



YUYARINA PACHA: A LIBRARY IN THE AMAZON

Posted on May 20, 2025 by Dima Fadel



Categories: [Al Borde](#), [Energy and sustainability](#), [expanding design practices](#), [Low Density](#), [Project](#), [xavi gonzalez](#)

Tags: [Al Borde](#), [Amazon](#), [children's learning spaces](#), [Chonta wood](#), [community library](#), [Ecuador](#), [indigenous knowledge](#), [kids library](#), [non-formal education](#), [participatory design](#), [rural development](#), [Sumaco Biosphere Reserve](#), [Sustainable construction](#), [Vernacular architecture](#)

“Yuyarina Pacha,” meaning “Space-Time to Think” in Kichwa, is a community-driven project located in Huaticocha, within the buffer zone of the Sumaco Biosphere Reserve in the Ecuadorian Amazon. Initiated in 2019 by Laboratorio Creativo Sarawarmi and Witoca—an agricultural association centered on coffee production—the project began as a non-formal education initiative with local children. What started as a simple reading club soon grew into a multidimensional space for holistic learning.

Constructed primarily from *Chonta*, a native Amazonian palm celebrated for its strength and resilience, the building draws on traditional local construction techniques. In this region, *Chonta* has long been used in architecture, often set directly into the ground without waterproofing. The project embraces these ancestral methods, adapting them to meet modern needs.

urbanNext Lexicon

Yuyarina Pacha: A Library in the Amazon
<https://urbannext.net/yuyarina-pacha-a-library-in-the-amazon/>



ISSN : 2575-5374

urbanNext Lexicon

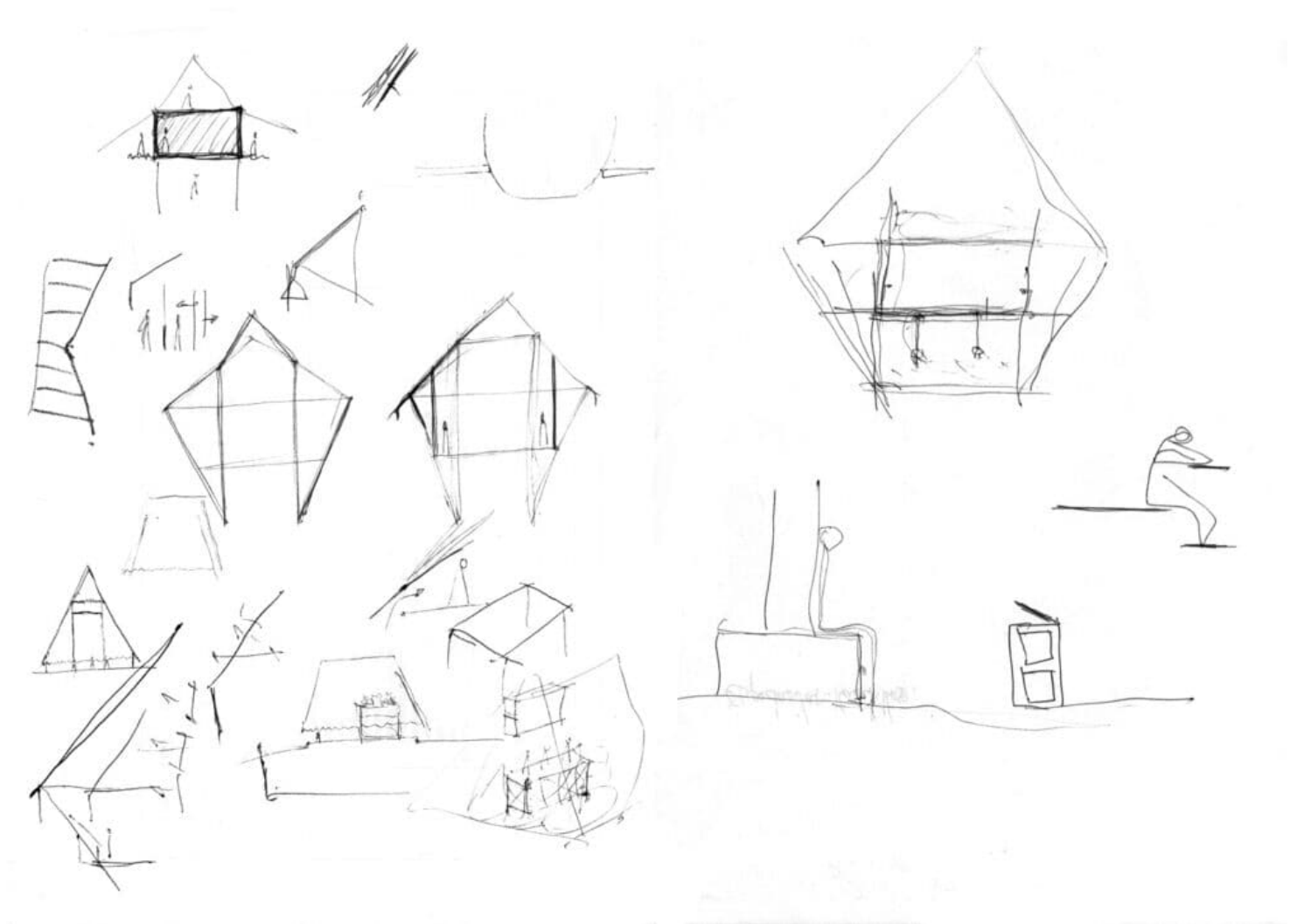
Yuyarina Pacha: A Library in the Amazon
<https://urbannext.net/yuyarina-pacha-a-library-in-the-amazon/>



