



Ganesh Pooja – 13th May 2004

Programme for the evening

- 7:30 – Ganesh Vandana
8:00 – Ganesh Pooja
8:45 – Moksha and Devi Mangalam
9:00 – Arti

Lord Ganesh, the elephant-headed god, is considered a symbol of wisdom and a harbinger of good luck. Ganesh is revered as a great remover of obstacles. New ventures begin with a prayer to Lord Ganesh, who is the son of Lord Shiva and Mata Parvati

People mostly worship Him asking for *Siddhi*, success in undertakings, and *Buddhi*, intelligence. He is also the God of education, knowledge and wisdom, literature, and the fine arts.

Symbolism of Lord Ganesh

A unique combination of his elephant-like head and a quick moving tiny mouse vehicle represents tremendous wisdom, intelligence and presence of mind. Ganesh meaning



God or Lord of the *ganas* (people) represents the qualities that a leader should have.

- A leader should listen to everybody, therefore the large ears.
- He should have nose to scent out the smallest problem; which a large trunk does with sensitivity.
- It is important for a leader not to let out all that he knows or all that he has been told; that is why Lord Ganesh has a large stomach.
- His corpulent body, awkward gait, broken tusk and guffaw tell us that outward beauty has no relation to inner perfection.

Ganesh Vandana

This dance is an invocation to Lord Ganesh in the Orissi classical style. It begins with the three-fold salutation to God, the Guru and the audience. The dancer then explains Ganesh's wonderful attributes as the elephant headed son of Shiva and Parvati. Seeking His blessings at the beginning of any endeavour, we aspire to His wisdom.



Choreography: Guru Mayadhar Raut and Guru Mondira Balkaransingh
Dancer: Ashvini Keshavan

Moksha and Devi Mangalam

Beginning with Nritta or pure dance this piece demonstrates the form and technique of Orissi. It then progresses to Mangalam, which is traditionally the last prayer offered at any event. We began with Ganesh, and will now end by praising Devi, the feminine aspect of God, represented by strength and energy. She maintains the balance between creation, preservation and dissolution. She is a gentle mother, and yet a fearsome warrior who removes evil in this world. In the quest for Moksha or liberation, it is Devi who leads us to consider that inner Shakti or life force which resides in each of us.

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Shlokas

These are a few of the more well known shlokas which will be recited during the pooja. Please feel free to join with reciting them.

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*Asato Maa Sat Gamaya;
Tamaso Maa Jyotir Gamaya;
Mrityor Maa Amritam Gamaya.
Om Shanti, Shanti, Shantihi*


From untruth, lead me to truth
From darkness, lead me to light
From death, lead me to immortality
Om, Peace, Peace, Peace.

— — — — —
*Aum Bhur Bhuva Svaha,
Tat Savitur Varenyam;
Bhargo Devasya Dheemahi,
Dhiyo Yo Naha Prachodayaat.*


May we meditate on the Glory of the Lord, the Remover of pains and sorrows, the Bestower of happiness, Who has created the universe, and Who is the embodiment of knowledge and light. May the Lord, enlighten our intellect in the right direction by destroying all our sins and ignorance.

— — — — —
*Vakratunda Mahaakaaya,
Suryakoti Samaprabha;
Nirvighnam Kuru Me Deva,
Sarvakaaryeshu Sarvadaa.*

O Lord Ganesha, with your curving trunk, your titanic body, from you shines the light of a million suns, may you remove all obstacles from the path of all my endeavours


***Gurur Brahma Gurur Vishnu,
Gurur Devo Maheshwaraha;
Gurur Shaakshaat Parabrahma,
Tasmai Shri Gurave Namaha.***

The Guru is Brahma (the Creator), the Guru is Vishnu (the Preserver), the Guru is Shiva (the Destroyer of all evil). The Guru is the Supreme Lord Himself, I bow to that Guru.


ShodaSha Upachara Pooja Vidhi (The Sixteen Step Pooja Ritual)

1. *Dhyaanam*: Meditation
2. *Aavahanam, Aasana-Samarpanam*: Invocation and Ushering
3. *Padyam*: Washing the Feet
4. *Arghyam*: Washing the Hands
5. *Aachamanam*: Offering Water to Drink
6. *Panchamrut Snanam*: Bathing the Lord in the five purest elements
7. *Vastram, Yagnopaveetam*: Offering Clothes, Jewellery and the Sacred Thread
8. *Gandhaanulepanam*: Offering Sandal powder and perfumes
9. *Pushpaarchanam*: Flower Worship
10. *Akshata Pooja*: Chanting the 108 names of the Lord
11. *Dhoopam Aaghraapanam*: Lighting the Incense
12. *Deepa Darshanam*: Illumination of the Lamp
13. *Naivedyam*: Offering Food
14. *Tamboolam*: Offering Betel Leaves
15. *Mangala-Aarti*: Singing Praises of the Lord
16. *Pradakshina Namaskaraha*: Prostrating before the Lord