



## MARUBI NATIONAL MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY

*Posted on July 26, 2016 by urbanNext*



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**Categories:** [Casanova + Hernández architects](#), [Middle Density](#), [Project](#), [Technology and fabrication](#)

**Tags:** [Albania](#), [City dialogue](#), [Cultural enrichment](#), [Educational Building](#), [Facilities](#), [Glass panels](#), [Identity](#), [Landmark](#), [Modernity](#), [Museology](#), [Museum](#), [Photography](#), [Prefabrication](#), [Project](#), [Refurbishment](#), [Shkodër](#), [Technological Approach](#), [Tradition](#)

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In 2013, the Albanian Ministry of Culture envisioned a plan to improve the national cultural infrastructure, paying special attention to the renovation of existing historical buildings, reusing them with a new cultural program. One of the first projects included in this program is the Marubi National Photomuseum, which is especially important due to its pioneering character. The plan to create the museum has created an enormous national repercussion because of the historical importance of exhibiting the photographic legacy created over more than a century by three generations of photographers from the Marubi family. In addition, preserving and disseminating the Marubis' work in a historical city like Shkodër takes on a strong symbolic significance that will help to promote the Albanian national identity, especially among new generations.



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## **Dialogue between Tradition and Modernity**

The selected design for the Marubi Museum, developed by Casanova+Hernandez architects, aims to promote a rich dialogue between tradition and modernity, between the past and the present. The legacy of the tradition is underlined by restoring the historical building – designed by the famous Albanian painter, sculptor, photographer and architect born in Shkodër, Kolë Idromeno. Its spatial and structural qualities are preserved without any volume transformation or new interior partitions. Conceptually, Idromeno's building becomes an important "object" in the exhibition to be shown,

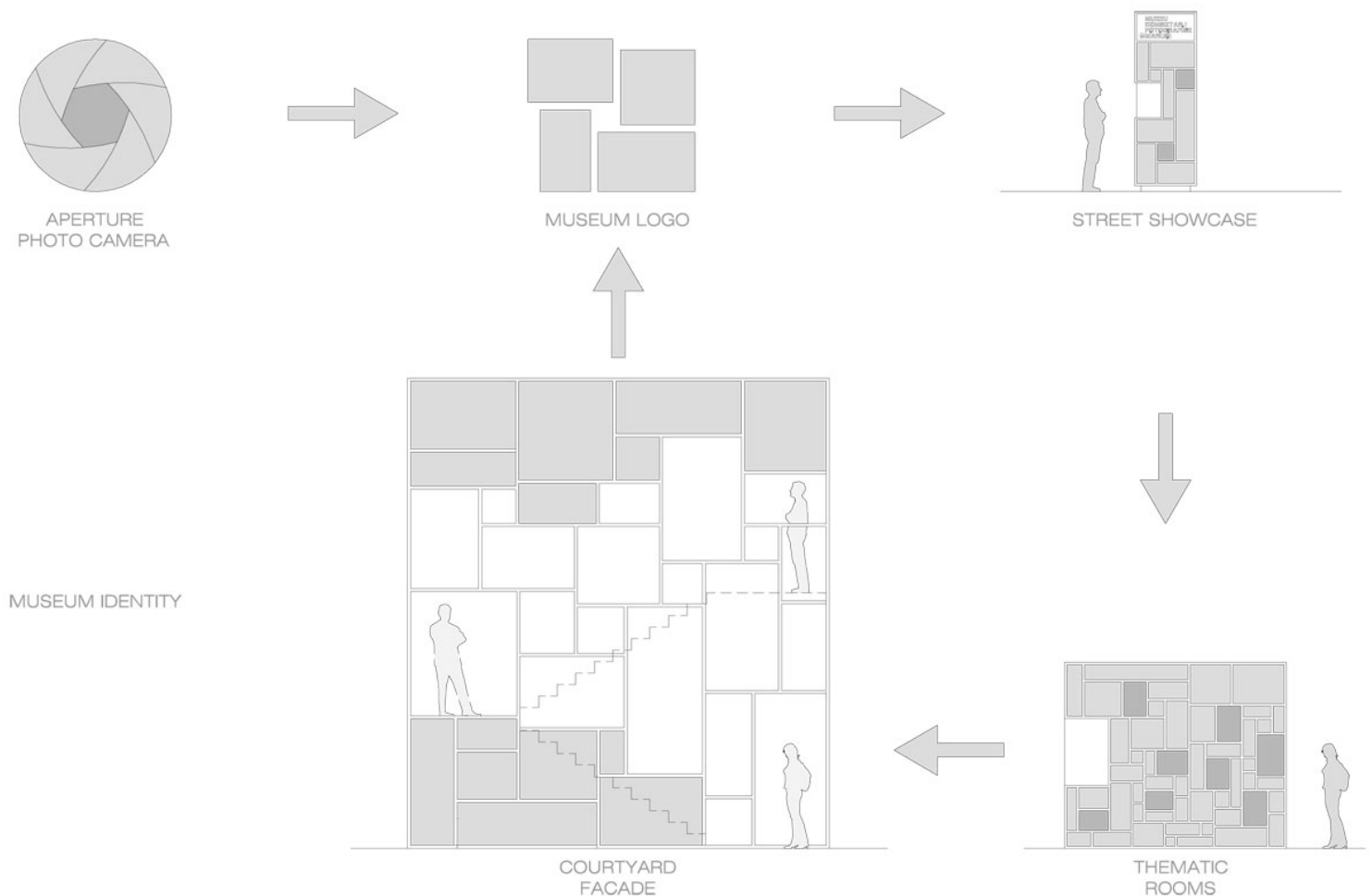
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contemplated and visited.

