



The Hindu Temple and Heritage Hall of Toledo

presents



7th - 9th Aug '09

Jhalak

A Glimpse of India

The Hindu Temple and Heritage Hall of Toledo, 4336 King Rd. Sylvania. OH 43560.
Tel: 419.843.4440. www.hindutempleoftoledo.org



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Jhalak *A Glimpse of India*

Friday, August 7th '09

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 06:00 - 07:00 p.m. | Ganesh Puja [religious ceremony] |
| 07:00 - 07:15 p.m. | Unveiling of "Krishna and Arjuna Chariot Painting" |
| 07:30 - 08:15 p.m. | Catered Dinner |
| 08:30 - 10:30 p.m. | Musical Evening by Gayaki Grooves |

Saturday, August 8th '09

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 08:30 - 11:00 a.m. | Venkateshwara Puja [religious ceremony] |
| 11:00 - 12:30 p.m. | Satyanarayana Puja [religious ceremony] |
| 12:30 - 08:00 p.m. | Mela [carnival] <ul style="list-style-type: none">★ Temple tours★ Food stalls representing different parts of India★ Desserts and drinks: Mango lassi, hot tea, Indian sweets★ Shopping: Indian movies, music, costumes, jewelry and more |
| 02:00 - 08:00 p.m. | Cultural Program |

Sunday, August 9th '09

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 09:00 - 10:30 a.m. | Mahavir Puja [religious ceremony] |
| 10:30 - 12:00 p.m. | Havan [religious ceremony] |
| 12:30 - 01:30 p.m. | Catered Lunch |
| 01:00 - 02:00 p.m. | Cultural Program |

Festival of India 2009

❧ The Team ❧

Committee	Names
Chairperson	Pradeep Vij
Co-Chair	Anand Brahme
Cultural	Vandita Prasad
Facilities	Pradeep Vij , Jay Jindal
Finance	Sangeeta Mehta, Ajit Pai, Pragna Pandhi
Hospitality	Abha Nandkeolyar, Lakshmi Ramanujam
Audio/Visual	Neel Sapre, Abhay Prasad, Kalicharan
Religious	Panditji, Om Sharma, Ravi Joshi, Sanjay Khare, Sudershan Pasupuleti
Advertisements	Anand Brahme, Pradeep Vij, Madhu Bais, Lakshmi Ramanujam, Shobha Jinka
Major Sponsorship	Jay Jindal, Pradeep Vij, Anand Brahme
Graphics & Cover	Supriya Upadhya-Joshi
Publications	Supriya Joshi, Anand Brahme, Rupan Vij
Publicity	Jay Jindal, Anand Brahme
Vendors	Tina Jindal, Abha Nandkeolyar
Website	Sumit Mukherjee
Volunteer	Ram Ramanujam
Decoration	Bhawna Bhatia, Shashi Goel
Youth Group	Tina Jindal, Mina Naik

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Subcommittee on Defense

Subcommittee on Transportation, HUD,
and Related Agencies

Subcommittee on Agriculture,
Rural Development,
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August 7, 2009

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The Hindu Temple & Heritage Hall of Toledo
4336 King Rd
Sylvania, Ohio 43560

Dear Friends:

I am pleased to recognize the 20th annual Festival of India. My warmest welcome to all in attendance.

This event is a celebration and a demonstration of the deep and rich culture of one of our ancient civilizations. At the same time, the gathering helps unify our community and promote an awareness and sensitivity and respect for all that is a key ingredient for our successful future.

Special thanks to the organizers of this event for all of your work to make it a success. Onward!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marcy Kaptur".

Marcy Kaptur
U.S. Representative

Dear Friends,

It is my distinct pleasure to welcome you all to “Jhalak,” the 20th festival of India, to mark the anniversary of Hindu Temple and Heritage Hall of Toledo. Jhalak means “glimpse”, and during these three days of festivities we will give you a glimpse into the rich and diverse Indian culture through music, dance, food and pujas.

