

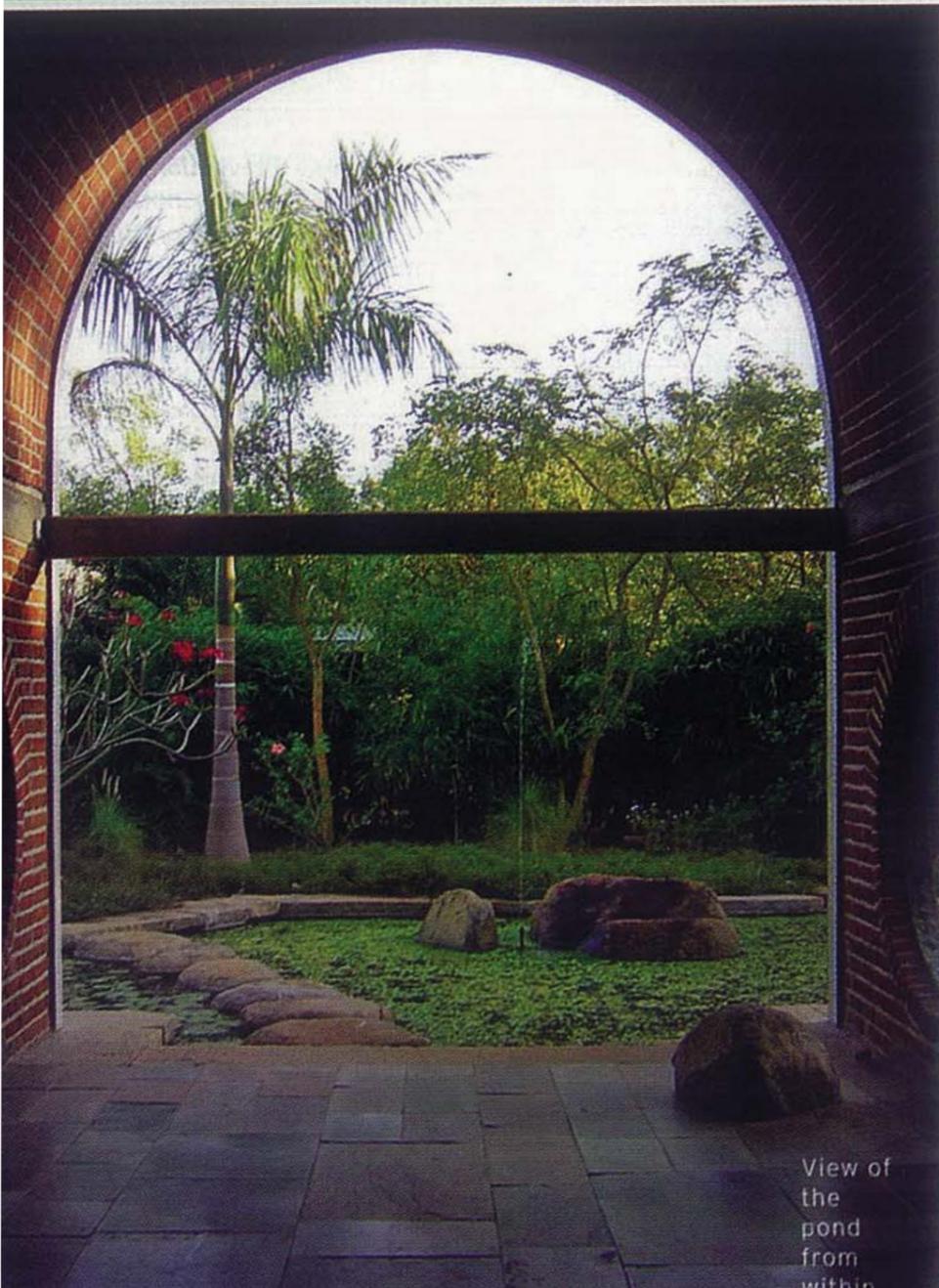
# EARTH TALKS

WHEN MONA DOCTOR-PINGEL WAS APPOINTED ARCHITECT FOR YANTRA, A COMMUNITY IN AUROVILLE, she ensured that the landscape would be integrated into the design from the beginning. Moreover, this space with its evergreens needed minimal water or upkeep

