

ANNEXURE 4.1
Helping out in the construction

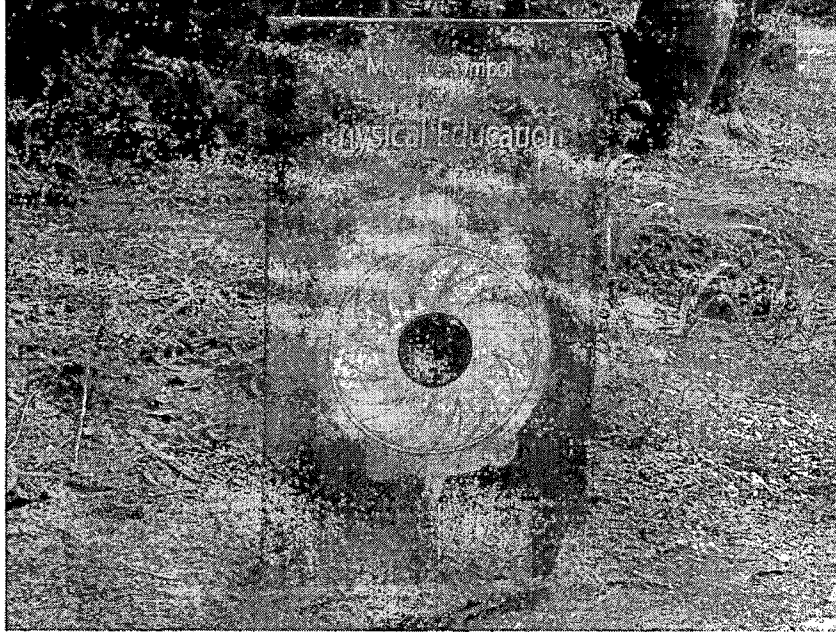


ANNEXURE 4.2
The Spiritual Map of India



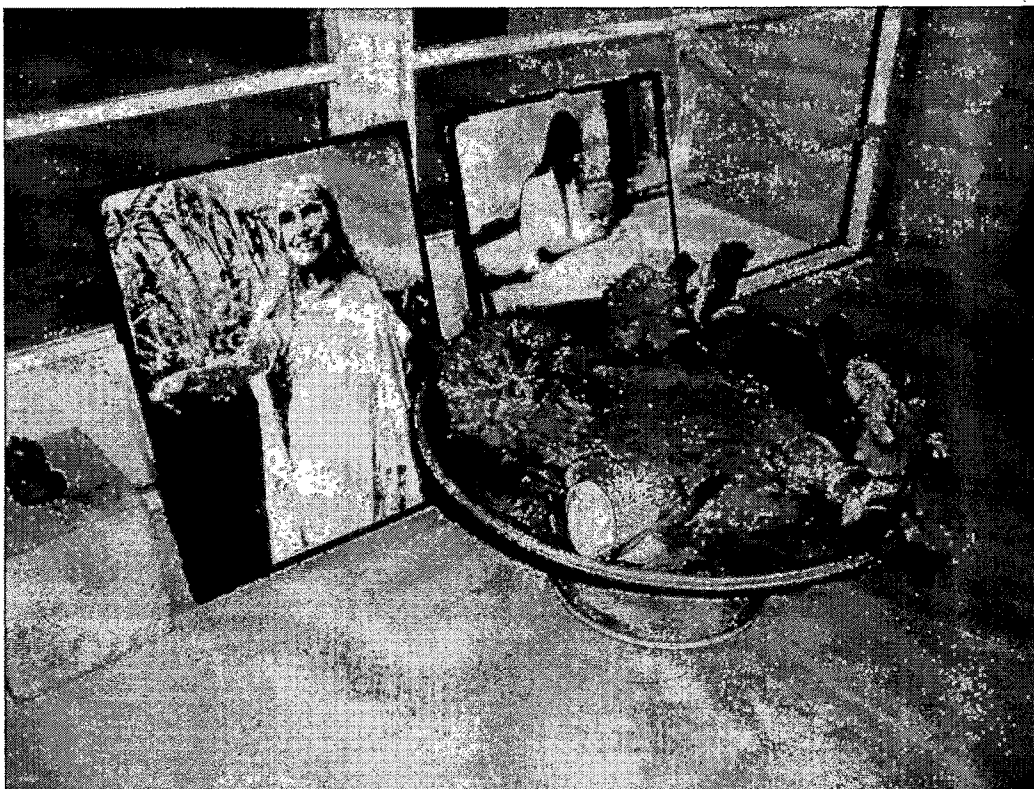
ANNEXURE 4.3

Symbol of the Physical Education given by the Mother



At Dehashakti Sports Ground

ANNEXURE 4.4
Displaying Photographs of the Masters



Small *Ganesha* idol on display

ANNEXURE 4.5
Declaration of the Ministry for SAICE

N° 6/3/68 - Ests (D)
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

New Delhi - 1, the 16th April, 1969
26 Chaitra, 1891

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: Recognition of Higher Secondary Course of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education, Pondicherry, as equivalent to Higher Secondary Examination of a recognised University or Board for purposes of employment under the Central Government.

The undersigned is directed to say that the Government of India have decided, in consultation with the Union Public Service Commission to recognise Higher Secondary Course of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education, Pondicherry, as equivalent to Higher Secondary Examination of a recognised University or Board, for purposes of employment under the Central Government.

2. In so far appointment under the I.A. and A.D. is concerned, these orders have been issued in consultation with Comptroller and Auditor General of India.

Sd./- (Harish Chandra)
UNDER SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Authorised for issue
Sd/ (S.L. Sehgal)
Section Officer

To
All Ministries of the Government of India etc. (including all Attached and Subordinate Offices under the Ministry of Home Affairs, Commissioner for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes, Commissioner for Linguistic Minority Affairs, and Zonal Council.)
2. Union Territory Governments/Administrations.
3. All Sections of Ministry of Home Affairs.

1. Copy forwarded for information to the Secretary, Union Public Service Commission (10 spare copies) with reference to their letter No.F.1/10/68-RR dated 1.8.1968.
2. The Comptroller and Auditor General of India with reference to their U.O. No. 418-NGE II 63-68 dated 13.3.1969.
