

# Last School

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## A VISION FOR TOMORROW

**JEAN-YVES LUNG**

We do not know what the world will be like in the next 15 or 20 years, except that it will be rich in challenges of unprecedented magnitude and complexity. However, it seems that everywhere pupils and students are trained in the continuity of the past world which will soon no longer have the means to exist.

Auroville's mission is to prepare them for a world that does not yet exist, to lead them to think outside of preconceived ideas, and to face the coming challenges creatively and cooperatively, carried by the faith that a new world is possible, provided we choose it and go for it.



FOR MILLENNIA, WE  
HAVE BEEN DEVELOPING  
OUTER MEANS, OUTER  
INSTRUMENTS, OUTER  
TECHNIQUES OF LIVING  
—AND FINALLY THOSE  
MEANS AND TECHNIQUES  
ARE CRUSHING US.

THE SIGN OF THE NEW  
HUMANITY IS A  
REVERSAL IN THE  
STANDPOINT, AND THE  
UNDERSTANDING THAT  
INNER KNOWLEDGE AND  
INNER TECHNIQUE CAN  
CHANGE THE WORLD  
AND MASTER IT  
WITHOUT CRUSHING IT.



## Towards a future

There is no existing diploma to validate this program. The surest way to prepare young people for a future full of unknown and challenges is to help them develop their personality as fully as possible so that they enter an endless development process, and to give them the habit of taking on challenges.

Artistic activities have a key role here because they put the students in a position not only to discover themselves but also to realize that they are able to concretize what they see, to be the creators of themselves and the world.

“BY YOUR STUMBLING,  
THE WORLD IS  
PERFECTED.”

ALL PROBLEMS  
OF EXISTENCE  
ARE ESSENTIALLY  
PROBLEMS OF  
HARMONY.

## A culture of synthesis

In a world where interests and values conflict, the ability to build a reconciling harmony between antagonistic points of view acquires a growing importance.

Simplistic and exclusive approaches, which create so many disorders, must be replaced by a synthetic movement where what appears antagonistic finds its complementarity.



*Last School*



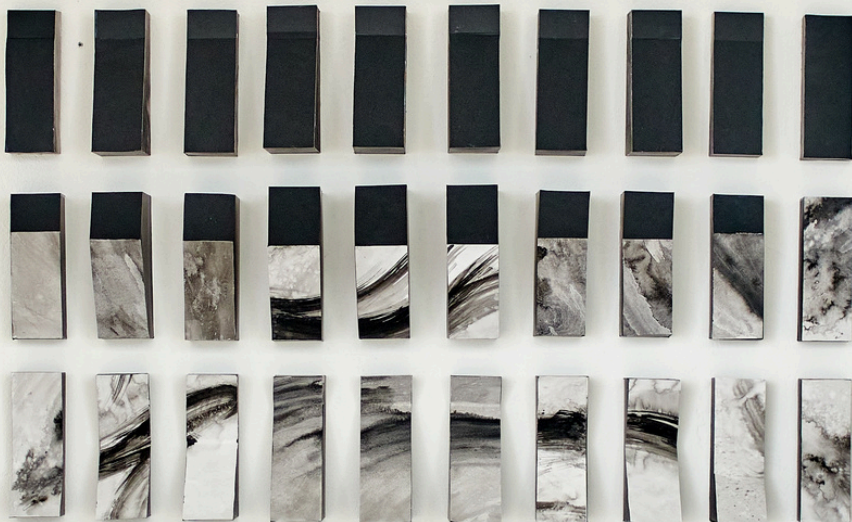
## Prepare the future

Our world will face formidable challenges in the coming decades, for which current educational programs offer no preparation. Our planet and humanity are in a situation of acute disorder created by experts of all kinds.

We need something other than these instrumental skills without inspiration, which are locally competent but without vision and overall incompetent.

What we will need more and more are men and women capable of thinking in a creative, intuitive, and synthetic way, of finding in themselves the soul force which can alone face the needs of the time, and to invent a new thought, a new life, a new world, if humanity is to survive.

