



## The Face as a Narrative Special Project

Geetanjali Srivastava  
VC- 05625004  
March 2007

Guide: Prof. Raja Mohanty

Face to emote

Divinity and Beauty

Devi & Beauty

Why do we tell stories?

The Changing face of Reverence

Hindu Goddesses

Anthropomorphic qualities

Folk Stories and Myths

- Aditi, Diti
- Tara, Ugratara
- Vandevi
- Manasa

Gods for the Contemporary Time

- Goddess of Happiness
- Goddess of Self

Paper Mache Masks

Hypothesis

## A Face to emote

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- desire to form a face or give facial identities to voices we hear on the phone, voice on the radio

- based past experiences of the people we have met

- face is an important feature for the identification of others

- conveys significant social information

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- We look for faces in everything,

two symmetrical horizontally positioned dots for the eyes & horizontal line just a little below to form the mouth

Is communication in any way based on tangible/ intangible emotions of the person one is trying to connect with?

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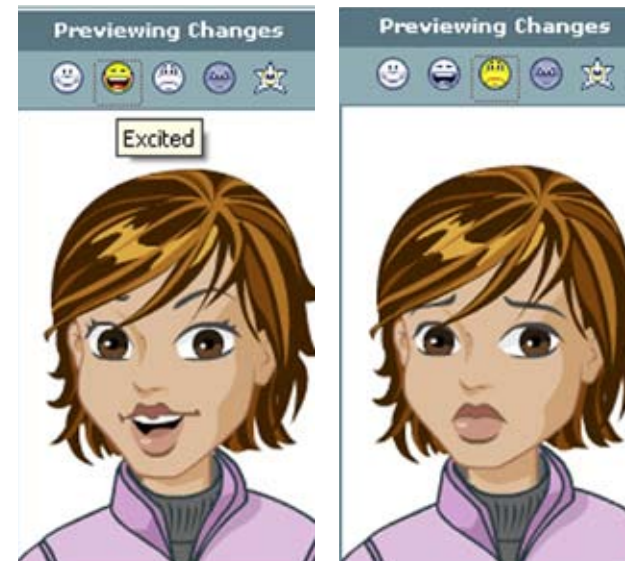
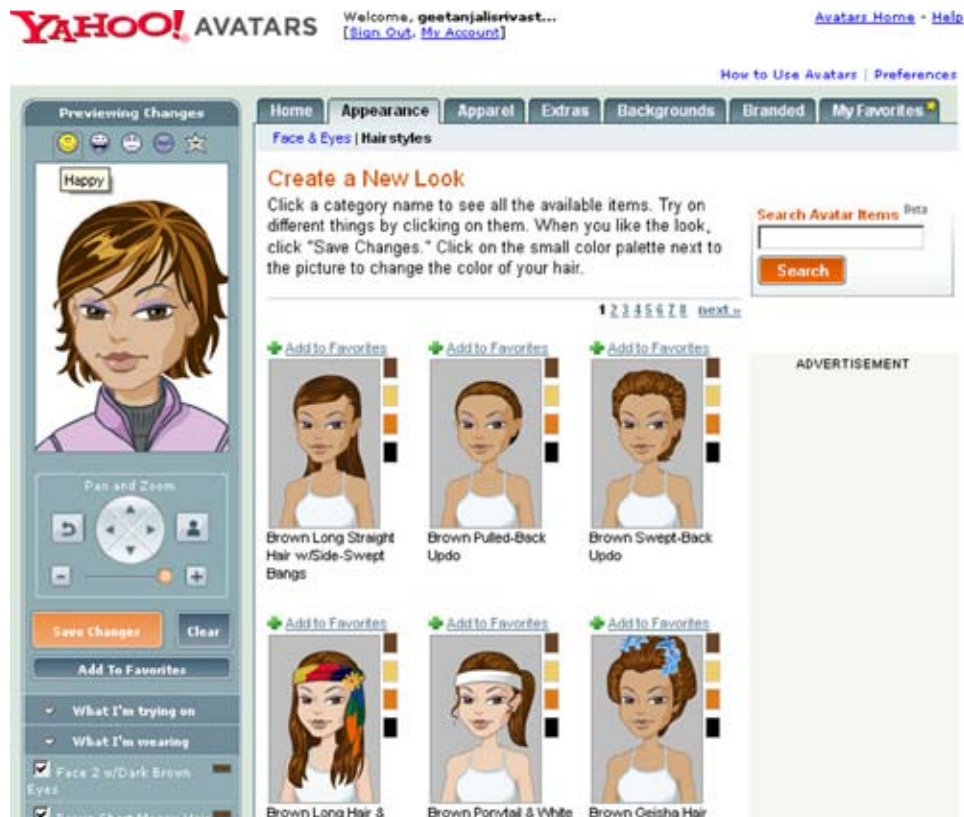
## Avatars- Online masks

