
studio નક્ષબંદી
NAQSHBANDI
MONA DOCTOR-PINGEL
ARCHITECTURAL WORKS

CONTENTS

The Context - Auroville	04
About -Mona Doctor-Pingel	06
Yantra Community	08
Cottage Restaurant	12
Studio Naqshbandi	18
Temple Tree Retreat	28
Aikido Dojo	36
Deepanam School	42
PITStudio	48
CBERD	50
Cottage Showroom	52
Fish House	58
Garden Of The Unexpected	64
Sri Aurobindo Integral Life Center	70
Utsav	76
Sunderanand Co-Living	82
Published Books	88
Dreamcathing/Dream Weaving	90
Multi-Culti: Life at Studio Naqshbandi	92
Recognitions	94

*All Drawings,images, and Text credits : Interns, Architects and professinal photographers who worked with Studio Naqshbandi



THE CONTEXT - AUROVILLE

Auroville was founded in 1968 in a ceremony with youth from 124 nations and 22 Indian states putting soil together in an urn signifying Human Unity. The project of Auroville is conceived as an urban experiment to undertake the work of “evolution of consciousness” in a society that would concretely experiment with the challenges of economy, sociology, environment and culture within an urban context while seeking spiritual life.

“All men of goodwill who thirst for progress and aspire to a higher and truer life are invited to Auroville.”

From a barren plateau of red earth with a few palm trees, peanut fields, deep canyons caused by erosion over the years and no skilled labour, Auroville is today a lush green forest with enterprising local youths, whose skills in the construction industry are sought in the megapolises of India.

Currently Auroville has a population of approximately 1700 adults and 700 children. The envisaged population in 1968 was 50,000. The villages in and around Auroville have also grown in size with a population of 30,000, from which 5000 are employed in Auroville activities. The relationship with the local people and those who come from outside to make Auroville their home continues to be a complex theme, but there seems to be more that unites than divides those that reside on and around the Auroville plateau. There is a strong bond born of shared memory, endeavour and a very particular spirit of place.

The extraordinary Galaxy Master plan of Auroville, designed by French architect Roger Anger, was an inspiration for many who came in the early years and remains a symbol for Auroville even today. However the reality of the land and people constantly requires changes and modifications that make the planning of Auroville a real challenge. About forty different architects from all over the world and India practice in Auroville. Auroville remains an arena of experience and transformation at all levels of life and humanity, and this is probably the real challenge of its architecture and planning.

The Charter of Auroville

1. Auroville belongs to nobody in particular. Auroville belongs to humanity as a whole. But to live in Auroville one must be a willing servitor of the Divine Consciousness.
2. Auroville will be the place of an unending education, of constant progress, and a youth that never ages.
3. Auroville wants to be the bridge between the past and the future. Taking advantage of all the discoveries from without and from within, Auroville will boldly spring towards future realisations.
4. Auroville will be a site of material and spiritual researches for a living embodiment of an actual Human Unity.

28 February 1968, The Mother

Mona Doctor-Pingel

born in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, studied architecture at the Centre for Environment Planning & Technology (CEPT), Ahmedabad, and later got a master's degree in Appropriate Technology from Flensburg University, Germany, with a DAAD scholarship. She is practicing and living in Auroville since 1990. Her Studio Naqshbandi offers a personalized approach to holistic solutions for architecture, interiors and landscapes – stressing on research in the fields of Baubiology (Building Biology) and activating the five senses through architecture.

We aspire to bring
simplicity and beauty without being austere;
rich in details without being ostentatious;
sensorial without being overpowering.



YANTRA COMMUNITY

Auroville, India 1995-2002

A community in the Industrial Zone of Auroville integrating workshops and Residences, set out with guding principles of Baubiologie (Building Biology). Creating a landscape of vaults and domes, while respecting the existing landscape.

Site Area	**4500 sq.m**
Built up Area	**600 sq.m**





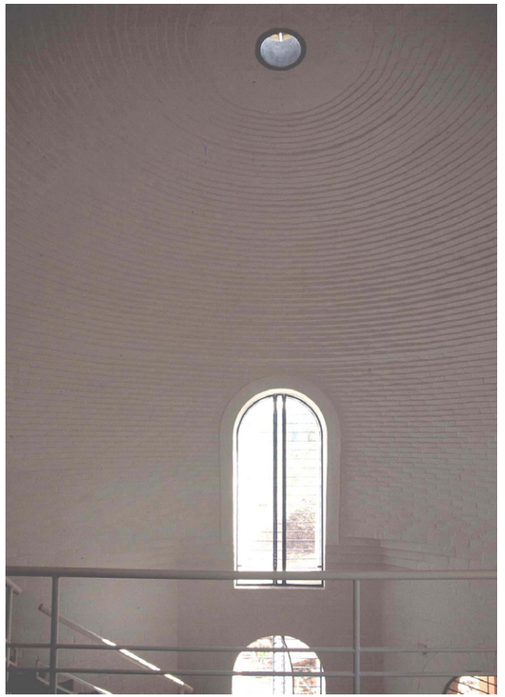
Use of **Arches, Vaults and Domes** as the primary language for all buildings



Landscape has been integrated in the design, with the use of waste and Recylce ed material



Exposed **CSEB and fired bricks** as primary materials



Interior of the **dome** with skylight



2024 (Harini's House) - White Painted and plastered

COTTAGE RESTAURANT

Pondicherry, India 2009

Cottage Restaurant was designed and built for the Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust. The restaurant enjoys a prime location on the street facing the main canal that once divided the French quarter and the Tamil quarter.

It caters food (savouries & sweets) with a seating capacity of approximately 150 customers.

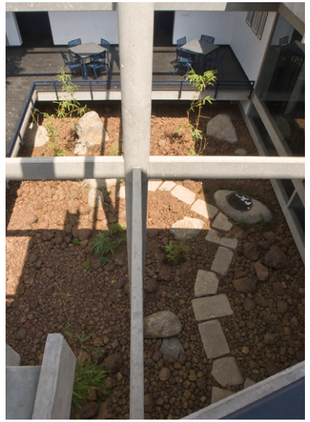
Site Area	**320 sq.m**
Built up Area	**600 sq.m**







