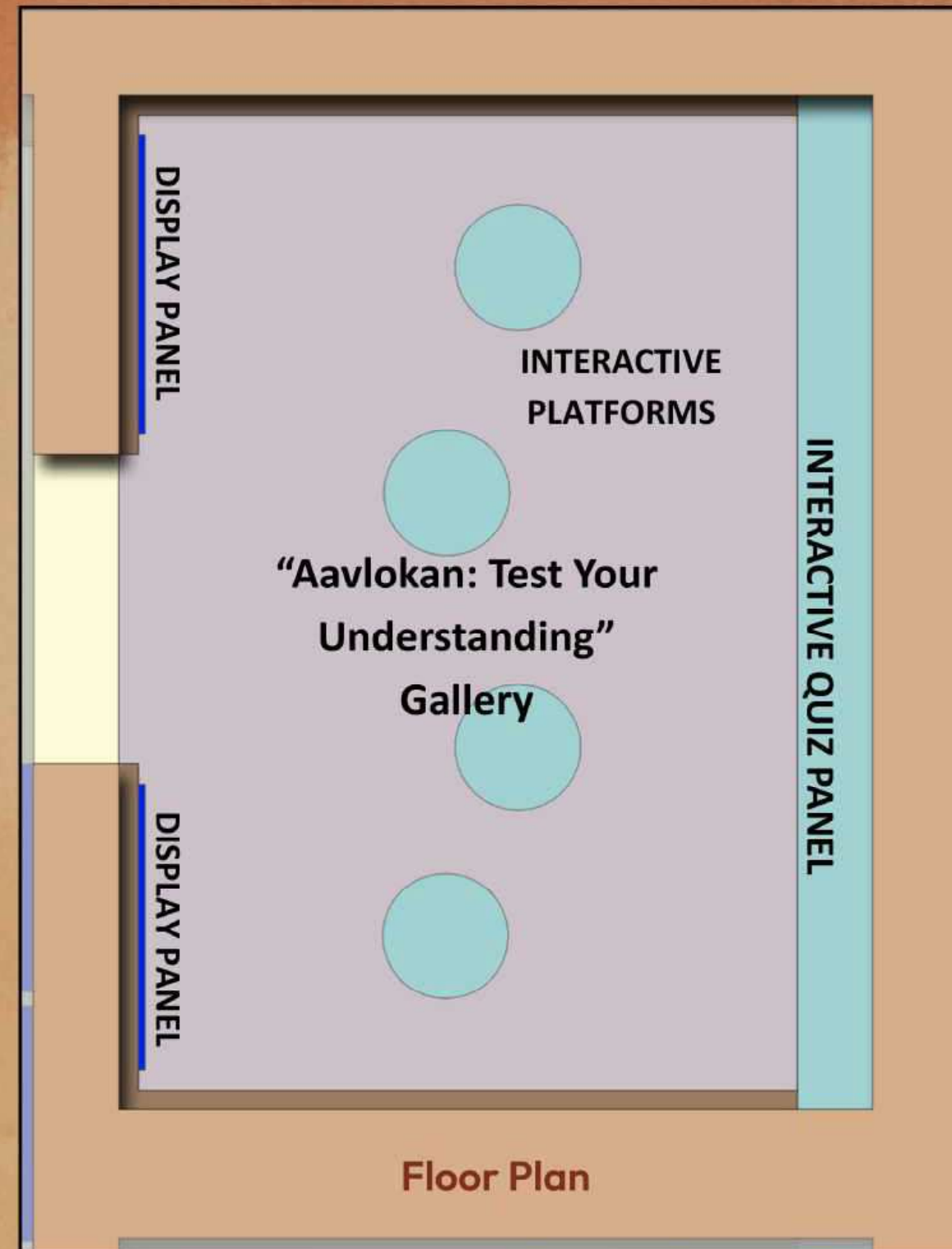
SAMAY REKHA : A Life across changing India



SAMVAAD : Conversations with Premchand



AAVLOKAN : Test your Understandings



Interactive Engagement & History



SAMAY REKHA : A Life across changing India

Touch & Learn Timeline

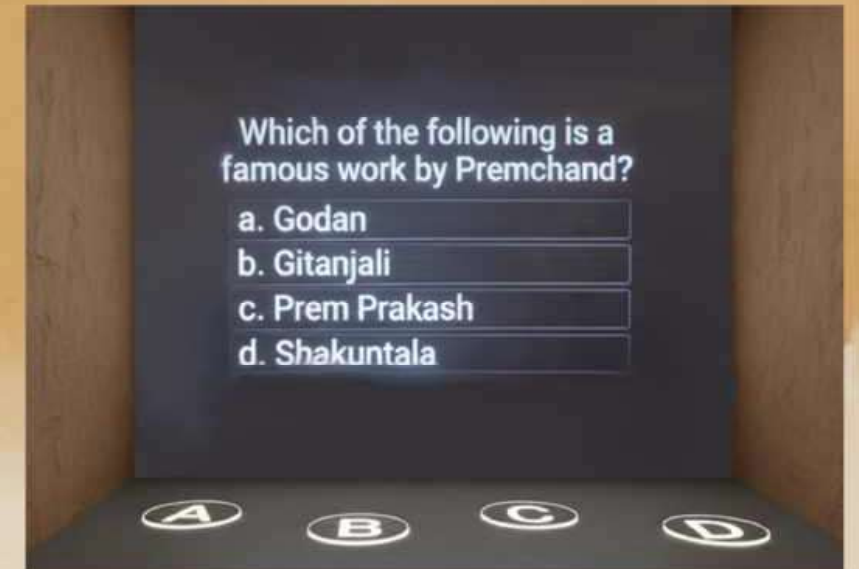
Contextualizes Premchand's life against the Indian Freedom Struggle.



SAMVAAD : Conversations with Premchand

Share Your Thoughts

A digital tapestry where visitors leave reflections, creating a living dialogue.