3. The Press Information Officer of the Ministry of Home Affairs for giving publicity to the decision contained in the Office Memorandum.

Sd./-
(Harish Chandra)
UNDER SECRETARY TO THE GOVT. OF INDIA

Certified True Copy


Registrar,
Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education
PONDICHERRY - 605 002

REGISTRAR
SRI AUROBINDO INTERNATIONAL
CENTRE OF EDUCATION
SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM
PONDICHERRY - 605 002

ANNEXURE 4.6

Time Table of a SAICE Student

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Lundi	*	*	English (School)	Singing (Sohini)	*	Bengali (Library)	Pottery (Amba Bhikshu)
Mardi	*	French (School)	French (School)	*	Sitar (Music Room)	Maths (School)	Geography (School)
Mercredi	English (School)	*	Chemistry (Lab)	Chemistry (Lab)	*	*	Bengali (School)
Jeudi	*	English (School)	French (School)	*	*	Physics (Lab)	Physics (Lab)
Vendredi	*	*	Biology (Knowledge)	Biology (Knowledge)	*	Bengali (Library)	*
Samedi	Ecology (Lake)	Ecology (Lake)	Ecology (Lake)	*	*	*	Embroidery (An Ashram inmate's house near Atelier)

*These periods were used to study Maths in a *rendezvous* basis; i.e. the teacher and student mutually decided to meet during any of these periods as per their convenience and availability. (places where the classes were held)

The Play of Painting

For the past few years about 250 people a week, most of them children, have been participating in a research project which uses painting as a means of self-discovery. Now the Sri Aurobindo Institute for Educational Research (SAIER) has published a book by Claire Le Touzé, *Looking at Children's Paintings in a New Light* (there is also a French version) which documents this fascinating work. *Auroville Today* spoke to Claire about the project.

Sri Aurobindo and Mother were very clear about what constitutes true 'education'. "Each human being is a self-developing soul and the business of both parent and teacher is to enable and to help the child educate himself, to develop his own intellectual, moral, aesthetic and practical capacity and to grow freely as an organic being..." wrote Sri Aurobindo in *The Human Cycle*. "True education must reveal what is already present in the developing beings and make it blossom", wrote Mother.