- The “avatar” derives from Sanskrit word

- meaning “incarnation” and usually

- implies a deliberate descent into mortal realms for special purposes

- Online avatar is a personality connected with the screen name of an Internet user



A character preview window titled "Previewing Changes" with a toolbar of five icons: a yellow smiley face, a blue laughing face, a blue neutral face, a blue sad face, and a yellow star. The main area shows a character with long brown curly hair and a brown top.

Home Appearance Apparel

### Create a New Look

Try on different things by clicking on look, click "Save Changes."

[1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#) [5](#) [6](#) [7](#) [8](#) [9](#) [10](#) [11](#) [12](#) [13](#) [14](#) [15](#) [16](#) [17](#) [29](#) [30](#) [31](#) [32](#) [33](#) [next »](#)

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A thumbnail image showing a dance studio with a wooden floor, a mirror, and a person in a pink leotard.A thumbnail image showing a hospital room with a bed, a desk, and a person in a blue uniform.



## Divinity and Beauty

- one of the finest examples of imagined beauty
- Hindu Gods and Goddesses portrayed with a sense of aesthetic measure
- degree of flawlessness associated with the portrayal of divinity

This notion emerged from the Greek identification of perfection and limitation, leading to identifying God as being infinite, perfect and immeasurable in form

1 (the septic)

God is perfect ;  
Being perfect entails being existent ;  
Therefore, God exists.

2 (the aseptic)

Whatever is divine is (absolutely) perfect ;  
Were nothing divine, divinity would be imperfect;  
Therefore, something is divine.

Existence and the Ontological Argument  
Murray Kiteley

*Essence of the Vedas:*

*Ultimate God was and always will be an inner, formless, individual realisation, in the human search for realisation of the ultimate reality or Truth.*



## Darshanic/ Katha image

- rural and urban parts of the country
- painted rocks worshipped/ revered
- there are sculpted examples of faces of Gods and Goddesses which are considered to be divine and sacred eg. Caves of Ajanta, Buddhist religious art
- Kaimur district of central India, archeologist describe concentric triangles in sandstone set up as shrines for the worship of the female principle Shakti built by Upper Paleolithic hunters and gatherers

- The present-day calendar art has with its twin aspects of the
- darshanic image and katha image.

The darshanic image is the image that is worshipped and some people revere these images

The katha image portrays a story or a legend about the character and usually there are various other characters and



## Devi and Beauty

- The woman represents the primordial female in the purest form,
- two aspects of beauty represent two sides of God, order, the form of God, light, God's formless unknowable aspect
- To the Gothic mind, beauty was the radiance of truth, a manifestation of Divinity
- to contemplate the divine form was to participate not only in its aesthetic beauty, but it was a way to commune with God
- attempt make God look beautiful was to describe the quality of God itself

## Why do we tell stories?

- need to feel connected with each other
- this connection comes from what we talk and remember about
- tend to create an impression, sugar-coat and exaggerate facts
- every newspaper article may not be entirely true, fact + fiction

