ELLORA

Craft Culture Documentation

Third Year Bachelor of Design 2024-25

MVPS's Sharadchandraji Pawar College of Architecture, Nashik

ELLORA
Introduction

Ellora is a UNESCO World Heritage Site located in the Aurangabad district of Maharashtra, India. It is one of the largest rock-cut Hindu temple cave complexes in the world, with artwork dating from the period 600–1000 CE.Cave 16 features the largest single monolithic rock excavation in the world, the Kailash temple, a chariot-shaped monument dedicated to the god Shiva. The Kailash temple excavation also features sculptures depicting various Hindu deities as well as relief panels summarizing the two major Hindu epics. It is also called the kailashnath temple and was designed to resemble the sacred mount kailash which is said to be the abode of God shiva.

There are over 100 caves at the site, all excavated from the basalt cliffs in the Charanandri Hills, 34 of which are open to public. These consist of 17 Hindu (caves 13–29), 12 Buddhist (caves 1–12) and 5 Jain (caves 30–34) caves, each group representing deities and mythologies prevalent in the 1st millennium CE, as well as monasteries of each respective religion. They were built close to one another and illustrate the religious harmony that existed in ancient India.All of the Ellora monuments were built during the Rashtrakuta dynasty, which constructed part of the Hindu and Buddhist caves, and the Yadava dynasty, which constructed a number of the Jain caves. Funding for the construction of the monuments was provided by royals, traders and the wealthy of the region.
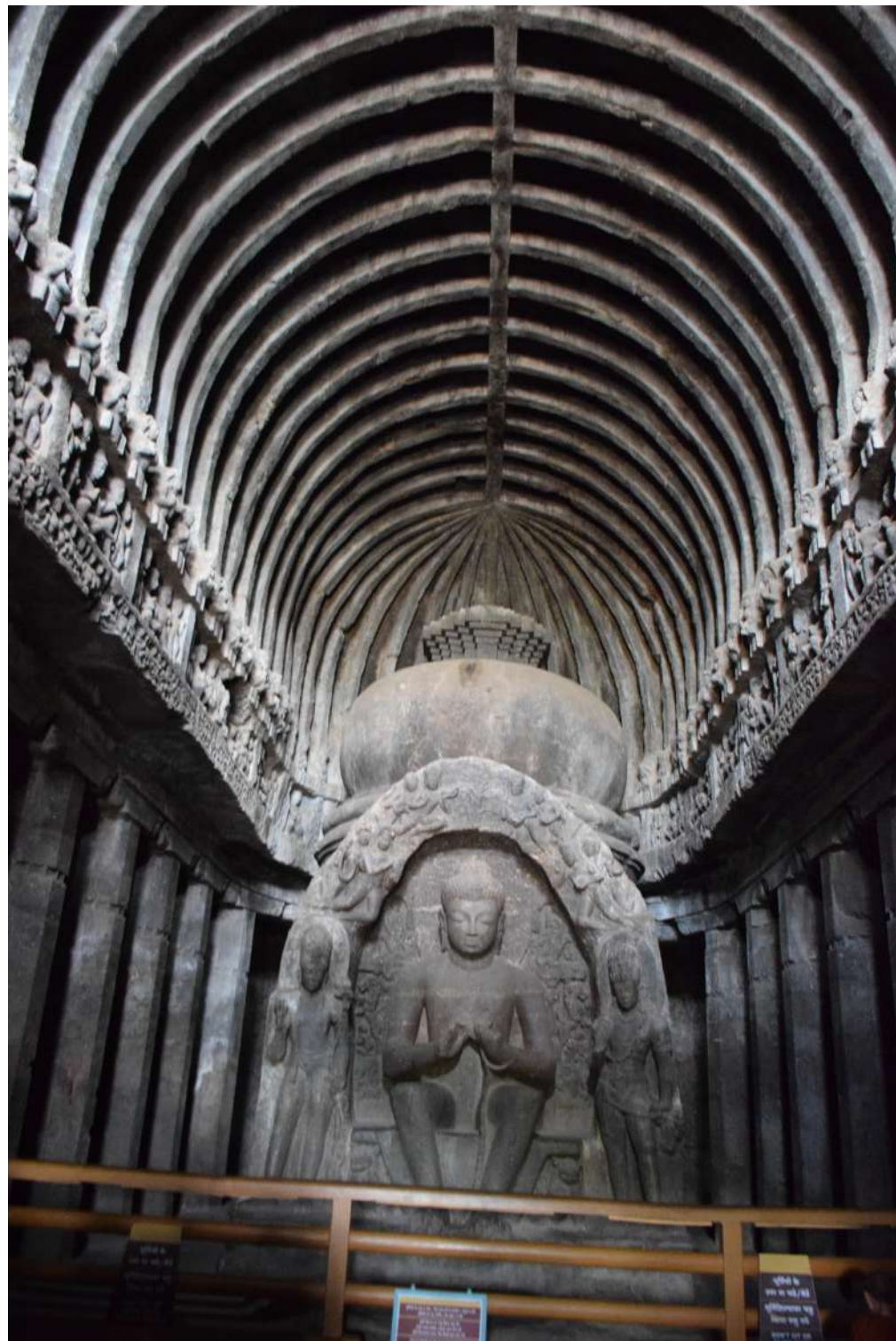
KAILASHA TEMPLE

