Experience the beauty and soul of India.
TRAVEL TO SOUTH INDIA AND AUROVILLE WITH CIIS

It’s not too late to sign up to join other alumni and CIIS friends as we embark on our second annual journey to South India from January 13 through 29, 2006. This exciting tour, which includes visits to Chennai, Auroville, Chidambaram, and Mamallapuram, offers both the first-time and seasoned India traveler a unique mix of options for adventure, relaxation, intellectual study, and yoga. The trip is led by Richard Buggs, Director of Alumni Services and Dean of Students, as well as a clinical psychologist and a frequent traveler to India.

The group’s base will be Auroville, the universal township that like CIIS was founded on the integral vision of philosopher Sri Aurobindo and The Mother. There you will have the rare opportunity to experience firsthand integral spirituality and living on a daily basis, through talks by CIIS President Emeritus Robert McDermott, and by mingling with the townpeople who have created this innovative community. You will also have the chance to witness a real-life experiment in sustainability, and learn more about ethno-medicinal plants, Tamil villages, and environmental restoration, among other topics.

For more information contact Richard Buggs, Director of Alumni Services and Dean of Students, at 415.575.6135 or rbuggs@ciis.edu. To read about last year’s trip to India, including testimonials from those who were on that trip, visit http://www.ciis.edu/news/auroville.html.

CIIS to Honor Raj and Helen Desai

On April 29, 2006, CIIS will present Rajnikant and Helen Desai with its Haridas Chaudhuri Award for Distinguished Service in honor of their contributions to celebrating and preserving the art and culture of India in the United States.

Raj Desai formerly served on CIIS’s Board of Trustees, and Helen Desai currently serves as a trustee for the Cultural Integration Fellowship, CIIS’s parent organization. The couple were founders of the Society for the Art and Cultural Heritage of India (SACHI), a nonprofit organization that provides forums to explore the richness and diversity of the art, culture, and heritage of India. They are also docents and donors for San Francisco’s Asian Art Museum.

For more information on this special event, please contact Dorotea Reyna, Director of Development, at 415.575.6135 or dreyna@ciis.edu.

CIIS Public Programs Launches Transit Ad Campaign

This has been a fall of exciting “firsts” for CIIS Public Programs. Formerly known as Lifelong Learning, the program changed its name to better reflect the Institute’s intent to create a cultural center for growth, learning, and awakening for the general public.

Then, in September, CIIS Public Programs launched a monthlong mass transit ad campaign, a first for CIIS. The campaign featured three high-impact ads that appeared on the back of 30 San Francisco MUNI buses, inside 60 subway or BART trains, and in 20 BART stations, respectively.

The innovative slogans were the result of a collaboration between Public Programs Director Karim Baez, the CIIS Communications and Marketing Department, and Big Think Studios, an advertising agency in San Francisco that works with nonprofits, foundations, and socially responsible companies to transform complex issues into simple and powerful messages.

Letter from the President

Dear Friends:

I am extremely pleased to report that CIIS began the 2005 academic year with the largest number of enrolled students in our history—1,080. This achievement is due to a committed institute-wide collaboration among faculty, administrators, and staff to attract and retain students. It is also a clear indicator that CIIS’s pioneering mission—to advance an integral education—is rapidly gaining resonance among an ever-growing audience.

This year’s record enrollment represents nearly a 15 percent increase in tuition revenue for CIIS. While this increase certainly helps to secure the Institute’s long-term financial vitality, it is only part of the formula for our success. The other critical component is you, our alumni and friends. In order to sustain our growth and stability, CIIS relies heavily on non tuition revenue, which includes gifts from individuals, foundations, companies, and other donors, as well as revenue from our public programs, four counseling clinics, the campus bookstore, and the café.

In this period of maturation and growth, CIIS needs the ongoing support of our alumni and friends, those who share the Institute’s integral vision, in order to ensure our financial security and continued academic excellence. Please consider becoming a lifetime investor in CIIS by supporting our non tuition areas.