Storytelling- inherent part of human existence, we tell stories of inspiration and encouragement, horror and fear, tales of love and emotions

- stories help us as individuals to keep our personal thoughts together

- research psychologist discovered that stories are in fact the way our brain works to store memories

- we do not remember individual facts, instead, we keep in mind facts as bits of a larger story that we make up

- variation between eyewitness accounts  
each person may see the same individual facts, but each person recalls those facts in the context of a story that belongs uniquely to her or him



## The Changing face of Reverence

- Chalcolithic finds at Bilwali in Central India of Mother Goddess of an archaic type with exaggerated buttocks, heads, noses, arms and breasts



- autorickshaw meter where one finds Ganesha painted

- milk canister is marked with the holy symbol of the swastika

## Politicians/ Actors

- popular faces of esteem, recognition, fame and money. M.G.R. portrayal of Vishnu, especially Rama and Krishna made people believe that he was the avatar of Vishnu in real life, and was considered as a symbol of the ideal man



## Personification of objects

Such as Auto rickshaws / trucks/ meters, common objects of worship during the Vishwakarma puja



## Hindu Goddesses

- goddess in every village, every tree, a nymph in every lake
- Demonesses stand guard on village frontiers.
- Dakinis and wise Yoginis- each with a story to tell

The female identified as primal mother, source of being and nurture

The image of the Mother Goddess can be both worshipped and feared

Goddesses are seen in different points of time as:

**Vedic:** Aditi, Diti, Prithvi, Saranyu, Ushas, Nisha, Rati, Manasa

Rarely worshipped

**River Goddesses:** Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati

**Brahmanical Goddesses:**

Saraswati, Lakshmi, Devi, Sati, Uma, Parvati, Durga, Kali, Shitala,

## Indus Valley Civilisation

4000 years when the Pre- Aryans lived and worshipped the female power, associating with mother earth,

- agrarian communities placed emphasis on fertility of the earth- earth and fire was worshipped for fertility

post- Vedic period that females were given high reverence

Brahmanas and Upanishads pushed the female aspect of the divine in the background

Hinduism that brought the Goddess into the foreground



## Anthropomorphic qualities

- Vedic Deities were conceived as anthropomorphic deities and worshipped as superman/ woman

- Non human abstract concepts such as earth, fire, dawn, light, sky. Sun, powers of creativity, fertility, continuity or preservation, dissolution and destruction were given a facial identity

- gods are represented with a figure that looks like a person, may have additional superhuman characteristics

- The ten avatars of the Hindu supreme god Vishnu possess both human and divine forms and qualities,



Anthropomorphism is the attribution of uniquely human characteristics and qualities to non human beings, inanimate objects, or natural or supernatural phenomena.

Animals, forces of nature, and unseen or unknown sources of chance are frequent subjects of anthropomorphosis.

- natural tendency for humans to perceive inanimate objects as having human characteristics

In 1953, U.S. government- hurricanes names- feminine, thereafter masculine names

## Folk Stories & Myths

The Indian books Panchatantra and The Jataka tales employ anthropomorphized animals to illustrate various principles of life.

Anthropomorphized animals are frequently used to portray stereotypical characters, for the author or artist to quickly convey character traits

Rudyard Kipling's Just so stories where human characteristics commonly ascribed to animals

highlight their perceived personality  
(owls are typically portrayed as wise),

appearance  
(penguins are usually portrayed as plump aristocrats, as their plumage resembles a tuxedo);

or a combination of both  
(raccoons are commonly portrayed as bandits, because the band of dark colored fur around their eyes resembles a mask, and because they roam at night)



## Aditi

Aditi is the mother the Devas

- attribute of Aditi is her motherhood
  - the mother of the Adityas, a group of 7 or 8 gods
- Aditi is also said to be the mother of the great god Indra, the mother of kings and the mother of Gods

Aditi does not have a male consort in the Rig Veda.

- provide him or her with wealth, safety, and abundance.