The Kailasha is a great monolithic rock cut temple isolated from the surrounding rock and excavated from top
to bottom and scooped out all through from outside to inside. It is said that two generations worked for it and
took more than 200 years for its completion. The temple was planned and begun under the Rashtrakuta
King Dantidurga (735-757 D) and the major work went on in the reign of Krishna I (757-773A.D). The artistic
activities of Kailasha were carried out in several phase and spread over many reigns of the Rashtrakuta Rulers.
This cave locally known as Kailasha, the abode of Shiva the patron deity of the temple, Kailasha is a
temple complex, with all essential elements temple, including main shrine, Nandi shrine, gateway, surroundi
cloisters and subsidiary shrines. The temple is richly carved with niches, pilasters, windows and cornices.
The whole temple is decorated with gigantic Images of deities, amorous couples, friezes of cones along with fauna,
and geometrical designs. After completion of the temple there is evidence of renewed plaster and painting in about
the 11th centuries A. D.

Originally the entire temple was coated with white plaster so that it appeared to be covered in snow like the sacred
mountain.
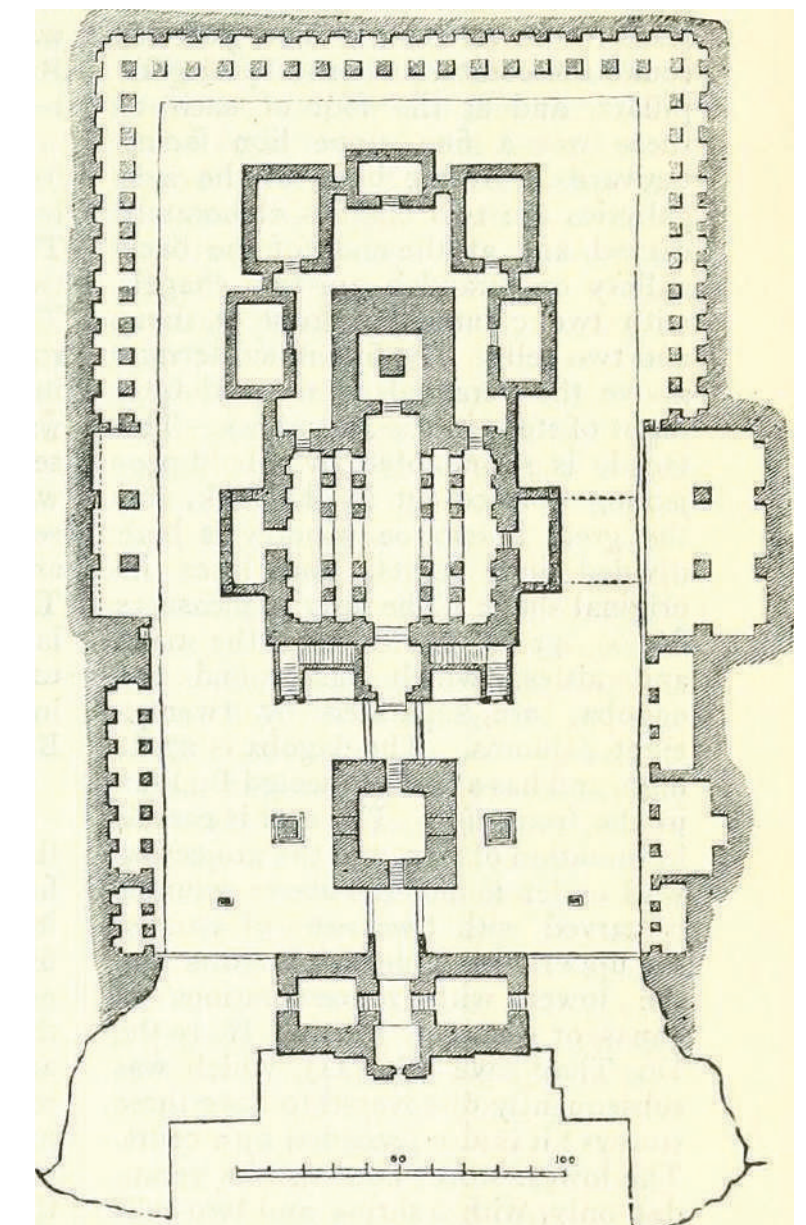
PLAN OF KAILASH TEMPLE