*PROGRESS LIES IN WIDENING, NOT IN RESTRICTION. THERE MUST BE A BRINGING TOGETHER OF ALL POINTS OF VIEW BY PUTTING EACH ONE IN ITS TRUE PLACE, NOT AN INSISTENCE ON SOME TO THE EXCLUSION OF OTHERS. TRUE PROGRESS LIES IN THE WIDENING OF THE SPIRIT AND THE ABOLITION OF ALL LIMITS.*







IT SEEMS TO ME THAT  
PSYCHOLOGY WITH OUT  
YOGA IS LIFELESS. THE  
STUDY OF PSYCHOLOGY  
MUST NECESSARILY LEAD  
TO YOGA, AT LEAST TO  
PRACTICAL YOGA IF NOT  
THEORETICAL

The mission of education can no longer be to produce ready-made citizens for a system that cannot find solutions to the problems it has created, it is to promote the emergence of men and women capable of building themselves consciously on a truer basis, while building a new world in which they chose to live together without exclusion, around common aspirations and projects.

A PROGRESS  
GUIDED BY THE  
SOUL AND NOT  
SUBJECTED TO  
HABITS,  
CONVENTIONS  
OR  
PRECONCEIVED  
IDEAS.





# LAST SCHOOL WORKSHOPS



“OUR RESEARCH RESEARCH  
WILL NOT BE A SEARCH  
EFFECTED BY MYSTIC  
MEANS. IT IS IN LIFE  
ITSELF THAT WE WISH  
TO FIND THE DIVINE. AND  
IT IS THROUGH THIS  
DISCOVERY DISCOVERY  
THAT LIFE CAN REALLY  
BE TRANSFORMED.”

## MIND TO MATTER

**BHAVYO TRIVEDI**

*Exploration of 3D shapes & surface development*

### 2 to 3D

Created in collaboration with Bhavya, a graduate of urban design from CEPT University.

This workshop was developed to offer an intensive week of surface development as a tool to approach the creation of 3D shapes.

Introducing basic tools and techniques the week built on precise design thinking and implementation.

Collaborative works were developed in pairs and a larger collective work challenged the entire school to craft a mural, which was displayed during the term.

The participants were challenged step by step to create entirely from one large piece of chart paper without any patchwork.

The workshop taught techniques linked to surface development, cladding, cutting, pasting, design thinking, and precision in every action.

The pair and group works allowed each individual to step up and find new and innovative ways to approach the paper and test themselves to translate complex shapes into 3D.

The level of work produced by the youth matched that of university level students.



# THINKING IN SHAPES

**BHAVYA TRIVEDI**

## Joys of design

My time at university introduced me to the enticing world of design.

Whereas my study focus was on urban design, cities and the basics of town planning, I learnt skills ranging from graphic design to mapping to digital 3D model making.

I quickly realised that these skills opened up an entirely new and innovative side to my creativity that drawing and painting had previously not done.

I also realised that presently, high school aged students in Auroville who are at the cusp of making decisions on their future paths, have little to no exposure to these fields.

This possibility is what I wanted to bring back to the students in Last School: an opportunity for them to explore the world through a different lens, and to learn the skills to create something that they had never created before, with the hope that it may awaken hidden interests and talents.

The success of the workshop became apparent to us when the final project was introduced on day 3 – a single 3D form to be designed, made and clad entirely on their own.

That evening we found the students hunched over their work well past school hours. Many of them had 'called in sick' on their after school commitments and were determined to execute their ideas to the T.



WE ARE BOUND  
IN OUR  
THOUGHTS  
WHERE WE  
HOLD  
OURSELVES  
FREE”





*Last School workshops are an occasion to deepen concentration through intensity and exposure to approaches which are as yet unfamiliar to the students.*



PROGRESS LIES IN  
WIDENING, NOT IN  
RESTRICTION.

THERE MUST BE A  
BRINGING TOGETHER OF  
ALL POINTS OF VIEW BY  
PUTTING EACH ONE IN ITS  
TRUE PLACE, NOT AN  
INSISTENCE ON SOME TO  
THE EXCLUSION OF  
OTHERS.

TRUE PROGRESS  
LIES IN THE  
WIDENING  
OF THE SPIRIT  
AND THE  
ABOLITION  
OF ALL  
LIMITS.

## Determination

Their focus was not on the completion of the project, but rather on its quality, creativity and precise execution. Observing this attitude towards the task was a great validation of our intent.

