

Design Resource

Durga Idol Making - Bengaluru

Durga Pooja Celebration

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Lija M. G.

NID, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/durga-idol-making-bengaluru>

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Introduction

The thatched roofs that covers the uppermost part of shelter which provides protection from rain, snow, animals, birds, heat, wind, light etc. is the ideal place where the craftsmen work. At one side of the Byatarayanapura traffic signal of Bengaluru in Karnataka, you will find the roofs of the tarpaulin put over the bamboo sticks that are placed on the top portion of the tent structure. This is one of the place where the Durga idols for the Bengaluru and neighboring places are made. Durga is considered as the Goddess who fights against the evil and also referred to as the mahashakti. Durga Goddess is also referred to as Devi and Shakthi as per the Hinduism.

Sculptures have been in many of the cultures as the central religious devotion. It is said that it is also an expression of religion and politics. One of the method of sculpting is the pottery with the clay as one of the oldest materials.

The basis of a sculpture is to have a base that will be less structurally sound if added later. Armature is the frame work around which the sculpture is generally built. Armature can be generally made from sticks, dowels, lumber etc. The base is then filled with a form that is under layered generally with different materials. Detailing is done to the sculpture such that it looks fairly finalized. The sculptures are then cured and allowed to dry. It is then painted with special paints depending on the material of chose.

Durga Celebrations in Different parts of India

Durga Puja are widely celebrated in most of the states such as Assam, Mithila region of Bihar, Jharkhand, Manipur, Odisha, Tripura and West Bengal with about five days of celebrations. It is said the eminence of Durga Puja increased during the British rule in Bengal, Assam etc. After the Hindu reformists identify Durga with India, she had become one of the largest celebrated festivals in the world.

Durga Puja is said to be a worship that includes Shiva, Goddess Parvati, Lakshmi, Saraswati, Ganesha, Kartikeya, where Lakshmi, Saraswati and Kartikeya are considered as their children. Durga Puja is also considered as a worship of mother nature that is generally done with nine types of plant including a plantain (banana) tree that represents nine divine forms of Goddess Durga.

In the state of Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Kerala and Maharashtra it is called as Navaratri Puja. Mysore in Karnataka is called as Dussehra, Bommai Golu in Tamil Nadu, Bommala koluvu in Andhra Pradesh and Kullu Dussehra in the Kullu Valley of Himachal Pradesh. It is said that the Bengalis traditionally wake up at 4 in the morning on the Mahalaya day to listen to the enchanting voice of the late Birendra Krishna Bhadra and late Pankaj Kumar Mullick on All India Radio as they recite the hymns from the scriptures of Devi Mahatmyam.

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Some of the complex edifices is of the Durga reigns by standing on her lion mount and wielding ten weapons in her ten hands. This is generally the religious center of the festivities and the crowds gather to offer flower worship also known as pushpanjali in the mornings. Devi Paksha meaning the period of the goddess, khakis carry the large leather strung called the dhak that shows off their ritual dance worship called aarati. Chanting of mantras in Sanskrit is an essential part of the Durga Puja festival also known as the Durga Puja's Pushpanjali Mantra.

It is said that the entire process of making of the sculpture (durga murti) is from the collection of clay to the ornamentation that is referred to as holy process supervised by rites and rituals. As per the Hindu date of Akshaya Tritiya, i.e. the day Ratha Yatra is held. Clay for the sculptures is collected from the banks of a river preferably the Ganges. There is also a tradition of collecting a handful of soil (punya mati) from the nishiddho pallis (forbidden territories) of Calcutta. After the transportation of the clay it is the donation or opening of the eyes. The eyes of the sculptures are usually painted on Mahalaya i.e. the first day of the pujas. It is said that before painting the eyes, the craftsmen fasts for a day and eats only vegetarian food.

Baroyari Durga puja is said to be mostly started in Guptipara in Hooghly by the twelve young men where baro means 12 and yar meaning friends. In Kolkata, Baroyari Durga Puja was first organized by Sanatan Dharmotsahini Sabha at Bhawanipur. Puja means worship and Durga Puja is celebrated from the sixth to tenth day of the waning moon in the month of Ashvin i.e. the sixth month of the Bengali calender. The pujas are held over a ten day period with traditionally viewed as the coming of the married daughter, Durga to her father i.e. the Himalaya's home.

In Maharashtra, Durga Puja is an enjoyable occasion. Puja is performed each day and devotees do not remove the flower garland that is put each day on the sculpture or image of the deity. After nine days, all nine garlands are removed together. Young girls who have not attained maturity are invited to eat, play games, dance and sing. The elephant is drawn with Rangoli, and the girls play guessing games. It is called as 'bhondala' then they are fed a meal of their choice. Goddess Durga is also worshipped by devotees in different pandals across the state. The pandals are decorated with beautiful decorative.