There are many ways you can invest. A contribution to CIIS’s Annual Fund, for example, will support such vital needs as our scholarship funds, which help attract and retain talented students who might otherwise not be able to attend CIIS. Or you could participate in one of CIIS Public Programs’ many exciting offerings, which have included classes, workshops, and events with distinguished leaders such as religion scholar Huston Smith, philosopher Joseph Chilton Pearce, dance artist Anna Halprin, and poet Coleman Barks, to name just a few. Other ways you can contribute are to include CIIS in your estate planning, refer people to our counseling centers, patronize our bookstore, or introduce us to potential donors.

A warm thank you for your ongoing support of CIIS. Your generosity ensures that CIIS will always provide an extraordinary education for extraordinary people—those committed to transforming themselves and the world.

Cardially,

Joseph L. Subbiondo
President

CIIS Today

The Community Newsletter of California Institute of Integral Studies
FALL 2005

CIIS
1433 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94103

www.ciis.edu
In the wake of Hurricane Katrina’s devastating blow to the Gulf Coast, the CIIS community responded swiftly—with prayer, donations, and volunteerism. "As a community we stand struck with grief and moved with compassion for the victims of Hurricane Katrina," said President Joseph Subbiondo. "Our commitment is to move forward quickly to aid in the relief efforts, utilizing the resources we have as individuals and as a community.

East-West Psychology student Elizabeth Hussel Rabans, a native of New Orleans, immediately organized a gathering of students, faculty, and staff to meditate for the American Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund. On September 16, she along with students from the People of Color group organized another vigil that included an invocation, speakers on the government and media response to the disaster, a discussion of the issues of racism and classism that emerged from the crisis, and an opportunity to form action groups.

In addition to these efforts, Academic Vice President Jude Wexler extended an offer through the Council of Graduate Schools to welcome displaced students at CIIS, and the Institute’s Lorraine S. Rockefeller Library made its resources available to scholars and students whose work had been curtailed by the hurricane.

Richard Buggs, Dean of Students and Director of Alumni Services, visited a potential evacuee site at St. Mary’s Cathedral in San Francisco to offer CIIS’s counseling services both on-site, and on a pro bono basis through the Institute’s four counseling centers. President Joseph Subbiondo offered CIIS’s help to the City of San Francisco to coordinate its efforts in case management, counseling, and other areas of service. CIIS also offered to volunteer to answer crisis calls from people looking for missing loved ones in need of assistance at the Oakland Service Center of the Red Cross.

President Subbiondo said he was heartened by the CIIS community’s immediate and generous response to the hurricane victims, and he affirmed the Institute’s commitment to “continue to work together to support those in desperate need.”

If you are interested in donating to hurricane disaster relief, we urge you to donate to the American Red Cross (www.redcross.com) or to another relief agency of your choice.

“> SPIRIT IN THE ARTS
Current Art Exhibits & Events

ARAB WORLD UNVEILED—Painted Photographs by Halla Ayla
October 14–December 16
CIIS Main Building, Fourth Floor

CULTURES AND CIVILIZATIONS: A VISUAL JOURNEY
Paintings, Collages, and Mixed Media Works by Gerald Huth
October 27–December 16
CIIS Minna Street Center, Second Floor

ZEN CIRCLES—Calligraphy by Kazuaki Tanahashi
November 13–December 22
CIIS Main Building, Third Floor

For More Information: 415.575.6242 or amarchione@ciis.edu

The Community
News of California
Institute of Integral Studies
Fall 2005

CIIS Today is published semimonthly by the Communications Department for alumni and friends of CIIS.

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Keep in touch with CIIS! Visit our Alumni Web pages at www.ciis.edu/alumni. Find out what your former classmates are up to and update your own current information.

www.ciis.edu

"I feel I have all the opportunities right here to balance the dimensions of consciousness—the physical, mental, and spiritual," Franci vec said as he looked out over his four-acre vineyard.

After 15 years in academia, eight as an East-West Psychology doctoral student at CIIS (he earned his Ph.D. in 1989), Franci vec moved from San Francisco to Sonoma County in 1986 for the express purpose of reconnecting with nature. "I felt very much in need of being out in nature and doing something physical," he recalled. In this more bucolic setting Franci vec felt "free, rejuvenated, and energized."