The workshop was able to tap into a deep determination of the students to manifest their imaginations within a very structured environment.

I hope that the energy of the workshop — a constant buzz of students sharing ideas, swapping tools, assisting in each other's projects — stays with them and they are able to tap into that spirit during any circumstance they need.







EACH NOW WAS A  
PART OF THE  
OTHER'S UNITY,  
THE WORLD WAS  
BUT THEIR TWIN  
SELF FINDING'S  
SCENE.



## TWIN JOURNEYS

**BHAVYA & BHAVYO TRIVEDI**

*The process and preparation of this workshop spanned a course of three months. We, a pair of twins, embarked on a journey to piece together a week of intensity in matter, using paper as the medium for the translation.*

### A common game

Since Bhavya had just graduated with her bachelors in urban design, her eyes were set on diving into space and exploring the third dimension, which we everyday experience, but never really play with..

And so we decided to play - with shapes and forms and sizes of all sorts.

Through this game, we wanted to share a knowledge which we had not yet tapped into at Last School.

We shared a vision of creation an act of transformation from within mind, into matter:

We would propose a series of simplified steps that could awe the students and lure them to create their own.

Our aim was not to overwhelm them with technical knowledge and expect perfection but to provide a space for challenge, through intensity and patience.

IMAGINATIONS  
TRANSLATE INTO  
WILD FORMS





TOWARDS

# INTEGRATING KNOWLEDGE ACROSS DISCIPLINES

## MATHEMATICS: THE LANGUAGE OF IMAGINATION

### IN CONVERSATION WITH JEAN LEGRAND

*All I try to do at school is to help students appreciate the underlying beauty in logic, the beauty in a mental development that leads them to an elegant conclusion.*

#### Allow for time

In every problem, there are several ways to solve it, but there is a more elegant way.

It takes sensitivity and a certain appreciation. It's not just about solutions but about feeling the "beauty" of that logical progression.

It's the same in other areas like painting: that sensitivity is universal. There's a kind of breath, rhythm that shows up when you're connected to what I call an inner reversal. A breath that guides.

Some children are closed off to math or blocked. Probably, due to how they were taught, often too quickly, covering ground, not considering their natural pace. And they've lost their natural enthusiasm.

The key is to respect their pace and needs. When a student says they're saturated, we need to listen, to respect their natural learning ability.

Time is so important. So why this race against the clock? To go where?



“TIED LIKE A  
SACRIFICE ON THE  
ALTAR OF TIME”





So many students as soon as they get a fraction, they try to turn it into decimals, automatically.

But there is a particular beauty to fraction — they always refer themselves to the whole.

With decimals, we forget where we came from.

With fractions it'll always be  $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of... the whole. Of That.

**JEAN LEGRAND**



## WHY I TEACH MATHEMATICS

**ASHWIN EZHUMALAI**

*When I was in school as a 2nd grader I struggled to understand multiplication tables, until my teacher showed me the simple and logical reason for them using a bunch of seeds – everything made perfect sense ever since!*

### Simplicity

Mathematics used to be one of my favourite subjects in school, thanks to the teachers who made it very easy to understand and enjoyable.

When I was given the opportunity to teach the subject at Last School, I happily took it up to continue the journey of making math easy, approachable and enjoyable.

My regular classes are usually in groups of similar caliber. I have been using materials and textbooks from O and A-level as reference to match the math curriculum for the given age groups along with games and puzzles to initiate curiosity and engagement.

From time to time, I also introduce tests to challenge them to evaluate where as an individual or as a group that we need to work on.

The approach takes into account the expected academic level of the age groups, yet the purpose or the aim is to make them understand and enjoy the subject and appreciate the joy in learning; and eventually get the students to take up the subject and teach it.

During my planning for the term, I try to set a time frame to complete the curriculum topics, however it is not a priority, the time frame is mostly left to the students and their pace of learning.

At the end of the day, I prefer that the students find joy in learning math regardless of the level they are at rather than fear that they are not good enough for the subject.





# A NEW CHEMISTRY LAB

This year, we were able to build a miniature chemistry lab at the school which had been sorely missed, since access to other laboratories were restricted in recent years.

The students organized a series of chemical experiments and demonstrations presented to the school body.