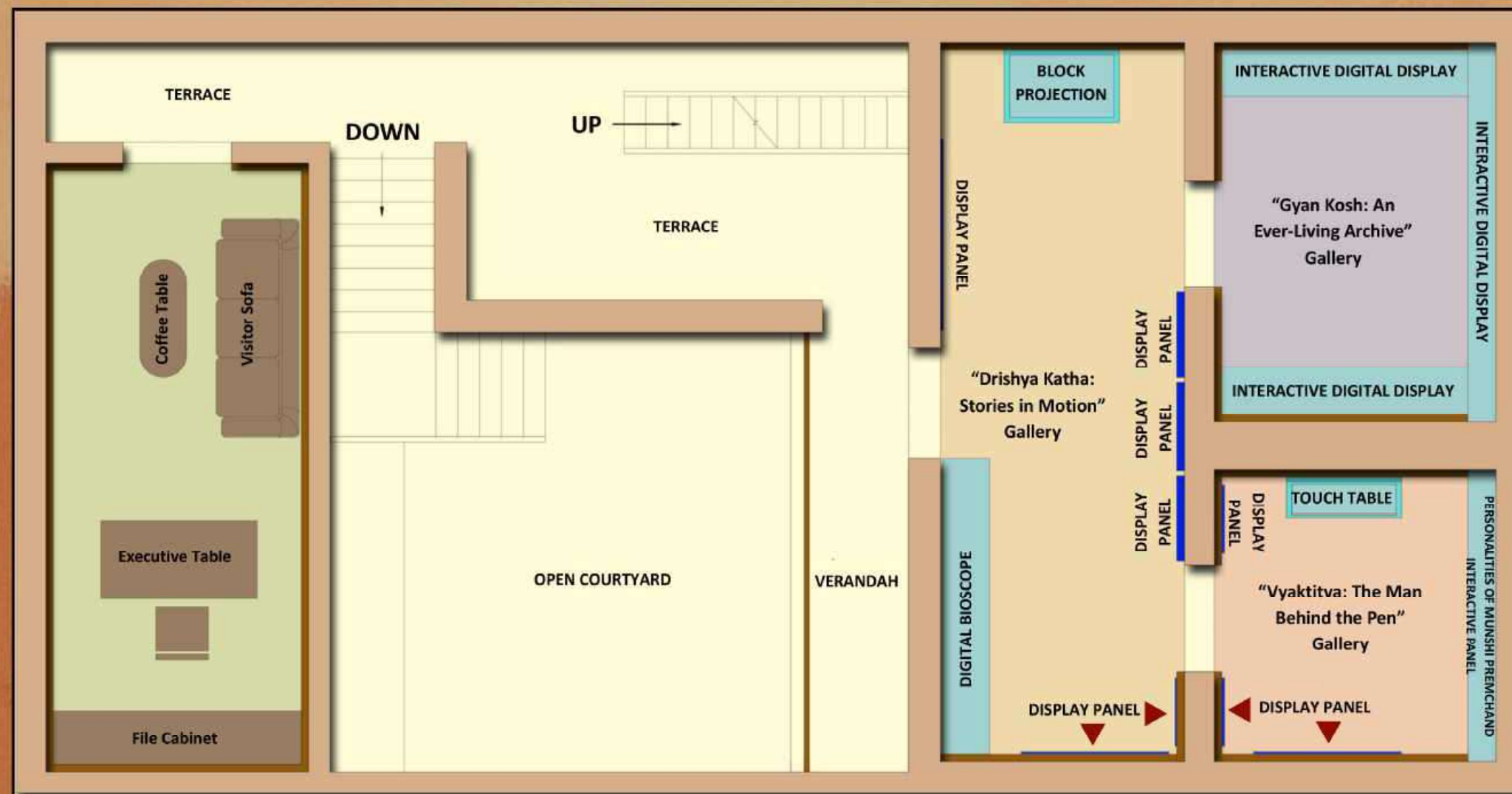


SAMVAAD : Conversations with Premchand

Interactive Quiz Panel

Gamifying literary knowledge to engage younger audiences.

First Floor Plan with Display Layout



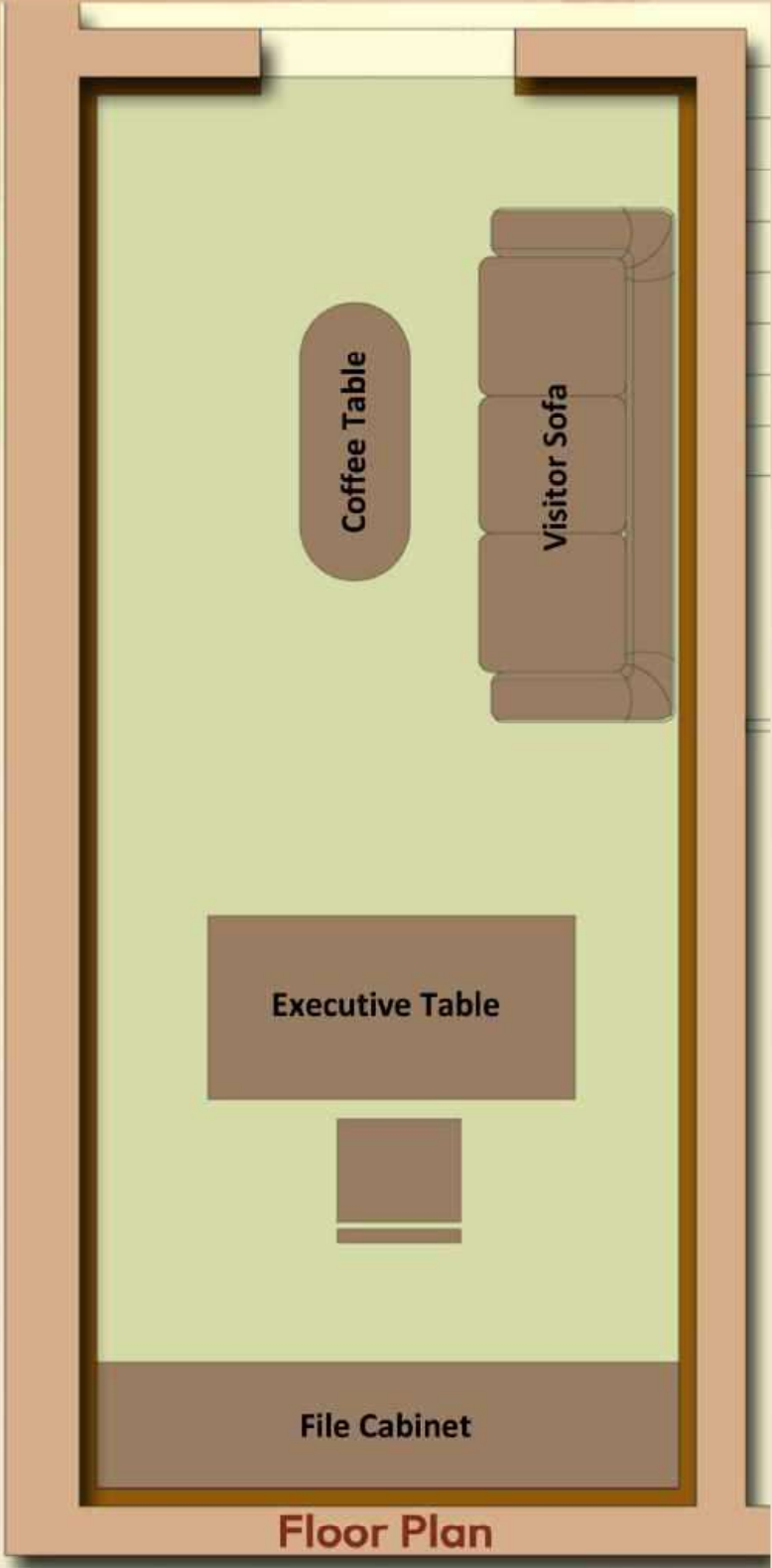
First Floor – Literature and Personality

