

Matrimandir

May 2019



A mass of plumeria flowers bloom on one of the Matrimandir Nursery trees.

Walking through the Matrimandir Nursery during April is a delight. The plumeria trees are in full bloom and the rich foliage of dark green leaves begins to fill in the branches which have been bare for the last few months. The long avenue of blossoming trees in the Nursery is colored in a rich pallet of hues, ranging from deep magenta to yellow to the most delicate pink and creamy white. The air is filled with the distinctively different perfumes of each variety of plumeria flowers.

The Matrimandir Nursery has a plumeria collection of almost two hundred varieties. These trees were collected from around the world over the years

since the Nursery was started in January of 1970, almost fifty years ago. Most of the trees are fully grown now, and serve as mother plants. Cuttings from their branches can easily be used to reproduce the chosen variety.

To see this magnificence of blossoms is truly a feast and a blessing for the eyes. Those who do not know the history of the creation of the Nursery will simply marvel at the colorful display, but to those who know that these blossoming acres were once only fields of dusty red windblown soil, the display on view today is nothing short of a miracle.

The beginning of the Garden of the Unexpected

In our previous newsletter we had shared with you the design that emerged from the year long process in 2018 that had seen an offering of many possible designs for this new garden at Matrimandir.

It is to be a garden for children, a place where they will marvel and encounter the Unexpected, where they will begin to experience a reflection of the atmosphere held within the Matrimandir itself. Of the several designs which were proposed by various teams, one had been chosen as the focus and key elements of two other concepts have been integrated to arrive at a final overall design.



Planting the first plumeria trees in the Garden of the Unexpected on February 21st, Mother's birthday.

On February 21st the garden was inaugurated with the planting of three plumeria trees brought from the Matrimandir Nursery. It was a light and happy moment as Aurovilians, guests and volunteers young and old pitched in to set the heavy saplings in their composted pits. Fresh earth was then pressed around the roots to give them a firm base for their growth over the years to come. On Auroville's birthday, one week later, nine more plumerias were planted to further develop the garden. In the days that followed, the paths and pools of the garden were marked out as the design team spent early morning hours

quietly considering the layout of the land. They began to make fine adjustments to the elements of one major section of the garden in response to the presence of the newly planted plumeria trees. They sought for balance, they observed the movement of the sun, and saw where it provided shade, or not, in parts of the garden. This subtle action of the design team will go on for many months as the garden begins to grow. In this way, the shape of the garden, in its finer elements, will evolve and grow from day to day as the elements of the garden, such as pools and pathways, are established on the land.

In early April lorries of large granite boulders arrived, to be carefully unloaded one by one with a crane. Some of the stones had long fine nosed shapes, others were like pillars, and others like wide flat benches for the gardens. One had to take care not to damage any of the stones. (Granite is hard, yes, but it is fragile too, and can easily be broken by shock on unloading). All the boulders have been unloaded in an area just outside the

garden. The design team will now carefully select each stone to fit it in its destined place in the garden to come. This aspect of the garden will grow, stone by stone, over the coming year. In the meantime, the shaping of the earth will proceed. The hollows needed for water bodies and the flat areas for wide stone gardens and other features will be shaped within the overall wave-like shape given to the gardens long ago.



Builders of the Garden of the Unexpected inspect the newly arrived boulders

The New Matrimandir Compost Section

About a kilometer from Matrimandir a new site for the production of compost for the future gardens is being established. Our current compost producing site is located just near the Matrimandir, where all of our workshops and services are located. This area will in future become an isolating zone around the perimeter of the gardens. Thus all of our facilities will successively have to be moved out of this zone. The compost section will be the first to shift.

For the last few months our metal workshop has been the site of a lot of activity as the steel roof beams for the new vermi-compost shed are being produced. Steel channels are being cut, welded and painted as the 14 meter long frames are constructed here. On April 15th the first set of four steel trusses was transported along the curving Auroville roads to the new site just beyond the Visitors Center. The frames, now erected above the red earth and brick platform in the middle of a wide field, give an idea of the large compost production facility that will be developed here.



Roof trusses for the new compost shed are being manufactured in the Matrimandir metal workshop.



The Matrimandir metal workshop team installs roof trusses for the vermi compost production shed at the new site.

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Important information on sending your 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.

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