People of Punjab strictly observe Navaratri. Some Punjabis have only milk for seven days before breaking the fast on ashtami or navami. They worship Durga Ma and do the aarti at home. Some of them have fruit or a complete meal only once a day. Intoxicating drinks or meat, and other forms of entertainment are completely avoided. At the end of the fast, devotees feed beggars or worship little girls who spell the Shakti of the Mother Goddess.

Durga Puja is celebrated in the state of Tripura with all its pride and glory. In India Durga Puja is the second biggest celebrated in this state and also the biggest celebrated festival to the people of Tripura.

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Durga Puja is celebrated in the state of Andhra Pradesh at Vijayawada, Proddatur, Nandyal, Warangal and Hyderabad with all its pride and glory. The Durga temple in Vijayawada is located adjacent to Krishna River and near to Prakasham Barrage is the largest and famous temple in Andhra Pradesh. Dasara is one of the biggest festival along with Ugadi. People buy new clothes and things for home. The Durga temple in Warangal is located adjacent to Bhadrakali Lake located in center.

In Tamil Nadu, Golu is the festival celebrated during the Navaratri period. On this occasion dolls, predominantly that of the Gods and Goddesses from Hindu Tradition are artistically arranged on a seven stepped wooden platform. Traditionally, 'marapachi' wooden dolls representing Perumal and Thayaar are also displayed together at a dominant location on the top step of the platform erected specially for the occasion. On the 9th day (Navami day), Saraswati puja is performed when special prayers are offered to goddess Saraswati – the divine source of wisdom and enlightenment. Books and musical instruments are placed in the puja pedestal and worshipped. Also, tools are placed for the Ayudh puja. Even vehicles are washed and decorated, and puja performed for them on this occasion. As part of the Golu festival, Saraswati puja is performed as Ayudh puja. This is followed by the Vijayadashami celebrations at the culmination of the ten-day festivities. Apart from the golu pooja, Ayudha Puja has become very popular when business houses celebrate it ardently.

Dussehra is marked as the day of victory over Goddess Durga over the demon Mahishasur. It is also known as Vijaya Dashami literally meaning the victory on the Dashami, also dashmi being the tenth lunar day of the Hindu calendar month.



Clay idol of durga made on the occasion of Dasara.



The detailing for the face of Durga idol is given with a sculpting tool.

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The artisan working on the eye part of the idol.

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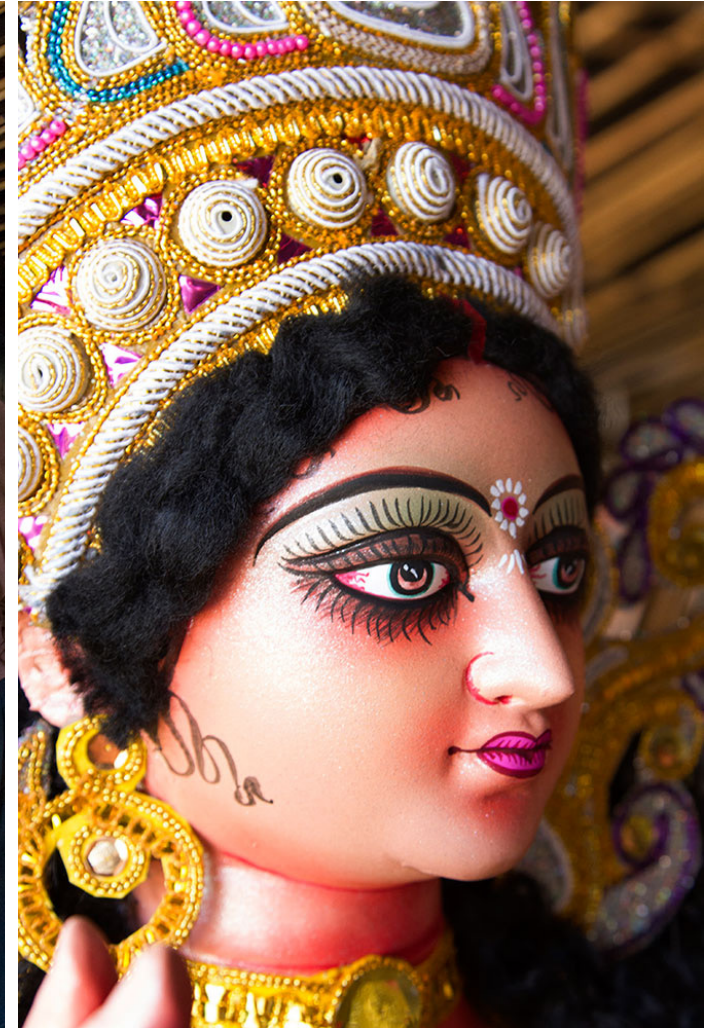
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The artisan draping the saree onto Durga idol.