Chemistry was a challenging subject for me when I was in school, but with time the experiments that were once magic tricks slowly revealed their functioning. That process of enduring and taking the time to understand the subject made me appreciate the subject and sparked my curiosity further to dive deeper!

In chemistry classes, we try to work on perseverance and patience with the students as the subject requires a good base to appreciate and understand the magic that chemistry is.

Once a base is established, the students are asked to bring forth topics of interest within the subject, so that step by step it is their curiosity which leads us on to deepened explorations.

**ASHWIN EZHUMALAI**

The science programme has been strengthened this school year both in chemistry and life sciences by introducing a richer curriculum and more observation-based practices.





# INSISTENCE ON PHYSICS

SATYAVAN BHATT

*Mathematics and sciences allow us to sharpen the analytical mind and awaken the intellectual integrity embedded in the scientific method. These are domains that can foster a sense of wonder at the physical universe. The fields covered are Physics, Chemistry and Sciences of Nature.*

## Understanding the physical universe

In Last School, there is an insistence on studying physics during the first year since it's an opportunity to have a basic understanding of the physical world, the various phenomena we witness on a daily basis.

The students explore the topics of motion, force, gravitation, energy, sound and light.

This is also an occasion to improve on mathematical calculations by solving exercises which involve practical questions like finding out distance, speed, weight etc as well as conversions of different units ( km/h to m/s, kg to grams and vice versa).

The students learn to use a precise, scientific language which requires them to express themselves in a clear, logical and concise manner.

Physics is a constantly evolving field in which the answers given to explain the happenings of the physical world lead to more questions for those who wish to dig deeper.



IT MAY BE THAT ONE DAY HE DECIDED TO HAVE A UNIVERSE OF THE TYPE WE HAVE AND HE BEGAN TO OBJECTIFY HIMSELF IN ORDER TO HAVE A UNIVERSE

## Life Sciences

The Life Science programme this year spanned from the cellular level to complex ecosystem interactions.

In exploring human biology, the program covered the digestive, circulatory, and respiratory systems, along with cellular respiration's role in energy production. This included studying various body tissues—muscle, nervous, epithelial, and connective—and their essential roles in maintaining health and supporting life functions.

In parallel, students examined the symbiotic relationships between humans and plants, focusing on how plants provide oxygen and nutrients while benefiting from the carbon dioxide we produce. This led to an understanding of nature's circular system, where waste is continuously recycled, highlighting the principle that waste does not exist in a balanced ecosystem.

We also explored how external factors like music affect the brain, how mood influences physiology through hormone release such as cortisol, and how breathing techniques scientifically impact well-being.

These topics led us towards discussions on ethical issues in biotechnology, including debates around CRISPR, artificial birth, species control, and medical consent, broadening students' understanding of the implications of scientific advancements.

LUCAS POLLET





# PHYSICAL DISCIPLINE: A HIMALAYAN TREK

*It is 6am on Saturday morning, 19 of us are gathered at the school parking, borrowed rucksacks filled with books and sacks of sand. This year's trek selection and training has begun.*

## The challenge

Meeting twice weekly, bags filled with increasing weights for 2 to 5 hours and walk around Auroville.

These treks are a crucial part of our Last School tests.

They are aimed at working with the participants both at a collective level and an individual level: developing strength and endurance in the physical, the capacity of pushing one's limits, putting the collective above one's own personal needs and discovering the joys and beauty and sheer grandeur of the mountains.

**ASHWIN EZHUMALAI**



## SLEEPING BUDDHA IN PYJAMAS

**PABLO DOS SANTOS GOMEZ**

The trek was amazing. It changed me, added to my life.

We trained, but nothing could have prepared me for what came. The plan was simple: we had 10 days of walking, every morning we would wake up at 5:30 to pack our bags, have breakfast and by 8 or 9 would be on our way.

Walks varied from 4 to 6 hours on some days up to 14 km of ups and downs.

Once we reached, we'd spend the rest of the day exploring the new location walking until dinner, after that we'd all go sleep early.

The highest point of the trek was Sandakphu at 3626m of height.

At Phalut we climbed a hill at dawn in our pyjamas. It was very arduous, but we saw Everest and the Sleeping Buddha.

Everyday was a different experience packed with different emotions — I went through them all.