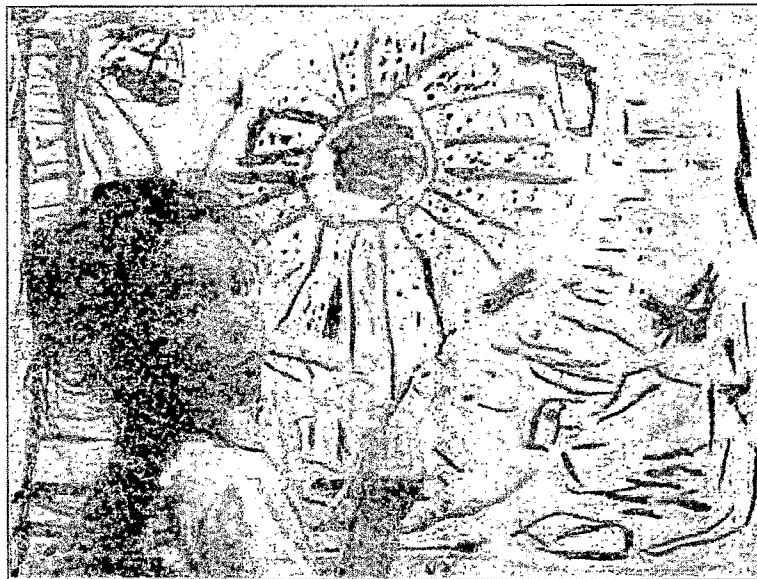
From the early days of education in Auroville, attempts have been made to put this profound approach into practice in Auroville schools. Some of the early attempts were too 'stratospheric', out of touch, with the reality of that pioneering period. Today, things are changing. In spite of the pressure of exams and alien syllabuses which vitiate the child-centred approach in some schools, more and more educational initiatives based upon the 'self-developing soul' are beginning to be widely adopted.

One example is the Awareness through the Body programme, run by Aloka and Joan. Another is The Learning Community experiment, featured in our last issue. And yet another is the 'Play of Painting', which uses painting as a means of self-discovery and expression.

Claire who, along with Sandrine and Nathalie, comprises the core team, had been teaching painting to children for many years. One of the things she noticed was that when children were free to choose their own subjects, certain images and figures recurred. She couldn't understand why this happened or what they meant until, in 2003, she met Petrouchka who recognised these images as signs of 'The Formulation'.

The Formulation

'The Formulation' is a set of universal patterns in children's paintings discovered by Arno Stern. Stern, who was self-educated, discovered through 50 years of work with



Mahana painting

The archaic manifestations or first traces made by a little child are not, Stern emphasised, clumsy or 'unfinished': "they come from the organic memory of the child." He explains that the body has an 'organic' memory

of its development in the womb and is expressing it through these figures. The next stage, the 'primary figures', is also born out of an inner necessity. Later, the child notices a similarity between these figures and certain objects in his or her environment. So the third phase begins with 'picture-objects', born from the intention of representing 'real' things. However, traces of the primary figures remain in the

'picture-objects'. The final phase, the 'essential figures', is reached by older children or adults. "The essential figures", explains Stern, "are a pure emanation of the organism. Through the possibility of this manifestation, the human being reaches a new dimension."



Claire at the 'table palette'

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Chandradev expressing himself

children exactly what Claire had also noted: that certain images tend to recur. What he also observed in the paintings of thousands of people of different ages, nationalities and cultures is that these recurring images tend to evolve through four phases or stages. These he labelled 'archaic manifestations', 'primary figures', 'picture-objects' and 'essential figures'.

Throughout the process, the child is free to experiment. He or she can add many sheets of paper if the child wants to make huge paintings. This freedom to discover endless possibilities in oneself also increases

self-confidence.

Play of Painting is not 'art'

"Play of Painting is not 'art'," Claire emphasises, "because there is no intention to present something to somebody else. The process of expressing the organic memory of the body is transformative. It brings great joy and a sense of expansion of the being, which Stern called 'plusêtre' ('being more')."