A modern image, associated with the new museographic program, is achieved by installing five "functional boxes", which are prefabricated and detached from the original building, working as pieces of furniture or sculptural elements. Tradition and modernity enter into a dialogue in every corner of the building. Outside the museum, a showcase element works as a landmark that indicates the museum entrance; in the interior of the building, the original windows and spatial qualities of the building dialogue with the exhibition boxes; and in the courtyard, the old building coexists with a new modern and sculptural back façade.

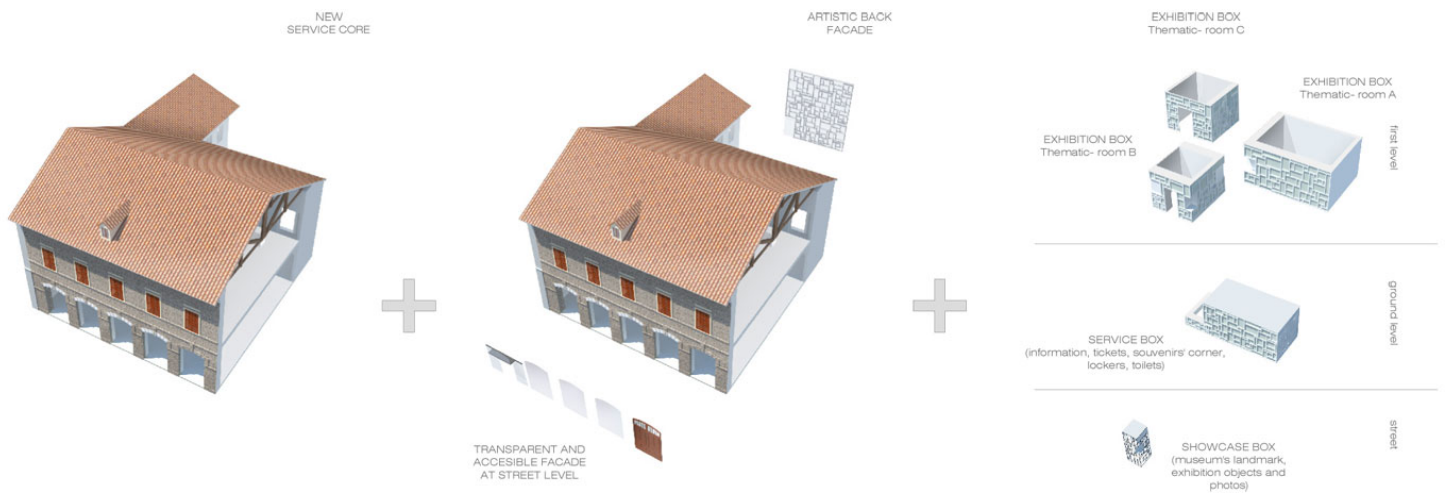


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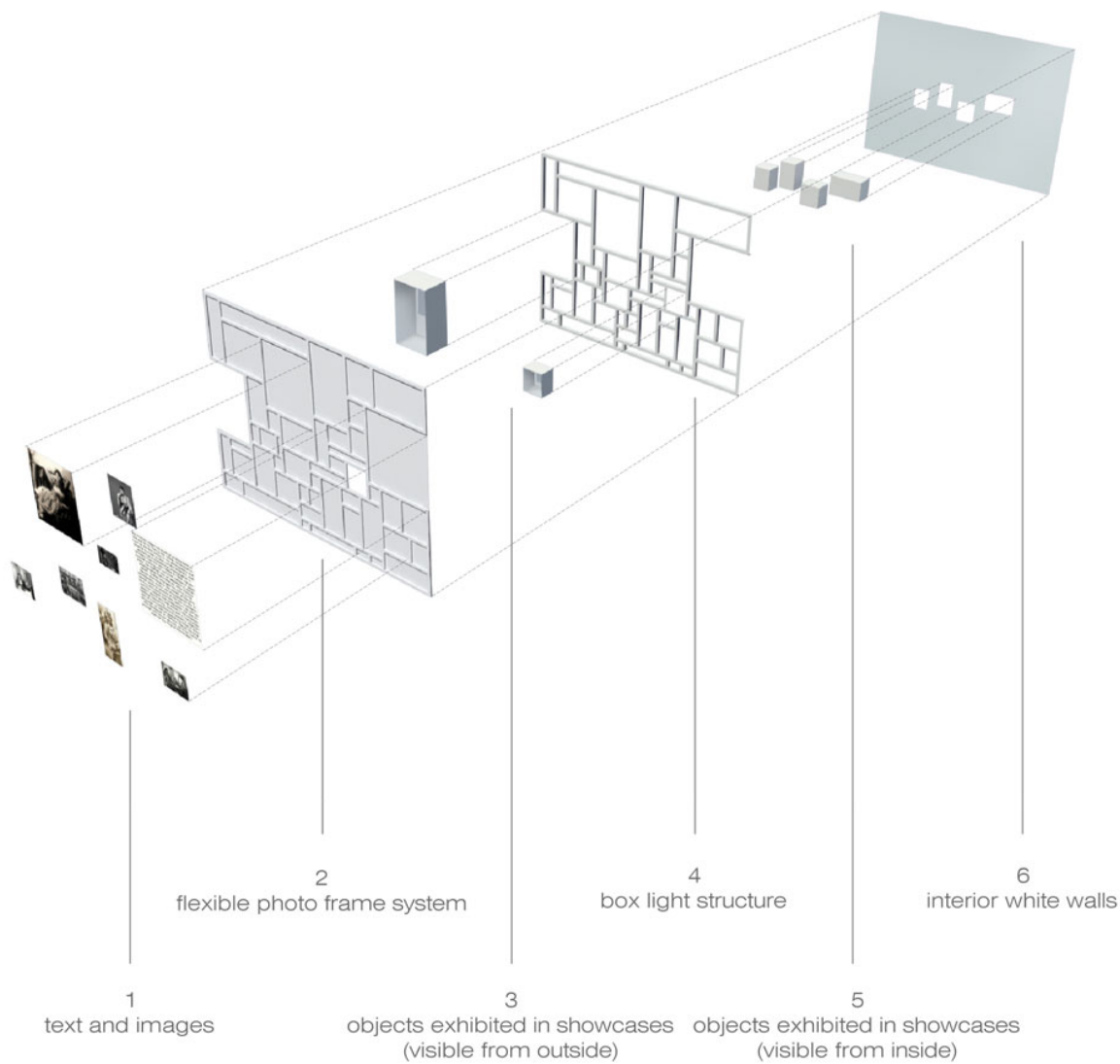
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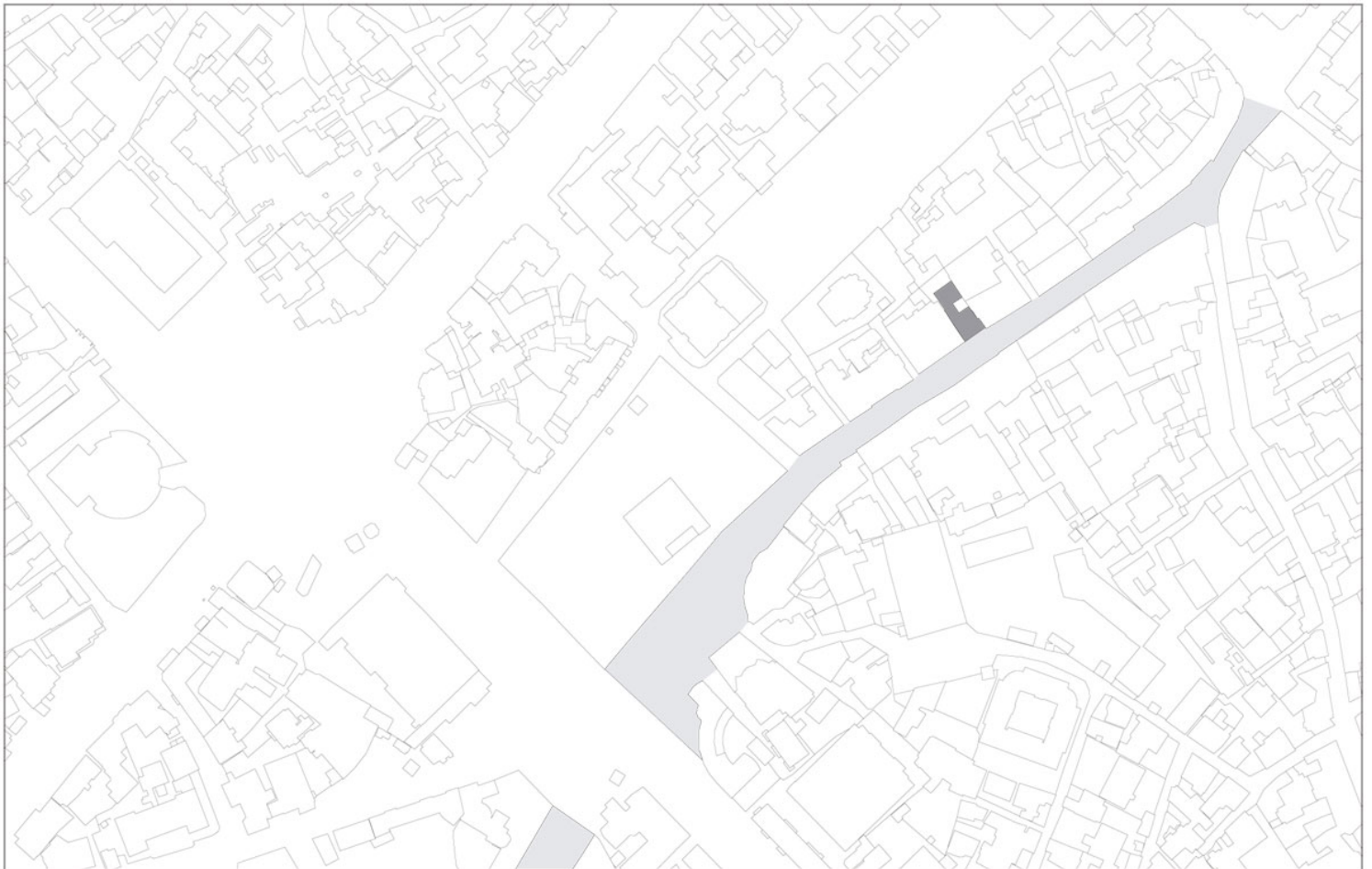
LAYERS OF VERSATILE  
EXHIBITION SYSTEM

