

Design Program Brief

Neighbourhood Place

It is early morning, summer of 2022 in the village of Konerirajapuram, near Kumbakonam. It is a quaint village with around 75 to 100 families, surrounded by plentiful of paddy fields. The corner house right at the entrance of the village adjacent to the lake is abuzz with activity. The morning Kolam has been prepared, the floor is getting washed and clean, there is smell of fresh flowers in the air and a special meal is getting prepared. Veena music and karnatic vocals fill the entire place with a melody, just like every other day. However, today is special because it is the first day of the 5 day music festival organized by the "neighbourhood place" of this village.

In the last two years, things have changed drastically for the village, for the better of course! Post the pandemic outbreak in 2020, many families who had migrated, began returning, major conservation work of the Aghrahams began in Konerirajapuram and many small villages in this belt. Everybody realized the potential of using virtual means of learning to their advantage, and till today keep using this as it is convenient to them. As of now, almost 70% of the houses have been occupied. The village is now filled with kids, teenagers and adults. Needless to say, all the *tathas* and *pattis* are super happy!

The idea of the **Neighbourhood place**, the project that we are discussing today was thought of almost 18 months ago. Krishna, grandson of the first corner house had also returned from the USA. Earlier he used to visit the village twice a year, now he stays in the village and works from here. What we want to talk of today is his idea of developing a place for the neighbourhood. According to him, it is a place for the entire village to come and spend time. This is how he describes it -

"It is a place for learning,

It is a place for craftsmen and innovation,

It is a place for discussing ideas and debating,

It is also a place for just gathering over filter coffee and jam some music!"

When he narrated this idea to his grandparents, both *tatta* and *patti*, were absolutely silent at first. Krishna thought, may be what he is thinking was not such a great idea. But the reality was different, both his grandparents were silent because they were transformed in their own version of the neighbourhood place and lost in their own thoughts... thoughts that were very strange, and almost dream like.

This is how they describe all that they had imagined in those 5 minutes -

Their neighbourhood that did not have much people was suddenly bustling with activity; many families were now staying in the village. One of the houses however seemed unusually active. Near the Thinnai many activities were going on, sometimes someone was reading newspapers, at other instant a group was discussing politics, then again little Lalitha was standing animating stories to a group of 5-6 children.

As they entered inside, they began seeing kids and adults singing and playing musical instruments. Suddenly they saw Mohan, their friend and a master craftsman from Tanjore. He was sitting cross-legged in one of the courtyards, making Veena, fussing over his trainee workman to properly shape the jackfruit wood.

In another room, they saw their neighbour's son Balasekar, a scientist and researcher taking workshops for the children, who were all engrossed in making models. This room was surrounded by immense resources - there were computers, a 3D printer, there were books, atlases and encyclopedias.

From outside this house almost blended with the surrounding, but from inside the place seemed new and full of excitement.

Krishna softly shook his grandparents, curiously wondering about the combination of silence and innocent smile on their faces. He asks them, "Paati, Tatha what do you think of this idea?" And they didn't think a second further and happily replied, "Peran, let us make this place for the village."

So today, here we are in the neighbourhood place. It has been a year since its inception already and everyone in the village is very happy using the facilities.

The Making of Thanjavur Veena

Thanjavur Veena or "Thanjavur" Veena is manufactured in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu and has been awarded a GI. It is always made out of 50-60 year old jackfruit (*Artocarpus lacucha*) wood because of its excellent tonal quality and because it ages well. The wood is procured from a forest, a zone is 150 km from Thanjavur. An average of 6-8 Veenas can be produced in a month, each part takes a whole day's work.

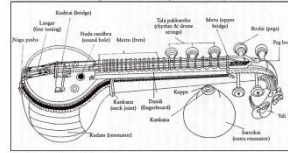


Fig. 1: Components of a Thanjavur Veena. The Veena-making process can be broadly divided into three categories:

(A) The Carving



This log of jackfruit wood is selected to make the body of the Veena. Measurements are marked for the exact shape of the Veena to be carved.

The workshop of a veena maker



Storage space for raw material and components: Old Veena Veena heads to parts and assembled.

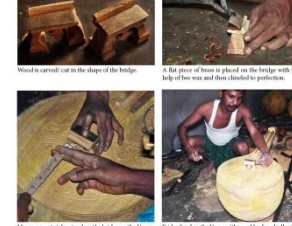


Spans for carving the Veena. Open, dusty, 4-6 working on veenas at different stages.



A decorative piece called Yachi is attached to the neck of the Veena.

(2) Bridge Making



Wood is carved out in the shape of the bridge.

A flat piece of brass is placed on the bridge with the help of hot wax and then checked for perfection.

Measurements taken to place the bridge on the Veena.

Bridge fixed on the Veena with wood-bark and adhesive.



Space where storage of material, tools, varnished veenas and working happens in the same space.



Space for storing finished veenas.

Tools Used in the making of Thanjavur Veena



Different sizes of chisel used to carve.

Files and scrapers used to smoothen the surface of the wood.

Saws used for cutting the wood to desired sizes.

Imprecise tool for measuring the length.

Tools for measurement of angles and for drawing circular shapes.

Manual Drilling tool.

Tools for supporting the Veena used to work with the strings.

Two colors used for ink: Chemical and natural.



The resonator is carved and the wood is scooped out.

The resonator is then covered with a wooden sheet which is cut and shaped to fit perfectly.

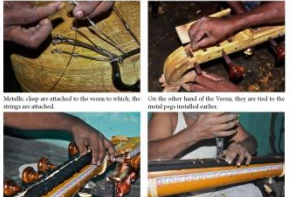
A mixture of jackfruit bark, yellow color and adhesive applied on inside and outside.



A rough sketch of the design to be carved is traced on the Veena.

The design is carved using a chisel and a wooden mallet.

(3) Attaching the strings



Metallic clips are attached to the veena to which the strings are attached.

On the other hand of the Veena, they are tied to the metal pegs installed earlier.

A mixture of chemical and hot waxed is melted, kneaded into a dough and fixed on the Veena neck.

The strings are now stretched over the entire neck and of the instrument and tied to pegs and knobs, which are fixed to the Veena using hot wax.

The pegs and knobs are made of cow-wood. Lately beautiful designs are painted around the instrument using lac-colors.

The non-frettinging resonator used mostly as a stand is made of paper-bark, cow or other low costly materials.

Twenty-four brass metal frets are fixed on the veena and the excess wax is removed with a blade.



Working on finishing before carving, allowing it. Less dusty, well lit.



Painting and carving stage, an artisan also seen making a part of the bridge.

Site

Your site for design intervention is located at a very crucial and beautiful spot in the village. The location is crucial because it is right next to the lake, very close from the village entrance. It is a beautiful spot because numbers of the village you find a condition of the lake edge with its steps to water, a large banyan tree and a small corner tea-shop all near each other. Your site is located right in this area.

People pass by this corner all the time be it on their way to the temple or to run an errand to the grocery store right beside the tea shop. You may think of ways while you design to address the area formed between the south-west corner, low wall and lake edge. You are not allowed to build anything outside of your plot, but there should be a design gesture that responds to the space getting formed here.

What can you do to make this area active? Can you engage the people coming to the tea stall to come have a walk of the exhibition that is put up in the neighbourhood place? Can you invite the kids who have come for biscuits and candies to the tea stall by giving them a glimpse of an interesting object? Can the smell of marigold flowers and music bring in the guests to linger on to your terrace garden for a while on their way to the temple?

Krishna is the custodian of the neighbourhood place, he stays in one of the agraharams in the village along with his grandparents. He has his workspace in the neighbourhood place and manages the running of the place along with help from two teachers. His various tasks include teaching, getting resources, organizing small events, curating exhibitions and checking on administrative happenings.

One of the two classrooms, has regular music classes. The other one is open for lectures and workshops. So if there needs to be science workshop for kids or a public health seminar or an informative session on scientific advancement in agriculture, this classroom comes in handy.

The reading room and cyberspace gets used throughout the day by different age groups of people. Every Sunday morning, a two hour story telling session happens in this space.

Refer the sequence of **Veena making** to help you understand the nature of the spaces needed. While designing, think of it as a space that is open to visitors for a limited time of the day. Think of how this can be achieved through your design without compromising the craftsman's work environment.

There is a **meeting space** that can accommodate 25-30 people. Krishna has come up with a ritual where one every fortnight a topic gets democratically discussed and debated. This space is informal and issues and suggestions related to betterment of the village are noted down. Smaller meetings related to organizing an exhibition or a musical performance also happen in this space.

Exhibitions require a running length of 10-12 metres. You have freedom to interpret this. You can use walls or free standing panels. The purpose of the exhibitions is to showcase the activities that happen here in the centre.

Food is prepared everyday in the kitchen for 8-10 people. Krishna, his helpers along with the craftsmen and music teachers have their lunch together.

There is a 10mx10m large terrace on the upper level. The terrace can be used for eating, sleeping and enjoying the rains.

Design Guidelines

Your plot has two continuous long walls. You are supposed to keep the wall on the east as is.

The west wall is adjacent to the main street of the village. Anybody entering the village will pass by this street. It also falls on the way to the Vishnu Temple. While designing think of how you can use this edge to incorporate the following - in order to allow a glimpse or two and avoid it becoming a nuisance for the users of the built form.

1. Glimpse - to be able to see, visually connected but physically dis-connected
2. Pause - to be able to sit for some time and engage,
3. Enter - to be able to go inside, physically connected
4. Obstruct - visually and physically dis-connected

You can remove upto 10M of the wall. You can choose to remove it in two, three or more parts.