"Drishya Katha: Stories in Motion"
Dynamic visual interpretations of key stories and novels.

"Vyaktitva: The Man Behind the Pen"
An intimate look at his personal life, values, correspondence, and contradictions.

"Gyan Kosh: An Ever-Living Archive"
A research-oriented space housing digital archives, manuscripts, translations, and critical scholarship.

Curator's Office





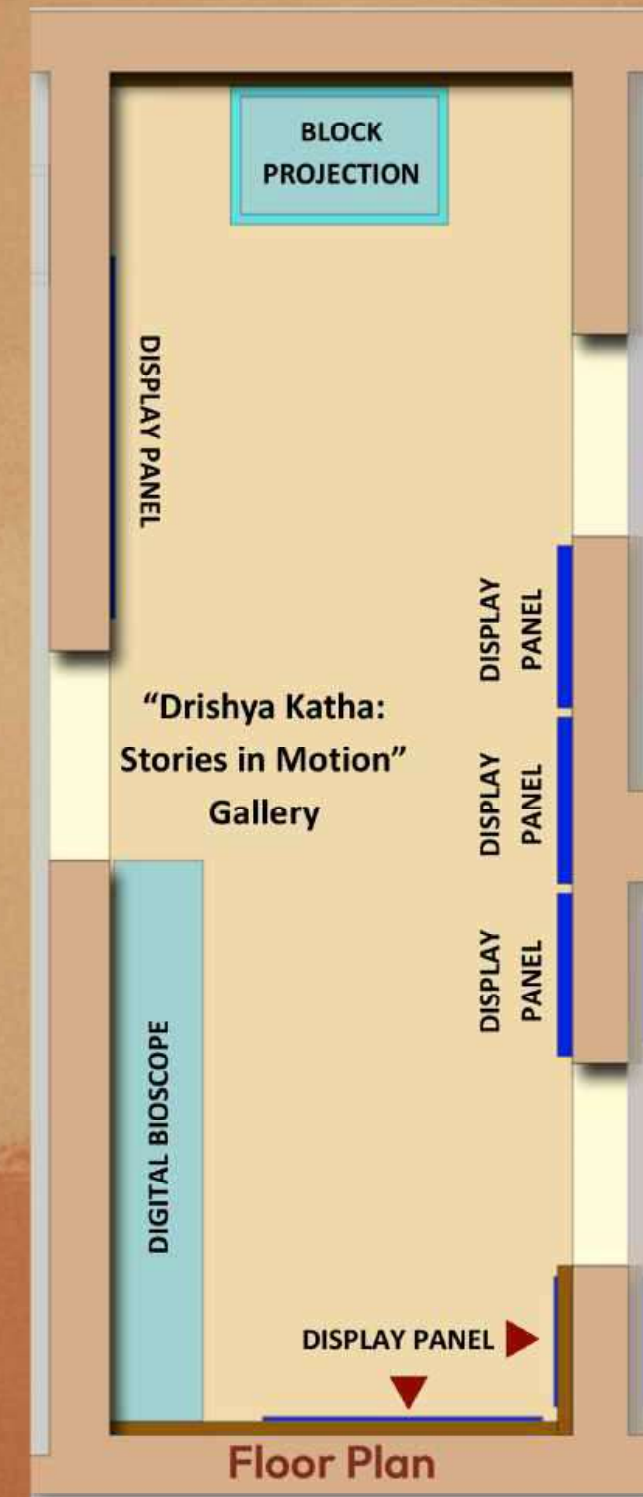
DRISHYA KATHA : The Stories in Motion

The Bioscope :

Instead of standard flat screens, the design uses a "Bioscope" format- peepholes into circular digital displays. This mimics the nostalgic village fair experience, offering a voyeuristic view into the rural vignettes of Premchand's stories.

The Flipbook :

A physical-digital hybrid podium where turning physical pages triggers dynamic projection mapping.



