After a very long and more than slightly over-productive year, we are all kind of taking stock at the end of 2018.

This year, we had 10 publications go to print... the Auroville 50th anniversary here in Auroville, with an open house and rammed earth stele... 50th events across the subcontinent... We closed up a 3 year construction at Sharanam and another small local construction... Lara has worked on a proposal for the Matrimandir Garden of the Unexpected... Satprem has continued technical support for HfH Sri Lanka... Ayyappan has added a new course on Wind Turbine design... and the Bioclimatic Earth workshop has hit full swing.

So we will be reconfiguring our publications schedule for a quarterly newsletter, with the first issue at the end of March!

Please feel free to share this newsletter with your friends and colleagues as we spread the knowledge of earth architecture to the world!

Earthily yours,
The AVEI Team
Since June, Lara has been working on a proposal for the Garden of the Unexpected (GoU) at the Matrimandir Gardens in the center of Auroville. Lara is now, along with Jyoti, assisting the Unexpected Four team (Mona, Joss, Andreas, and Greg) in an integration period for their final garden design.

Very sincere thanks to all of the members of the community and experts who have generously shared their knowledge, as well as the GoU organizers!

https://www.auroville.org/contents/4498

http://gou.auroville.org/
Excerpts from Lara’s “Garden of the Unexpected” proposal

What is the Spirit of Auroville Gardening?

Rather than trying to cultivate Concepts from other gardening. We will try to find the surrounding environment which is already in existence. The process of gardening is not about designing things, but about cultivating the potential that already exists. By understanding the environment, we can create a new garden that is in harmony with its surroundings.

The concept of a garden is not just about plants, but about the atmosphere that surrounds them. A garden should be a place of spiritual growth, where people can connect with nature and find peace.

We will work with local materials and create a garden that is unique to Auroville. The garden will be a place of learning and growth, where people can come to learn about sustainable gardening practices.

The garden will be divided into different stages. Each stage will have its own characteristics and will be designed to meet the needs of the garden at that particular time. The stages are:

1st Stage: Pubescence
2nd Stage: Adolescence
3rd Stage: Maturity
4th Stage: Self-propagating

Each stage will have its own unique features and will be designed to create a specific atmosphere.

The garden will be a place of creativity and imagination. We will encourage people to explore their own ideas and create their own unique garden spaces.

We believe that a garden should be a place of wonder and mystery. It should be a place where people can be inspired and challenged to think differently.

Excerpts from Lara’s “Garden of the Unexpected” proposal
Satprem went to Sri Lanka from the 8th to 18th October to conduct an evaluation mission of the work which happened during the last year for the HfHSL “Homes Not Houses” project. This mission was initially scheduled for last October, to check the initial stages of implementation after the various training courses given in 2017 to Habitat for Humanity Sri Lanka (HfHSL) and World Vision Lanka (WVL).

The scope of the mission changed from what was initially planned, as the production of earth concrete blocks in Kilinochchi was too expensive. Thus, the main scope of work for this mission was to evaluate the potential of new quarries in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu, the suitability of soils for the production of CSEB in the north. The evaluation included also the block production in Batticaloa and the houses built in the north and east.

It was encouraging to see all of the good work accomplished, especially the construction of houses by HfHSL, and their efforts in problem solving and promotion of CSEB. One house even resisted an elephant attack!

As of 16th October, 42 houses were fully completed, 30 houses were in the finishing stages and 42 houses were at other stages of construction. It is important to mention that this project is an owner-driven initiative and that HfHSL is only assisting beneficiaries to build their own houses. HfHSL proposed various types of houses and adapted these designs to the wishes of the homeowners.

Soils in the north are not the best for the production of CSEB, as they are in general very gravely, with often 40 to 60% of gravel. Nevertheless, a quarry was identified with a good quality soil that was centrally located in the main areas of development in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu.

Block production, organized by WVL, continued in Batticaloa with the Auram machinery and Sri Lankan made manual presses.

Congratulations to the HfHSL teams in the North and East who managed to achieve these impressive accomplishments during the last year!
As a continuation of Auroville’s 50th Anniversary celebrations this year, the “Journey of Auroville: Baroda Festival” was held at the end of September in Vadodara (previously Baroda) in the western Indian state of Gujarat. The primary venue for the festival was the campus of The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda (MSU).

The Journey of Auroville festivals are taking place in cities of particular importance to the life of Sri Aurobindo, the Indian philosopher and freedom fighter whose philosophy, along with that of the Mother, forms the founding principles of Auroville. The Baroda Festival aimed to engage the youth and citizens of the city by tapping into areas of mutual expertise between Auroville and Baroda, to form lasting connections between these two communities. The Earth Institute’s librarian Hilary joined as a core team member in organizing the five-day Baroda Festival, as she had previously taken part in the Auroville Expo in Delhi in November 2017 as part of the Sustainability Kiosk (see Newsletter 36).

The opening ceremony took place on 25th September with dignitaries from the Auroville Foundation and MSU on the dais and a concert by the Raga Mantra Trio, a fusion music group from Auroville. The festival then continued with different events led by Auroville units and Aurovilians: an art camp by Upcycling Studio; theater performances and workshops with the Vast team; Odissi dance performances; lectures and seminars on youth engagement, conscious consumerism, and integral education; and film screenings. On 28th September, an architecture symposium was held in conjunction with the Vadodara Chapter of the Institute of Indian Interior Designers (IIID), where Lara and Aurovilian architects presented on architecture in the Auroville context on a triple-wide Matrox screen (see next page). The festival concluded on 30th September with a performance

Exhibition in Premanand Hall and Vast Performance
of *Bhu*, a magnificent theatrical performance and homage to the earth inspired by the South Indian martial art *kalaripayattu*.