Beautifully completed face of the Durga idol.

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The artisan pasting the moustache to the face to complete the details.



Durga idol that is made of clay and painted with gold color.

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Artist fixing the head gear to the face of the idol with clay.

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Tools and Raw Materials

Following are the tools and raw materials required for Durga Idol making at Hebbal are:

- **Clay:** Clay from Bengaluru, Ganga, Balu and Thickana matti from the Kolkata regions of India are generally preferred for the Idol making.
- **Rice Husk:** It is generally mixed with the clay from Bengaluru for stiffness purposes.
- **Hay:** It is mixed with the clay in giving the final details to the sculptures.
- **Gunny Sack and Plastic Material:** It is used to mix, knead the clay to the required proportions.
- **Tarpaulin:** It is used as a topping in covering the Idols from rain and sunlight.
- **Sticks and Ropes:** Sticks of bamboo and others are preferred in making of the frame structure for the sculpture.
- **Stoles:** It is used to support the craftsmen in making bigger sized Idols.
- **Brush:** It is used in giving the final touches to the idol with water.
- **Water Colours:** Generally water colours brought from West Bengal is used for colouring the idol.
- **Spray Guns:** It is used to spray the water colours to the idols.
- **Plank of Wood:** It is used to spread the parts of the idol made in clay.
- **Jute Fibre:** It is mixed with clay to get grip in making idols & also it is fixed as hair for the deities and lion figures.
- **Machete (Big Knife):** It is generally used to cut the jute fibre to smaller pieces.
- **Sticks and Bamboo Sticks:** It is used in providing shelter for making of the Durga idols.
- **Poster and Acrylic Colours:** It is used generally to paint the eye portions of the idols.
- **Nails:** It is used to fix the cloth material to the portions wherever it is required.
- **Maida Paste:** It is used to stick the hair and golden papers on the idol.

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Paint spray gun is used to spray paint evenly.



T screw driver is used to drill holes.

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Hammer is used to nail and fix the structures for the idols.



Hay is used to roughly tie the structure of idols before starting with clay.

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Gum paste is used to stick accessories of the idols.



Artisan measures meters of cloth to cut and drape on the idols.

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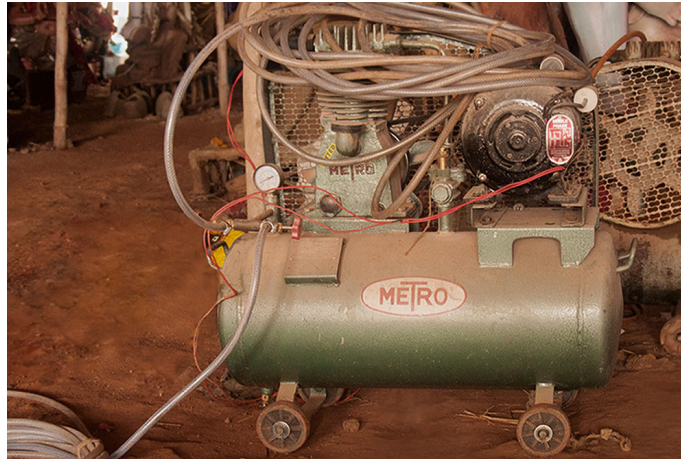
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Air compressor is used to spray paint evenly.



Dummy hair is spread to fix on the idols.



Molds that are used to get replicas of designs.



A fine paste of clay mixed with water.

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Clay mixed with rice husk and hay.



A set of colors that are used by the artisans to color the idols.



A set of round and flat paint brushes.



Gum paste mixed with black color to fix the hair.

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Accessories that are stuck on idols to give it a lovely look.



Twine threads are used to tie the hay to get the basic structure of idols.



For lion hair jute fiber is used.

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Making Process

The work place is set with sticks inserted to the ground firmly with the required area for the production. Top portion is placed with bamboo sticks that are laid parallelly and tied, over which the tarpaulins are laid that protects the craftsmen from sunlight and rain.