First Floor : Visualising the Narrative

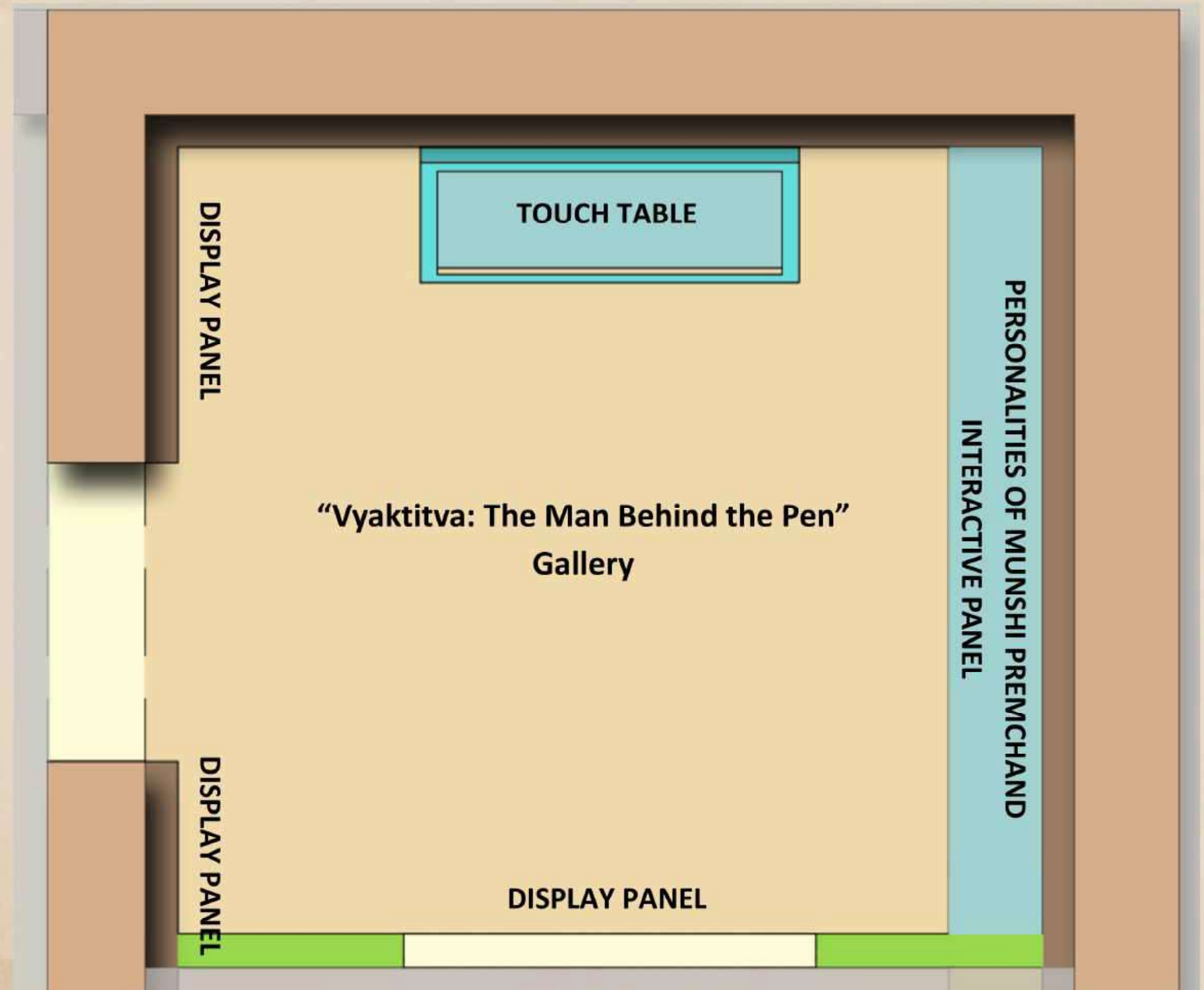


Digital Bioscope



The Flipbook with Projection

VYAKTITVA : The Man Behind the Pen

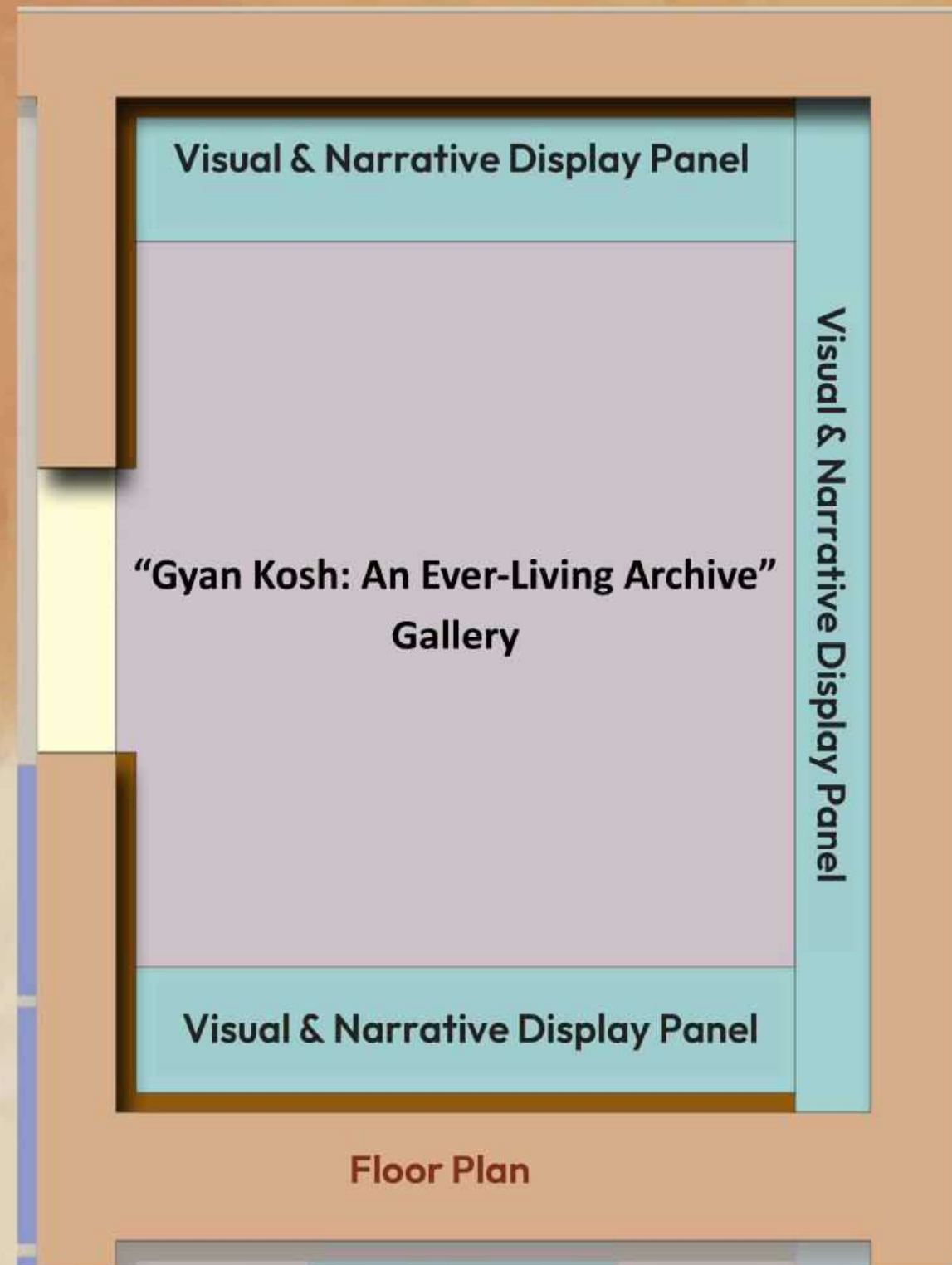


Floor Plan

