



## SATPREM MAINI

Satprem Maïni is a French architect, born in Algeria in 1959. He has an Architecture Master from the School of Architecture of Lyon, France. He lives in Auroville since 1989, where he is the director of the Auroville Earth Institute which was founded in 1989 by HUDCO, government of India. Satprem is the representative for Asia of the UNESCO Chair “*Earthen Architecture, Constructive Cultures and Sustainable Development*”. The Auroville Earth Institute is also partner of the network BASIN South Asia and various others world networks of earth builders.

Satprem has a post graduate master of Earthen Architecture from the School of Architecture of Grenoble, France. He is an occasional consultant of the United Nations and a member of CRATerre-ENSAG (the International Centre for earth construction, France). He works as an architect, builder, consultant, researcher, trainer and lecturer. People from all over the world come to Auroville to learn something from Satprem and the Auroville Earth Institute. Since 1990, Satprem and his team have trained more than 6,400 people from 66 Nations.

Since the early 1980's, his endeavour has been based on the adaptation and renaissance of traditional techniques, use of local materials, participation of individuals and the reconsideration of the role of the architect: from creator and builder to animator and psychologist. Since 1985, the endeavour to revive traditional techniques and local materials has been essentially based on using raw earth as a building material and especially compressed stabilised earth blocks (CSEB).

Since 1989, Satprem's life has been dedicated to Auroville, India and the World for the recognition of our Mother Earth, while using its matter for the sake of sustainable developments. His life is offered to the Lord and is dedicated to Karma Yoga, the work done as an offering to the Divine, for the Lord's Action upon Earth so as to unite Matter and Spirit. Today, the architectural research being conducted by Satprem integrates symbols and a holistic approach to life. He tries to link the genius of the past with recent discoveries so as to build a timeless architecture – Architecture made of light, energy and conscious matter. Since 1992, the Sanskrit name Satprem, meaning Truth and Love, replaced the birth name Serge.

Under his direction, the Auroville Earth Institute is researching, developing, promoting and transferring earth-based technologies, which are cost and energy effective. Today the research and development of the Auroville Earth Institute on architecture and technologies based on earth are disseminated worldwide through training courses, demonstration projects and consultancy. Satprem has published 33 publications and since 1985 he has worked in 30 countries to promote earthen architecture.

Satprem was granted 13 awards: in 1992, the “Hassan Fathy Award for architecture for the poor”, 11 Indian awards and in 2010 a Saudi award for the Al Medy Mosque built at Riyadh in 2004.

## KEY PROJECTS AND RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENTS

### **1989 to 2010 – Research and development on domes and vaulted structures**

R&D which seeks to optimize the structures and to build them in a “free spanning” mode” (without formwork)

### **1996 to 2010 – Research and development on disaster resistant buildings**

Technology with hollow interlocking blocks, approved by the government of Gujarat, Tamil Nadu (India) and Iran

### **2006 – Temple Sri Karneshwar Nataraja, India**

Pyramid Temple for Lord Nataraja, based on the proportion of the great pyramid, with a pointed dome

### **2004 – Al Medy Mosque at Riyadh, Saudi Arabia**

Mosque of 420 m<sup>2</sup> built in 7 weeks, minaret of 18.05 m high, “Prince Sultan Bin Salman Award for Urban Heritage” in 2010

### **1999 to 2003 – Training centre of the Auroville Earth Institute**

Research and development of various stabilised earth based technologies and vaulted structures

### **1999 – Dome of the Dhyanalinga Temple, near Coimbatore, India**

Dome de Ø 22.16 m, 570 tons built without centring in 9 weeks to cover the temple of Lord Shiva

### **1994 to 1995 – Mirramukhi School at Auroville**

School of 600 m<sup>2</sup>, with stabilised rammed earth and a vault of 10.35 m span

### **1992 to 1994 – Shakti Vihar School at Pondicherry, India**

School of 2000 m<sup>2</sup> for 700 children of low income groups, built for the NGO Volontariat

### **1991 to 1999 – Vikas Community at Auroville**

Holistic development of this community which was a finalist for the 2000 “World Habitat Award”

### **1989 to 1992 – Visitors Centre at Auroville**

Centre of 1 200 m<sup>2</sup> built with Suhasini Ayer, "Hassan Fathy Award for architecture for the poor" in 1992

### **1988 – Rural primary school at Genale, Somalia**

School built during a training course upon request of UNESCO and CRATerre/ENSAG

### **1986 – House of “24 H. of the earth” at Grenoble, France**

House of 56 m<sup>2</sup> built with the team of CRATerre/ENSAG