

Doraha Dialogues

A Residency & Cultural Conversation Series

Doraha, Punjab — March 2026

Curated by Vatrakh Foundation

Concept

Doraha Dialogues is an interdisciplinary cultural programme situated within a century-old Kothi in Doraha, Punjab. It gathers artists, ecologists, archivists, and community practitioners to examine how histories of land, labour, and identity intersect with climate change.

The Kothi becomes a living archive where slow, research-based art practices take shape.

Rooms, courtyards, and surrounding farmlands host creative experimentation rooted in soil, memory, and community relationships.

Doraha Dialogues positions culture as sustained engagement, not spectacle — a thoughtful practice that listens to place and builds future memory.

Rationale

Punjab stands in a moment of ecological and cultural transition:

Depleted soils from chemical-intensive monoculture

Falling groundwater threatening food security

Air pollution intertwined with seasonal agricultural cycles

Youth identity shaped by migration, technology, and aspiration

Yet art thrives — language persists — and memory resists forgetting.

Doraha Dialogues responds to this tension, asserting that rural knowledge is global knowledge.

It asks how art can reshape understanding of the agricultural crisis, how heritage can inform environmental futures, and how communities can document change as it is lived.

Programme Components

1 — Artist & Writer Residency

Context-responsive creation supported by community engagement, archival study, and ecological research.

2 — Curated Dialogues

Intimate exchanges on climate, heritage, agrarian transformation, and literary imagination — held in the Kothi and in the landscape that surrounds it.

3 — Exhibitions & Installations

Film, sound, archival storytelling, and performance integrated into heritage spaces and rural ecologies.

4 — Doraha Marketplace

A site of rural creative economy featuring sustainable crafts, seed and soil innovation, and independent publishing. Visiting village Jaipura meeting the local artisans.

5 — Heritage Walk: Doraha Fort

A guided encounter with a historically significant fort — connecting empire, movement, ecology, and oral history. Doraha Fort even had Noor Jahan as a guest. Walk towards historical Katana Sahib Gurudwara, along with a village tour. Visit to Sarai Lashkari Khan which is a historical inn built by mughal military general Lashkari Khan, in the reign of emperor Aurangzeb in 1667 AD about 9km. Aamir Khan's movie Rang De Basanti was shot here.

Day trip to Shri Anandpur Sahib, a visit to museum Virast E Khalsa

6 - Nature Walk & Visit to Nearby Villages:

To understand the rural Punjab, environmental conditions, life in a Punjab village, understanding the crops, soil, etc.

Participants & Community

Doraha Dialogues convenes a small, diverse cohort:

1. Artists, writers, and curators
2. Archivists, historians, and anthropologists
3. Environmental and agricultural experts
4. Universities and research institutions
5. Youth groups and farmer-led innovators

Cultural missions and international partners

1. Participation is intentionally intimate to enable depth, collaboration, and co-authorship.
2. Intended Outcomes
3. New works rooted in Punjab's land, memory, and climate discourse
4. Expanded archives documenting agrarian and cultural transitions
5. Climate literacy through culture — bridging science with everyday life
6. Strengthened rural cultural infrastructure and livelihoods
7. Sustained partnerships and annual continuity with potential scaling

Doraha Dialogues positions Punjab as a leader in climate-aware cultural production.

Vatrukh Foundation

With a longstanding commitment to literacy, dignity, and collective wellbeing, Vatrukh Foundation cultivates a new spectrum of cultural leadership emerging from Punjab's soil and its resilient communities.

Invitation for Collaboration

We welcome collaboration with institutions working in:

1. Cultural programming and contemporary arts
2. Climate resilience and environmental transformation
3. Heritage stewardship and archival innovation
4. Community-led economic initiatives
5. Publishing and research ecosystems
6. Collaboration is envisioned as co-authorship — shared knowledge, shared impact, shared visibility.

Launch — March 2026 | Doraha, Punjab

A home with history opens its doors to the future.

Art listens. Land speaks.

Punjab enters global conversation — on its own terms.

Doraha Dialogues

We invite you to be part of this beginning.