A native of Croatia—he grew up on the island of Hvar in the Adriatic Sea—Franci vec had seen his parents and grandparents make wine. He decided to try winemaking as a lark, a pleasant diversion from the daily rigors of researching and writing his dissertation on creativity. He experimented at first in the basement of his apartment. One barrel led to a couple of barrels until he had "more barrels than I knew what to do with," Franci vec said chuckling.

His hobby quickly became a passion and before long Franci vec had leased a barn from the owner of a nearby vineyard that he turned into a small winery called One World Winery. In 1993 he picked and crushed his first wine, which he fondly recalls as a first love: "It was a ’91 Cabernet," Franci vec said. "Upon its release in 1993 it won a Silver Medal at the Harvest Fair, which gave me significant motivation to continue to make more wine."

In 1998, Franci vec and his wife Jane made the momentous decision to buy four acres of undeveloped pasture in Sonoma County and create Suncé, which means "sun" in Croatian. The artisan winery and its tasting room opened within the year, and now produces 5,000 cases of wines annually, many of them Gold Medal winners.

Business success is not, however, what truly inspires the 52-year-old father of three young daughters. What Franci vec values most is the very act of making wine—of turning grapes into a fine wine. "Partaking in this process, he says, fuels his personal transformation and enables him to put into daily practice the integral philosophy and values he studied audiously for 15 years in academia.

For Franci vec, winemaking is an elegant metaphor for the transformation of consciousness. He points out that the key phases of the wine-making cycle parallel the three stages of human transformation, outlined by philosopher Ken Wilber, among others. First there is the "horizontal" stage of preparation, the elaborate process of planting, tending the vines, and harvesting the grapes. Then the grapes enter the transformation or "vertical" process of fermentation where raw material is turned into something that bears no resemblance to its elementary form. This is followed by the third phase, a long incubation period where the wine is stored in small oak barrels in a temperature-controlled room for at least a year before it becomes the finished product: a perfectly balanced wine.

But in addition to changing Franci vec’s life personally, winemaking has had a completely unexpected effect: it has opened up opportunities for him and his family to serve the larger community, another core CIIS integral value. In September, Suncé Winery launched an initiative called “One World Wine for AIDS” and is donating 25 percent of the profits from the sale of three wines to Bay Area AIDS organizations in their effort to find a cure.

For Franci vec has also generously given to CIIS through in-kind donations of Suncé’s wines, served at the Institute’s alumni reunions, art salons, and receptions. Staying connected to CIIS satisfies this lifelong learner’s thirst for knowledge and enlightenment, and is his way of showing his gratitude for an institution that he says changed his life. "So many people at CIIS helped me in my own evolution and development," Franci vec said. “My contribution has been miniscule in relation to the education, the good, the energy that I received from CIIS.”

For more information about Suncé Winery, visit www.suncéwinery.com. To find out about the One World Wine for AIDS initiative, and to order wine, visit www.wineforaids.org.

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"I feel I have all the opportunities right here to balance the dimensions of consciousness—the physical, mental, and spiritual."

Franci vec
Librarily Associate Membership Has Its Privileges

Need help with your research and wish you still had access to the extensive resources housed at CIIS’s Lawrence S. Rockefeller Library? The library’s services are now just a click away.

Starting spring 2005, CIIS alumni who are Library Associate members can enjoy online access to all of the library’s subscriptions, including databases such as PsycINFO, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, and the Bibliography of Asian Studies; full-text journals such as the Journal of Transpersonal Psychology; and more than 10,000 e-books. Members may access all of these resources from the Library’s Web site at http://library.ciis.edu by using their CIIS identification number.

Library Associate membership is open to all alumni and requires a $25 annual fee.

In addition to the online services, Alumni Library Associates enjoy these benefits:

- Access to all of the library’s extensive reference and special collections, which can be used on-site only.
- Borrowing Privileges (including books, dissertations, videos, DVDs, and audio cassettes).
- Reference Services either in person, via telephone, or online.
- Access to ReWorks, an online reference manager and bibliography-maker program.

