

Matrimandir

December 2012

The Matrimandir , with its developing gardens, is more and more a place of color,- with lovely flowers, plants in many subtle shades of green , with an increasing variety of decorative stones and pebbles collected from around the country...and always with the backdrop of the golden Matrimandir at its center. And so we have decided to start printing our Newsletter in color to let all of you enjoy this visual dimension of Matrimandir. We hope that the color photos convey something of the natural beauty that is slowly unveiling itself in the gardens here.

For each of the twelve gardens of Matrimandir, the Mother had specified a particular flower, - one of the many hundreds to which she had given names, based on her perception of its inner significance. For the garden of Consciousness, she had selected the golden yellow double hibiscus which she named "Supramental Consciousness." This and several closely related varieties have now been planted and are blooming in this garden. The gold and yellow flowers stand out beautifully against the green of the surrounding lawns. This flower is shown in the photo below.

Aside from planting in the gardens, work is also ongoing to lay down the red sandstone cladding of the pathway the leads up to and around the wide tear drop shaped pool. And, in the coming months, the main work remaining here will be to construct a special underground chamber which will house the pumps needed to feed the fountain and cascade which are a main feature of this garden. This underground space will also centralize the electric controls for the entire set of lights for this and for the two adjacent gardens; Existence and Bliss.

The Hibiscus named "Supramental Consciousness" in the Garden of Consciousness



Next to this garden, in the Garden of Bliss, work is well advanced on the cladding of the seven low circular walls which ring the raised central area of the garden. Slate stones with a graduated variation in color (darkest on the outermost wall progressing to lightest on the inner wall) are being fixed to all the walls. Work has begun too to fill the intervening spaces with a good layer of compost and soil so that the phase of planting here can begin during this rainy season.

To show you the overall progress and relation of the three gardens of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss we reproduce for you on these two pages a panoramic view taken from the top of Matrimandir.

Existence garden is on the right, Consciousness in the center and the garden of Bliss, with construction in the early stages, is seen on the left. Along the lower edge of the photo a few of the golden discs of Matrimandir are seen, and along the upper edge appear some of the buildings of the administrative zone. The green space between the outer edge of the gardens and the buildings beyond will some day be filled with a Lake, to create a zone of silence around the entire gardens.

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In the garden of Unity, there was a concreting on November 12th to give the final shape to the sloping walls of the twelve meter wide pool which sits adjacent to the mini amphitheater. Our 40 year old cement mixer was taken out from the shelter of our machinery shed and put to work once again to mix the concrete for this job. The sound of the mixer running brought back memories of the same sounds that were the heart beat of the site during those day-and-night long concretings that were so frequent during the building up of the main structure during the seventies and eighties. That old mixer has served the site so faithfully for all those years! Having done this concreting, the cladding of the pool's base and sides is now underway, using slabs of white granite brought from Karnataka. Meanwhile, the construction of the complex stainless steel frame that will support the central stage of this pool is advancing steadily over in our metal workshop.

Another work going on in our metal workshop is the preparation of the aluminum stands needed for the new panels soon to come for the expansion of our Solar Plant. Since 1997 we have been fortunate to have on site a 36 KW solar plant, with over 400 PV panels used to harvest the energy of the sun. This plant is being used today to power the main air conditioning system of Matrimandir's Inner Chamber. Now this plant is being expanded, with another 15 kW of peak power being added.



Final concreting in the pool in the Garden of Unity on November 12th

For this expansion, stands are being fabricated which will support the 66 panels (each 270 watts) which will be added within the next few months. Once this expansion is complete we will be a little less reliant on the electricity supplied by outside sources. We will be able to also reduce our consumption of diesel used by our generators which run when the electricity supply is off. – Presently, the electricity supply here in Auroville is being cut by as much as 14 hours each day!- In the long run the goal is to have more and more of Auroville's power need met by dependable, alternative sources. (There are already four giant windmills in the south of Tamil Nadu generating power for Auroville's use, but as the state supply grid is so often not functioning, this energy cannot always be fed to us.)

The three first gardens as seen from the top of Matrimandir.



Monsoon rains at Matrimandir (October 30 – 31)

For the second day running we have asked the workers to go home....cyclone Neelam is passing by, lashing the area with rain and strong gusts of wind. Not as strong as the major cyclone Thane that hit us directly at New year, Neelam still has managed to disrupt the work at Matrimandir.

There is always a special silence here on such days, felt behind the gusts of wind...indeed that silence is surely always here, just more well hidden on our normal busy days, with the action of all the volunteers and employees on the site, and the daily flow of visitors who come to sit in the Inner Chamber. Matrimandir has a very special silence...there is a Peace, and at the same time an intensity, an intensity which pushes forward towards ... something.

Now the rains come, brought in on a strong gust of wind...the strength of the gusts increases and the cyclone, still some hundreds of kilometers southeast of us, moves gradually closer. Sheets of wind-driven rain fly across the open site of Matrimandir... The trees toss their heads more and more wildly as the strength of the wind increases....there is the sound of water splashing down from the roofs that shelter us during the rain. The gutters beside the radial paths of the gardens fill with water, and flow rapidly outward to the edge of the gardens... the two large excavations there begin to fill up, two meters deep now, as the storm waters accumulate.



Monsoon rains lash the Matrimandir site in late October.

One year, in very strong rains, these excavations became completely full, - and for a few days we had the unusual sight of seeing there, as in a preview, portions of the lake which will eventually surround the entire Matrimandir garden oval. It was one of Mother's strong wishes that these gardens be fully surrounded in future by a lake to act as an isolating zone, to protect the peace of the garden area from the more bustling atmosphere of the future city center. Well, we are still a long way from that yet, but these rainy days come from time to time to give us a glimpse of how it might one day be...

Meanwhile, Matrimandir stands immobile as always at the center of the scene. Winds sweep across the site, rains are carried along, refreshing the earth, bringing the much needed life force back to this land that has had such a very parched and dry summer. Humans bundle themselves up against the chill wind, and wait until Nature has played out Her ritual monsoon drama to the end.

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We would like to note, in closing, that along with the change to print the Matrimandir newsletter in color, we will introduce a second change, which is to send this letter to you four times a year instead of six. The overall yearly cost will thus remain about the same. We hope you enjoy the coming issues and we thank you all once again for your continued support!

Address for donations and correspondence:

(Please make your cheque, money order or DD payable to '**Matrimandir**')

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