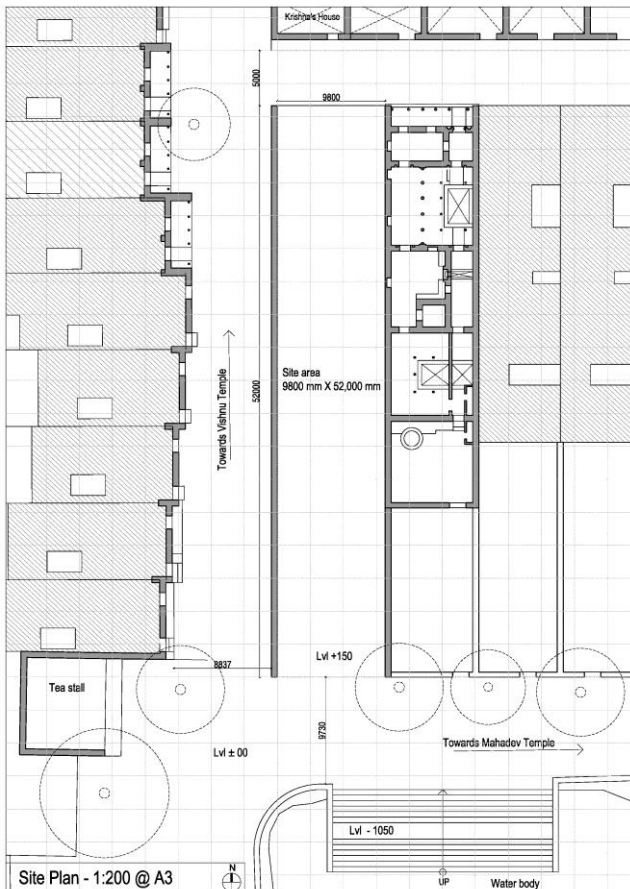
You may introduce four differently sized courtyards for different kinds of activities and interaction.

Out of four, one of the courtyards is a terrace courtyard; people can sit here and have tea, read a newspaper, exchange their kolam books and notes and once in a while even have a folk dance practice. Like the produce courtyards of the area, atleast one courtyard should be a produce courtyard and it could be next to the kitchen.

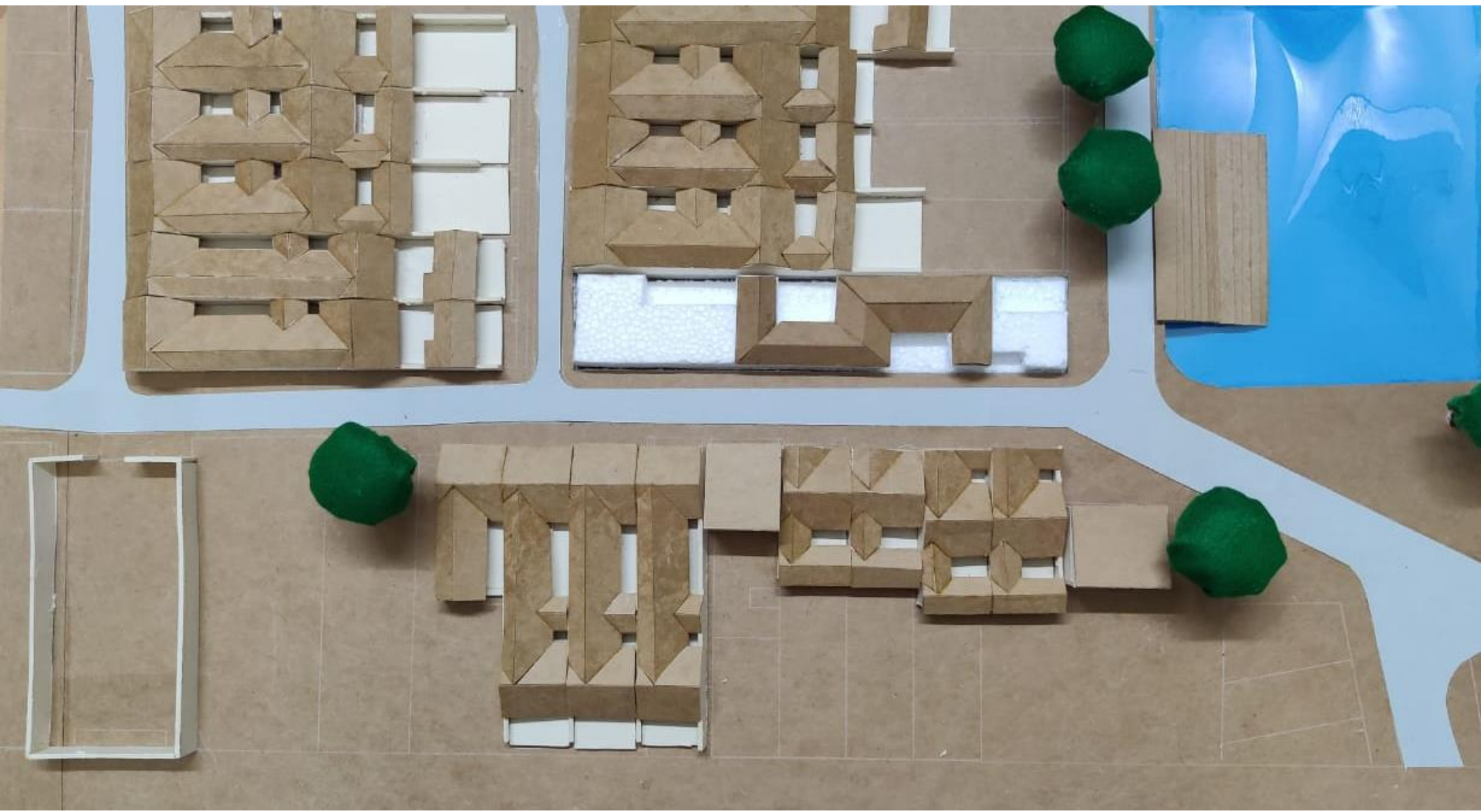
Walls, columns, platforms and courtyards: The spaces within the Agraharam are open, semi-open and enclosed in nature. If we break it down into elements, these are courtyards, platforms that define levels, columns and walls. **Transition** from one space to another gets defined just by the use of the above elements. The areas are also flexible in use. For eg the first courtyard (courtyard) along with bhacharam and Kosdam are used for activities that range from reading newspaper, sleeping at night, performing prayers, large religious gathering or marriage. The space with its level difference, light and wind conditions makes it adaptive.

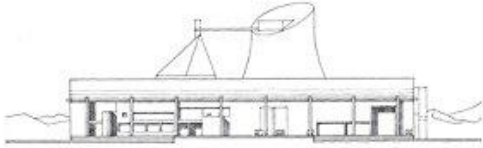
While designing, the basic architectural elements and ideas behind spatial use will remain the same, however they could be used with a different expression.

The Neighbourhood Place			
A.	Veena Making	Area Sqm	No. of people
1.	Scooping and moulding the resonator and neck	30	3
	Semi-open workshop space with carpentry work, involves noise and dust, also an area for finishing by buffing		
2.	Carving	20	2
	Well lit, private space involves precision work, involves drawing, soft chiselling to carve, painting		
3.	Attaching pegs and making bridge	20	2
	Semi-open workshop space		
4.	Fixing the frets, strings and sound tuning	30	1
	Clean space, away from carpentry work. Needs a wet area and a counter top platform for heating and melting wax		
5.	Storage area for raw material	20	
6.	Storage and display of the finished product	20	
B.	Knowledge Hub	Area Sqm	No. of people
1.	Class room 01	15	15
2.	Class room 02	15	15
3.	Library + cyberspace (table for 8 people + 2 computers)	40	10
C.	Support activity		
1.	Krishna's work space	20	1+1
2.	Kitchen with traditional food + wash area	15	
E.	Services		
1.	Toilet: Male + Female	20	
F.	Ployvalent area		
1.	Space for exhibition	45	10-15 People
2.	Meeting space	30	15-30 People
3.	Space for collective lunch / dinner/snack	10	15 People
4.	Terrace on the upper level		
G.	Circulation spaces 30% of total area	340	
	Total built up	1022	
		484	



Site Plan - 1:1250 @A3





FRANCIS D.K.
CHING

ARCHITECTURE
FORM, SPACE, & ORDER

FOURTH EDITION

INTERACTIVE
RESOURCE
CENTER



WILEY

A Pattern Language

Towns · Buildings · Construction



Christopher Alexander
Sara Ishikawa · Murray Silverstein
WITH
Max Jacobson · Ingrid Fiksdahl-King
Shlomo Angel

analysing

ARCHITECTURE

THIRD EDITION



SIMON UNWIN





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Jaipur

2



Jaipur

3



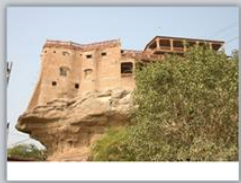
Jaipur

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Jaipur

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Jaipur

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Oldenburg

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Oldenburg Castle

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Oldenburg Castle

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Oldenburg Castle

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Oldenburg high street

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Pompidou Centre

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University of Applied Sciences

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Lago de palmaria

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Lago de palmaria

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Lago de palmaria

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Casa Mila

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Renzo Piano Building Workshop