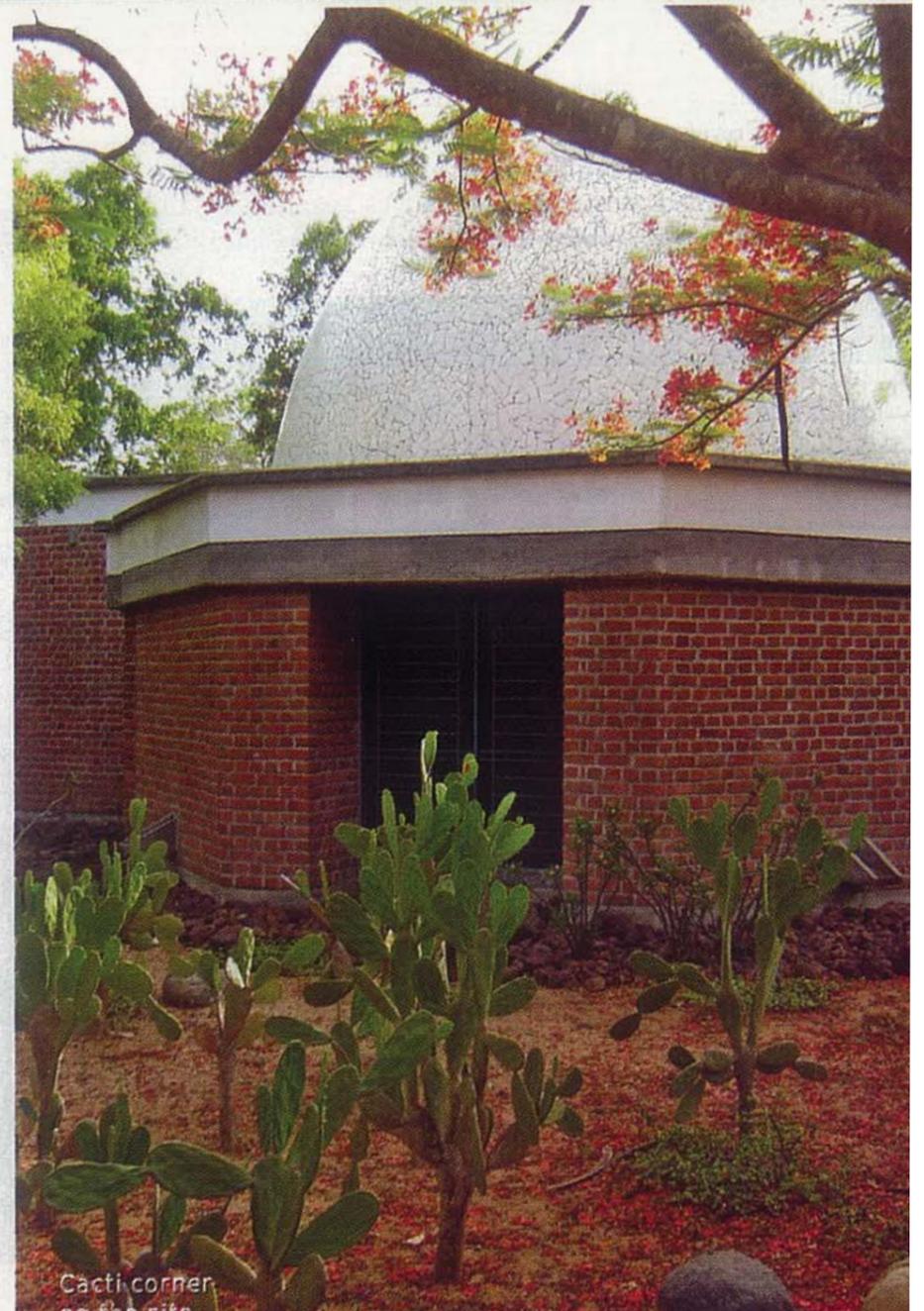
**Y**antra is one of the many communities within Auroville, the international township near Puducherry. Each community displays its own characteristics, in terms of style, size, levels of interaction and co-existence between inhabitants. Mona Doctor-Pingel of Studio Naqshbandi evolved the landscape design of Yantra from the architectural repertoire of vaults and domes found in the building structures.

When work began, the 4,500 sq m plot was replete with evergreen trees such as rosewood, ebony, teak, neem, palmyra and pipal, planted almost five years before. The site slopes towards a 4m-deep canyon, at a slant of about 1.5 metres, which proved to be a challenge in terms of planning. Since the city braves harsh summers through much of the year and drought is an unfortunate reality, the community is coping with the elements by using eco-friendly options.

Locally-available laterite rocks, granite boulders and slabs are used as landscaping accents while these also act as landmarks.



View of the pond from within



Cacti corner on the site