## Conceptual Diagrams

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## **An Open, Accessible and Living Cultural Landmark**

On the one hand, the museum program expands into public space, and one of the “functional boxes” becomes a showcase installed in front of the museum, serving as a landmark that invites citizens to visit it. On the other hand, public space enters the museum and the project erases the border between street and institution with a transparent and accessible ground floor that hosts a free-entrance multifunctional space for lectures, workshops and temporary exhibitions. As a result, the project intends to create an open and living museum, capable of becoming a cultural landmark linked to the street life of Shkodër.



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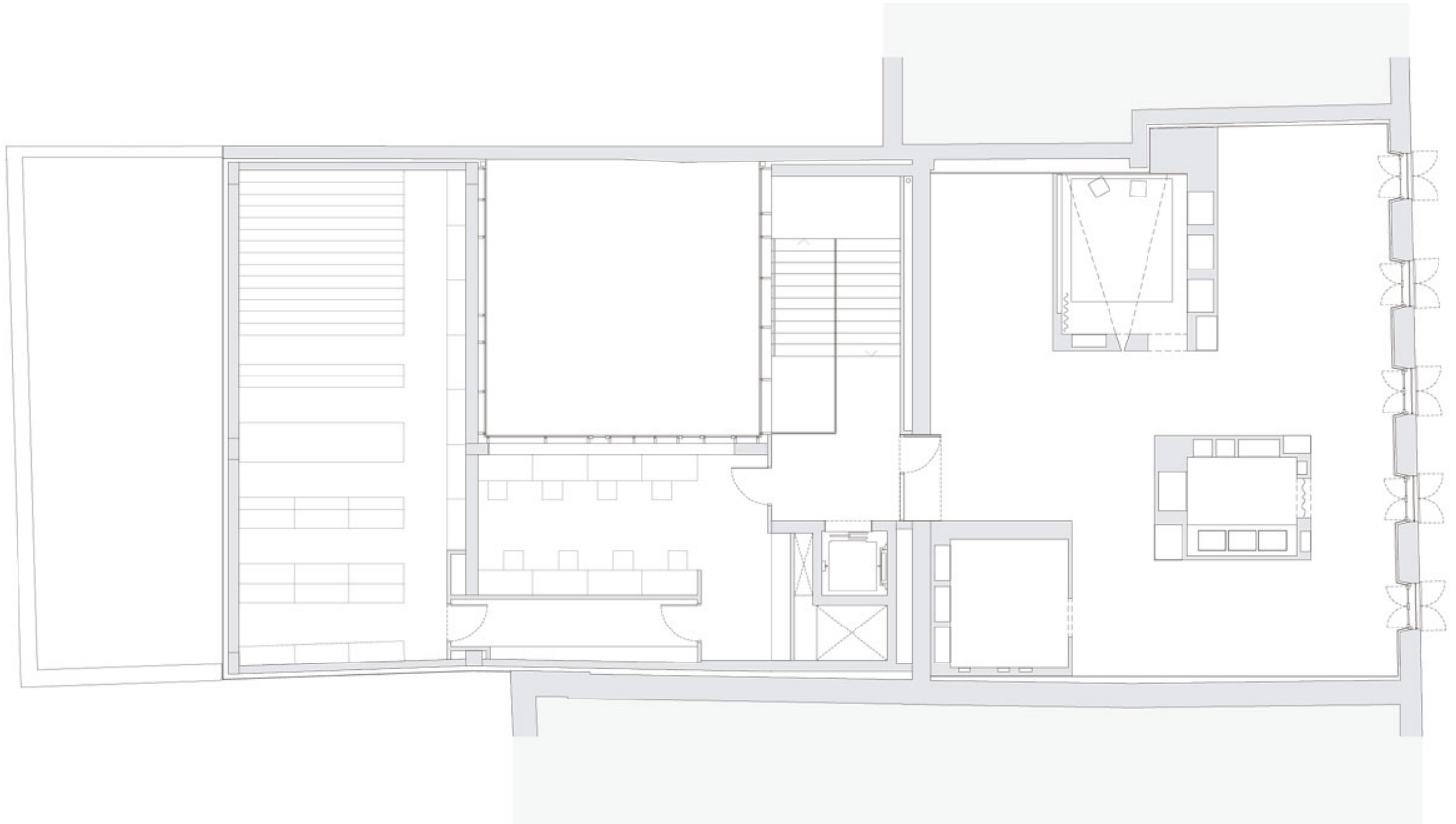
**Site Plan**

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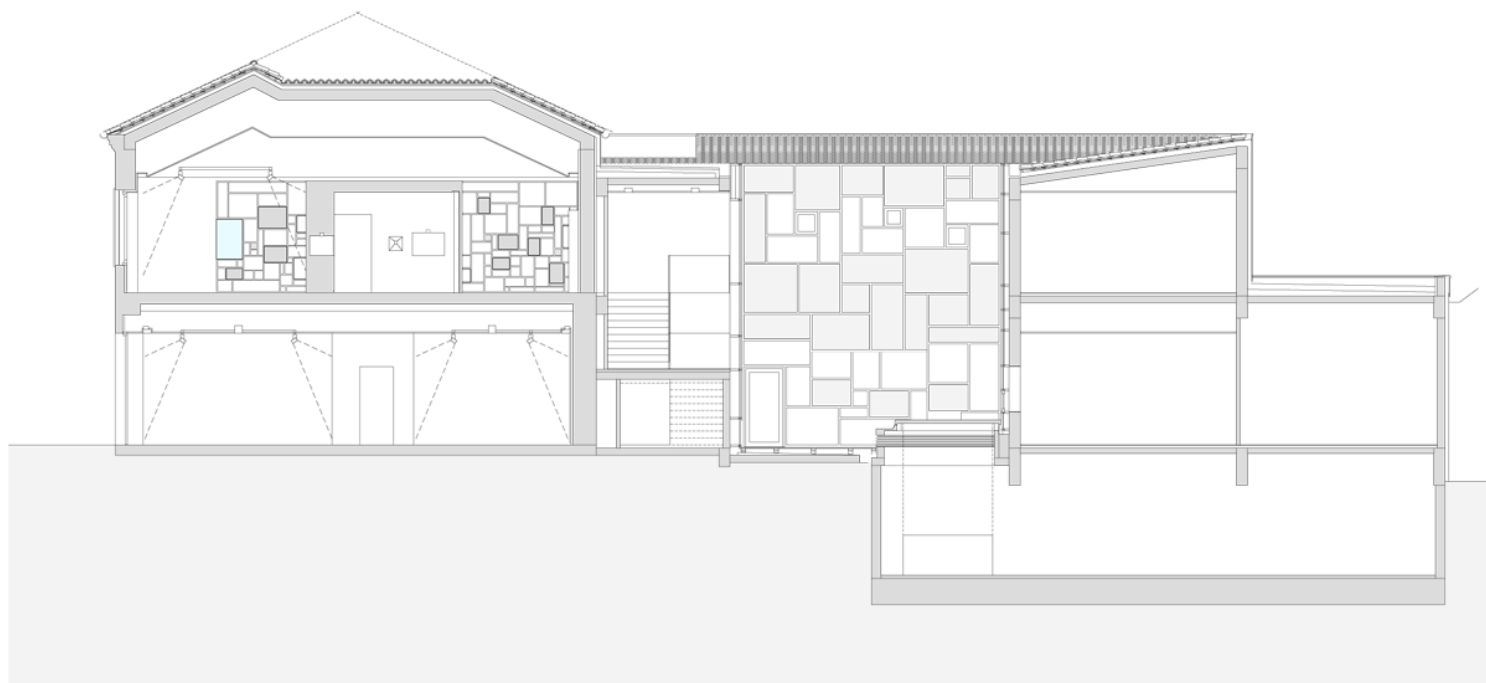
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**First Floor Plan**