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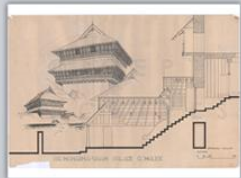
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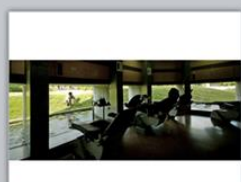
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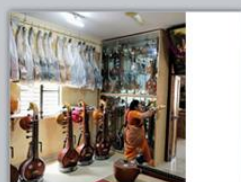
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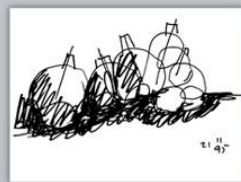
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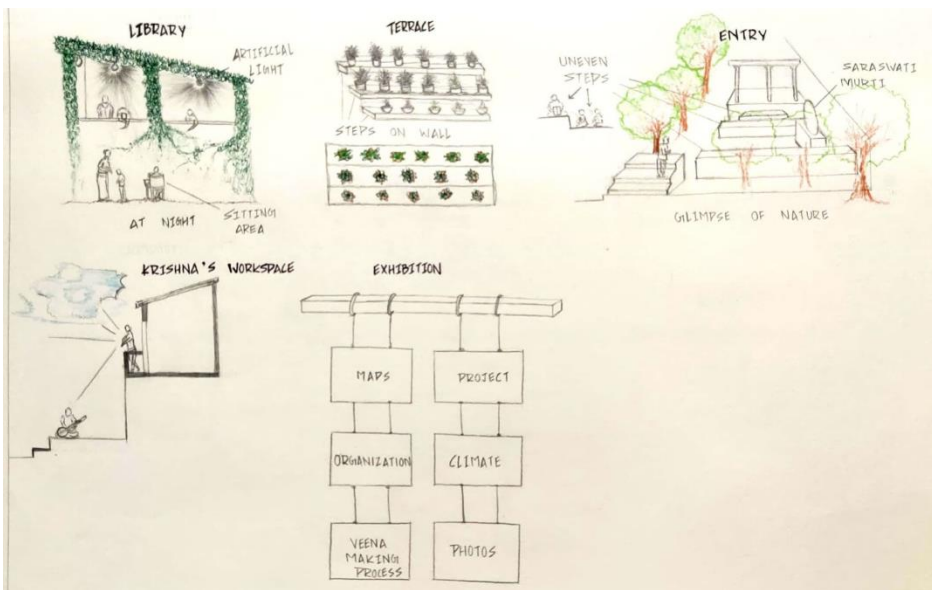
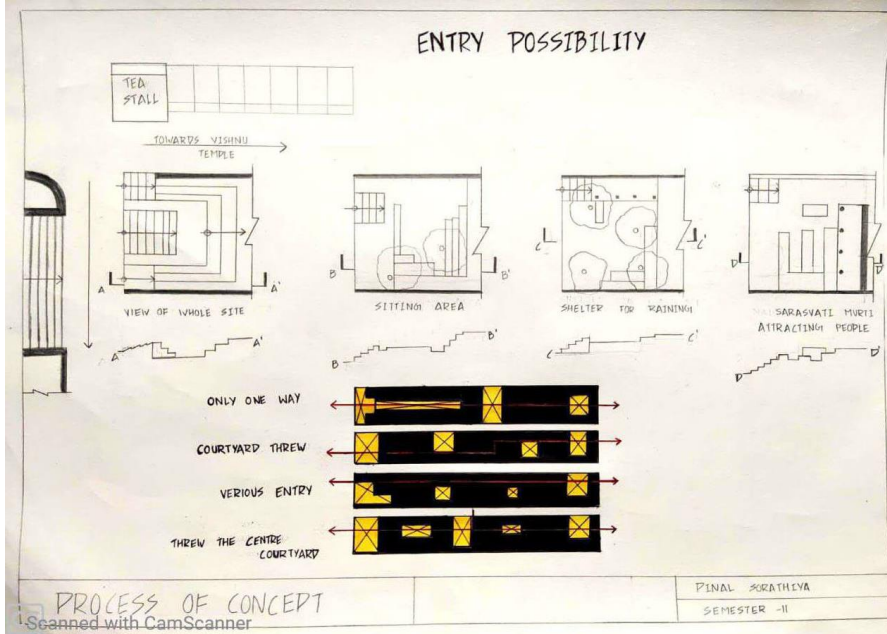
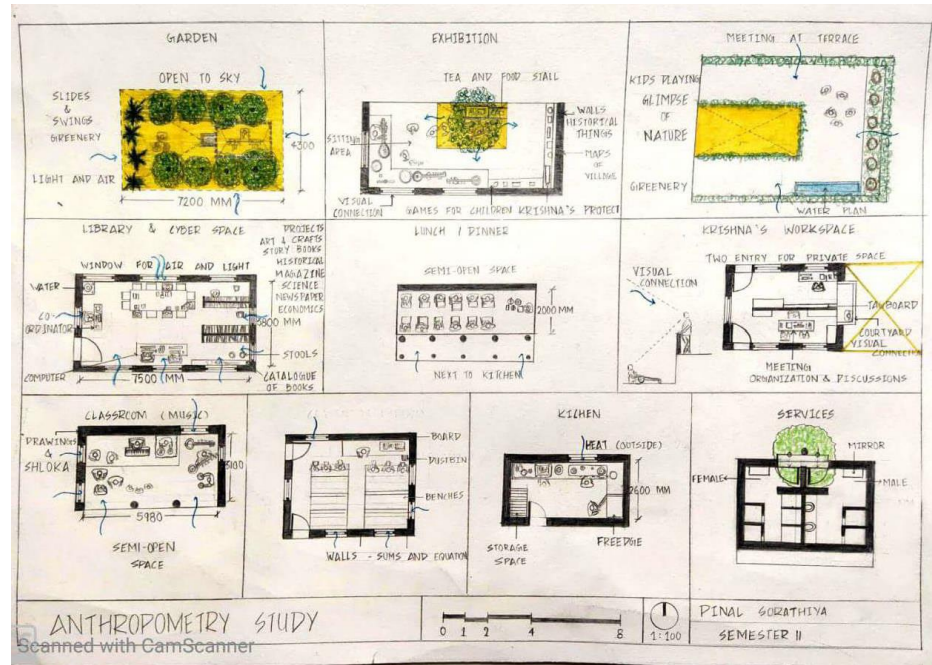
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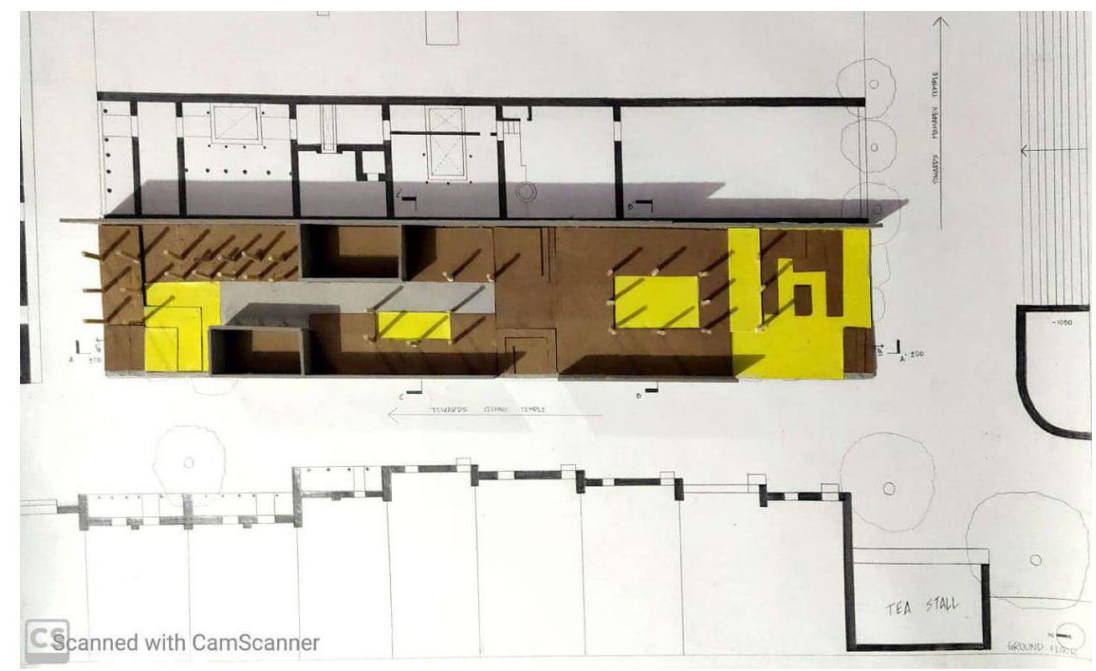
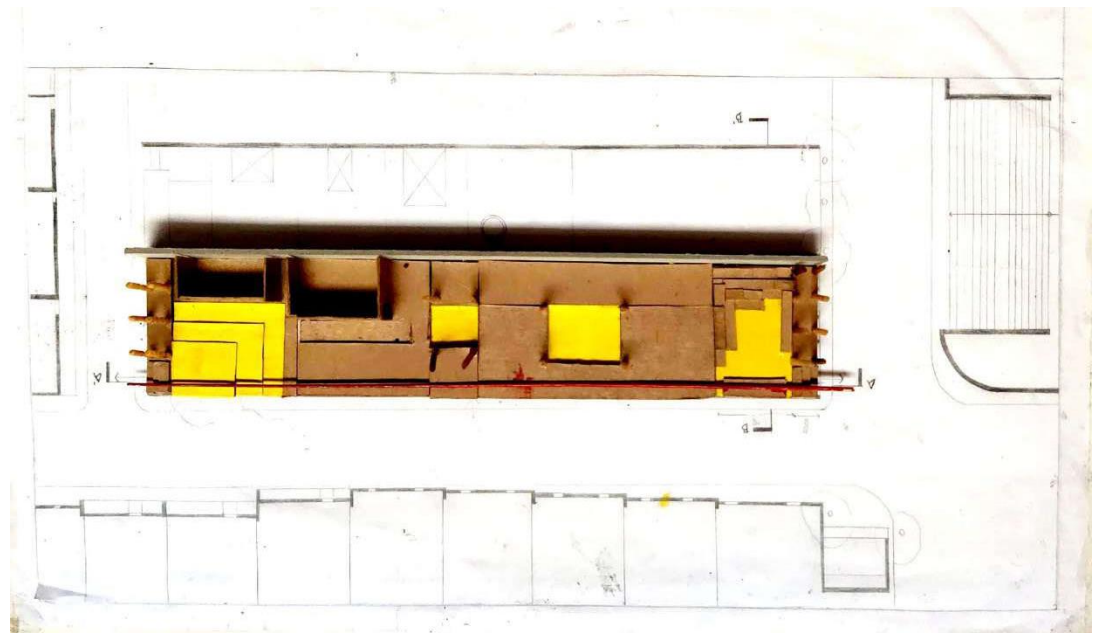
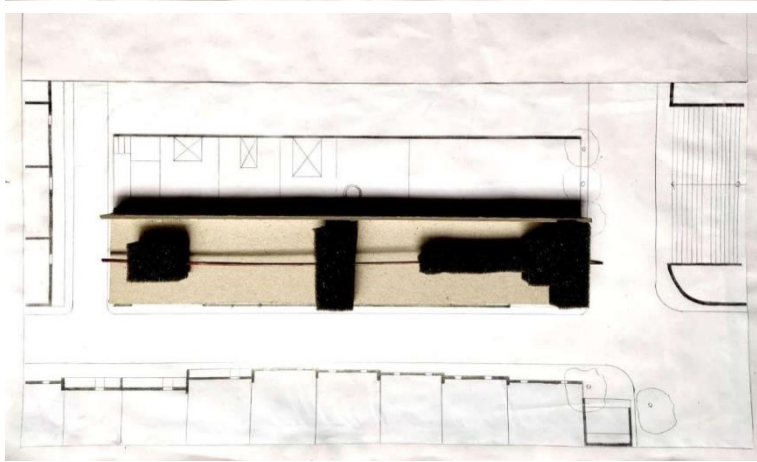
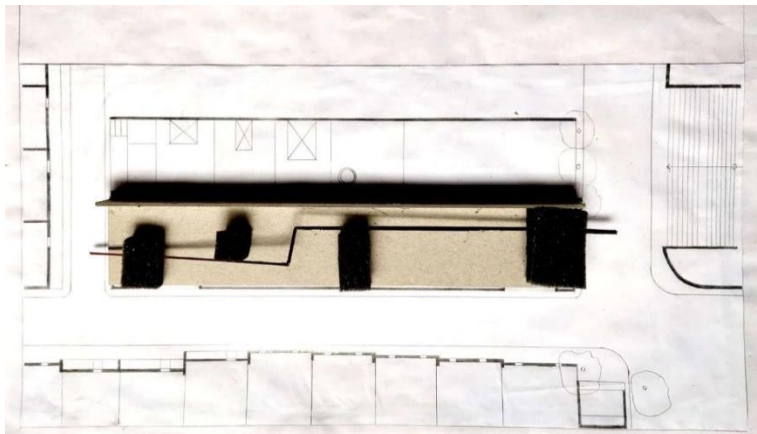
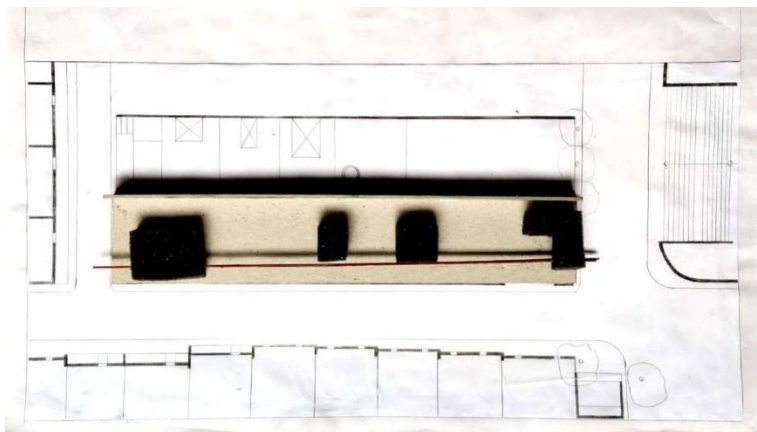


