

Matrimandir

May 2017



Planting seven Lagerstroemia trees in the garden of Progress on March 4th

Progress Garden

In early March, before the onset of the hot summer days, seven trees were planted in the developing Garden of Progress. This tree, Lagerstroemia Speciosa, - commonly called "Pride of India", - is a small to medium size tree, - growing just tall enough to give some shade in the garden without blocking off the view, and will bear attractive, lightly scented rose purple flowers, to which the Mother has given the significance "Intimacy with the Universal Nature".

Mean while, at the outer edge of this garden the work of excavating the seven meter by seven meter pond was completed, and now waits to be lined with an HDPE pond liner so that the stone edging of the pond can be built and then the pond can be brought alive, with water, plants and fish. In each of the gardens built so far, the water element is very much appreciated, as it brings immediately a living, ever fresh touch to the landscape.



Progress garden, in this photo taken from the top of Matrimandir, is outlined in the red earth of Auroville. At the top, one can make out the square excavation for the future pond. The seven Lagerstroemia trees are also visible if you look along the central axis of the garden.

Bliss Garden

In the Garden of Bliss, on the opposite side of Matrimandir from Progress garden, a snow white finishing touch has been added. While quartz stones, ranging in size from the tiniest at a few millimeters, up to the largest at ten centimeters have been artfully added to the central moon area. The seven bowl fountains are now encircled by the largest of these stones, while the smallest pebbles, like a layer of river sand, describe a pathway on which one can circulate in the garden.



The overall effect has been to introduce an element of texture, whiteness, and a touch of magic into this central feature of Bliss garden.



The main entrance door to the Green Room swings easily open on its bearings, even though it is clad with heavy sheets of Agra sandstone. This same stone was also the cladding material used for the finishing of the entire Amphitheater and for the Petals of Matrimandir.

Green Room

Elsewhere, in the underground rooms beneath the Amphitheater, work has been concentrated in the “Green Room”, - the room where performers will in future prepare themselves to appear on the stage in the Amphitheater. The basic layout of the Green Room has been built up over the last few months and all the plumbing and electric lines installed in the floor.

Now we approach the finishing stage, where the false ceiling, air-conditioning, floor tiling, wooden doors and shelves, and lighting are soon to be installed. The room thus begins to take on its finished form and is expected to be fully completed before the winter monsoon.

Looking Ahead

What will happen when all of the Matrimandir gardens are built, and the oval road around them is done?

At that point, or even before, it will be time to remove all the buildings, some very old and some not so old, which lie in the 100 meter wide band circling the gardens. The Mother had envisioned an “isolating zone” which would encircle the gardens and act as a buffer zone between the silent, concentrated atmosphere which should be here, and, on the outer edge of this zone, the more active band of the inner city surrounding the Matrimandir. In a further development of this concept, the Mother spoke in the early '70s, of building a Lake to surround the gardens, which would have this isolating function. The Mother noted, at the time, that there was not then enough water to fill such a lake, but that the problem would be tackled in time...

To create the isolating zone, and eventually the lake, the first task will be to remove the entire collection of service buildings which now surround the Matrimandir gardens at close quarters. These service buildings have many functions, ranging from administrative and accounting to the laundry

for the Chamber (for socks, mats and cushion covers), to the many facilities for the 100 people who work here each day (catering, parking, toilets, various storerooms) as well as our materials stockrooms and machine repair shops . This long list of supporting activities will have to continue in the years to come to keep Matrimandir fully functional and to make sure it is well maintained in all its aspects.

We have mentioned this project to you before, but thought it would be interesting to show you a

concept sketch of the future “Service Facility” as envisioned recently by our two Aurovilian architects. The planning work for this facility goes on (the building keeps changing shape slightly!) as there are endless details to be considered in arranging all of the activities into a fairly concentrated site. This facility will be located on the outer border of the isolating zone, - the outer shore of the lake- on the north eastern side of the gardens.



A conceptual sketch of the Matrimandir Service Facility, which would house all needed support activities for the future support and maintenance of Matrimandir.

Important information:

1) **Please note that the Matrimandir will be closed for maintenance from June 4th until July 6th 2017.**

2) **Offerings:** Contributions to Matrimandir are exempt under sec. 80G of the Indian Income Tax Act. You can send us by post your offering by DD/Cheque payable to “Matrimandir”. You may also give your offering in cash/cheque/DD at the Matrimandir Office during your visit for meditation.