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## Longitudinal Sections

### **Interactive Chrono-Thematic Exhibition: Information and Education Combined into a Multisensory Experience**

The exterior of the functional boxes located on the first floor of the museum presents a chronological exhibition, which is intertwined with the thematic exhibition inside them. The chronological exhibition shows the life and achievements of the Marubi dynasty with texts, historical pictures, videos and objects organized around the biography of the three members of the Marubi family. This information is put into context, together with the history and culture of Albania and the city of Shkodër, thus providing an important didactic dimension.

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The thematic exhibition complements the chronological exhibition by stimulating a multisensory experience that makes the visitor interact with the space and with the devices of the three thematic rooms. These rooms show three phases of the traditional photographic process, presented inside the ideal reconstruction of the historical spaces where this process took place: the photo-studio belonging to Pjeter Marubi "Driteshkronja"; Kel Marubi's darkroom; and Gegë Marubi's archive.

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## **The Museum's Identity**

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The modern image of the museum is based on an abstract pattern, which is inspired by the geometry of the aperture of a camera, which opens and closes to control the light. This abstract pattern is used to design the structural layout of the five exhibition boxes installed in the building, while at the same time it integrates a complete and versatile exhibition system that includes frames to exhibit photos and documents, showcases for objects, and video screens for slide-shows and short movies.

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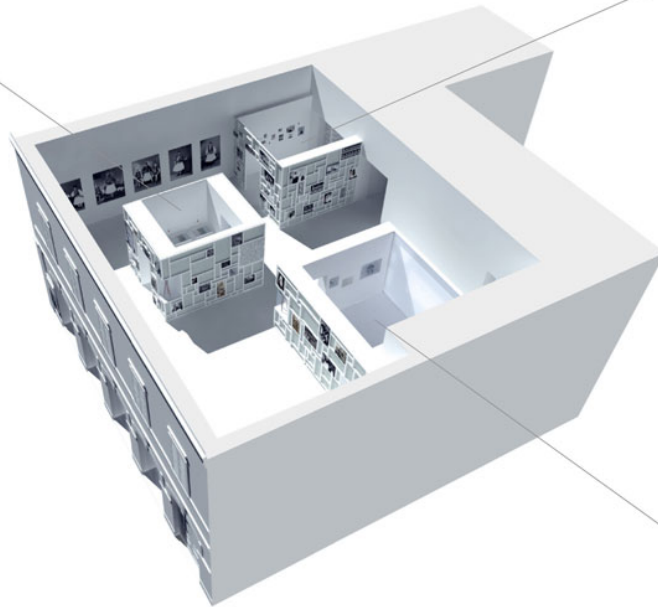
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## THEMATIC-ROOM B:

- It shows the process of developing the photos
- It is presented within a reconstruction of the photographic laboratory of Kel Marubi in Shkodër

## THEMATIC-ROOM C:

- It shows the process of keeping and preserving the photographic material
- It is presented within an ideal reproduction of the archive that Gegë Marubi preserved until 1970, year in which he donated it



## STREET SHOWCASE:

- It marks the entrance to the museum, containing its name and some information about the exhibition and other activities of the museum
- It shows a few photos and objects towards the street introducing the museum collection

