In the ‘80s, photographer Nadia Loury was part of the Auroville community, which at that time was still a big family of about 500 people. This gave her the opportunity to catch fleeting moments of daily life which she then shared with her Auroville friends. These photographs are now brought together in the just-released and very beautiful book « Auroville 80 ». Profits from the sale of the book will go to « Acres pour Auroville » for the purchase of missing Auroville land. (120 pages / 170 photos, bilingual French-English, published by Auroville Press)

Special opportunity - don’t miss out on the « Special Christmas 2020 » offer!
For a donation of 80 euros or more for « Acres for Auroville » you will be gifted with a copy of Nadia’s book. As Nadia has written: « Securing Auroville’s lands is essential and there are so many of you who support the A4A project. »

Below are the details for purchasing Nadia’s book and how to benefit from the special Christmas offer. There’s also the story of how Nadia came in contact with Auroville, why she created « Auroville 80 », plus the beautiful book review that was published in Auroville Today.

* How to buy the book « Auroville 80 »:
France : 25 euros plus 9 euros postage
Europe, World: 25 euros plus postage
(please contact nadia.loury@orange.fr for shipping costs and delivery dates)
Please specify « Auroville 80 » on the back of your check or with your bank transfer:
- By check to AIF (Auroville International France) at the following address: Carole Candon, 166 Tr, rue d’Augeyssau, 92100 Boulogne-Billancourt, France
- By bank transfer: Bank: Crédit Mutuel BIC: CMCIFR2A IBAN: FR76 1027 8060 4100 0207 7270 180

*Special Christmas Offer – receive the book as a gift:*
To be gifted with the book, you need only send a donation for A4A of €80 minimum to AIF (Auroville International France) specifying « Special Christmas 2020 Offer» on the back of your check or with your bank transfer:

- By check to AIF (Auroville International France) at the following address: Carole Candon, 166 Tr, rue d’Augeyssau, 92100 Boulogne-Billancourt, France
- By bank transfer: Bank: Crédit Mutuel BIC: CMCIFR2A IBAN: FR76 1027 8060 4100 0207 7270 180
We’ll transfer your complete donation to « Acres for Auroville » and send the book to you!

*« Auroville 80 » is available in Auroville at the Visitors Centre bookstore and also on auroville.com: Rs 1050 for Aurovilians, and Rs 1500 for the general public.

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**NADIA – HER STORY AND HER MOTIVATION**

![Image of Nadia](image)

I went to Auroville for the first time in 1973. Then I spent several years there on and off in the ‘80s, and photography was a way for me to capture the spirit of the time in what was the simplest area – daily life. At that time it was easy to meet Aurovilians – the communities were open, and it was easy to open a door. There was little fencing to protect the planted areas from herds of cattle and goats. Meals were frugal - I learned simplicity of life, and I’ve never forgotten it. Life was rather rough under the burning sun, but also inspiring! That’s what I wanted to catch with my shots during all those years throughout the ‘80s.
My interest in the Auroville adventure and the teachings of The Mother and Sri Aurobindo date back to a long time ago. Here’s a small detour to understand my life path: I’m half Russian and half French. My father and my paternal family went through the Russian Revolution, and their stories were repeated to me countless times, mixed with historical events. All the violence that my family experienced – a revolution, then a world war - didn’t incite me to have confidence in the human race. And if you add to that the environmental problems I discovered through my physical geography studies and my growing interest in ecology, the future in the 1970s seemed bleak. I’d even say that I had an antipathy against humans!!

And then by chance, three events took place: reading Pierre Teilhard Chardin’s book « The Place of Human Beings in Nature » (« La place de l’être humain dans la nature ») which placed human history in geological time, and then the marvellous view of the Earth taken by astronauts in their 1968 flight around the Moon – the « Earthrise » - that rocked us with its beauty and perfectly illustrated the fragility of our beautiful planet. And finally, my father was a friend of Roger Anger, the architect of Auroville. In his secret library, he had a book by Satprem « Sri Aurobindo or The Adventure of Consciousness » which for me opened the door to a promising future! Certainly, yes, the evolution of consciousness takes time, but life, my life, then took on and had meaning and wasn’t the result of serendipity or blind necessity. And that’s how I came into contact with Sri Aurobindo, The Mother, and Auroville. Their teachings have enlightened all my existence and I have confidence in the future even if the storm clouds hanging overhead - climate change, destruction of our life habitat, conflicts of all kinds – threaten to destabilize our societies.

Since the decade of the ‘80s, thousands of my silver-photopaper prints slept quietly in cartons. In 2017, I wanted to transmit them to the Auroville Archives, and before doing that, the idea came to me to make a photo book as a testimonial to that intense time. And that’s the way « Auroville 80 » was born. For me it is one way to transmit this flesh-and-blood story and the poetics of that daily life to those who come to Auroville today, sharing the history of this adventure and the ideal that lives inside us. In order to collaborate and add « my stone to the edifice », I wish that the profits of the book sales be used for securing the lands of Auroville.

Here is Nadia’s now-iconic photo that she shot in 1983:
The book review that was published in « Auroville Today »

It is sometimes difficult to place the 1980s in Auroville. The 1970s was a period of pioneering and high drama – including, as it does, Mother’s passing and the conflict with the Society – while the 1990s witnessed a Cambrian explosion of projects. In contrast, the ‘80s seemed a quieter decade, even though it saw rather vicious internal strife, as well as the establishment of SAIER and, of course, of the Auroville Foundation itself.

However, Nadia Loury’s bilingual (French/English) photographic book, Auroville 80, helps us look at the 80s with new eyes. For what she captures are not the iconic moments but, as the sub-title suggests, ‘the poetry of daily life’. So we see Aurovilians working in the fields, meeting under the Banyan, drinking tea at the Matrimandir, organizing food deliveries at Pour Tous. It could become a catalogue of trivia, yet through Nadia’s lens something else shines through: a sense of perseverance, dedication, fraternity and even a quiet joy in what was clearly still a struggle to survive.

Indeed, one of the surprises of this book is how basic Auroville still was in the 1980s. Many Aurovilians were living under keet, struggling to erect the first rickety Cretan windmills, crowbaring holes in the unforgiving laterite. Yet even as green shoots were pushing through that soil, in the same way these photographs show that the foundations of a collective life were being laid in education, town planning, governance and health care.

And while the Matrimandir space frame emerged in its tessellated glory, everywhere, it seems, the Auroville children were having fun.

This is a lovely book. It’s no easy thing to capture the texture, the magic, of the quotidian but Nadia succeeds. Along with her sensitive commentary, her fine photographs allow us to touch the heart of an experience which, while it may seem foreign to more recent residents, still fires the soul of many of those early explorers.

The profits from this book will go towards land purchase via the Acres for Auroville land campaign.

Alan