Claire describes her own experience in an Auroville studio. "I'd been painting since I was a child. In the first sessions of the Play of Painting I drew in my own style, but at a certain point I couldn't anymore. Something else came through me that I had never done before and it was so joyful, so liberating, like surrender to the natural flow of life. Now I feel I can be more myself and I can allow an inner guidance to manifest. So then I understood why the children are so happy and concentrated when they are doing the Play of Painting."

Conditions for organic expression

Claire stresses that this doesn't 'just happen': that Stern specified that certain conditions have to be in place for the full 'organic expression' to take place, conditions which are not yet completely fulfilled in the Auroville ateliers. "The three essential conditions are a fully trained practitioner who can recognize the universal signs and different stages of The Formulation; a closed space where outside influences are eliminated or minimised, with the 'table-palette' (a long table on which 18 different paint colours are arranged) at the centre; and a group of people of mixed ages." Why the mixture? "The group dynamic is very important. The small children who are doing the archaic figures or primary figures pour them out naturally, and this gives a lot of inspiration to the older ones who may be a little more blocked. On the other hand, the older children and adults will be much more skilled on the technical side and this will be a very good example for the small ones."

What, then, is the role of the trained practitioner or 'guide', as Claire terms it, in this process? The guide's essential role is to support in every way the child's inner and outer explorations, as a servant. The guide knows the Formulation and is careful not to judge the child's work in any way. A negative statement can make

the child fearful of failure, but even praise is to be avoided as this may cause the child to try to please rather than to 'be' herself. For the same reason, the child's work is not put on public display or taken home. Instead, the guide will keep all of it in a special folder for research and archives.

The role of the parents

The guide's role is also to reassure the parents, "opening a small secret door and introducing a new way of 'seeing' in order for them to



Nathalie (right) and student at work

become respectful accomplices." So, once a year, the parents are invited to see their child's paintings without the child being present, but only with the child's permission if he or she is more than seven years old. Many parents are astonished by what they see.

Stern emphasised that the Play of Painting is not a therapy, but that it can prevent the need for therapy later in life. But how does this work relate to the larger purpose of Auroville? "In two ways," says Claire. "Firstly, through the Play of Painting the children begin to feel that behind all the outer differences there is the same inner being; that they belong together because these universal signs appear in everybody's work. So they are more willing to accept the other as he or she is. At the same time, they find their own unique way of being. For example, one child may be very precise and take a lot of time to do one painting, while another child may complete 4-5 paintings in one session."

So these workshops are mini-laboratories where the children experience weekly this balance between the individual and the collective without rivalry and competition. These are very powerful ways of living our ideals of human unity and unity in diversity.

"Moreover, in Auroville freedom and joy are considered the two necessary elements not only for individual growth but also for the development of a collective consciousness leading to 'effective human unity'. And freedom and joy are the essence of these workshops."

Future research

Claire's research project, which was funded by the Sri Aurobindo Institute of Educational Research, has now concluded with the publication of the book. What are her plans? "It's not yet clear where our funding will come from in the future. But my wish is to be able to continue to offer this service free to Aurovillian children and adults. We have three ateliers now, at the Kindergarten, Nanduram and Udavi School. For the first time in the history of the Play of Painting a building has been designed specifically for that purpose by Nathalie and Francois in Udavi School and this is three-quarters completed."

"My work so far has been mainly with younger children - this was the focus of the research project - but now I have sessions which bring together younger and older children and adults, as Stern advises. This will be a whole new area of discovery. So, in the future, Sandrine and I would like to have a work space outside schools where everyone, adults and children, can freely come to enjoy this wonderful activity."

"The other area of research described in the book, which is different from the 'Play of Painting' as created by Arno Stern, is 'Painting through Concentration'. This was inspired by Marguerite Smithwhite, who was connected with Auroville and the Ashram for many years. Each concentration has a particular purpose in awakening and sensitizing the child to subtle aspects of its being, particularly the inner soul or 'psychic being'. Now I want to more deeply explore this part of the work."

Alan

Looking at children's paintings in a new light by Claire Le Touzé. Published by SAIER, 2009. For info: aurovillepress@auroville.org.in

For more information about the Play of Painting, see Arno Stern's website: www.arnostern.com or contact jendepeimbr@auroville.org.in