## THEMATIC-ROOM A:

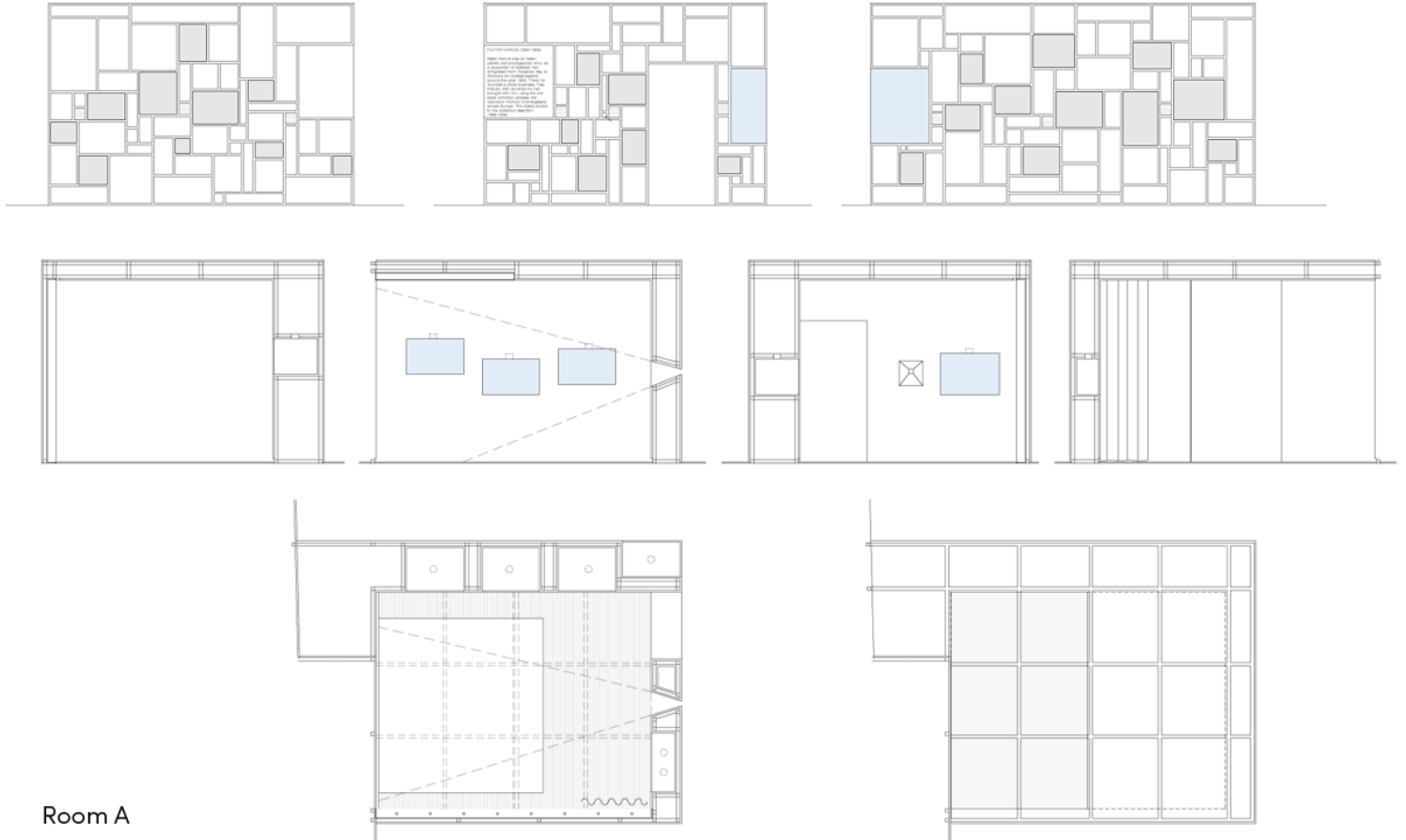
- It shows the photo making process
- It is presented within a reconstruction of the "Driteshkronja", the photographic studio built in 1883 by Kole Idromeno for Pjeter Marubi in Shkodër

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Room A

## Exhibition Rooms

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The abstract pattern, which is always mixed with the photos and objects in the collection, becomes the symbol of the museum. It can be recognized on different scales and in several parts of the building, such as in the logo of the museum, in the design of the street showcase, in the layout of the functional boxes inside the building, and even in the structure of the new artistic back façade that frames the views over the surroundings and filters the light within the building. The Marubi National Museum of Photography acquires its own specific identity by tying together all spatial, structural, functional, graphic and visual aspects, helping visitors to identify the building and the collection with a complete, rich and unique experience.