The Festival is a big undertaking and the ideas, efforts and volunteer hours of innumerable community members have all gone into making “Jhalak” a great success. Under the leadership of Anand Brahme and Pradeep Vij, all of the festival committee members have done a commendable job to bring this year’s festival to fruition.

I would like to take this opportunity to give you a glimpse into the main events of the year so far. To tap the resources, talent and wisdom from within our community, we organized a very successful Community Connection Night, during which “Gayaki Grooves,” our local Indian musical group, was introduced. A fun, magical evening was organized for the Kid Connection Day. We have started a Sunday lecture series to present various aspects of Hinduism, and many learned community members have given lectures on different topics. Also, during the Festival, we will be unveiling a magnificent painting depicting a scene from the Gita where Lord Krishna is imparting knowledge about karma and dharma to Arjun.

Thank you to our knowledgeable and well-versed Panditji who graces the temple with his presence and goes beyond his duties to meet the spiritual and religious needs of our community. Panditji does an admirable job making the temple operate efficiently.

We are fortunate to have had founding members who envisioned such a place where our spiritual, cultural and social needs are met. Our temple board members make sure that such policies are made which will help sustain our temple for generations to come. Our temple runs so well because of the volunteers and generous donations from the community, and the general members contribute in the form of annual membership to help maintain our temple. By becoming a paid member, you own a piece of your heritage and you become a part of that valuable faction without whose contribution the temple could not run smoothly. Thanks to all the sponsors of Jhalak!

I could not have asked for a better executive committee to help me run the day-to-day operations of the temple. They are always willing to do whatever it takes to get things done.

I have taken this opportunity of serving as President, to give back to the community and offer my small contribution towards imparting our heritage into the next generation and help them feel a connection to their roots. It has already broadened my horizons and by the end of my year as a President, I hope to gain as much as, if not more, than I am able to give to our institution.

The Temple is only made of bricks and mortar – it is your presence and enthusiasm that makes our temple come to life. Vandita Prasad has organized a wonderful cultural program; let us all enjoy and have fun during the 20th Festival of India!

Best regards,

Rupan Vij

President, Executive Committee

Hindu Temple and Heritage Hall of Toledo

Dear Friends,

“The difference between what we do and what we are capable of doing would suffice to solve most of the world's problems” ...Mahatma Gandhi

Welcome to “JHALAK” Glimpses of India.

This year marks the 20th Anniversary of our Temple's inauguration. A lot has been done during these twenty years, we have a beautiful hall with a large stage and state-of-the-art audio-visual equipment to go with it. We also have an upgraded kitchen with all the modern amenities. This has been achieved because of all your generous contributions.

I am confident that our temple will continue to thrive. Almost every week I see new faces in the temple and new members taking active part in the workings of the temple. Contributing in their own way to the different activities. As the founding members progress towards Van Prasthashram, the baton must inevitably be passed to the next generation. The Sanatan Dharma School is preparing even younger devotees for their future role as leaders in our temple. Thanks to our Panditji and the devoted teachers.

We are also taking an active role in our local community. Last year, we funded two scholarship to be awarded to Sylvania schools' students. Several community members have represented the temple in the 'Multi faith Council of Northwest Ohio' and 'Habitat for Humanity'. Our youth group has volunteered at the Food banks, Park cleanups on Earth Days and many more charitable activities under the capable guidance of Tina Jindal and Mina Naik.

We are now embarking on the next phase of our progress. Plans are under way to add three new deities to the temple area. We will be replacing the roof and considering the installation of solar panels to make the temple more energy efficient. As you all know, these improvements are only possible with financial support from all our members. I hope you will help us realize these goals.

Our Temple President Rupan Vij is working very hard during these tough economic times to keep the temple running efficiently, but she needs all our help. So let's make sure we do our part. Also, a special thanks to our Festival Chair, Pradeep Vij and co-chair Anand Brahme and his committee for successfully organizing a highly entertaining weekend and providing glimpses into our rich culture.

So as we enjoy the beautiful program by our community, let us not forget the hard work that goes into each and every aspect of a successful event. Let us all do our part to make our Temple a beautiful, peaceful, self sustaining sanctuary for generations to come.