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Student work: Pinal Sorathiya

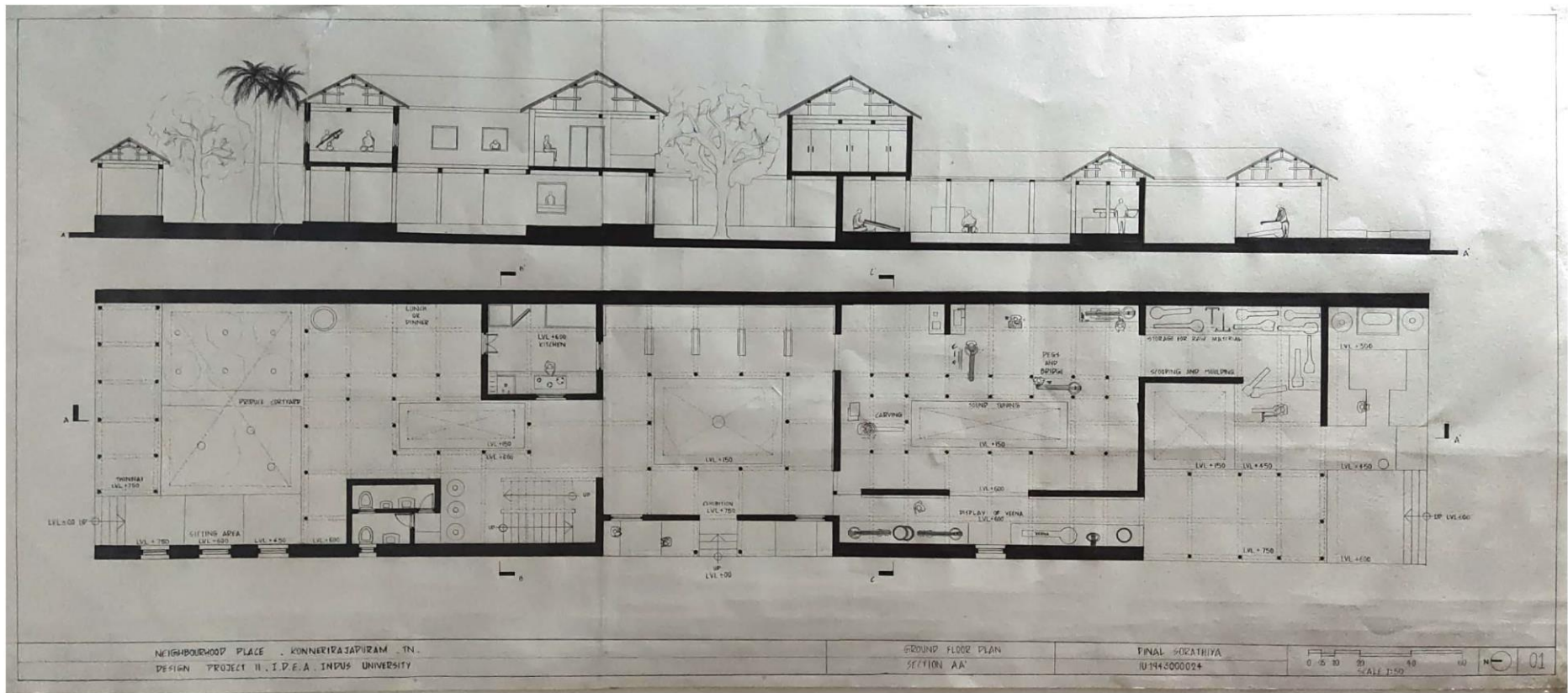
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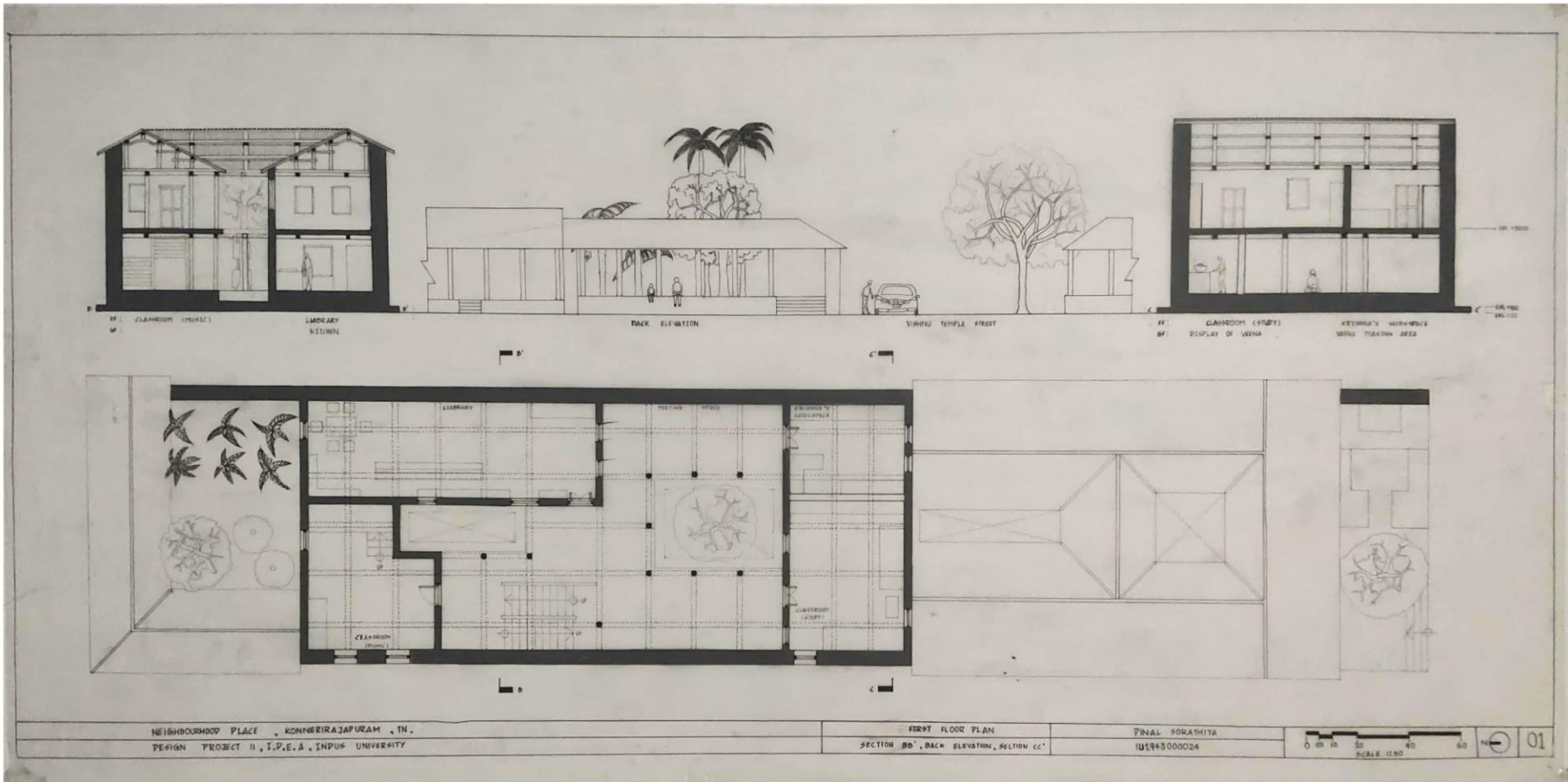
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Student work: Pinal Sorathiya