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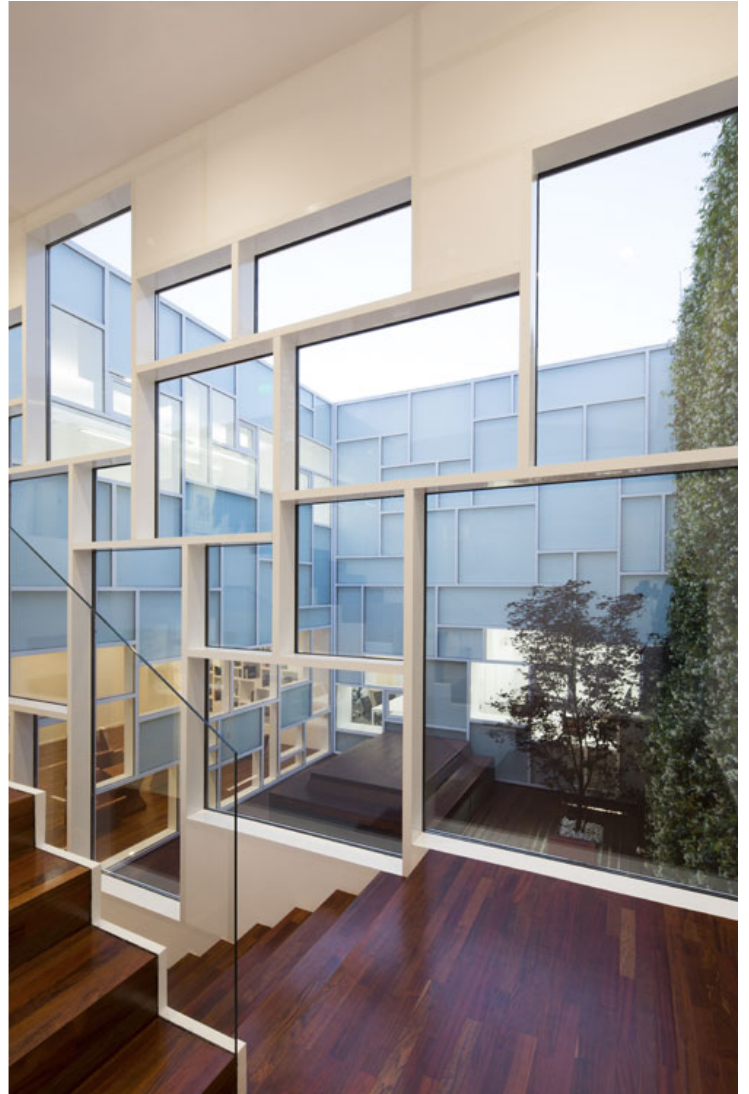
## Courtyard Façades

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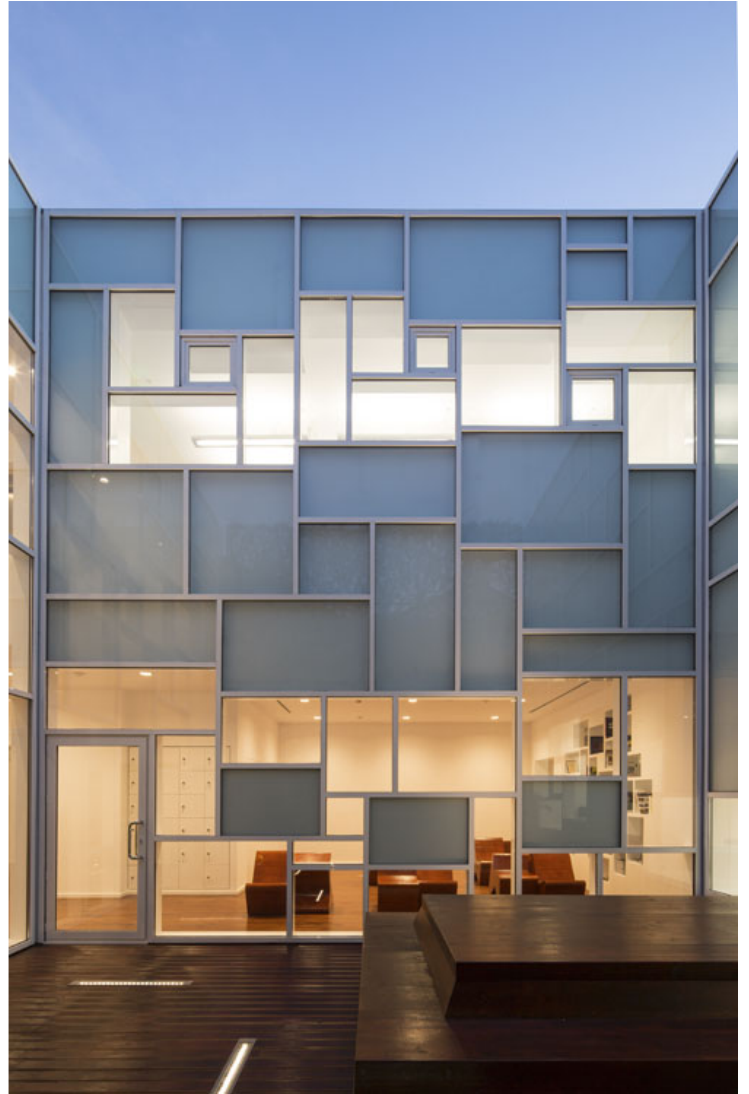
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