-Aditi is sometimes associated with or identified as a cow provides nourishment

- A-diti, she is un-bound, free one, free the petitioner from different hindrances, sin and sickness

- supporter of creatures



*Rigved 1.11.60*

*Oh revered mother of Gods, Aditi*

*Oh beautiful haired, forehead and figured Ainivali*

*Establish the cooking utensil with your hands.*

*With her powers may she hold that unity.*

*Sacred utensil with her hands wielding Agni*

*In her midst, just like a mother holds her child in lap.*

*Oh revered mother, you are the foremost of the Yageya Havan'*



## Diti

Diti is an earth goddess and -mother of the Maruts with Rudra

- wanted to have a son who would be more powerful than Indra

-and so she practiced magic and kept herself pregnant for one hundred years

Indra used a thunderbolt to splinter the fetus into many pieces, the Maruts.

- She is also Aditi's sister. She is one of the thirteen wives of Kashyapa,

- She has many demon sons and daughters

- Diti is usually mean and cruel to Kashyapa and Aditi.

- obsessed with trying to raise the power of demons to its peak

- hates Aditi's sons who are the gods.



Bluish like the blue lotus, 3 eyed, holding a scissor, skull, lotus, dagger. Tara is the power of the golden embryo, (Hiranyagarbh), a situation where the light of the stars in a dark night, universe and methods evolve its power. Tara stands for void, boundless space.

In the Tibetan descriptions of Tara she is benign, gentle and compassionate deity who cheats death

## Tara

Tara is called The Most Revered of the old pre-vedic Goddesses. Wine is sacred to Her.

Goddess of Compassion, Diamonds are Her sacred stone  
Tibetan Buddhist Great Mother

- vowed to incarnate until all beings have attained enlightenment. She also vowed to incarnate only as a female

She governs the Underworld, the Earth and the Heavens, birth, death and regeneration, love and war, the seasons, all that lives and grows, the Moon cycles.

Typically She is seen as a slender and beautiful woman of long golden hair and blue eyes

- Avalokiteshvara sheds a tear of compassion for all beings tear becomes Tara who is thus understood to be the essence of the essence of compassion.

Though Tara is known to be the cheater of death, the prolonger of life, and is popularly known as a charming playful young girl, she has a variety of forms, some of which may be fierce and terrifying

Ugratara

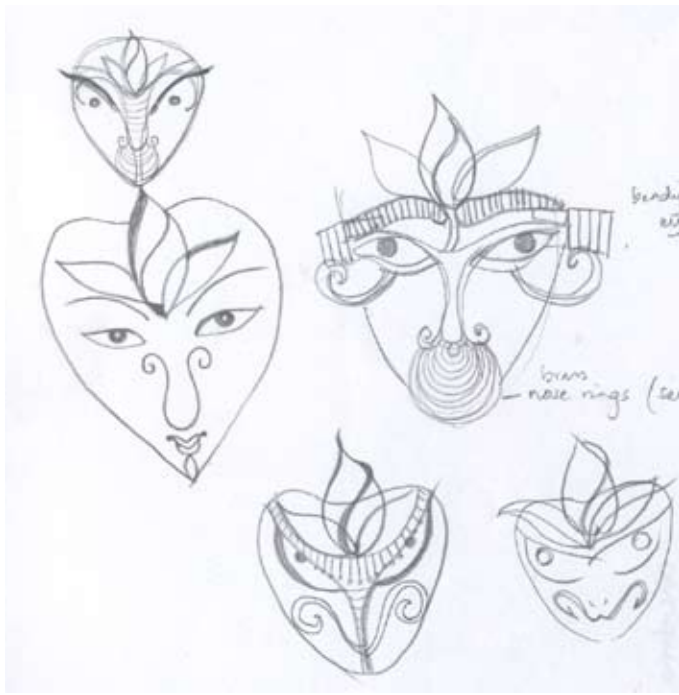
The fierce form of Tara

She is awe inspiring

Her complexion is like that of the blue lotus, and is three-eyed, one face, celestial and laughs horribly

She is in an intensely pleasant mood, stands on a corpse , is decked in ornaments of snakes, has red and round eyes, wears the garments of tiger skin round her loins, is in youthful bloom, is endowed with the five auspicious symbols and has a protruding tongue.

