Design Resource
Durga Puja
Bengali's Biggest Festival
by
Sudip Adhikary
IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:
http://dsource.in/resource/durga-puja

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Source:
http://dsource.in/resource/durga-puja/introduction

Introduction

In the month of September-October when the season 'Sarat' brings a bunch of white cloud in blue sky the whole Bengal celebrates 'Durgapuja, Bengali's biggest festival. When beautiful kasful (grass flower) paints the green land with a white touch the goddess Parbati visits to her own house (i.e. earth) with her four children Ganesh, Kartik, Swaraswati, Laxmi for five days and her arrival is celebrated with a great enthusiasm.

The wave of enthusiasm flows all across the Bengal with a spirit of togetherness. Shops use to be flooded with people perusing new dresses for themselves and their near and dear ones. These four days of Durgapuja people use to roam around from pandel to pandel to get a glance of devi durga. Road side food adds a bit of spice to their jubilant visit.

Beside all these festive reverberation Durgapuja provides an amount of employment opportunity to many people. Some of them earn only during this season such as 'Mritsilpi' (Clay artiest), 'Dhaki' (drummer), Pandel maker etc.

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Kumartuli

The place is called Kumortuli where the potter group works day and night to give the idol its shape. This procedure starts with the ritual called "Kahamopuja", a prayer to the god before making the structure made of straw. Then they put black sticky clay on the structure to make the idol. After a bit of final finishing the idol is pained with colour and decorated with jewellery.

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Dhaki

Dhaki comes from different parts of Bengal and gather in front of Shialdah Rail way platform where they perform their skills. They all dressed in different costumes and with decorated drums. Organizer of different pujamandap comes and borrow theme after a bit of bargaining and negotiation.

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Pandal Maker

Pandalmaker mekes the pandel with their artistic hand. The huge structure of pandal is made of bamboo tied with rope. In the pick time of puja they use to stay at a place nearby pujamandap and work together to decorate the pandal, one of the main attractions for the visitor.

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People and Vendors

For vendors like balloon sellor, panipri sailor, Mehendiwala, etc, puja mandap is a place to sell their goods and foods. Visitors coming from different places usually buy goods or have food from the stall near the pandel. You will get some traditional foods, sweets, ice cream etc at a very cheap price from those stalls, which sometime makes the mandap a hangot place for the visitor.

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Pandals

Pandals are the one of the main attraction for the visitor. Beautifully decorated pujamandap/ pandals are made of many different materials. The preliminary structure of a pandel is usually made of bamboo tied with rope. Sometime themes are taken by the organizing committee to decorate the pandel. The creative use of different patterns, materials such as bamboo, jute, cloth, glass etc makes the pandal a work of art.

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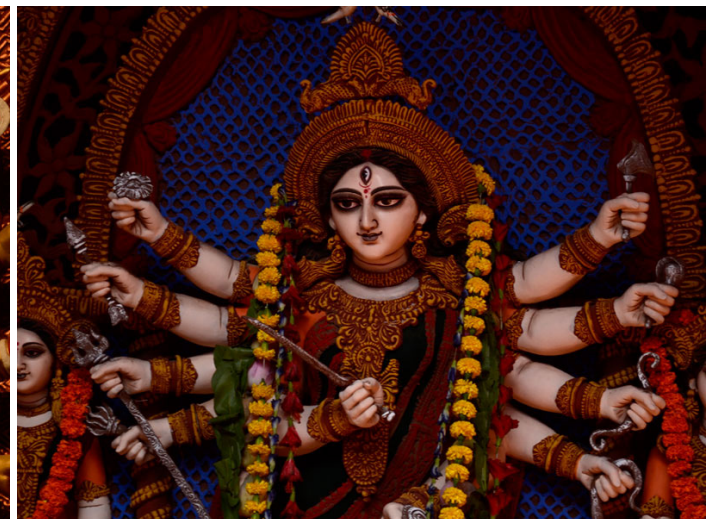IDC, IIT Bombay

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Pratima (The Idol)

People from different places come to get a glance of devi durga while roaming pandal to pandal. Different form, format and representation of devi duga creates the main interest among the visitor. Sometime the formal interpretation of theme is found in overall appearance of the idol.

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Vasan (Immersion Idol)

After the five days of joy and celebration finally the time comes when devi durga leaves for a year. The grand send off is celebrated with dance, drums bit, and a special event called sindur khela in which women generally play with red coloured sindur. The idol is brought to the major ghats of the river Bhagirathi with a grand possession to immerse the idol in sacred water of Ganges.

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Contact Details

This project was done by Sudip Adhikary IDC, IIT Bombay

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