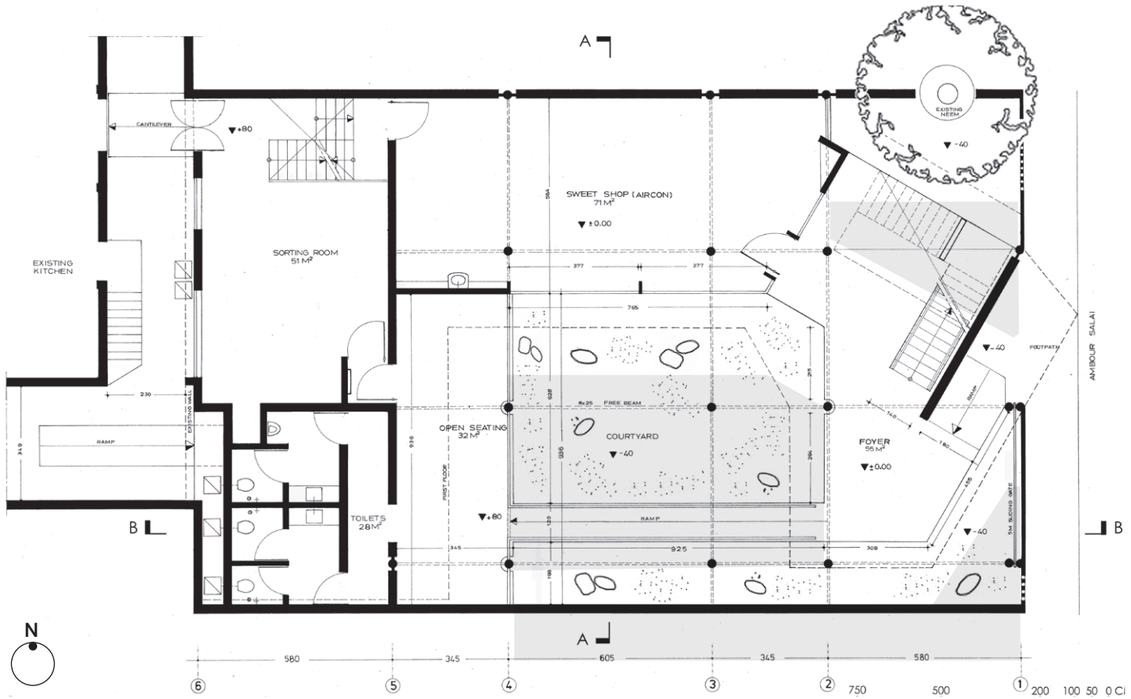
Use of Exposed Concrete elements and Black Unpolished kaddapa Flooring with white plastered walls.







Along with the central courtyard, it also features open to sky pockets of landscape with pebbles, boulders and yellow Bamboo



The Planning incorporates principle of Golden Ratio and Vaastu



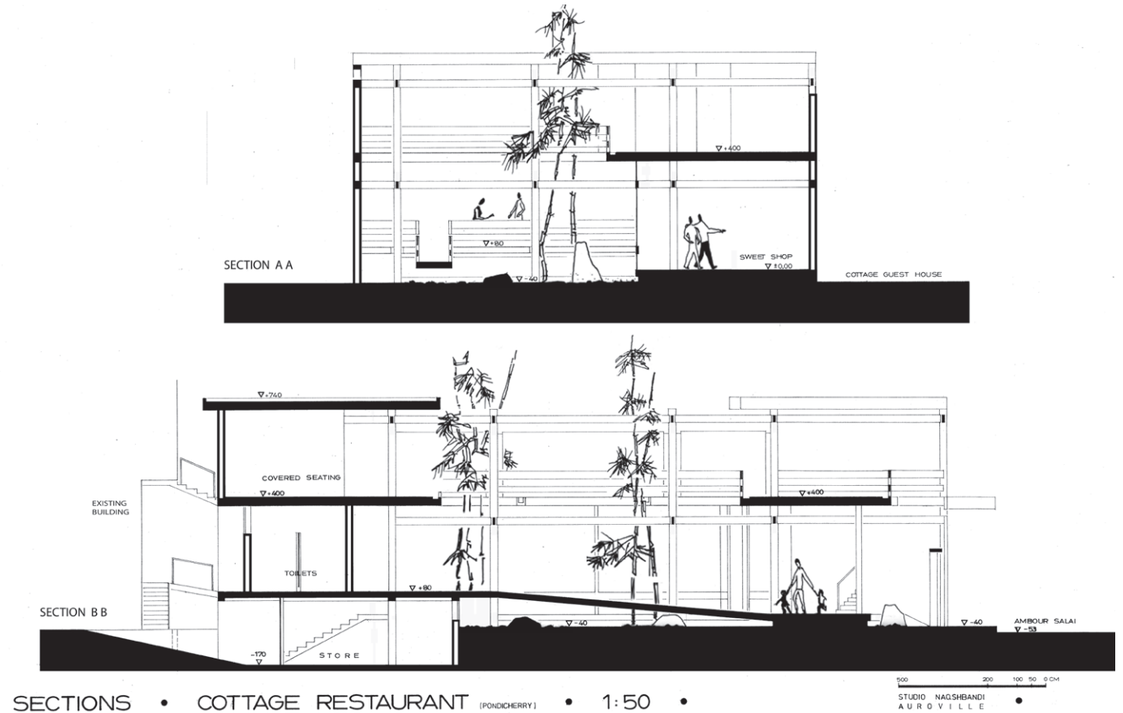
Courtyard View



Terrace seating



Street View of the Restaurant



STUDIO NAQSHBANDI + Extension

Auroville, India

2008 & 2018

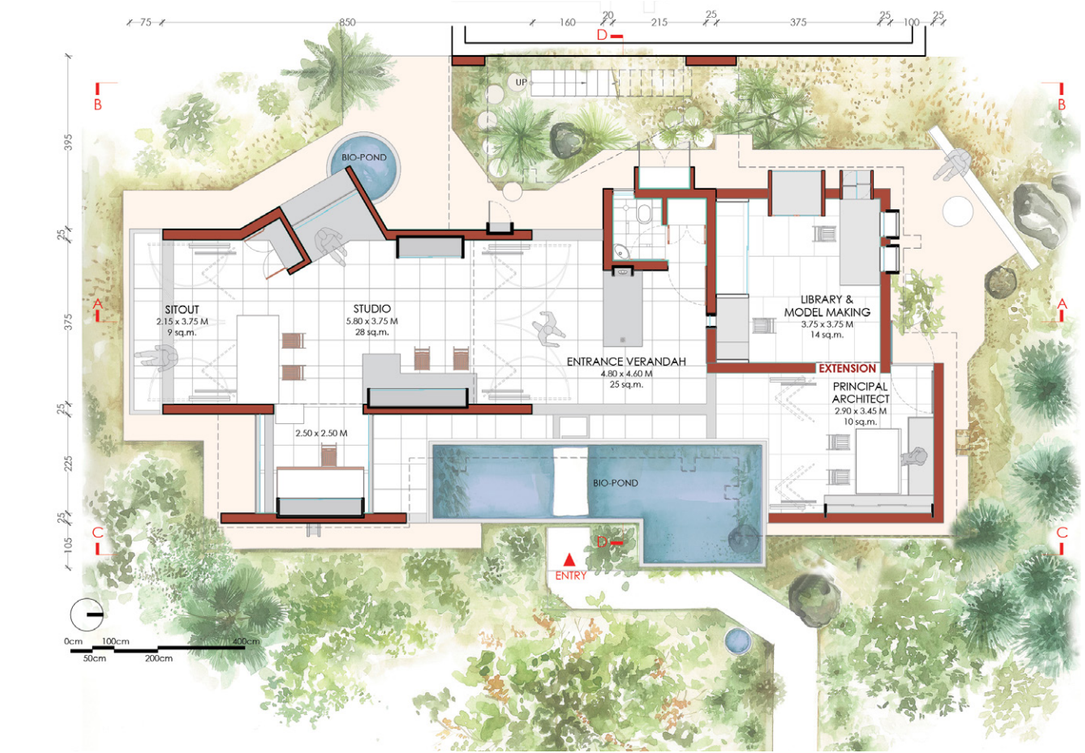
The studio is located within the community of 'Yantra', a glimpse of the workspace is enough to justify it as a Temple for Working.

