

3.6. Lakmahal Community Library



The Lakmahal Community Library was envisioned as a space of rest and refuge for autonomous learning, the activation of feminist vocabularies, and artist-led publishing that challenges the linear codes of reading and hierarchical dissemination in the publishing industry. This specially conceived reading room was titled *Reading in Tongues*, borrowing from queer Chicana poet, writer, and feminist theorist, Gloria Anzaldúa's text 'Speaking in Tongues: A Letter to 3rd World Women Writers.' The spatial design has been composed by ADM Architects, keeping in view the generous ambience of a historic household and garden. It also acted as a counterpoint to the Colombo Public Library by bringing oral cultures on par with the published word; making room for sharing literature in privacy and in kinship; immersing in multilingual poetry and Zine making, which reorient our relationship with the book as a multifold body. Addressing the intimacy and hardship of writing as a 'Third World Woman', Anzaldúa encourages us in this cataclysmic present to remain open and courageous in using our languages as an embrace of the world: May 'we continue to swim fearless with the length of our own bodies, in a sea of words'.

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