ISSN : 2575-5374

urbanNext Lexicon

Yuyarina Pacha: A Library in the Amazon
<https://urbannext.net/yuyarina-pacha-a-library-in-the-amazon/>



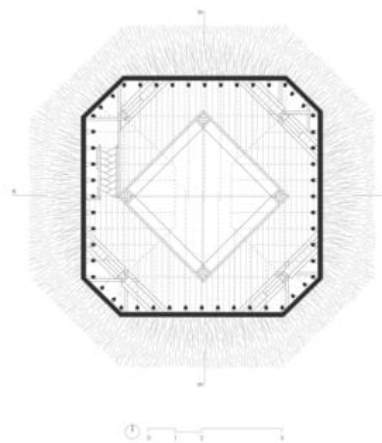
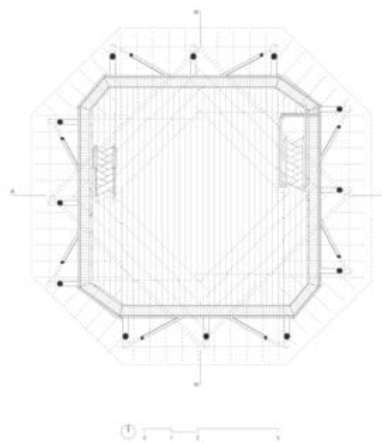
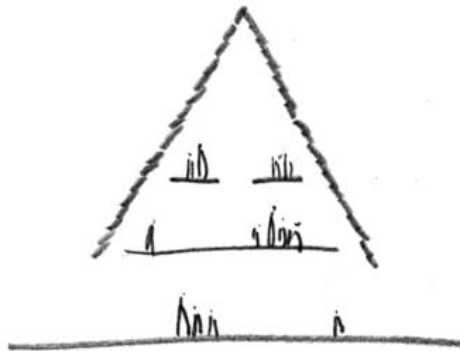
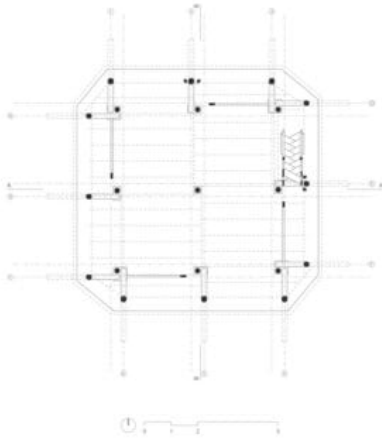
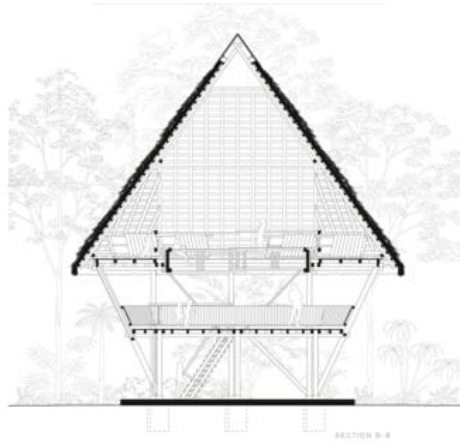
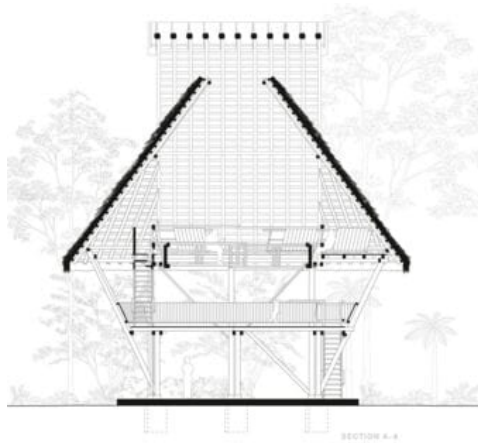
More than a place for books, the Yuyarina Pacha Community Library functions as a nurturing environment where children can learn, play, and create. The success of the original reading club highlighted the need for a dedicated library and community center. In response, the design evolved into a three-level facility:

- Ground Floor: An open, flexible space designed for art and science workshops involving water, food, plastics, and more. It also serves as a venue for informal gatherings and community events organized by the Association.

- First Floor: A dry activity zone where bibliographic collections are housed on open shelves, allowing easy access for children. This level, one of the largest indoor spaces in the area, also hosts meetings and additional group activities.
- Second Floor: A space dedicated to digital literacy, equipped with tablets and computers to record and archive oral histories, thereby preserving the community's intangible heritage. It also features a magazine collection and a reading balcony overlooking the central void of the floor below.

urbanNext Lexicon

Yuyarina Pacha: A Library in the Amazon
<https://urbannext.net/yuyarina-pacha-a-library-in-the-amazon/>



ISSN : 2575-5374

urbanNext Lexicon

Yuyarina Pacha: A Library in the Amazon
<https://urbannext.net/yuyarina-pacha-a-library-in-the-amazon/>



ISSN : 2575-5374

urbanNext Lexicon

Yuyarina Pacha: A Library in the Amazon
<https://urbannext.net/yuyarina-pacha-a-library-in-the-amazon/>



Given the irregular and organic nature of the materials, high precision was impractical. Instead, the design intentionally accommodates material variability, celebrating imperfection. A steep thatched roof responds to the Amazon's heavy rainfall, while a central glass skylight at the ridge provides both natural lighting and ease of maintenance—particularly important as the ridge is the most intricate and vulnerable part of the roof.

The library represents a model of self-managed, sustainable development. Even before construction was completed, the community began appropriating the space through a public event. Today, the Yuyarina Pacha Community Library stands as both a center for knowledge and a symbol of rural resilience, reflecting a way of life that fosters deeper harmony between people and

urbanNext Lexicon

Yuyarina Pacha: A Library in the Amazon
<https://urbannext.net/yuyarina-pacha-a-library-in-the-amazon/>

place—despite systemic neglect from the state.



ISSN : 2575-5374

urbanNext Lexicon

Yuyarina Pacha: A Library in the Amazon
<https://urbannext.net/yuyarina-pacha-a-library-in-the-amazon/>



ISSN : 2575-5374

urbanNext Lexicon

Yuyarina Pacha: A Library in the Amazon
<https://urbannext.net/yuyarina-pacha-a-library-in-the-amazon/>



ISSN : 2575-5374

urbanNext Lexicon

Yuyarina Pacha: A Library in the Amazon
<https://urbannext.net/yuyarina-pacha-a-library-in-the-amazon/>

ISSN : 2575-5374