The studio rooted in the essence and philosophy of Auroville. In its design the building respects the existing contours and indigenous trees on the site.

Site Area	**485 sq.m**
Built up Area	**110 sq.m**



Semi Circular Vault for Studio Workspace



Plan of Studio Naqshbandi



Segmental Vault for Studio Extension







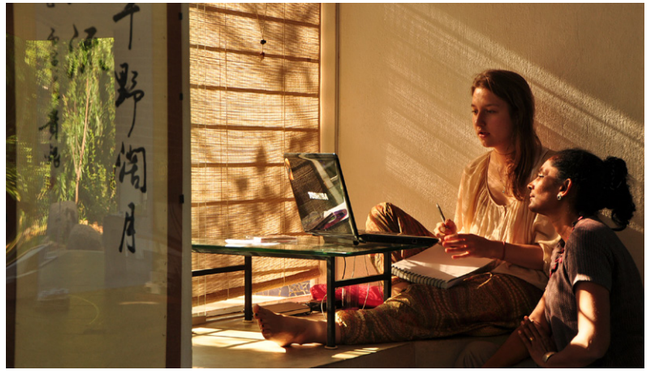


The Edible Roof garden alongside the Vault, helps in keeping the thermal comfort regulated

Reed Bed System for water treatment and Bio Pond as a Ecoligical Dishwasher

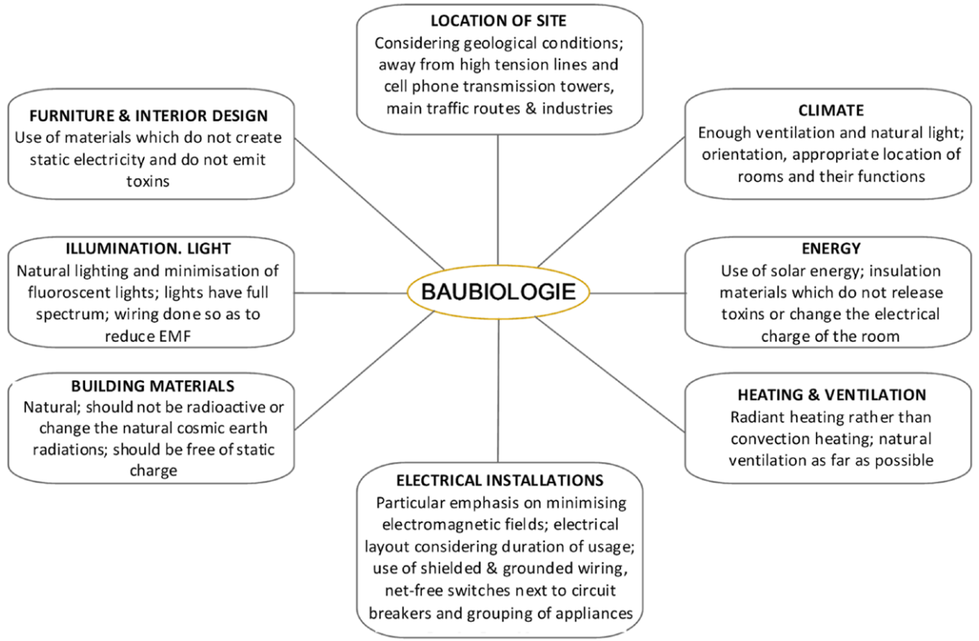












All of Studio Naqshbandi projects are concieved considering principles of Building Biology



TEMPLE TREE RETREAT

Near Auroville, India 2011 onwards

Temple Tree Resort is a boutique resort and spa nestled within the forested outskirts of Auroville, it offers various luxuries like dining-lounge area overlooking a bio-pond, wheelchair accessible rooms around a courtyard, a state-of-the-art wellness centre, a Watsu Pool for aquatic therapy and an outdoor swimming pool set amidst nature.

Site Area	**5200 sq.m**
Built up Area	**Approx 2500 sq.m**





Site Masterplan





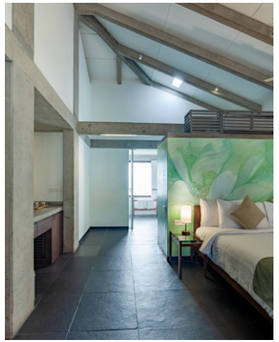






Insulated tiled roof assembly with precast rafters, thermocol, bison board and GI sheets; The overall planning creates a playof landscape along the built with its vegetation and water features.







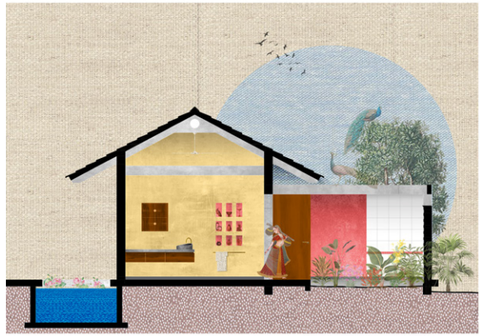


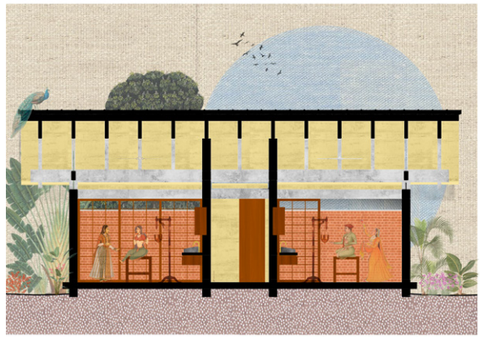
Interior Views of the cottages - Each cottage was designed on a theme based on flowers of Auroville; Hollow Terracotta Blocks were used for the walls and Black Cuddapah for floors.

Along with indegenous plants and shurbs twice the amount of teak and sandalwood has been planted than it is used in the buildings.