For more information and to apply for Associate Membership, contact Marc Karr at 415.575.6184 or via e-mail at mkarr@ciis.edu. You can also read more details online at: http://library.ciis.edu/information/associate.ap

CIIS UPDATING ALUMNI DIRECTORY

In an effort to better serve our alumni, CIIS is in the process of updating its Alumni Directory. Now more than ever it’s important for CIIS alumni to stay in touch—with CIIS and each other. Not only are you the Institute’s best ambassadors, but together the community of alumni are a valuable source of shared memories, information, and professional contacts.

Alumni will be able to submit their contact information both in print and online. Stay tuned for details on how to do this. You’ll also have the opportunity to approve what information you do or do not want published. If for any reason you believe CIIS does not have your current contact information, please visit our alumni Web page at www.ciis.edu/alumni, click “Keep in Touch,” and update the mailing list. You can also call the Alumni Office at 415.575.6116 or e-mail rhilgo@ciis.edu. We look forward to hearing from you.

STAY IN TOUCH WITH CIIS

Let us know what you’ve been doing since graduation—career moves, publications, awards, births, anything you would like to share with friends and classmates. Visit www.ciis.edu/alumni and click on “Alumni Notes” where you’ll be able to find out about your former classmates who are up to and fill in your own notes. You can also e-mail your comments to alumni_notes@ciis.edu or fax them to 415.575.1264.

REMEMBER WHEN

Sharing Fond Memories of CIIS

In this edition of the newsletter, CIIS Today introduces a new feature called “Remember When,” which showcases a photo from our archives—or yours—of CIIS’s alumni and friends. We’d love to see your photos. If you have one that you’d like to submit for possible inclusion in CIIS Today, send it to: Valerie Chow Bush Newsletter Editor CIIS, 1455 Mission Street San Francisco, CA 94103 or via e-mail to vbush@ciis.edu

Please include your phone number and e-mail address with your submission so that we can contact you about the photo. Also, please identify the people in the photo, if possible. All photos will be returned to you. We look forward to sharing your fond memories of CIIS with other alumni and friends.

CIIS TODAY

FALL 2005

JAKE POLLACK

Student Profile

He received a B.A in Religious Studies from Grinnell College where he focused on South Asian Hindu yoga traditions. After graduation, Jake spent 16 months in India and Sri Lanka where he studied Tamil Siddha medicine with a venerable Siddha Vaidya or doctor. In 2004, Jake was awarded CIIS’s Robert Joseph and Wilhelmina Ann Kranzke Fellowship to support his ongoing research on Tamil Siddha medicine, including study of its relevance to current global medical practices. He spoke to CIIS Today about Integrative Health Studies and his research in Tamil Siddha medicine.

What attracted you to CIIS?

CIIS appealed to me in particular because of the way that contemplative practice and embodied learning are woven into the curriculum, and I was interested in seeing how the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo, The Mother, and Haridas Chaudhuri had been applied in an academic setting. Also, I had sought a class [at Grinnell College] on the “Yoga Tradition,” and had been inspired to see the fusion between theory and practice. I thought CIIS might be a place where that sort of integration was the norm rather than the exception.

Why did you choose the Integrative Health Studies program at CIIS?

I wanted to be a medical doctor for a while, but when I learned that some of the main factors in health are lifestyle choices, such as nutrition and exercise, my attention shifted to other ways of understanding health. I was fascinated by the different approaches to medicine, and the power of intention and prayer, and the use of an organic biodynamic pharmacopoeia. Also, as a yoga teacher, I am drawn to the Siddha tradition’s use of various yoga practices to create health and longevity. Usually working in secret, they use inorganic compounds, such as salts, minerals, and even metals, along with an extensive plant pharmacopoeia to create thousands of different preparations. Certain rituals and mantras are equally as important as the physical medicine itself.

How did you become involved with fieldwork and research in this subject?

When I was in South India and Sri Lanka I visited many shrines sacred to the Siddha tradition and came into contact with various Siddha Vaidyas. My teacher in Sri Lanka was a well-known healer on the island and had studied many traditions of healing. I was particularly struck by my teacher’s willingness to be integrative—to go to Western medicine when necessary and support that healing with his own regimen and systems. Most of all, it was his broad understanding of health and all of its various aspects, including the physical, emotional, psychological, spiritual, and other elements that really inspired my interest in the Siddha system.