FRONT PANEL

The panel has Lord ganesha with his two wives Riddhi and Siddhi. It is situated just near the entrance. Anything starts from Ganesha like the Hindu culture where lord Ganesha is worshipped for auspicious beginnings. The Ganesha symbolises knowledge and the first place is given to the knowledge.

Opposite of Ganesha the form of power Durga is Mahishasurmadini. She is cutting down the head of demon with her many arms, the arms depicts power and knowledge.

ELEPHANT
SCULPTURE

RAMAYANA
PANEL

MAHABHARATA
PANEL

The Lakshmi is placed right in front of the opening. Lakshmi is seated on a double plated lotus in a lake, the leaves are not flat or straight, they are moving because the artist wants to show the water's movement. Some of the leaves are folded, some of them are tilted.
The water's movement is also shown by the two elephants filling the pots of water throught geir trunks and passing it over to Lakshmi fot abhishek. The two door keeper in front are welcoming with weapons in their hands
Various sculpture carved here in the temple are not there accident, but by deliberate design.
Every sculpture has a meaning an a purpose. The two elephants and free standing Pillars of Victory courtyard reflect Rashtrakuta's supremacy and power. The figures Sankha Nidhi, Padma-Nidhi and the panel of Gajalaxmi In courtya symbolize their prosperity. While the figures of river goddess Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati, symbolize the Purity, Devotion and Knowledge respectively.
The enormous animals supporting the superstructure Kailasha show the great importance given for the animal world in Hindu mythology. The whole temple complex is surrounded by a raise pillar corridor decorated with huge panels of mythological stories
The main temple is called as Rang-Mahal (Painted-palace) because after its completion, the temple was plastered and painted. Rang-Mahal is rectangular in plan. The 7 meter high plinth is decorated with size elephants and mythical animals and friezes illustrating Ramayana and Mahabharata. The main temple has a Vady Mandapa, Mandi Mandapa, a pillared hall, an antechamber and a semi sanctum surrounded by five subsidiary shrines (Panchayatana). The ceilings of the sanctum, antechamber and the hall have pendent rosettes, goddess Anna-Purna and Dancing Shiva respectively. The whole temple is also decorated with beautiful paintings
This panel on the south wall of the Rang mahal depicts the story of Ramayana.
Panel on the north wall of the Rang Mahal depicts the war scene of kurukshetra (mahabharat).
Both this panels are carved on those side of walls of rang mahal where it took place in India.

.

PANEL OF RAVANA LIFTING KAILASHA PARAVAT

The panel depicts the story of Ravana when he tried to lift Kailasha parvat to take it to Lanka with him. At that time God Shiva was in dhyaan mudra and Goddesses Parvati was sitting beside him. After the trembling effect they felt,Goddesses Parvati was scared, but God Shiva was very composed, he stopped him just by the pressure of his tiptoe. Ravana was struggling beneath the parvat, he was impressed by Shiva and performed Shiva tandav to show his appraisal. The panel perfectly incorporates the postures and expressions during the happening

The strokes on the carved stone indicates the craftmen whether he was a left or right-handed. From the observations made we can clearly tell that there were very less number of left handed craftsman .

The carving on the ceiling is directly carved out of the rock on the top . .