She is most terrible, appears fierce with bare canine fangs, carries the sword, Utpala and Kapala in the left



## Serpent Goddess Manasa

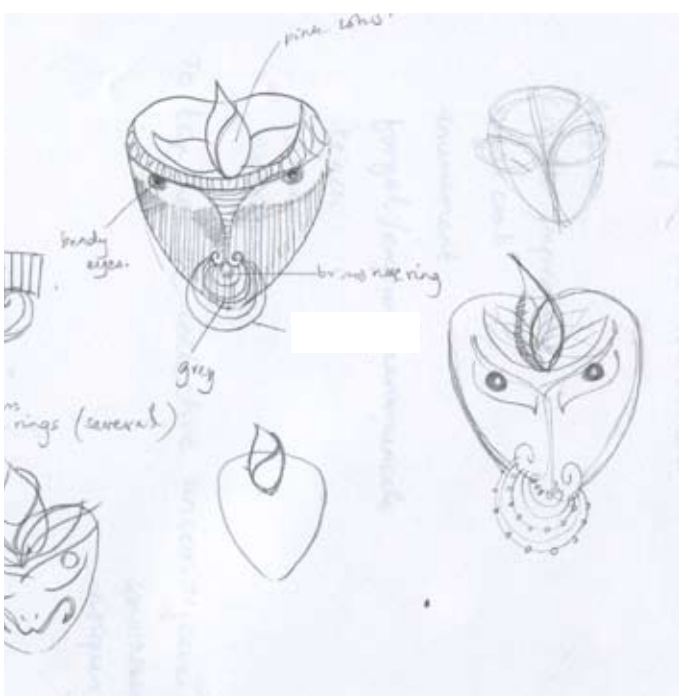
- anthropomorphic serpent goddess known as Manasa is worshiped in Bengal

-Manasa is a naga and goddess of fertility

- goddess of wish fulfilment and one who protects against snakebite

- attributed with the powers of curing infectious diseases like small-pox and of bringing wealth and prosperity

-pre-Aryan goddess





*The lotus represents the perfection of beauty and symmetry.  
the lotus symbolises birth and rebirth through the fact that the petals open when the sun comes out and close when the sun sets.*

## Vandevi- patron of nature

People in villages believe that in every forest there is a goddess who lives in a tree

-wears a scarf to cover her hair.

Therefore, every woman in the village must cover hers with either a sari or sarong. It is believed that if a woman does not comply, Vandevi not be pleased.





Hypothesis:

If the representation of the divine is sought to have a face?

If something is worshipped, does it need to be complete in terms of a facial identity and structure?

Do people look for a facial identity in something that they worship; these objects need to have the basic elements, such as the symmetrical dots for eyes and a horizontal line for a mouth. Sometimes though, a mouth may not be necessary at all.