Clay is collected from various parts of India such as the Ganga matti (clay collected from the banks of the River Ganga), Balu matti (one type of West Bengal clay), Thickana matti (another type of clay from West Bengal) and the clay collected from the nearby fields of Bengaluru.

The clay collected from the nearby fields of Bengaluru are smooth therefore it is mixed with rice husk to get more grip while working. If the quantity of clay is small it is mixed in hand, if the quantity is more then it is mixed with feet.

The shape of the idol to be made, the outline is first tied with the bamboo for small and the bigger ones with bamboo and sticks. The base structure is made with hay tied with the rope to the required shapes to which the clay is placed as per the shapes. After this is dried the coat of the clay mixed with hay is applied that gives the final outline to the idols. The face of the idol made with the Pop mould and the clay from the banks of river Ganga is used for this as it gives the better outline (details). The Pole part of the face is covered with freshly mixed clay and the face is fixed firmly, then the head portion is covered.

The structure is applied with water throughout with a brush and wherever finer detailing is required it is given the final touch ups. The hands and the feet are separately made by either hand or mould and then placed firmly, tied in few cases to obtain the required shapes. The designs made for the frames of the statue in few cases are fixed and left for drying in shade and then sunlight.

After the idol is completely dried it is painted either by hand or by the hand gun with required colours. Mostly water colours are generally preferred for painting on the idol. Dress material as per the form of Durga are wrapped around the idol and fixed with nail firmly. For the hair of Durga, jute fibre is immersed in black colour and then fixed, for the Lions hair the jute fibres are made in small bundles and fixed. The Eye portions of the idol is generally painted with either acrylic or poster colours as said by the crafts person. As said by the craftsmen this making of Idol is the group effort of about ten to fifteen members.

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Craftsman making an armature using dry rice grass.



Armature of legs in different postures.



Each body frame is fasten to make a complete idol (except head).

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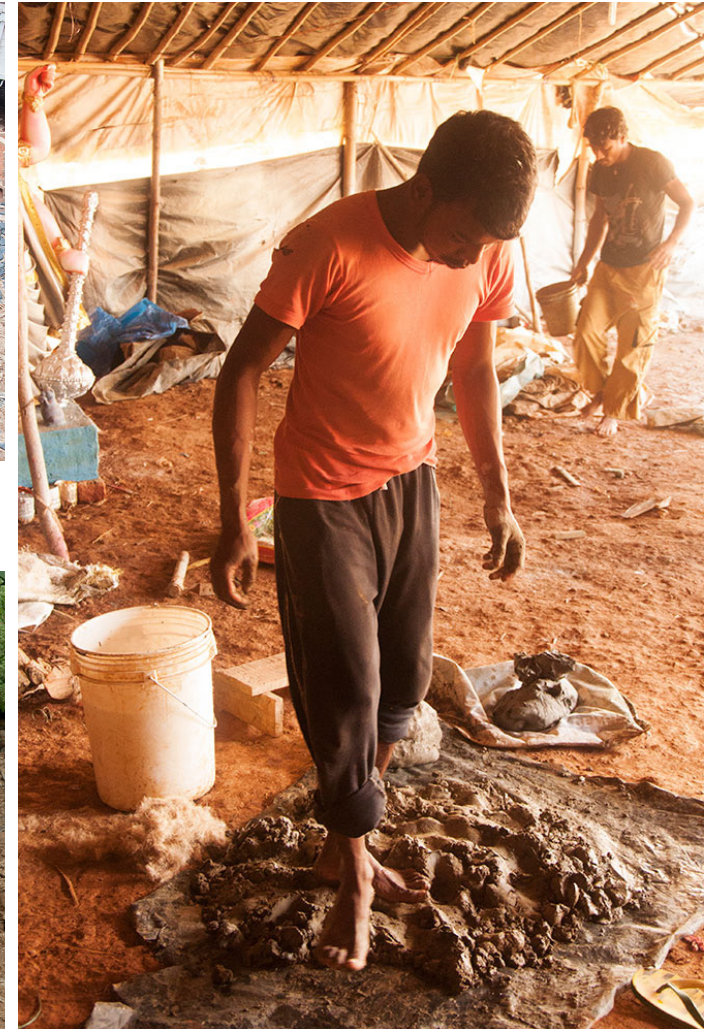
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Clay is separated from the lot.



Kneading the clay with hand pressure.



If clay is too hard, leg pressure is used to knead clay.

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Armature on which skilled artisan apply clay as a base coat mixing rice bark with clay.



Face of bigger than life-size idols are part of the body to apply clay (face of life-size idols are done separately).



Armature of Goddess is applied with the first coat of clay and allowed to dry.