CAVE NO. 10

The double storied Buddhist cathedral-cum-monastery the only chaitya griha at Ellora Cave is stylistically and palaeographically datable to 7th century A. D. It is a beautiful creation of artists, who have copied the contemporary wooden constructions in cave architecture. The most remarkable feature is the Music Gallery (upper floor) and the beautiful carved facade. The facade is decorated with a number of friezes of animals, couples and a beautifully carved window, which allows light to in the cave. It consist of a large courtyard with a double storeyed apartments on both sides and an apsidal pillared hall on a raised platform.
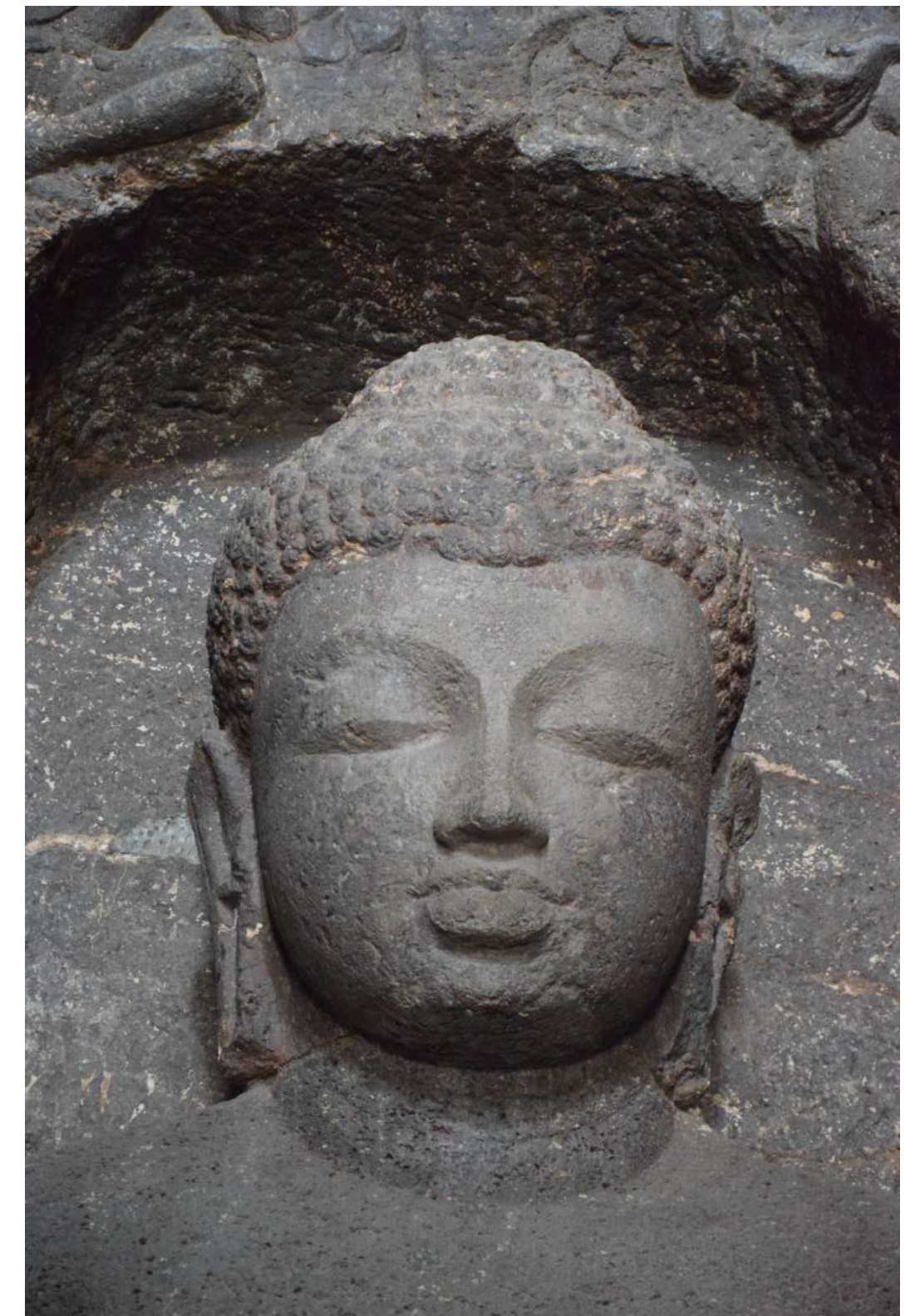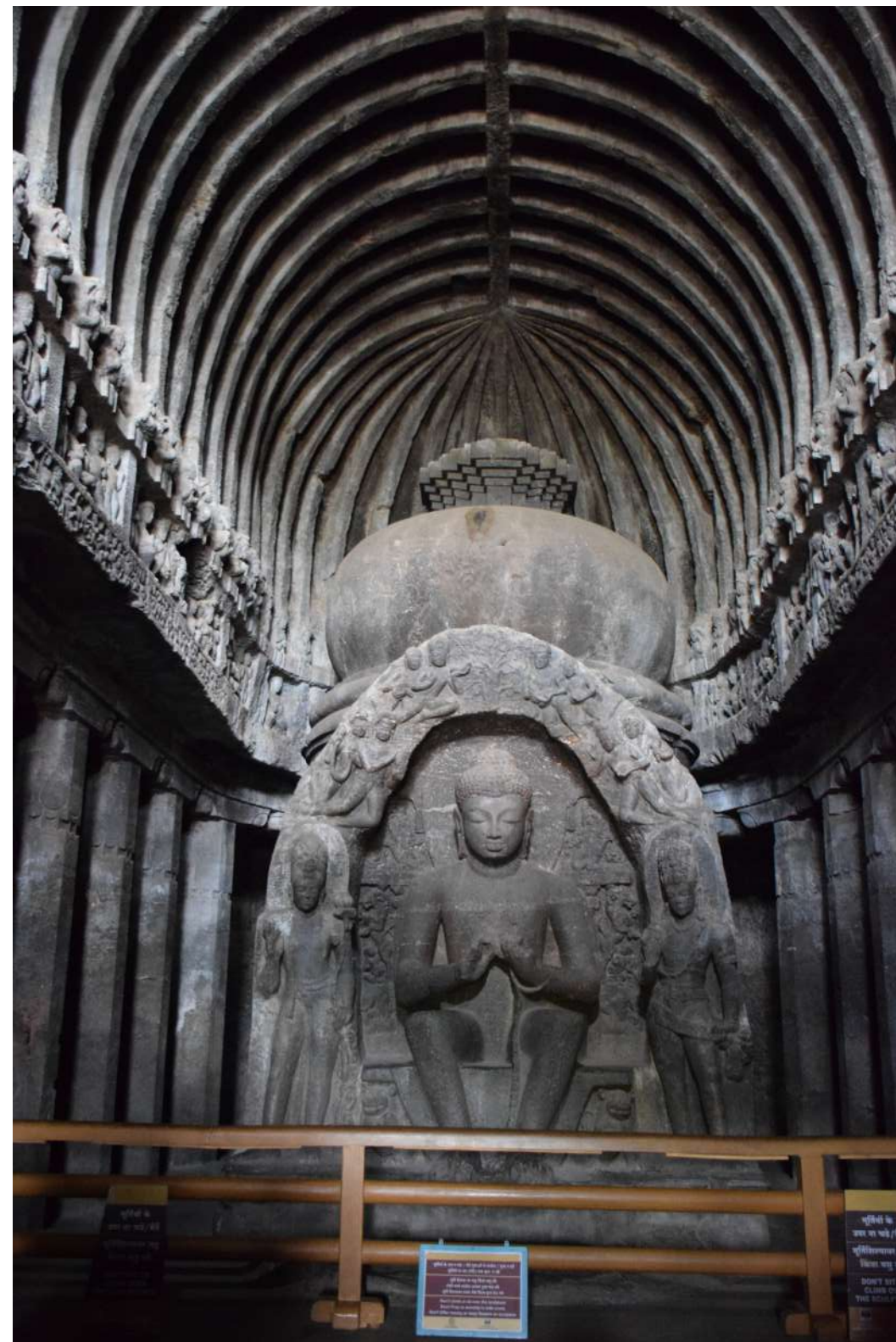
CHAITYA HALL

The spacious hall apsidal on plan, has thirty pillars arranged in an elongated apse. The object of worship is a seated image of preaching buddha flanked by two Bodhisattvas and celestial couples all carved against the stupa, which serves as an ornamental background. The drum of the stupa is also decorated with panels of Buddha and Bodhisattvas. The ribbed vault gives an echo effect in the hall when a person standing at one end of the columns of the naye creates any sound. The upper floor is approached by a flight of steps cut in to the sidewall of verandah, it is possible that from this Music-Gallery, background music was provided to the monks, chanting mantras below. It may also have been used for seating Important visitors during prayers.

Every year on 10th of March around 5:15pm sunlight from the above sun window falls on exactly right in front of Buddha's face illuminating it.