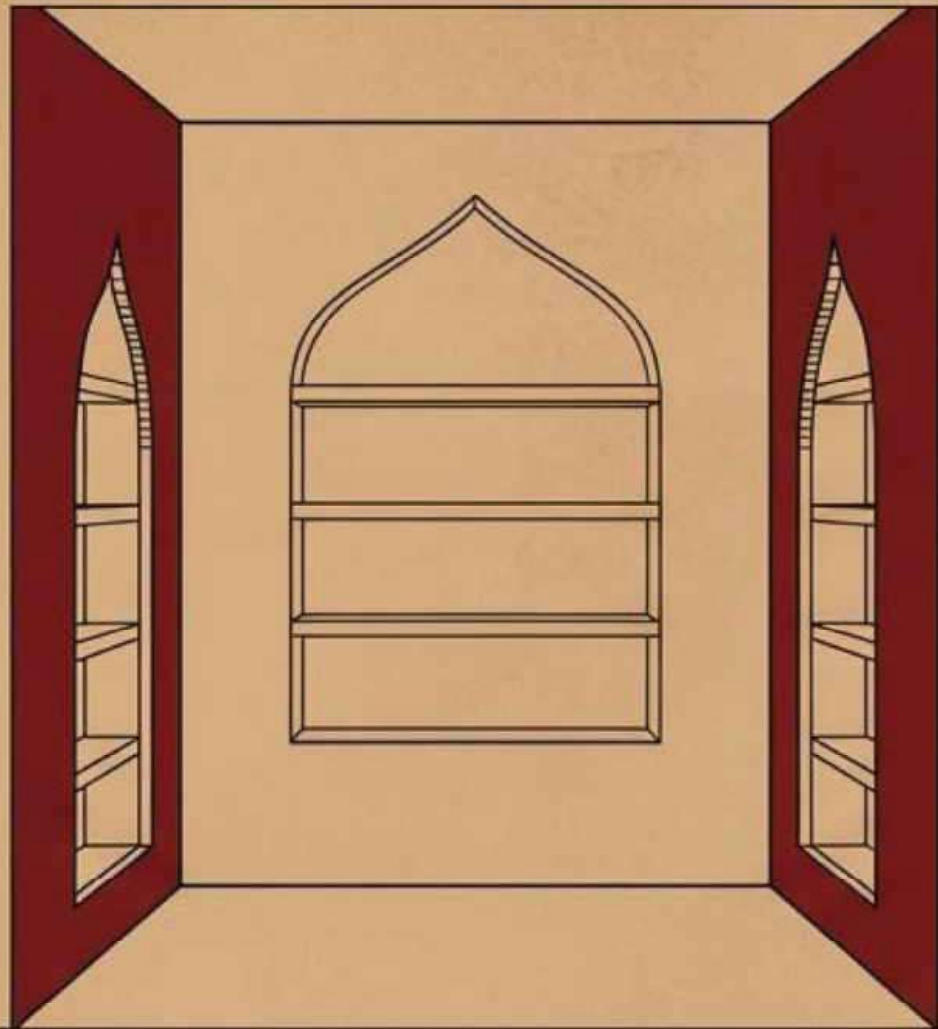
Interactive & Touch-based Personality of Munshi Premchand



GYAN KOSH : An Ever-Living Archive

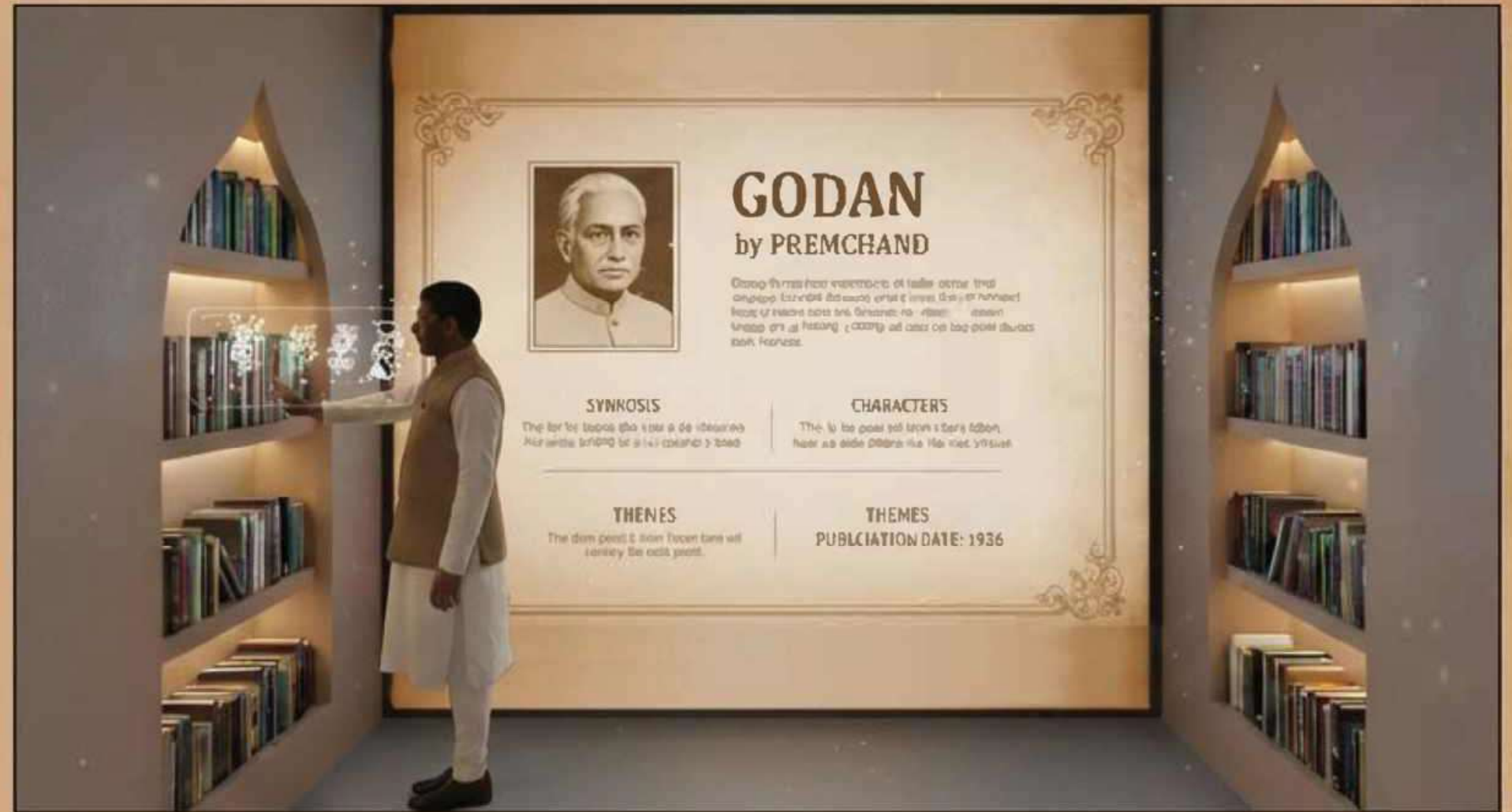


Lifesized Library and Storytelling Hub



The Repository :