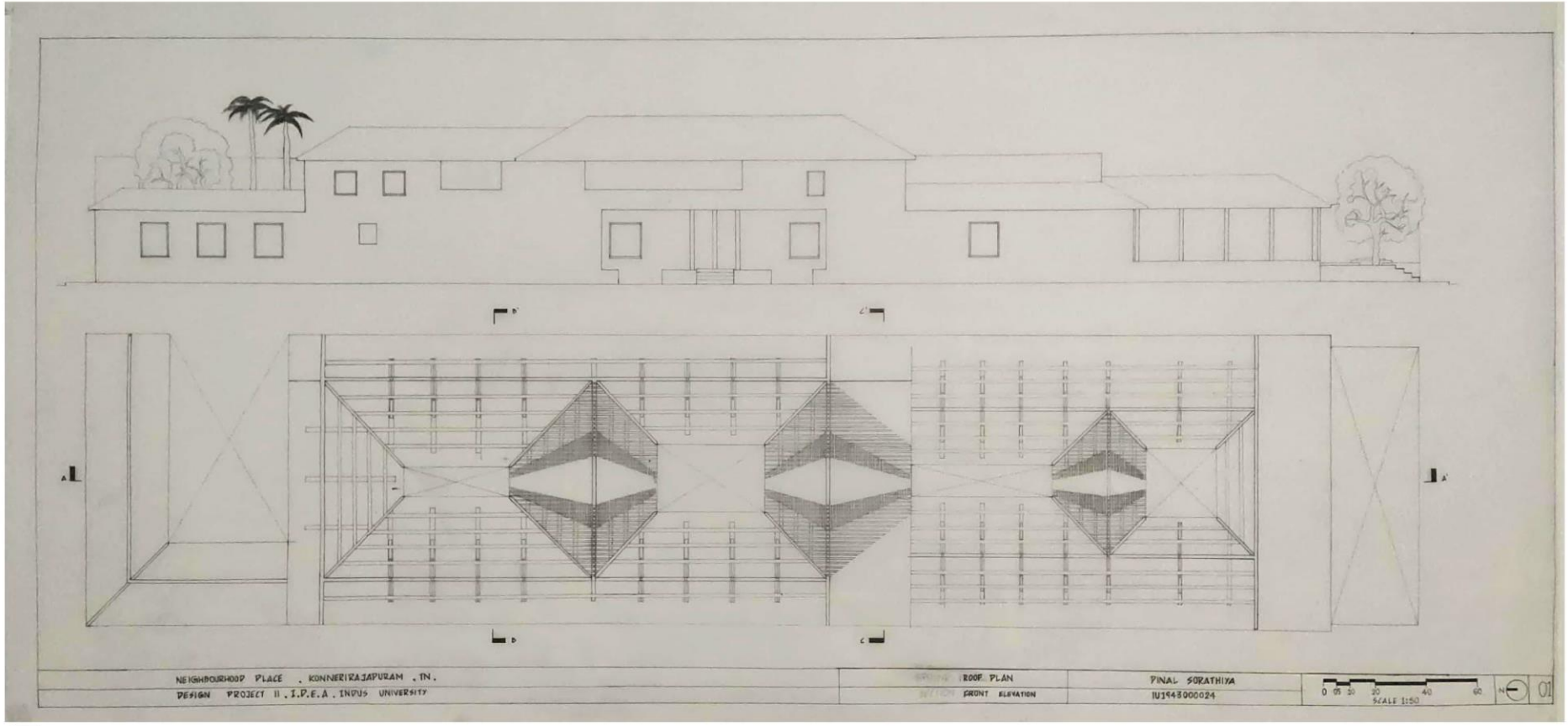
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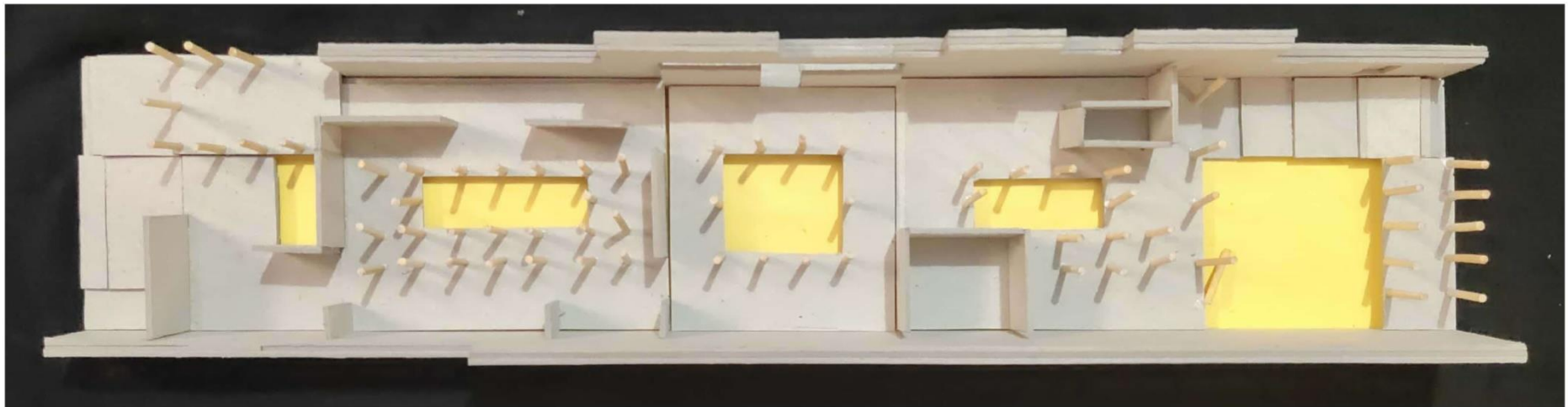


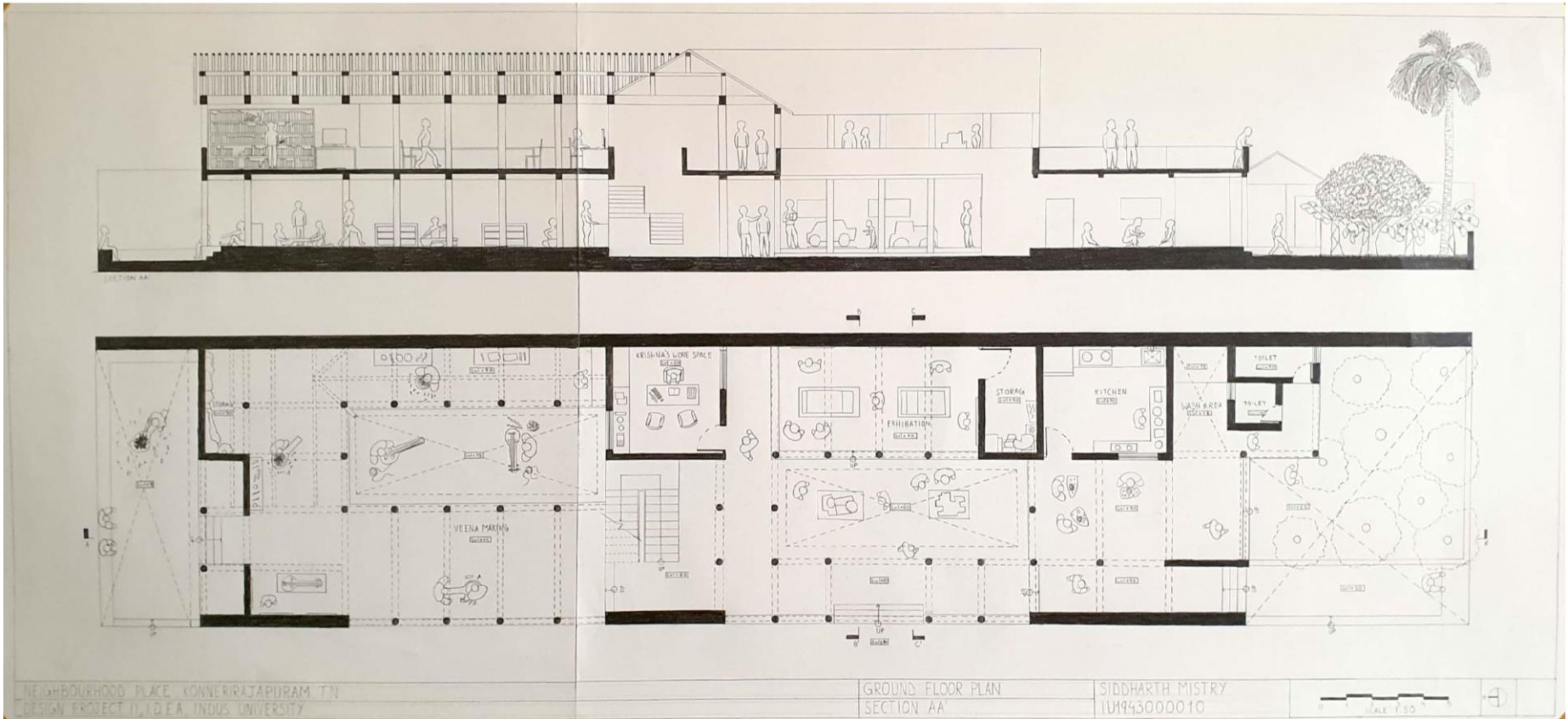
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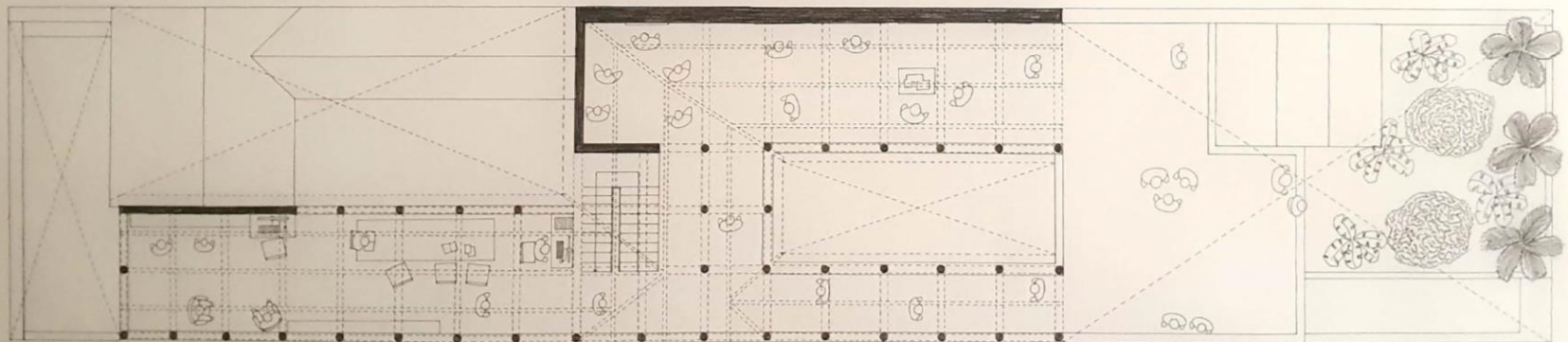
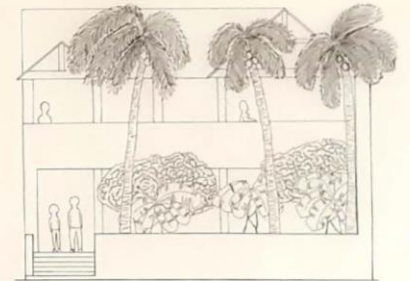
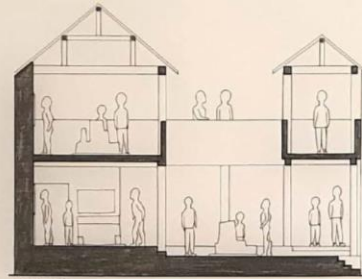
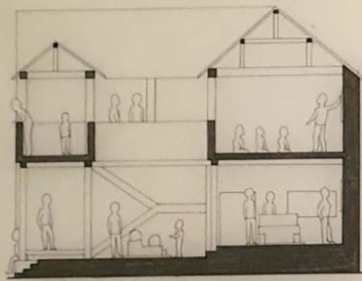
Student work: Pinal Sorathiya
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Student work: Siddharth