What relevance do you think your work has for us today?

Some of the greatest losses we have suffered in health care are the understanding of the power of intention and prayer, and the use of an organic biodynamic pharmacopoeia. Also, as a yoga teacher, I am drawn to the Siddha tradition’s use of various yoga practices to sustain health in a preventive way, which is ultimately the most cost-effective approach to promoting longevity and quality of life.

I thought CIIS might be a place where integration was the norm rather than the exception.”

—Jake Pollack

“Describe Tamil Siddha medicine and your research project.

Tamil Siddha medicine is relatively unknown in the Western medical and academic communities, as well as in the general public. It originated and is practiced primarily in South India, Sri Lanka, and Malaysia. I find the history of the Tamil Siddhas, the founders of this system of medicine, interesting, particularly their use of alchemical process—both interior and exterior—output of medicine and longevity. Usually working in secret, they use inorganic compounds, such as salts, minerals, and even metals, along with an extensive plant pharmacopoeia to create thousands of different preparations. Certain rituals and mantras are equally as important as the physical medicine itself.

Through my research I want to help educate people about it, and to provide a venue for contemporary Siddha Vaidyas (doctors) to define their field and scope of practice and to communicate their experience to multiple audiences, including the biomedical community.

“\n
Alumni Key Thompson and cofounder Rita Chaudhuri at graduation ceremony, 1984.

Alumni Key Thompson and cofounder Rita Chaudhuri at graduation ceremony, 1984.

Alumni Key Thompson and cofounder Rita Chaudhuri at graduation ceremony, 1984.

Alumni Key Thompson and cofounder Rita Chaudhuri at graduation ceremony, 1984.
In 1998 David Ulansey, PhD, created the first Web site on the impending mass extinction, which continues to be a leading Web site on this subject today (www.massextinction.net). A professor in CIIS’s Philosophy, Cosmology, and Consciousness (PCC) program who specializes in the religions of the ancient Mediterranean, Professor Ulansey is a founding member of 6X, a community action group comprised primarily of students from the PCC program that is committed to raising public awareness of the sixth mass extinction crisis. In fall 2005 the Threshold Foundation awarded a $25,000 grant to CIIS to support 6X’s groundbreaking multitermed media and public awareness project. The project includes a digital broadcast-quality documentary, due out summer 2006 and distributed on DVD, a Web site (www.6x-alive.org); and a pilot curriculum for high school biology teachers. Professor Ulansey is currently at work on a book entitled The Other Christ: The Mysteries of Mithras and the Origins of Christianity, to be published by Oxford Press in 2007. He spoke to CIIS Today about 6X and the mass extinction.

What served as your “wake-up call” to the impending sixth mass extinction crisis?

I had long been aware that the earth’s biosphere was experiencing tremendous stress from human activity. But in 1998, an American Museum of Natural History poll revealed that a consensus had formed among the nation’s biologists that we are in the midst of a mass extinction unparalleled at least since that of the dinosaurs 65 million years ago. At current rates, renowned biologist E.O. Wilson has predicted that half of all species of life will be extinct in 100 years. More recent predictions factoring in global warming estimate that we may have only 35 years. Yet despite these findings, according to this same survey, the public is generally unaware of this crisis. I believe the mass media are the only way we can reach the numbers of people who have to be reached with the speed with which they need to be reached.

What was the genesis of 6X’s multimedia project?

I had, for several years before our proposal, been saying to anyone who would listen to me that we have to make a movie about the extinction. Through coincidence—or synchronicity—an extraordinarily large number of PCC students in 6X had major professional experience and skills as filmmakers, Web designers, curriculum developers, and multimedia artists. We essentially had the team in place that could make a state-of-the-art film. We had about a week to write the proposal to Threshold and jumped into unbelievably high gear to submit it in time.

Why are you optimistic that humans can turn the crisis around within the next few decades?