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Clay is refined to use as another coat with the help of cotton cloth.



Covering the clay model with cloth to give it a smooth finishing.



Clay wet cloth is covered to avoid cracks on body.



Ganga Mitti (clay from basin of River Ganga) kneaded well and is used to prepare ornaments.

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Clay is pressed in the cavity of mould (face).



Supporting piece of clay is attached to either side of the face.



Face of the idol is completed by attaching both pieces.



Outer surface of face is ejected from the mould.

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A view of mould made of Plaster of Paris.



Various ornaments which are moulded.



Craftsman prepare neck area of idol to fix face.

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Face, moulded separately is fasten to body.



Meeting surfaces are covered with clay.



Top area of the face is covered with clay to form head bone (Parietal & Front bone).



Uneven surface on head is corrected.

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Hands and legs are made separately to join main body.



Fingers are made and attach to palm hand.



Palm hand is fasten to wrist area of idol hand.

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Process of preparing the paint which is used to paint the idols.

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Process of painting the features of idol.

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Craftsman draping saree for Durga Maa idol.

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Decorating durga Maa idol with golden chamki ornaments.



Fur is being fixed over the lion idol.

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Products

Craftsmen makes various Idols at this place like the Ganeshji, Vishwakarma, Durga, Kaali murthi etc. As per the festival or the occasions on which it is required from time to time and want of the people in whichever form.

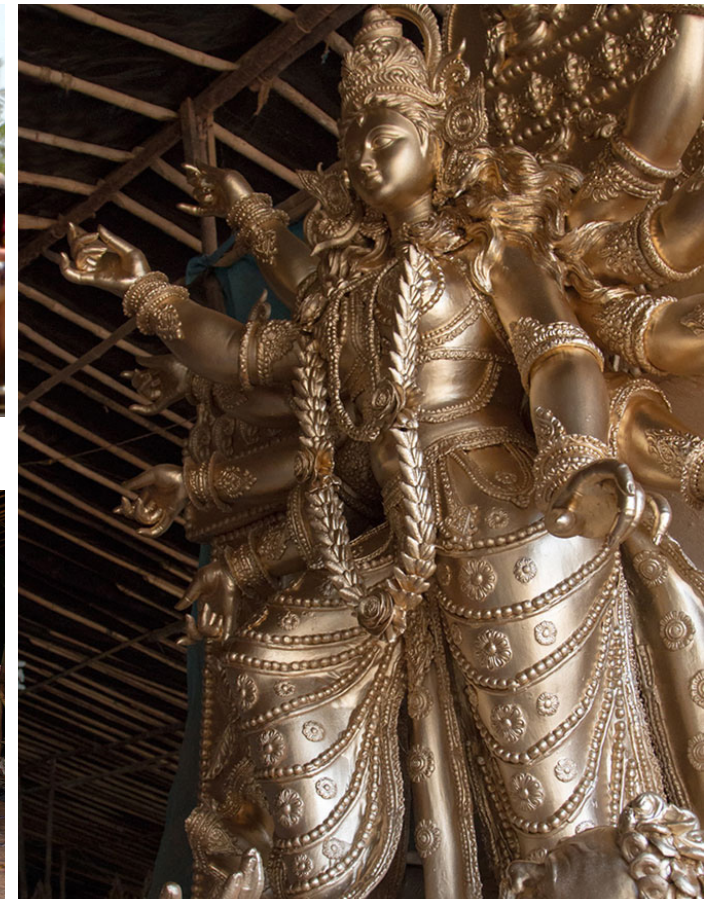
Generally the smallest idol made by the craftsmen in Bytaranpura signal are generally of 2 feet size and the biggest made by them are of about 14-15 feet. The cost of the smallest idol will cost of about INR 2000 - INR.3000 and bigger ones will cost of about INR 50,000 – INR.60,000. It is said that it takes minimum of about 1 week to make an idol. As per the craftsmen they make Sheravali Durga Maata, Durga Maata and so on for the people of their community who live in and around of Bengaluru.



Exquisitely finished Durga idols are being transported.



Idols of Durga lined up for the finishing of lions.



Clay idol of Durga painted in gold color paint.

Design Resource

Durga Idol Making - Bengaluru

Durga Pooja Celebration

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Lija M. G.

NID, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/durga-idol-making-bengaluru/products>

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Beautifully finished durga idol.



A gorgeously completed durga idol, a close look of the face portion.

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Video



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Contact Details

This documentation was done by Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and Lija M. G. at **NID Campus, Bengaluru**.

You can get in touch with

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You could write to the following address regarding suggestions and clarifications:

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