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NEIGHBOURHOOD PLACE, KONNERKRAZAPURAM, TN
DESIGN PROJECT II, IDPA, INDUS UNIVERSITY

CROSS SECTION, ELEVATION
FIRST FLOOR PLAN

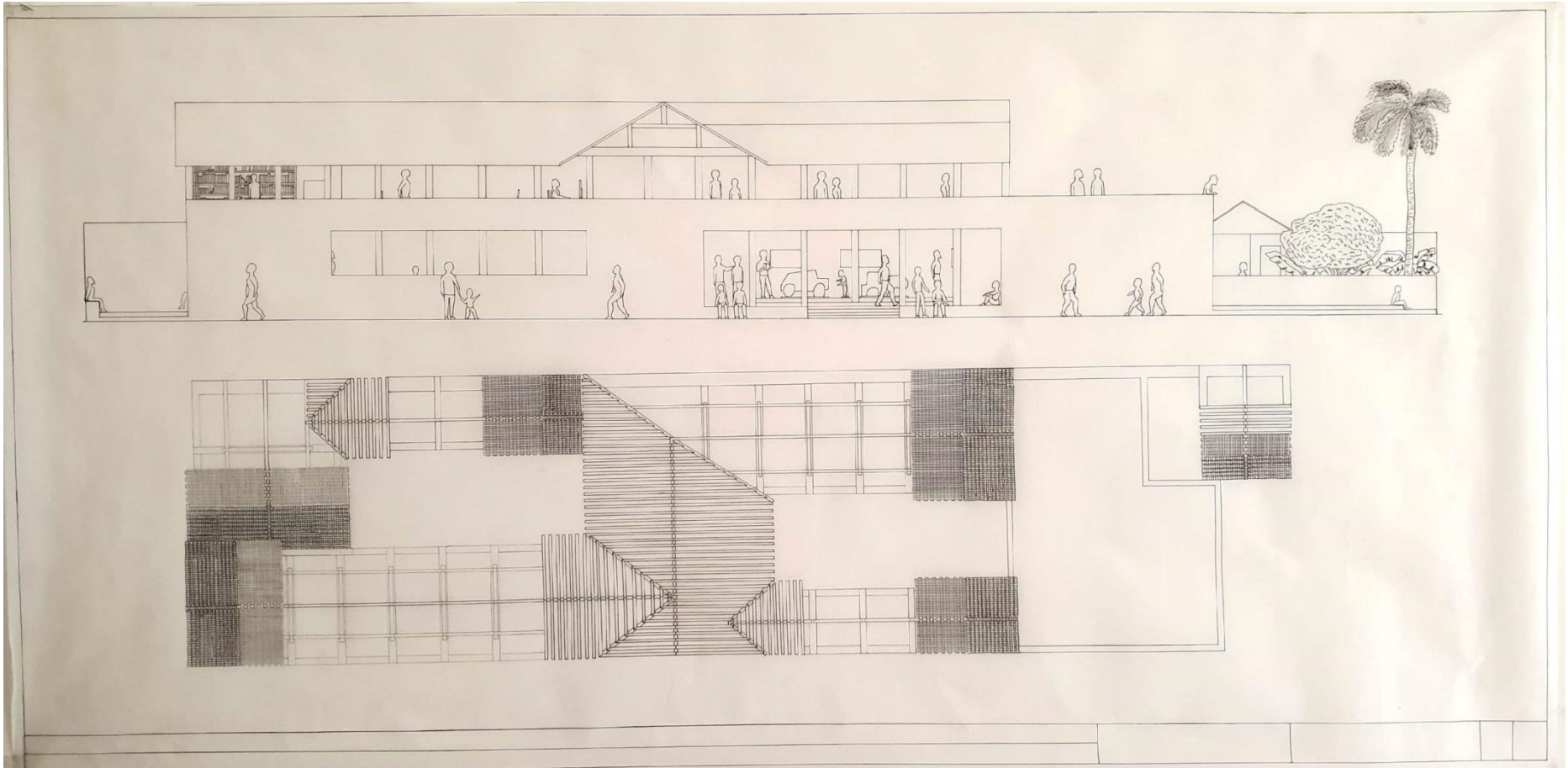
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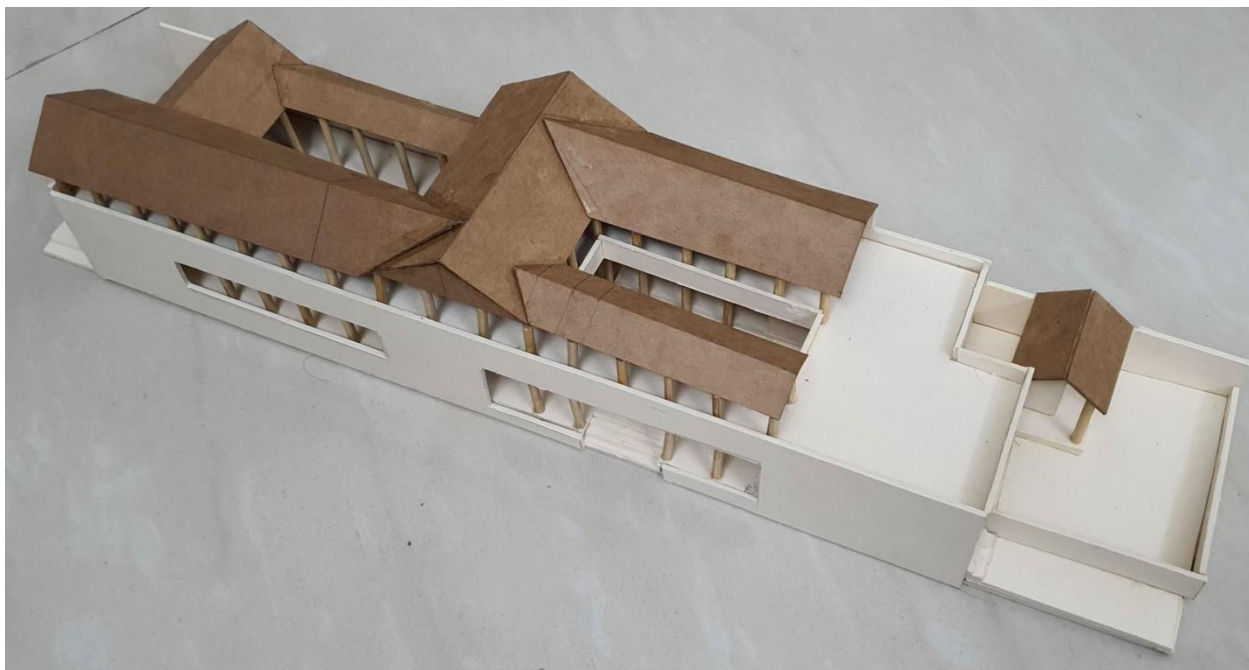
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Student work: Siddharth