The events were well received, with strong participation by the student body and larger Barodian community. The Journey of Auroville team is now preparing toward the “Journey of Auroville: Kolkata Festival”, which will take place at the end of January 2019 in Kolkata (Calcutta).

Learn more about the Baroda Festival in the three short films by Serena Aurora and AuroVenkatesh and the *AV Today* article by Hilary and Ravi M.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YnSn_uoxC24
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9qJwIveIfkg
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UZhtkb3JVrw
https://www.youtube.com/contents/4551

**Baroda Architects’ Symposium**

The architects symposium during the Baroda Festival, organized and hosted by Vadodara Chapter of IIID, was held at FGI Auditorium. Four AV architects gave lectures on various holistic aspects of Auroville’s design and constructive culture. Beginning with the urban scale, Lalit Kishor Bhati spoke about the unique set of environmental, socio-economic and socio-cultural factors in 50 years of urban planning in Auroville. Mona Doctor-Pingel showed many beautiful examples of the language of Auroville’s experimental building materials and technologies. Lara zoomed in further, showing the diverse experimental approaches in building with earth. Then Shailaja Sudhalkar Bhati zoomed back again to talk about the unique culture of design that has evolved over these 50 years. There was enthusiastic debate with the professional community of Baroda’s architects. Sincere thanks to Kalpesh Joshi for his work in organizing this symposium!
Just in case anyone needs an explanation for why Lara has been a little crazy, the following is the list of 2018’s publications (journal and conference papers, books, book chapters and technical reports), not including the most recent articles or the bimonthly AVEI Newsletters...

**Terra 2016 (conference papers)**


**Building Owning & Belonging (book)**

**AVEI School (book)**
Davis, L. (July 2018). “AVEI School of Earthen Architecture: Informational brochure”, Auroville Earth Institute, TN India.

**Smart Cities (book)**

**Structures Journal (journal paper)**

**IASS (conference paper)**

**PROFAS C+ (technical report)**

**ISES (conference paper)**

**Sacred Groves Followup Report (technical report)**

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**Smart Cities (book)**

**Structures Journal (journal paper)**

**IASS (conference paper)**

**PROFAS C+ (technical report)**

**ISES (conference paper)**

**Sacred Groves Followup Report (technical report)**
The Auroville Earth Institute has just concluded a year-long project with graphic designer Muthiah Kasi to reconceive our visual identity and graphic materials. Muthiah joined the AVEI team in December 2017 to take on this body of graphic design work. After redesigning the logo – a revised symbol with a layer of inspiration from the AVEI “Freespanning” vault construction technique – then adding all-new beautiful fonts, these design sensibilities were incorporated into our brochures, office and campus signage, letterheads, envelopes, and stamps. The result has been a striking collection of promotional materials that give a cohesive visual identity to AVEI and a beautiful new assortment of stationary items and fonts to work with. Thank you, Muthu, for your work!
NEW Wind Turbine Course

In response to numerous requests over the years, Ayyappan has developed and just taught the Earth Institute’s first ever Wind Turbine Design training course this November. For this pilot course, Ayyappan worked with a small group of students to guide them through practical sessions on woodworking, metalworking, and generator fabrication. He then taught how to wind the generator coils, with extensive exercises on casting the starter coil and rotator magnet disks. He gave a small instructional session on the furling tail system and tower installation.

At the end of the workshop, the trainees had assembled a small wind turbine and were able to test the wind, learn the basics electrical driven turbine systems, and hook up a battery.

After this successful first course, the Earth Institute is planning to offer it again next year.
Alumni Activities

Former Earth Institute intern Salomé Bergsma and the other students of the DESIGNBUILD LAB of LabEx AE&CC at ENSA Grenoble have recently completed a beautiful pisé construction with an amphitheater in the community of Four, in the Rhône Alpes region of France. The building incorporates pre-fabricated pisé walls, deactivated concrete, wood, pre-patinated zinc, and glass. Congratulations to Salomé and her DESIGNBUILD LAB classmates on this impressive building! More photos can be viewed on Instagram:

https://www.instagram.com/lmpt_ensag

Announcing IISc Energy Efficient Buildings Workshop

The Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore is organizing a 6-day workshop on “Low Carbon Materials and Building Systems” in the context of the Energy Efficient Buildings Workshop Series. Taking place at the Centre for Sustainable Technologies on the IISc Bangalore campus from 21 to 26 January 2019, the workshop will include lectures, hands-on training, and demonstrations of construction techniques. Some of the concepts that will be covered include energy in buildings, green building concepts, low carbon building materials (including stabilized soil blocks and rammed earth, among others, alternative roofing systems, masonry of vaults and domes, Bi-PV, and climate responsive architecture. See brochure for further details:

Happy Saraswati Puja from the AVEI team!
AVEI Training Course Schedule for 2019

February
25th to (Mar) 11th : Bioclimatic Earth

March
11th to 16th : CSEB Design
18th to 23rd : CSEB Production
25th to 30th : CSEB Masonry

May
13th to 27th : Bioclimatic Earth

June
3rd to 8th : Ferrocement
10th to 15th : AVD Theory
17th to 22nd : AVD Masonry

July
1st to 6th : CSEB Design
8th to 13th : CSEB Production
15th to 20th : CSEB Masonry

September
2nd to 7th : CSEB Production
9th to 14th : CSEB Masonry
16th to 21st : AVD Theory
23rd to 28th : AVD Masonry

October
14th to 28th : Bioclimatic Earth

November
4th to 9th : Wind Generator

December
2nd to 7th : CSEB Intensive
9th to 14th : AVD Intensive

The first programs now being run at the fully functional Sharanam Rural Development Centre campus !!

(photo by the Sri Aurobindo Society)