Miniature Section





Massage Room 1 and 2 Sections



Aquatic Therepy Pool - Addition 2023



Swimming Pool - Addition 2023

AIKIDO DOJO

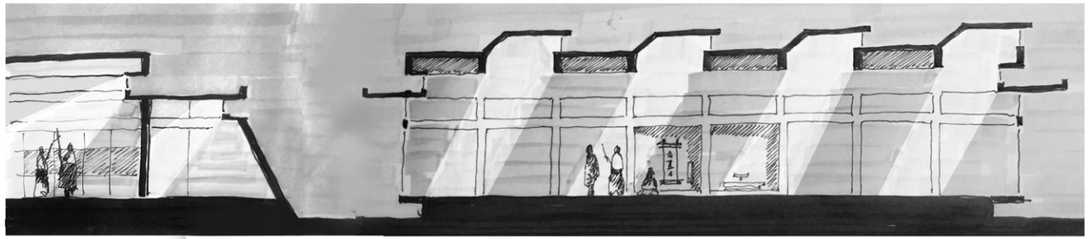
Auroville, India 2015

Budokan Martial Art Dojo located in Dehashakti sports complex, was commissioned by Sri Aurobindo Institute for Integral Education and Research (SAIIER). The Dojo is designed for all kinds of Martial arts, primary one being Aikido, for adults and children classes.

The design of furniture for the changing rooms, reception and specialized needs like the weapon's rack, shinden frames, sliding doors and window grills were also executed

Site Area	**600 sq.m**
Built up Area	**380 sq.m**

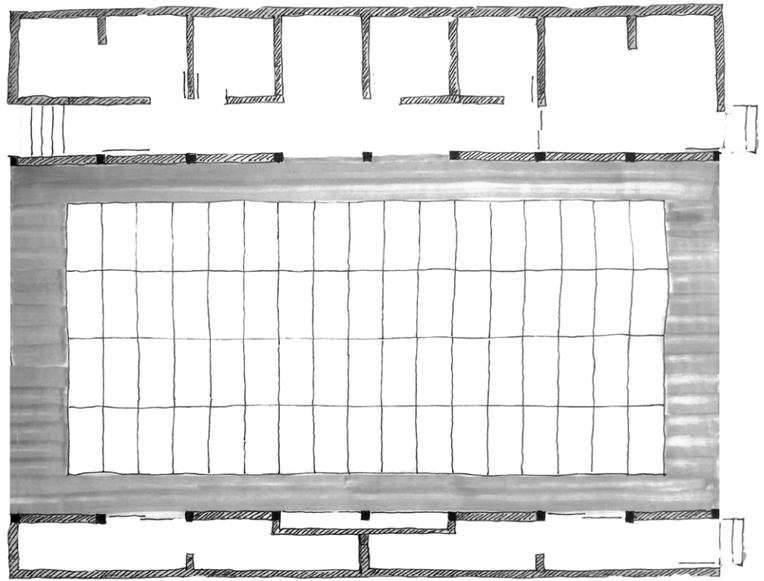




Schematic Section of the Dojo showing the clearstory windws and play of light



All the other ancilary spaces were planned around the central main hall, where the hall was designed to be naturally ventilated with the help of the hot air extraction at the roof level.



Schematic Plan of the Dojo



Interior View of the Dojo











Exposed Brick and Concrete elements were used along with black rough tandoor and bamboo flooring

DEEPANAM SCHOOL

Auroville, India 2008-12

Studio Naqshbandi was invited to improvise the existing infrastructure of Deepanam in 2007. With approximately 30 students at that time, it was a budding school with very little budget from SAIIER (Sri Aurobindo International Institute of Education and Research), the main financial and administrative branch in Auroville.

Working closely with the teachers, taking down their requirements systematically and created a five-year plan to grow incrementally.

Site Area	**Approx 3 acres**
Built up Area	**Approx 400 sq.m**





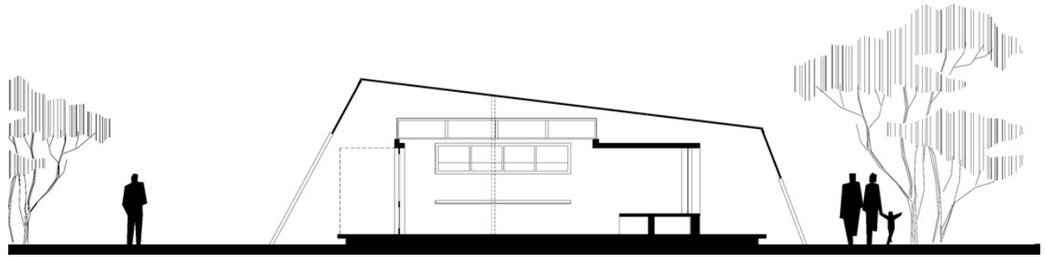
Site Study Model



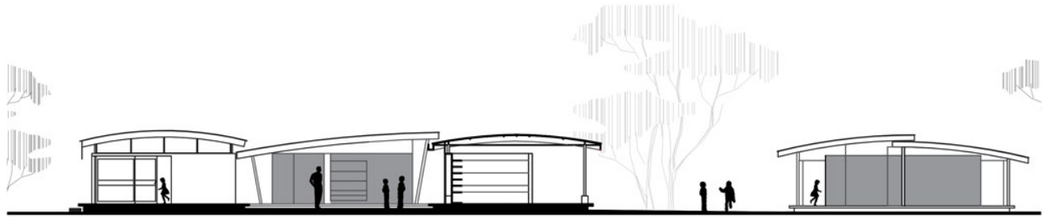
Clay Room



Courtyard View between clay room, craft room, and paint workshop



Staff room



Paint workshop Craft room Clay room Toilets





Angular GI sheet roofing to maximize light and ventilation



Toilet Block



Low Budget Project with Govt Grants



Open Class Layout with minmum wallls



Paint Workshop Exterior view

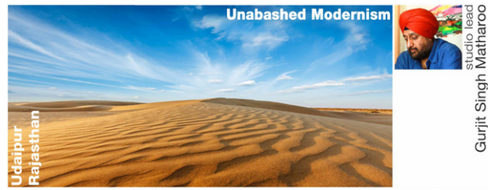
PITStudio

Pan India Travel Studio

Pan India Travel Studio PITStudio

PIT Studio aims at providing innovative architectural design training outside the formal institutions, by bringing together eminent professionals and committed students. They travel to mentor's work place, in varying geographical contexts, and become active participants in their methodology.