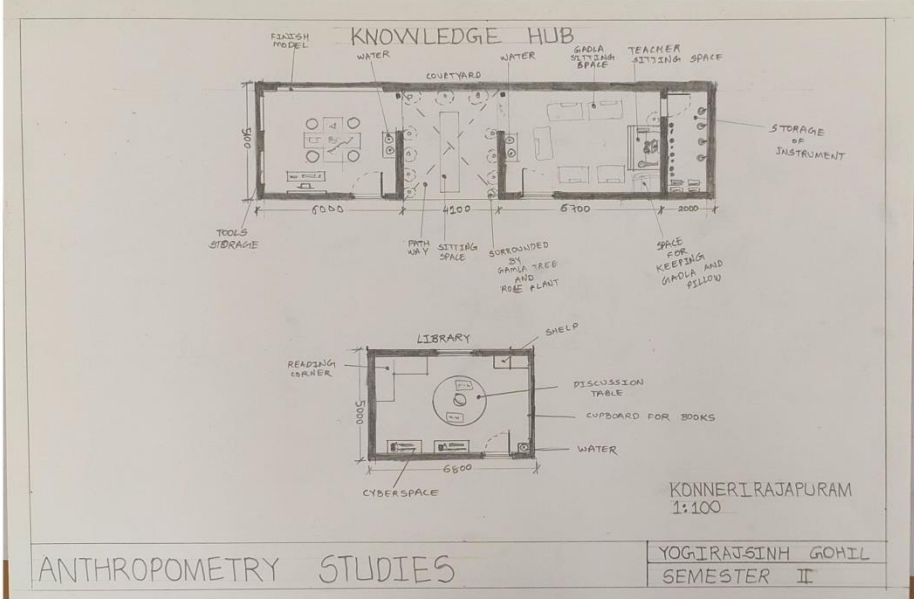
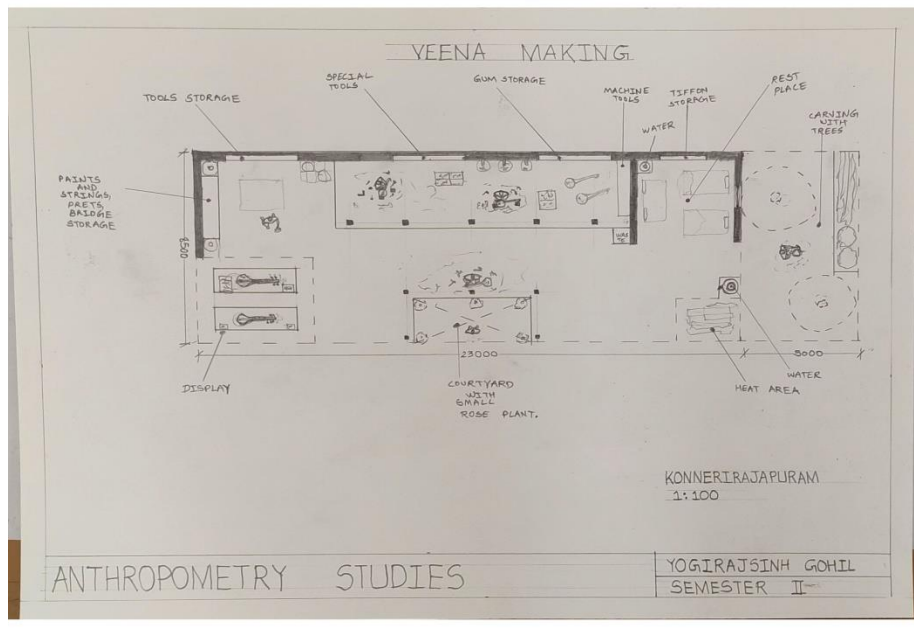
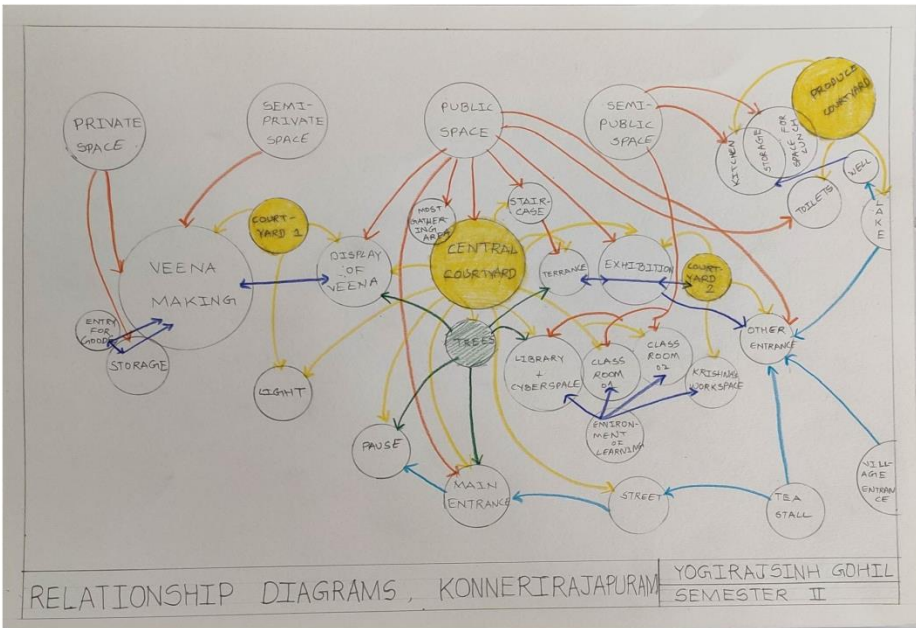
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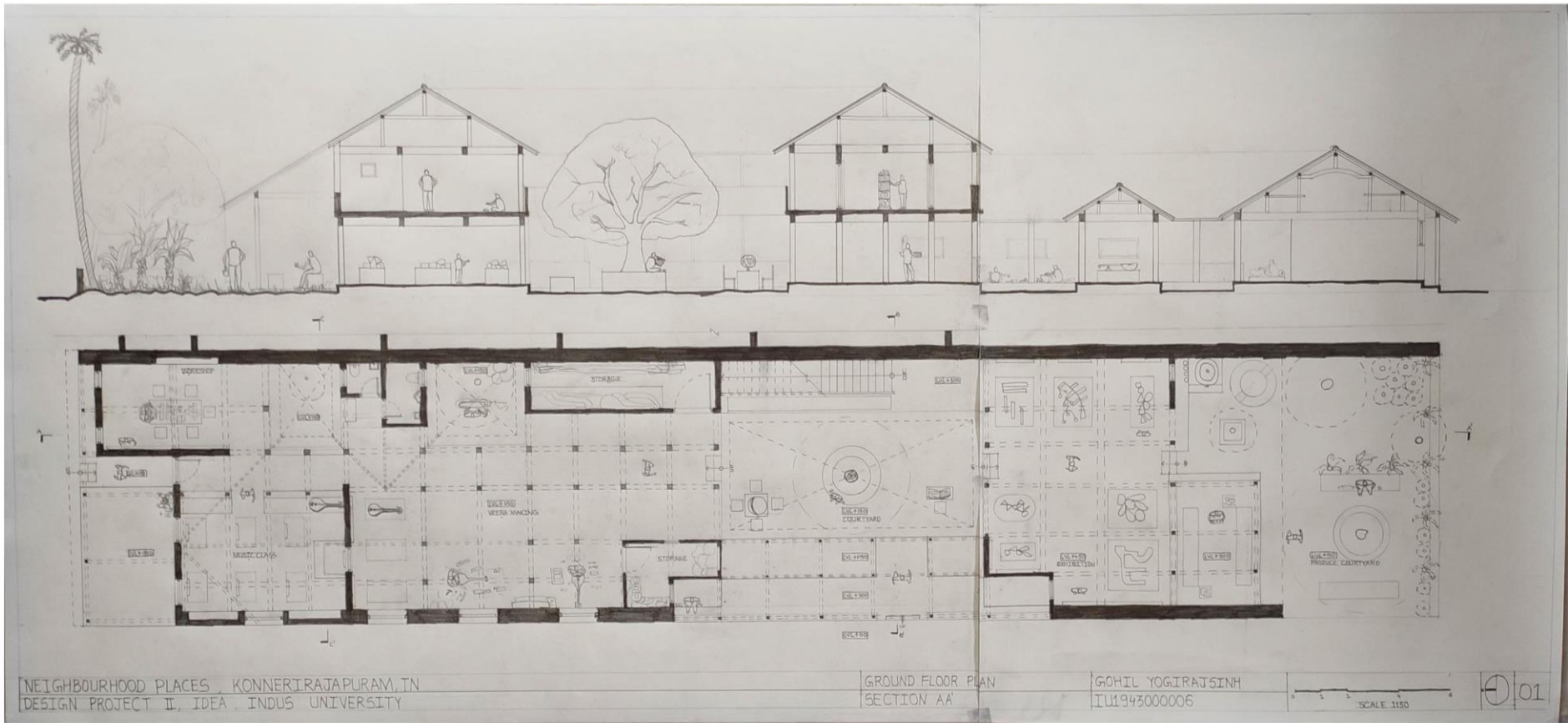


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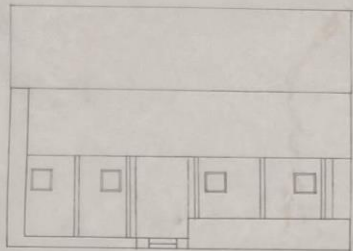
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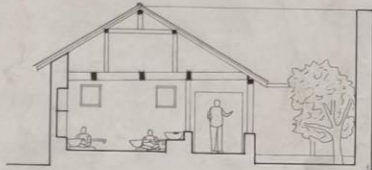
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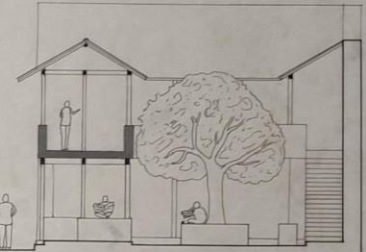
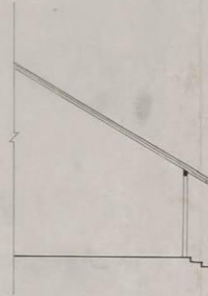
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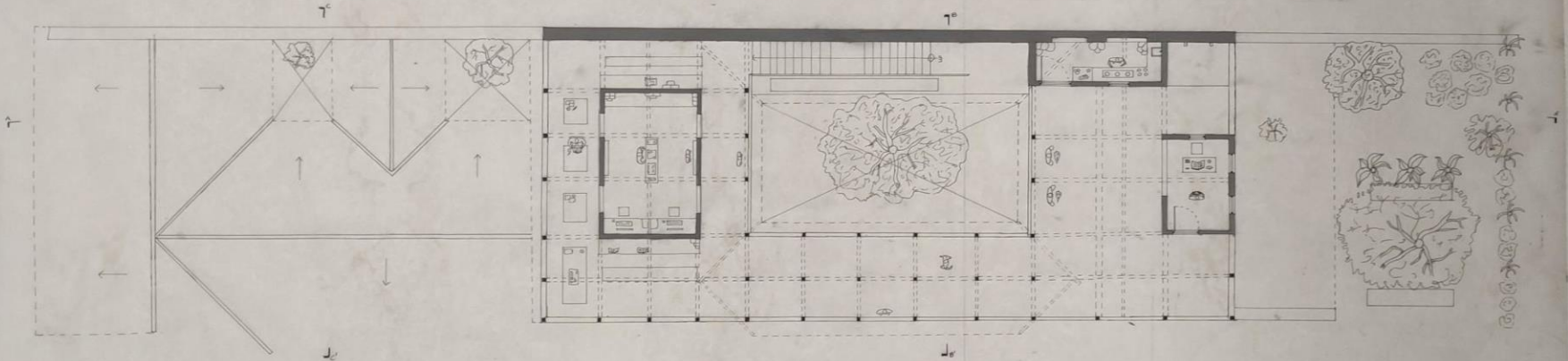
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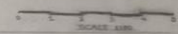
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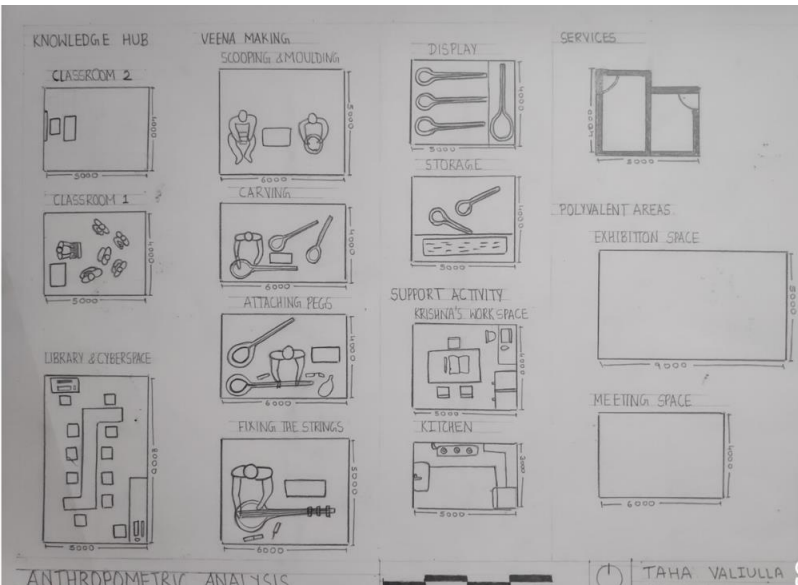
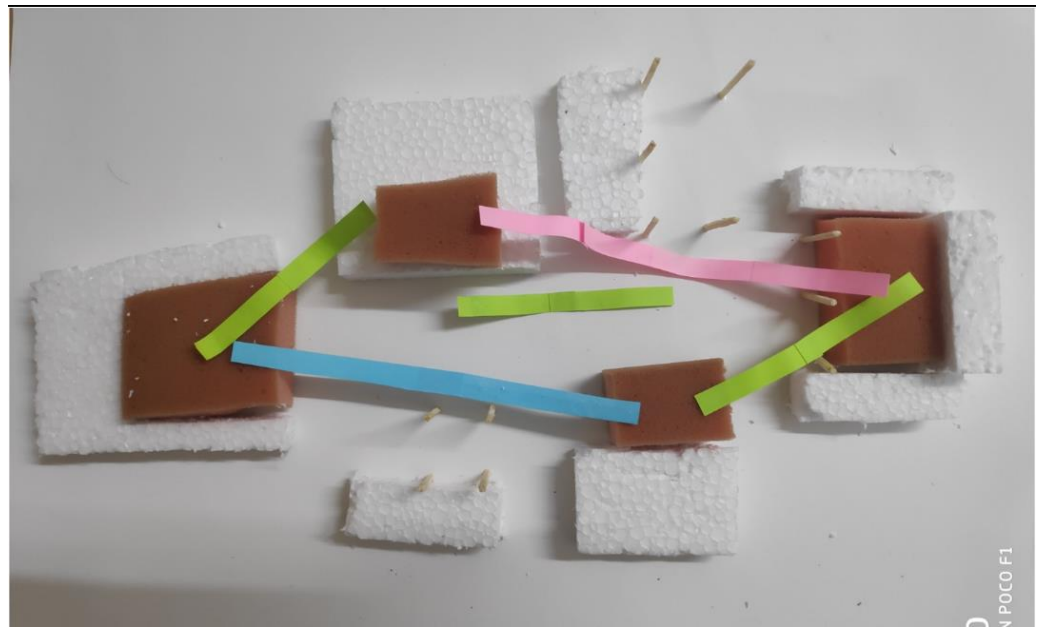
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLACE: KONNERIRAJAPURAM, TN
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FIRST FLOOR PLAN
CROSS SECTIONS, ELEVATION