As a scholar, especially as a scholar in the history of religion, I am very familiar with examples in the course of human history of very rapid cultural transformation taking place under the right circumstances. The origins of Christianity are a perfect example. Christianity came from nonexistence to being the dominant worldview of the West over a period of three centuries. Now with communication and transportation speeded up almost infinitely, what took 300 years back then could in theory take three years today.

But how do you break through people’s denial about such dire end-of-the-world scenarios?

The psychology of denial is much more powerful and savage than we think. The 6X documentary is going to address the issue of denial head-on—its psychology, sociology, and anthropology—by interviewing the world’s leading experts on this subject.

Besides mass denial, why is the general public so unaware of the mass extinction crisis?

There are powerful corporate and governmental interests that don’t want people to know about the crisis because that knowledge is so potent that if absorbed appropriately it could force a radical reconfiguration of society and economics. Thus, even though it’s suicidal and self-destructive, these interests are at work trying to keep such destabilizing news from getting to the general public. Another factor, I believe, is that the major environmental organizations have failed us by their silence about the mass extinction.

What can an average person do to stem the tide of mass destruction?

You don’t have to give away your car or stop eating meat—just yet. You do have to start educating yourself and spreading the word about the crisis. It is through this process that I believe a radical shift in consciousness will occur. These sorts of shifts have happened in the course of human history, and they didn’t require supernatural intervention or aliens from the Pleiades—they happened in reality.

If you would like to contribute to the 6X Media Project, please write your check to CIIS-6X, and send it to Dorotea Reyna, Director of Development, at 695 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA, 94103.

The banner artwork above is from www.massextinction.net.

For more information on these programs, contact Dorotea Reyna, Director of Development, at 415.575.6195 or dreyna@ciis.edu.

Your Support for Our Shared Vision

Scholarships
Each year, CIIS devotes five percent of its operating budget, approximately $500,000, for scholarships. Our continuing goal is to raise this amount by 10 percent each year to assist an ever greater number of students in pursuing their degrees. Your gift to the Annual Fund goes a long way in helping the Institute award more scholarships to its growing student body. In addition, you may choose to inquire about establishing an endowed scholarship at CIIS, a lasting legacy.

CIIS Heritage Society
CIIS welcomes your inquiries about making a planned gift to the Institute. These gifts, which include bequests, charitable gifts, and appreciated securities, can provide you with a variety of tax advantages and will welcome you as a member of the Institute’s Heritage Society.

Friends of the Arts at CIIS
Friends of the Arts at CIIS are members from the community and the Institute dedicated to supporting and promoting our arts program. A gift of $1,000 will establish you as a Supporting Member, and $500 as an Associate Member. Both membership levels entitle you to participate in quarterly art salons held at private homes, where Friends, guests, and exhibiting artists gather together to share lively conversation related to art in an intimate, creative and artistic environment. Contributions of any amount to support Spirit in the Arts exhibits are gratefully accepted.

CIIS TODAY
Thank You for YOUR SUPPORT

As President Subhiondo shared in his letter, gifts from alumni, faculty, staff, friends, and trustees—together with gifts from foundations, corporations, and businesses—are a vital component of the Institute’s stability, growth, and long-term success. We are pleased to recognize the many members of the CIIS community who contributed so generously in the 2004–05 fiscal year. Cumulatively, a total of $409,000 was donated by 350 donors, nearly half of them alumni—representing a 21 percent increase in the number of donors over the 2003-04 fiscal year.

It is encouraging to see the growing number of CIIS supporters who wish to ensure the Institute’s financial stability, continued academic excellence, and expanding circle of influence. Donors give support to a wide variety of Institute needs, including scholarships, the counseling centers, the arts, academic and public programs, the Haridas Chaudhuri Endowment for South Asian Philosophy and Culture, and many others.

As CIIS enters a new era of visibility and service, your gifts to the Annual Fund are an important investment in its future. For questions about the Honor Roll of Donors, or to inquire about making your own gift to CIIS, please contact Doreena Reyes, Director of Development, at 415.575.6355 or dreyata@ciis.edu. Thank you for your gift!

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If you made a donation to CIIS in 2004, please continue to support our work. For questions, contact the Donor Relations Office at 415.575.6106.

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