For eg. The stone temple image of Kali worshipped at Kalighat in South Calcutta

Totem pole, Bight State Historical Park, Alaska- Dodem: to be related to someone

## God/ Goddess for the Contemporary time

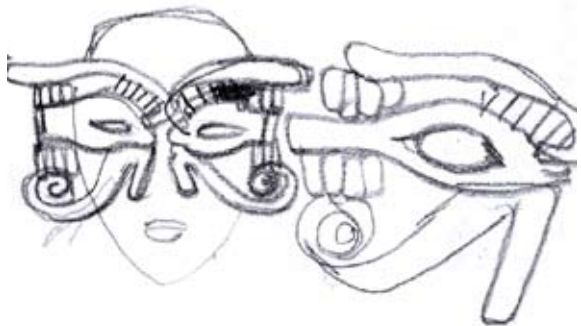
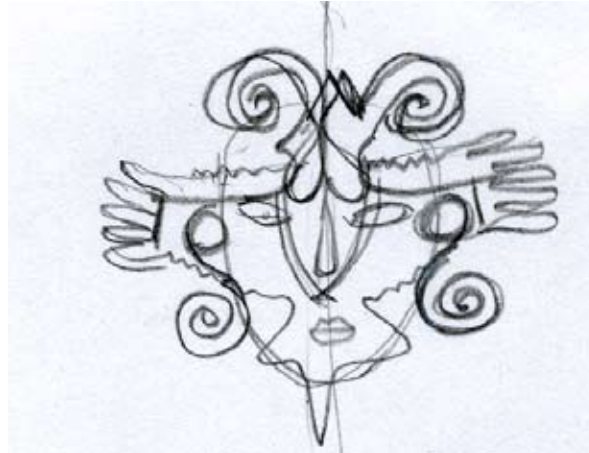
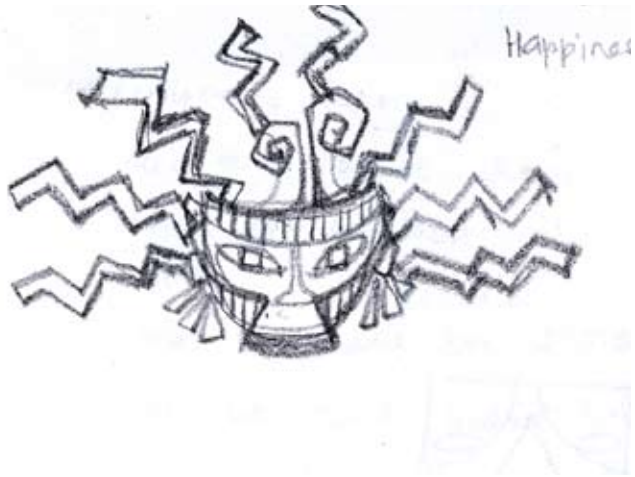
- Religions have always shown man in a lesser light, reduced him to a mere follower
- The 'sense of responsibility' is often shrugged off on 'God'
- What if there existed a religion that would bring the person who prays in the forefront as God himself?

guide people to create fewer problems for themselves and others, and to live in peace and harmony.

How can we make this world a better place to live in free from ill-actions?

- Have we kept room for spiritual thoughts in our life?
- Is there a religion that will make us look inside of us?

It is said that there is a bit of God in every one of us,  
What face should we give to the God who lies amongst us?



## Goddess of Self

Concept revolves around being able to see oneself in the eyes of the Goddess.

- Goddess is a term that refers to a being admired for her great beauty and mystical powers.

- beauty is only skin deep  
- it is finding the true self where one starts to look for the inner beauty

- We create an image of ourselves out of dread  
- for not being accepted for who we really are

- Self-acceptance gives one the liberty to enjoy ourselves and others without judgment  
- without judgment one is able to be happy

*“There is only one journey. Going inside yourself.” -Rainer Maria Rilke*



## Paper Mache Masks

1. Tear newspaper into thin strips length-wise  
soak in water in a bucket for 3- 4 days

2. Insert cinnamon sticks

3. Methi powder may be added 4-6 tbsp

4. Use a colander to remove excess water,

5. put in a blender with fevicol and make a  
lumpy paste, you should be able to knead it  
like dough.



6. Heat Industrial clay in the oven to 62  
degrees

7. Use immediately before it cools





## Paper Mache Masks

8. Apply vaseline on the clay-mould

9. Make base with newspaper strips soaked in fevicol- water solution and place over clay-mould

10. Place a string under the to pull out mask

11. Let it dry overnight



12. Style hair with coiling technique

13. Detailing can be done even after the mask is dry



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Photographs taken at Ramnathpuram village, Rameshwaram dec. 2006



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