CBERD

Center of Building Energy and Research and Development



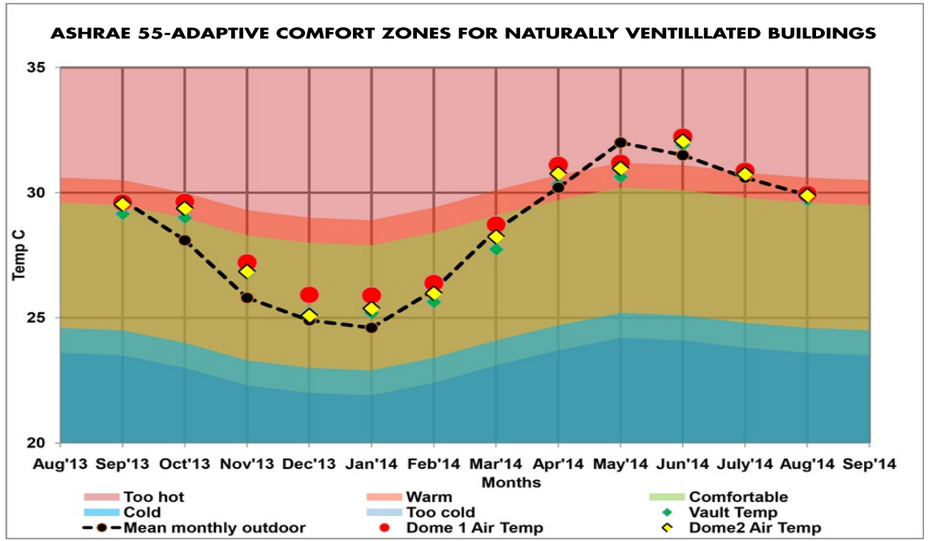
The Indo-US Joint Center for Building Energy Research and Development (CBERD)

U.S - INDIA Partnership to advance clean energy (PACE - R)

5 Years Indo-US joint research
in
ENERGY EFFICIENCY OF BUILDINGS









COTTAGE SHOWROOM

Auroville, India 2019

Cottage Showroom was designed and built for the Udyog trust of Sri Aurobindo Ashram. It is located in Pondicherry, on a corner plot on the main canal street.

The clients came to us to renovate a small existing showroom in this busy street. We encouraged the clients to relocate the building to a corner plot replacing the existing toilet blocks, to increase footfall and sales and also modernise the showroom.

Site Area	**110 sq.m**
Built up Area	**205 sq.m**





Cottage Showroom Street Elevation - RCC framed structure with transparent facade on three sides



Has a mechanical pulley system for steel grills

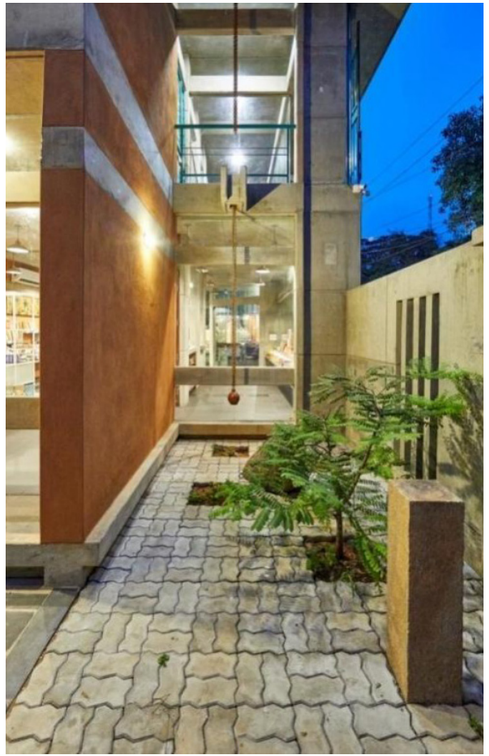




Cottage Showroom Ground Floor Plan and Elevation









FISH HOUSE 2015-19

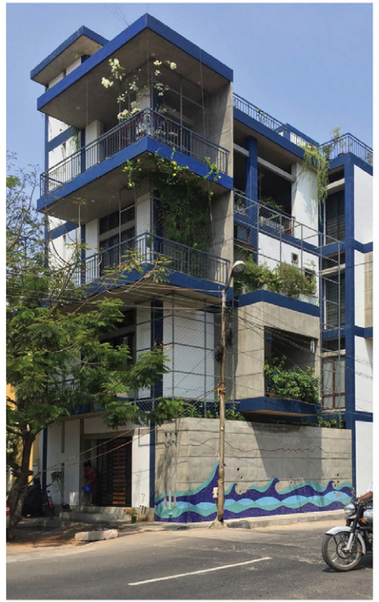
Pondicherry, India

Situated on a small corner plot of 7.5 x 12.5 metres, at the cross road of Muthumariamman kovil street and the ambour salai, a busy prominent street in Pondicherry.

The name derived from the fact that opposite the site is a local fish market and the client's liking for aquariums. The design had to combat the smell of fish, the menace of crows, noise and dust from the adjacent Canal Street.

Site Area	**93 sq.m**
Built up Area	**388 sq.m**

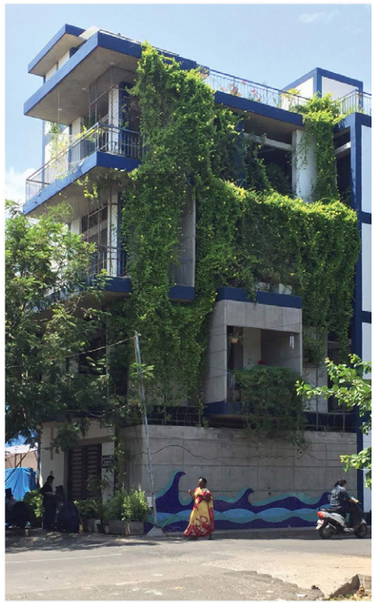




February 2019



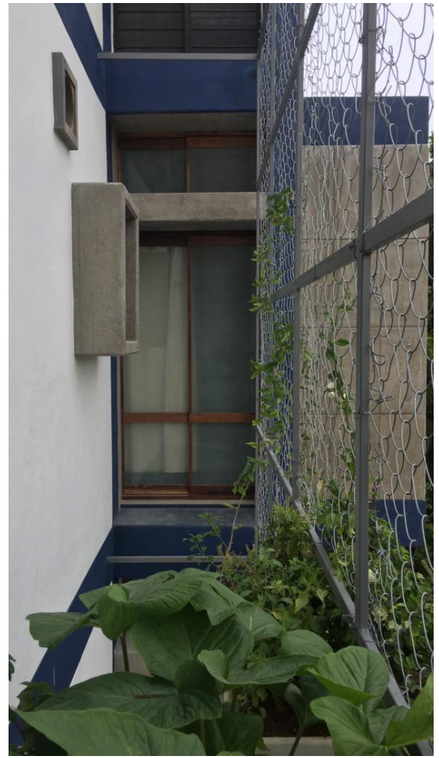
March 2020



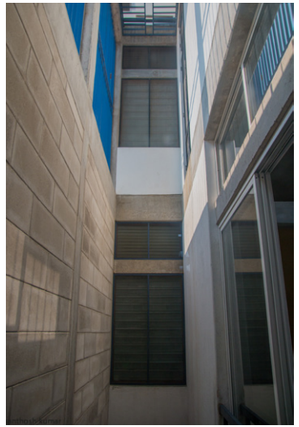
September 2020



Conceptual Section for the residiance

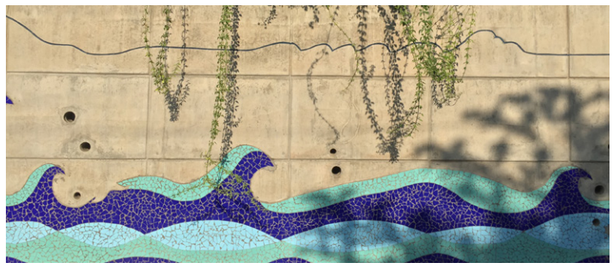


Green Wall Facade











Exposed RCC structure with brick infill and Aerocon blocks for courtyard wall and china Mosaic design for the boundry wall. The hosue also features an internal open to sky courtyard, Bio pond and energy efficiant fixtures