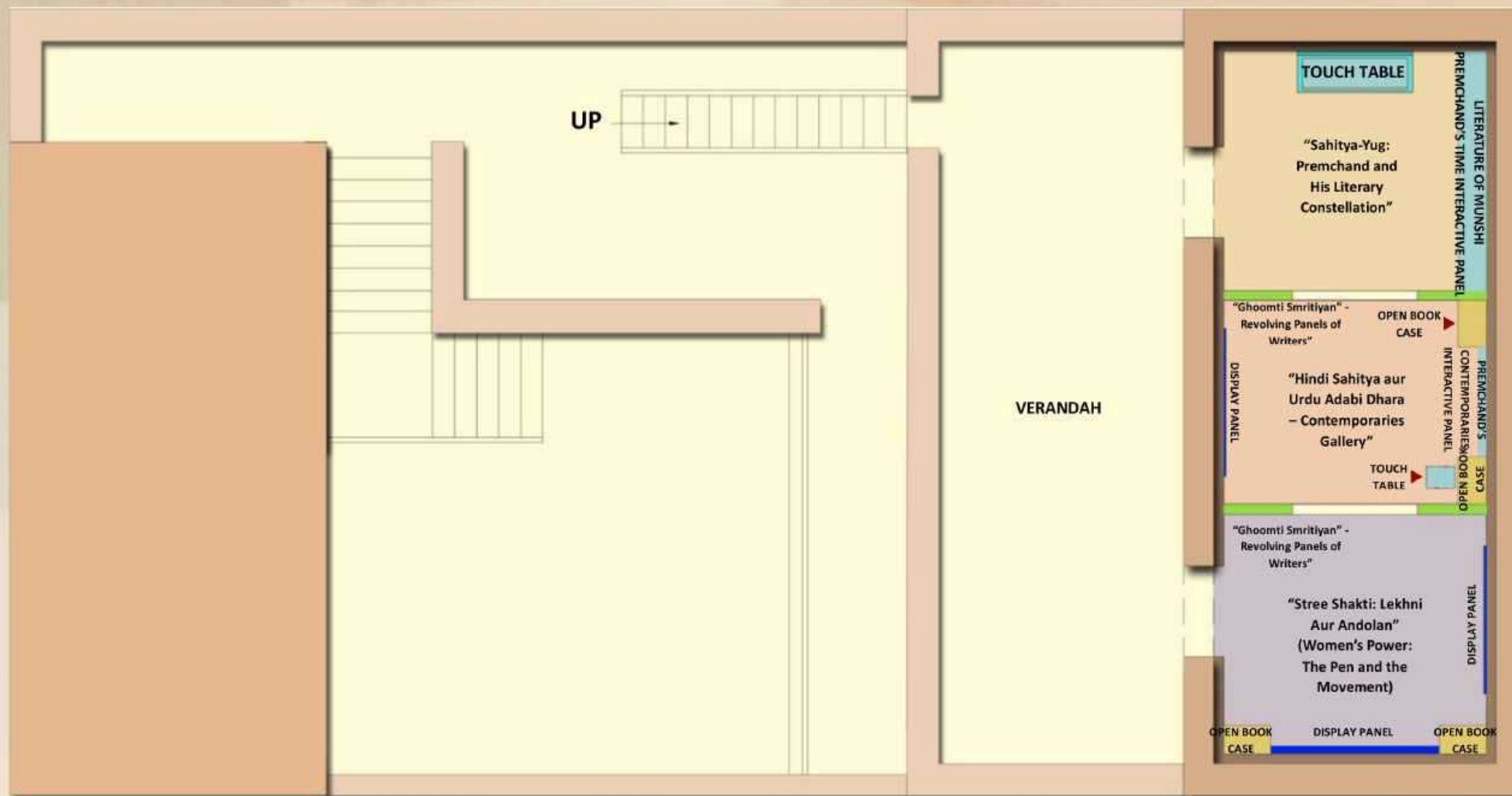
Visitor pulls a book, hidden layers inside the shelf reveal additional material.



Featured Work :

GODAN (The Gift of a Cow). The display breaks down characters like Hori and Dhaniam, and themes of agrarian debt, directly referencing the peasant life central to the museum's mission.

Second Floor Plan with Display Layout



Second Floor: The Literary Landscape

"Sahitya-Yug: Premchand and His Literary Constellation"

Situating him within broader literary movements and intellectual currents.

"Hindi Sahitya aur Urdu Adabi Dhara : Contemporaries Gallery"

Exploring the intertwined trajectories of Hindi and Urdu literary traditions.