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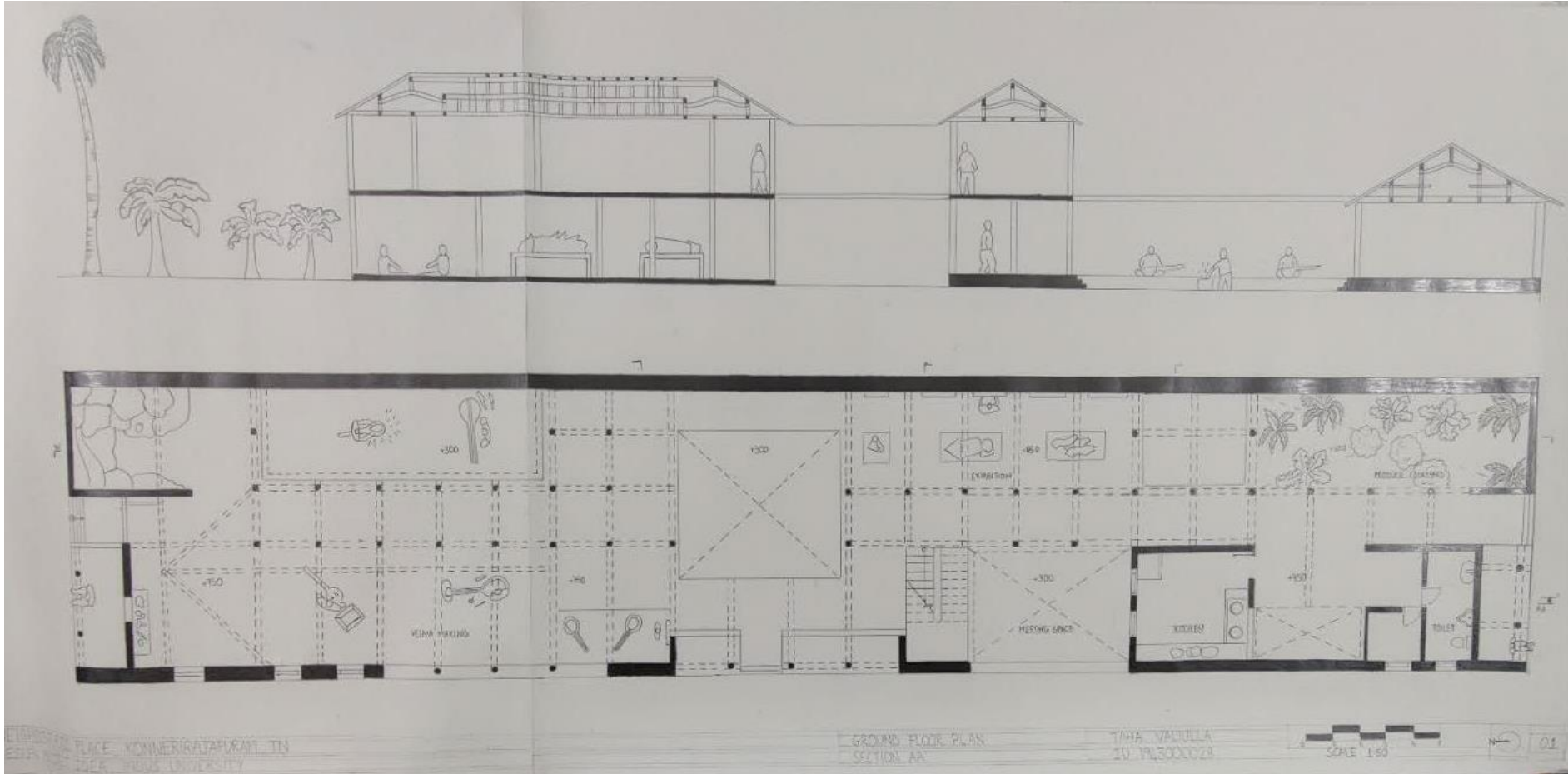


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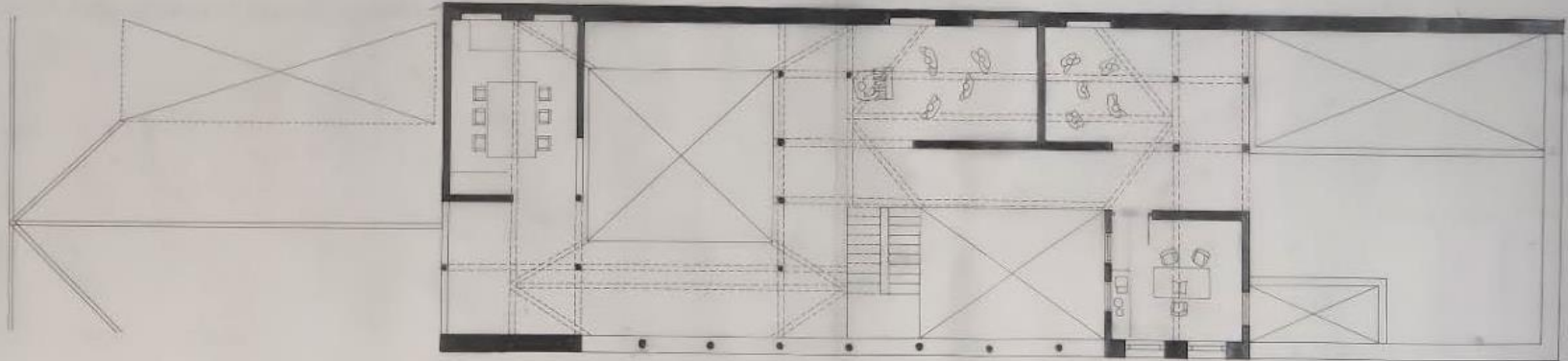
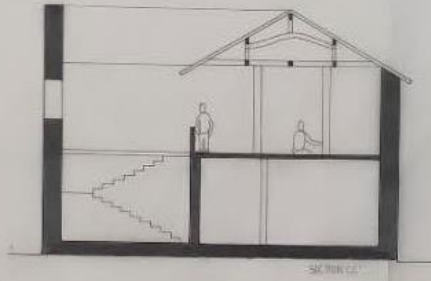
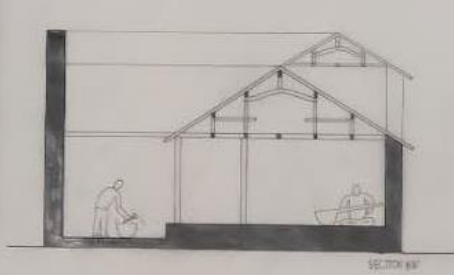


Student work: Taha

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Student work: Taha



WINDWOOD PLACE, KONNERSTRASHUKAM, TN.
BY ARCHT. S. S. RAO, INDUS UNIVERSITY

FIRST FLOOR PLAN
SECTIONS AND ELEVATIONS

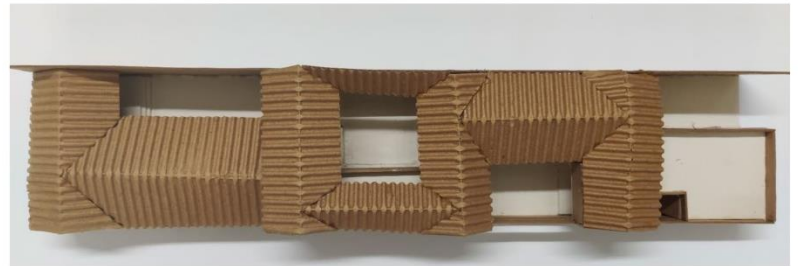
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Student work: Taha

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