Beautiful sceneries, interactions, laughs, people. Some of these I never would have thought to get to know — they are all unforgettable and epic characters.

*THIS YEAR THE TREK TOOK PLACE IN SINGALILA NATIONAL PARK, ON THE BORDER OF INDIA AND NEPAL IN DARJEELING, DURING THE THE TERM BREAK OF SEPTEMBER TO OCTOBER*





I AM PROFOUNDLY  
GRATEFUL FOR THE  
COLLABORATIVE EFFORT  
IN SOMETHING THAT,  
TRUTH BE TOLD, IS FAR  
FROM EASY.



# ECHOES OF ADVENTURE

PRAVEENA BALAGURU

## The collective

Nineteen of us, bound by circumstances, spent fifteen days together, improving our tackling personalities and refining skills.

The trek built courage and strength, from packing lessons to walking through mist, rain, and sun. Sore muscles grew stronger as we kept walking. We laughed through snores, burps, and farts, finding warmth in shared moments.

*IN THE CANVAS OF MY MEMORIES,  
EVERY STEP OF THAT TREK,*

*EVERY SHARED LAUGH, AND EVERY  
WHISPERED ENCOURAGEMENT*

*PAINT A MASTERPIECE OF  
FRIENDSHIP.*

Even the fog and clouds became part of our joy. Conversations, silly motivations, and shared teas gave us hope. Singing songs together, transforming lyrics with confidence, created a melody of our journey.

By the end, we emerged victorious, carrying memories of courage, laughter, and an unbreakable bond.

## Gratitude

As I reflect on my notes, there's a feeling of having missed out on expressing the depth of this incredible experience. Some things, especially moments like these, defy the limitations of language.

Concluding, I look forward with eagerness to future journeys, to explore new adventures. The excitement is palpable, and I anticipate discovering more moments that words alone cannot capture. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for being a crucial part of this unforgettable chapter in my life.

*THESE MEMORIES ARE LIKE A  
COMFORTING MELODY,*

*PLAYING SOFTLY IN THE BACKGROUND,  
EVERLASTING,*

*ACCOMPANYING ME THROUGH  
THE TAPESTRY OF LIFE.*

*THEY ARE NOT JUST MEMORIES;  
THEY ARE A PART OF WHO I AM,*

*A BEAUTIFUL PAINTING  
OF FRIENDSHIP*

*THAT CONTINUES TO UNFOLD WITH  
EVERY STEP OF LIFE'S JOURNEY.*





BIG THANKS TO  
EVERYONE  
WHO MADE  
THIS JOURNEY  
HAPPEN, A  
JOURNEY THAT  
GOES BEYOND  
WORDS.

MY HEARTFELT  
THANKS TO  
NEW FRIENDS,  
TO ASHWIN  
AND RAJEEV,  
AND TO THOSE  
WHOSE  
FINANCIAL  
SUPPORT MADE  
THIS TREK A  
REALITY.

**PRAVEENA**



I wanted this trek to be a personal journey for growth. To find myself; who I am and what I am capable of. And a purpose for my art, a direction.

A path I could pick up from and continue when I get back home in Auroville. I quickly understood that I could be in a group and still be with myself.

Experiences and encounters helped us shape who we are; bits and pieces of everyone and everything.

**EVA  
MAYSONNAVE  
MEILLAC**







# Last School

A UNIT OF SAIER, AUROVILLE

Last School in Auroville, India, works primarily with teenagers. Its educational approach, anchored in Sri Aurobindo, is centered on an integral development through the method of Free Progress.

The school offers an environment of beauty, where students asking their own questions, approach learning outside the constraints of traditional academic programs or external standards. Thus stepping firmly away from formal diplomas, Last School seeks to develop individuals who are better equipped to address tomorrow's complex challenges, invent new solutions, and contribute to an evolving society, rather than simply integrating into the existing one.

Last School  
After School n:1  
Super School  
No School



PHOTOGRAPHY: ASHWIN EZHUMALAI

[LASTSCHOOL@AUROVILLE.ORG.IN](mailto:LASTSCHOOL@AUROVILLE.ORG.IN)

“IN THE PHYSICAL THE DIVINE MANIFESTS AS BEAUTY”

*Mother's message to Last School in 1971*