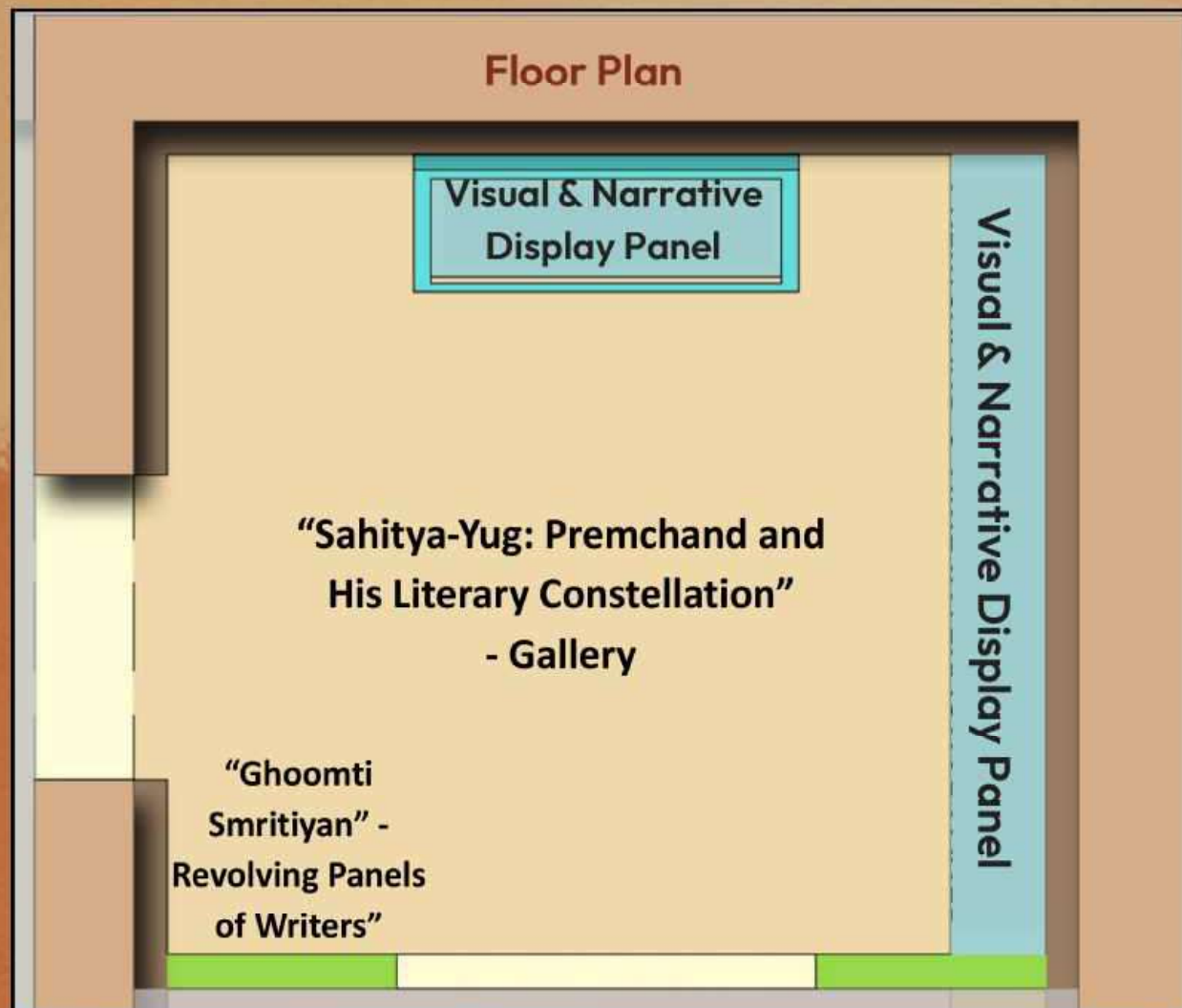
"Ghoomti Smritiyan : Revolving Panels of Writers"

A dynamic installation featuring photographs and profiles of fellow writers and successors.

"Stree Shakti: Lekhni Aur Andolan" Women's Power: The Pen and the Movement

Connects authorship with activism through visual and narrative display panels.

SAHITYA-YUG : Premchand and his Literary Constellation



The Context:

Introduction to Literature of His Time.

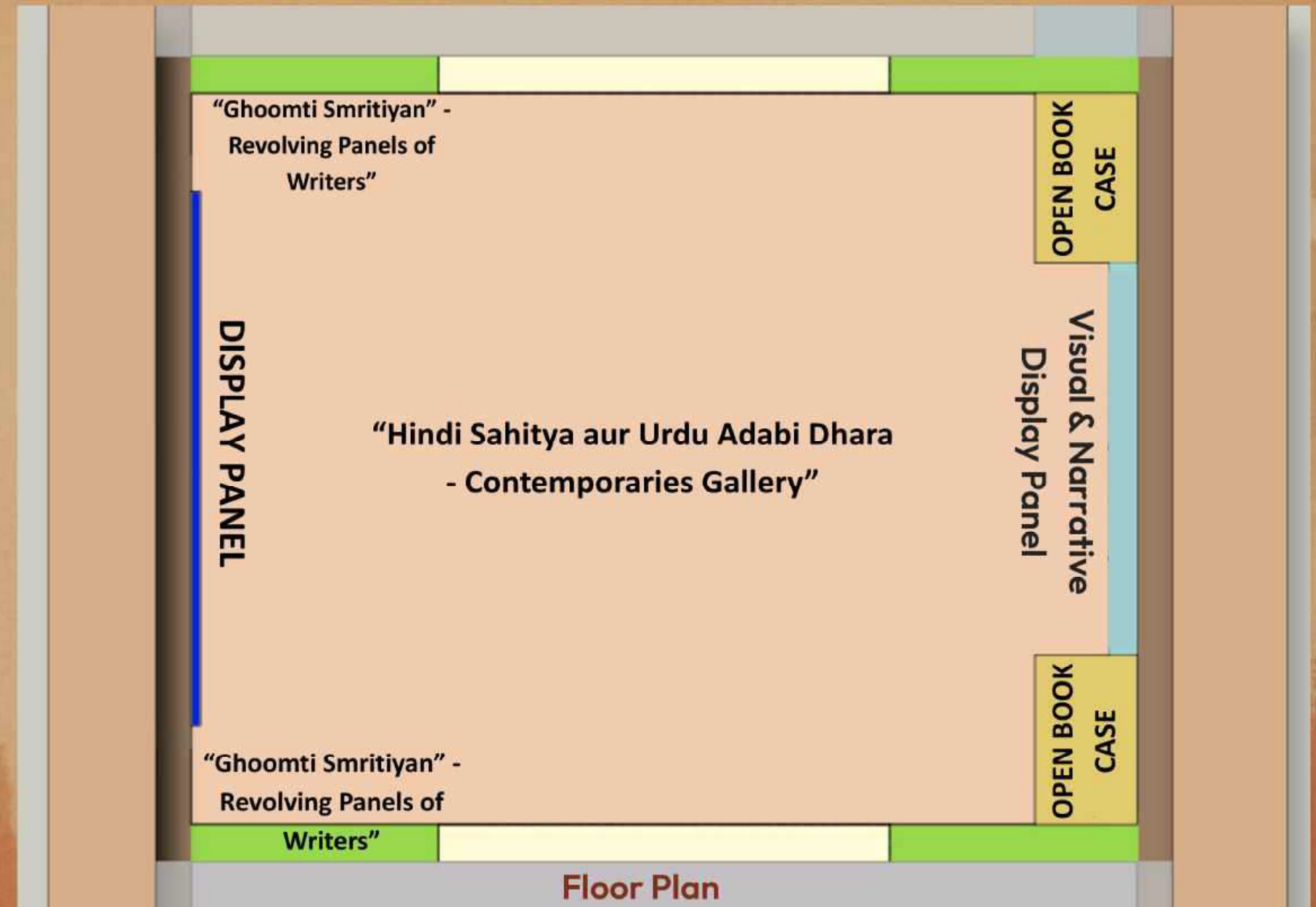


LITERATURE OF MUNSHI PREMCHAND'S TIME PANEL

The Gallery:

This space situates Premchand as a "critical interpreter of his times." The curved walls feature large-scale text excerpts that explore the literary transition from fantasy (Aiiyyari) to realism (Yatharthvaad) in Hindi literature.

“Hindi Sahitya Aur Urdu Adabi Dhara” - Contemporaries Gallery



A Bilingual Legacy: Hindi & Urdu



"Ghoomti Smritiyan" - Revolving Panels of Writers Photos



Premchand's Contemporaries Display Panel

Revolving Panels:

Dynamic displays allow visitors to physically rotate sections to reveal different authors, symbolizing the multifaceted nature of the era.

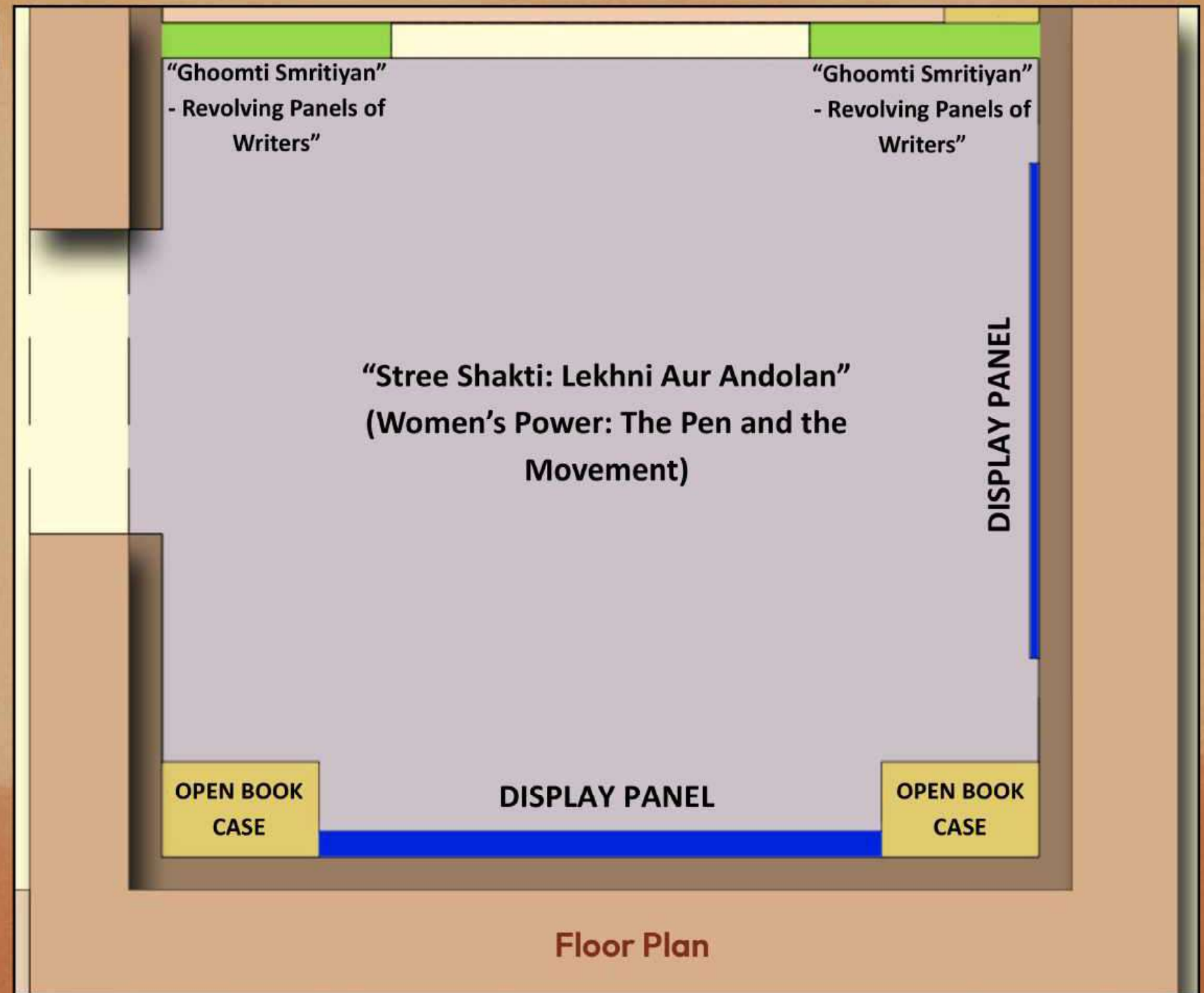
Urdu & Hindi Galleries:

Distinct zones acknowledge his duality-writing as "Nawab Rai" in Urdu (with works like "Soz-e-Watan") and "Premchand" in Hindi.

Cinema Connection:

The gallery also references 'Shatranj Ke Khilari' (The Chess Players), linking his literature to Satyajit Ray's cinematic interpretation and other notable films and TV series.

“Stree Shakti: Lekhni Aur Andolan”



The Personal & The Political

Shivrani Devi :

His wife and fellow writer (author of 'Premchand Ghar Mein'), married in 1906.

The Resignation (1921) :

The pivotal moment he resigned from his government teaching job and formally joined the freedom fight, choosing 'Swaraj' over security.

Saraswati Press :

The struggle to establish his own printing press in Banaras to avoid censorship and ensure independent expression.



Phasing of Execution & Estimation of Costs

The tasks mentioned below will adhere to the schedule. This activity will be monitored by the project manager and site supervisor.



CURATION



CONCEPTUAL & TECHNICAL DESIGNS