Volumnetric elevation and the green wall





All the spaces are designed to be Naturaly Ventilated

Studio Naqshbandi, Auroville

GARDEN OF THE UNEXPECTED

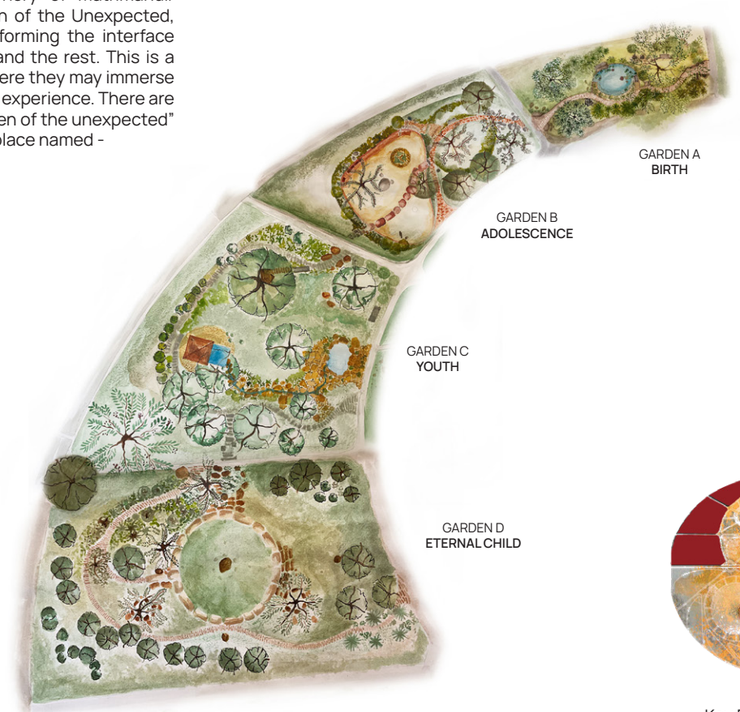
Matri Mandir, Auroville 2018-22

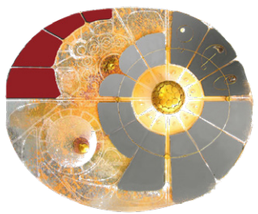
On 2 June 2018, Matrimandir announced an international open design event inviting design proposals for the Garden of the Unexpected. After various rounds of expert and community juries and feedbacks, our team the unexpected four was selected to manifest the garden, while integrating the compelling elements from the other top 2 entires with the process of dreamweaving.

Site Area **2 Acres**



Situated in the periphery of Matrimandir premises is the Garden of the Unexpected, a garden for children forming the interface between Matrimandir and the rest. This is a garden for children, where they may immerse themselves in a unique experience. There are 4 sections in the "Garden of the unexpected" reflecting the spirit of place named -





Key Plan - Matri Mandir



Used Natural Tree and plant species



Garden of Birth - bio pool with lilies, fishes and other vegetation



Garden of youthfullness -reflecting pool as a ending of the stream



Monsoon pavilion supported by 4 mirror polished black granite pillars and timber structure and copper roof.





Garden of adolescence: Laterite boulders as stepping stones, red sandstone coping, kadappa, laterite and sand stone paving





Studio Naqshbandi, Auroville

SRI AUROBINDO INTEGRAL LIFE CENTER

Surat, Gujrat

2023

The Sri Aurobindo Integral Learning Centre (SAILC) in Surat dedicated to Sri Aurobindo – his vision and thought – aspires to be a global hub for the youth to study and research on his philosophy and work. The building invites one on a journey of discovery with its beguiling simplicity and layered experience.

Site Area	**9200 sq.m**
Built up Area	**2800 sq.m**







Design shapes through open to sky courtyards providing a sensory experinece



Uses Exposed Brick and Concrete as Primary Materials







Bio pond with extensive landscape around with the design of Naturally Ventilated spaces maintains thermal comfort and sustainablity



The interplay between indoors and outdoors is pivotal in the design of SAILC. The landscape interweaving the built form in the form of courtyards, harvesting lakes, planted trees, green roofs and bio-ponds help create a surrel world within.

Studio Naqshbandi, Auroville

UTSAV
Auroville

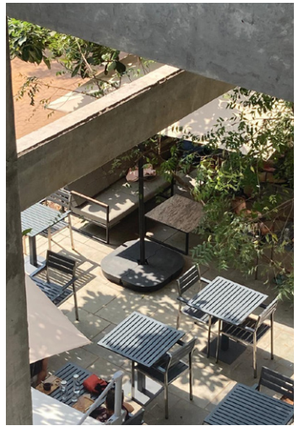
2023

UTSAV : An Urban Intervention – It is located on a prime spot on one of the main radials in the industrial zone of Auroville. It is a multi-use project which is planned to cater to start-ups, offices, cafes, commercial units, retail and residential spaces.

it allows for a variety of new activities and brings life to the area during day and night. The key idea is to be affordable, accessible and allow for climate comfort

