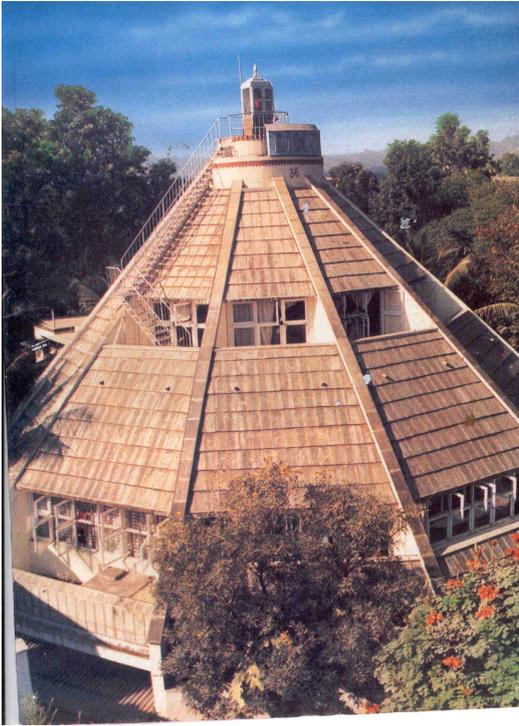


The RIMYI Institute: Its Structure and Design



The Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute, Pune was formally dedicated and opened on January 19, 1975. The Institute is a memorial to the late Smt. Ramamani Iyengar, who inspired her husband Yogacharya BKS Iyengar to propagate Yoga throughout the world.

The building has a unique architectural design, resembling a vertically sliced Mandala, semi-circular shaped pyramid. It consists of a ground floor of 1065 sq.ft. with a foyer and four residential rooms for pupils, a first floor which is the main hall of 1065sq.ft. for conducting classes, a smaller hall of 440 sq.ft on the second floor for practice of *pranayama* and a basement of 630 sq.ft which houses the library.

The design of the building is symbolic. The building is a three-tier one, representing Bahiranga Sadhana, Antaranga Sadhana and Antaratma Sadhana of Yoga

The height of the building is 71ft., $7 + 1 = 8$, representing the vertical growth of eight limbs of Yoga. It also represents the Beeja Mantra OM NAMO NARAYANAYA. It has 88 steps 8×8 which represent Ashtanga Yoga of Patanjali and eight steps of Samadhi. The building rests on the main column, which is about five feet in diameter. Eight beams radiate from the main column towards the eight outside columns representing, as it were, the sun and the planets of the Zodiac. The eight columns also represent the eightfold Path of Yoga enunciated in the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali – *Yama* (Moral Principles), *Niyama* (Individual Disciplines), *Asana* (Postures), *Pranayama* (Regulation of Breath), *Pratyahara* (Withdrawal of the senses from objects of desire), *Dharana* (Concentration), *Dhyana* (Meditation) and *Samadhi* (Trance). The main column represents the spinal column and the spaces between the columns represent the seven stages of consciousness in the quest of the seeker to meet his Maker. These stages represent his conquest over the body, breath, mind, will, action and knowledge culminating in the surrender of his self, thus purified, to his Maker.

The idol of Sage Patanjali, the author of the Yoga Sutras, is installed at the entrance to the main hall so that the seeker may bow to the sage and get His blessings. The idol of Lord Hanuman, son of Vayu (Wind God), is installed on the apex of the building. Hanuman is the embodiment of strength and stability, intellect and courage, celibacy and humility. He is one of the immortals of the Hindu Pantheon, inspiring those who enter the Institute to absorb some of His virtues. Being the son of Vayu, Hanuman is the mater of Prana and it is appropriate that the Pranayama Hall is located beneath His idol.

The buttresses on the roof represent the various Paths to the highest goal – merger with the Infinite.

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