Site Area	**2303 sq.m**
Built up Area	**900 sq.m**







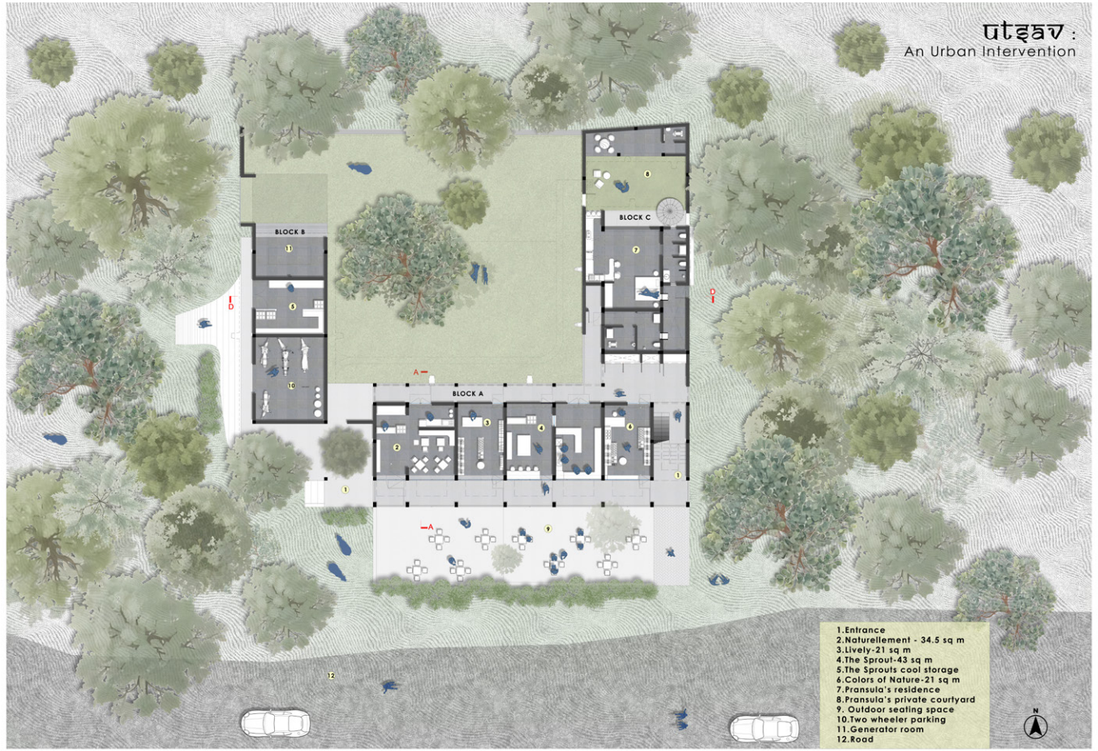






Amenities and spaces like covered parking space, a large internal courtyard, well-ventilated common toilets, drinking water points, waste water treatment plant, provision for solar PV and air-conditioning, etc all well thought out and integrated into the planning











The current plan has commercial unit and cafes in the ground floor and office spaces in the first floor. Residences are spread across ground and first floor and second floor, with the use of exposed RCC in most elements.

SUNDARANAND CO-LIVING

Ahemdabad, Gujrat 2025

Sundaranand is a Co-living shelter near the university area in Ahmedabad, It is designed for a young lawyer-architect couple who approached our studio just after Covid.

Their Brief was to create a home for themselves which would also include the concept of Co-living: bringing together people from different walks of life and providing them with short term accommodation offering space for living, working and entertainment creating a social milieu for conversation across topics.

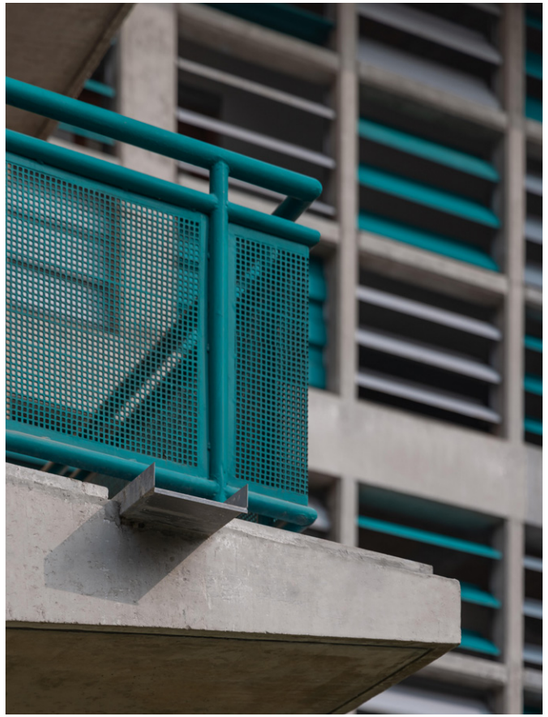
In short, a modern and modified version of a Dharamshala!

Site Area	**350 sq.m**
Built up Area	**700 sq.m**





The Design allows the ground floor to be a more public space with basement courtyards, bio ponds and more open planning.







Louvered Openings on the south Facade; The Thermal strategies not only contribute to the comfort but also add up to the quality of spaces;





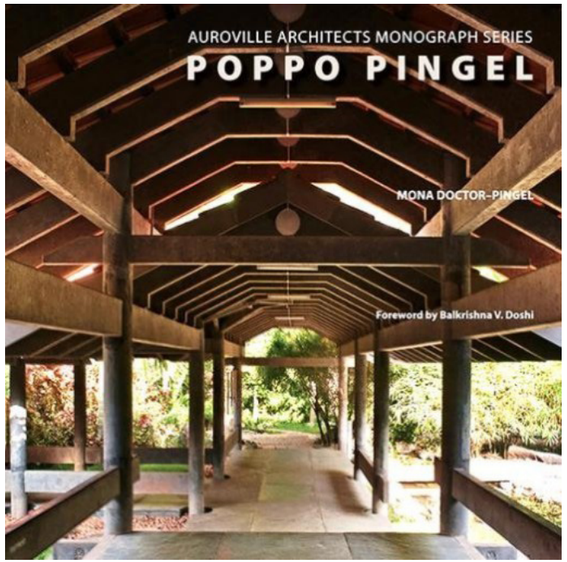


Jack Arch Roofs along with composite walls of CSEB and AAC blocks for thermal mass, along with in-situ ferrocement furnitures

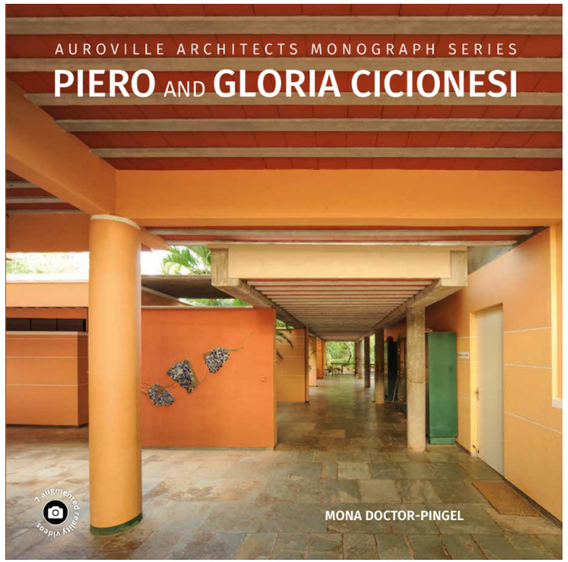


The building completly relies on natural ventilation and accounts for zero use of any air-conditioning throughout the year

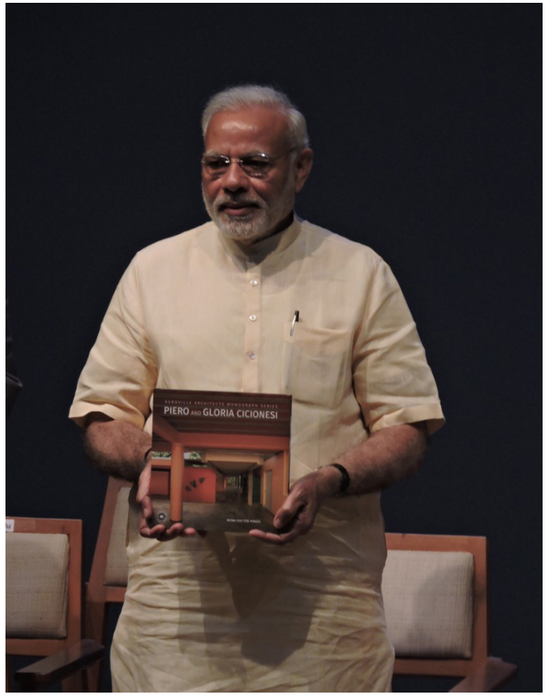
Published Books
Aurovile Architects Monograph Series



Poppo Pingel - 2012



Piero and Gloria Cicionesi - 2018



Book Launch 2018, Bharat Niwas, Auroville





Book Launch 2012_CEPT, Ahemdabad

DREAM CATCHING
- a forum for openness, spontaneity, vision & joy with no time limit - a fluid process.

Core Group Member







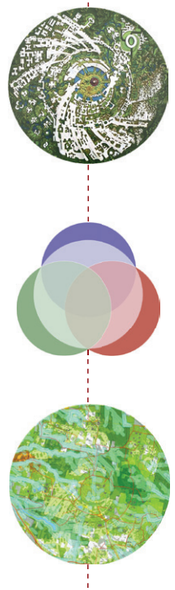
Dreamcatchers Charter

- Open to all
- Tap the potential collective wisdom
- Without censorship ideas are “copylefted”
- Raise the level of internal dialogue.
- Process oriented collective space.
- Inspiration flows at its own pace.
- A forum for openness, spontaneity, vision and joy.

From 2005-2009 the Dreamcatchers (over 100 contributors) explored many concepts for collaborative planning in AV – Dreamcatching, Dreamweaving, Dream Spaces, Dream Boxes, Design Café.

DREAM WEAVING
- a structured process to weave together inputs from different architects; finding the highest common potential through a collective approach. (Mona was a core member of the process)

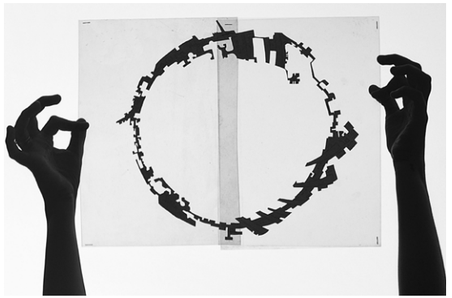
The Auroville Crown 2022-23











Architects continue to work on designs - 'copying as much as they can' from the others and present final designs and then decide which design they like best - usually one which has 'woven' many of the best ideas!

Multi-Culti
Life at Studio Naqshbandi

















RECOGNITIONS
Studio Naqshbandi

AWARDS

2024 **Winner**, Wade Asia Awards 2024, Category: Fascinating Facades

2024 **Winner**, Commendation Prize IIID Women's Design Day Awards IIID Women's Day Design Awards, Fish House, Garden of Unexpected

2024 **Winner**, Indian Institute of Architects (IIA), Category: Women Architect in the Forefront: Projects: IIA Awards, Cottage Showroom

2024 **Winner**, Indian Institute of Architects (IIA), Category: Mercantile Showroom: Awards, Cottage

2022 **Commendation award**, Centre for Development of Stones (CDOS), Category: Landscape, Garden of the Unexpected

2022 **Honourable Mention**, Archdais Interior Design Awards, Category: Residential, Mukuduvidu

2020 **Special Recommendation**, Landscape Planning & Design, S K Sharma HUDCO Design Awards, Garden of the Unexpected

2018 **Runner-Up**, Educational Architecture Category, WADe India Excellence Awards, Aikido-Dojo

2018 **Runner-Up** Landscape, WADe India Excellence Awards, Temple Tree Retreat

2004 **Special Mention**, Landscape Design Award, Architecture + Design (A+D) and Spectrum Foundation Architecture Award, Yantra Community, Wade Asia Awards, Cottage Showroom

FEATURED IN

BOOKS

2017 WOMEN ARCHITECTS AND MODERNISM IN INDIA, Madhavi Desai

2011 CONTEMPORARY RESIDENCE, More Contemporary Indian Houses, Nihya S & Kiran V

FEATURED IN

EXHIBITIONS

2023 SAMATVA - SHAPING THE BUILT - Exhibition honoring the work of 80 women architects as part of the BIENNALE 23, at RED FORT, New Delhi. London Biennale

2015 SAP Chennai, Geothe Institute, Auroville Festival in Chennai. Curated by photographer Jenner Zimmermann with Cultural Center Of Prenzlau, Berlin

2014 Architecture in Auroville - Works of Poppo Pingel and Mona Doctor Pingel. Exhibited in the cultural centre and museum at the Dominican monastery, Prenzlau, Germany.

MAGAZINE ARTICLES

2026 DWELL, USA (Nov/Dec) Transient Joy; Sunderanand, Ahm, by Rupal Rathore

2026 SHAKTI50: Women-Led Practices Shaping New India by The Architects Diary.

2025 Sri Aurobindo integral life centre (SAILC), Surat by Ar. Mona Doctor-Pingel.

2024 SURFACE REPORTER; Wade Asia Awards

2024 Garden of the Unexpected: Surprises for the senses and the spirit, Auroville, Author- Elmar Schenkel. Published by the Hugo Kükelhaus Gesellschaft e.V. Soest, Germany 2024

2024 SURFACES - The Wade asia special edition. Wiinner, Category: Fascinating dacade Wade Asia Awards

2024 Sri Aurobindo integral life centre, Surat, - RIBA, London See article (Digital, Publication)

2021 cleanEARTH- India Pavilion, A Temple of Working.

2019 Interview by Kavya Kalyan, MSc Urbanism, TU Delft With Mona Doctor-Pingel, Architect, Studio Naqshbandi. ATLANTIS Magazine by Polis, Platform for Urbanism and Landscape Architecture, Faculty of Architecture, TU Delft, Netherlands Volume 29, Issue 2.

2024 Winner, Wade Asia Awards 2024, Category: Fascinating Facades

2024 Winner, Commendation Prize IIID Women's Design Day Awards IIID Women's Day Design Awards, Fish House, Garden of Unexpected



Studio Naqshbandi I Yantra, Irumbai p.o, Auroville (605111), Tamil Nadu, India I
studionaqshbandi@gmail.com