Hari Om,

Bindu Mistry,
Chairman, Board of Trustees.

Namaskar

“Jhalak – A Glimpse of India” will showcase vivacity of Indian culture. It is the time of the year when festivities give new meaning to the celebrations.

Few countries in the world have such an ancient and diverse culture as India's. Stretching back in an unbroken sweep over 5000 years, it is this variety which is a special hallmark of India.

Underneath this diversity lies the continuity of Indian civilization and social structure from the very earliest times until the present day. Modern India presents a picture of unity in diversity to which history provides no parallel.

This event is possible only through the hard work and dedication of numerous people that work tirelessly for days on end to bring this event together. Thanks to the volunteers who have put in countless hours! A big thank you to all the financial contributors, even in these tough economic times many sponsors and advertiser were kind enough to continue their support. Once again, on August 7, 8, 9 temple grounds will explode with dances, the music, aromas and tastes of India, giving you a glimpse into the soul of all that is India.

Please join us and celebrate in this amalgamation of colors, creativity and togetherness.

Let's celebrate the 20th Festival of India together!

Thanks,

Pradeep Vij & Anand Brahme

Festival Co-chairs “Jhalak - A Glimpse of India”

What is the meaning of Namaste?

by Anant Dixit

Sanatan Dharma (Hinduism) is rich in symbolism. Many physical acts have a deep meaning at higher planes of existence. One such symbol is greeting commonly used in India—Namaste.

It is pronounced as Na-ma-stay where the “a” of “Na” and “Ma” are pronounced as the “a” in “above”. The gesture of Namaste is performed by placing both the palms together in front of our heart and slightly bowing the head. It is considered as a humble greeting straight from the heart. Interestingly, the word Namah has parallels in other ancient languages including Greek, Latin, Old Saxon and German, all of which have the general sense of obeisance, homage and veneration.

Namaste is a composite of Sanskrit words: Namah and Te. Namah means “to bow” while te means “you”. So, the word means “I bow to you”. The word Namah itself can be broken down into Na which means “No” and Mah which represents “I”. It thus means “not mine”. It has a spiritual significance of negating or reducing one’s ego in the presence of another. It also implies that there is nothing that the individual soul can claim as its own.

Hindu people greet each other by saying Namaste and also offer the same obeisance when greeting the temple deity or a holy person. Thus they offer respect to the soul within and also to the omnipresent God. This method of greeting has three-fold effect: mental, physical and verbal.

The effect of Namaste at the mental level is that it is accompanied by a rejection of “I” and thus a sense of selflessness, recognition of the equality of all, and honoring everyone’s sacredness.

The commonly prevalent problem of stress these days is, in large part, due to our cynical mind sets that lead us to constantly think about ourselves alone. This greeting elevates us from this type of thinking and subtly leads us into believing in the worth of each individual and inculcating a considerate feeling for others.

At the physical level, this greeting has several symbolisms. The five fingers of the left hand are said to represent the five senses of karma, while the other five of the right hand symbolize the five senses of knowledge. It is therefore a representation of the fact that our action should be governed by true knowledge.

The other symbolism associated with Namaste is that both hands are joined together making a total of ten fingers. The number “ten”, in all ancient traditions, is considered to be a symbol of perfection and unity e.g. the number of commandments in the Bible is ten, so is the number of rules of the Arya Samaj; Pythagorean system considered ten to be a symbol of the whole of creation while in the Ancient Chinese culture, ten was taken to be a perfectly balanced number.

According to another theory, Namaste identifies with the duality that exists in nature and suggests an effort on our part to bring these two forces together, ultimately leading to a state of Oneness, a condition of unity.

At the verbal level, the utterance of the word Namaste is equivalent to the chanting of a mantra. The sonority of the sanctifying sound of the word is believed to have a kind of a miraculous effect, by causing a change in the energy vibrations. The goal of the change is to fuse in harmony and become one with the cosmos itself.

The greeting Namaste is usually considered to be an identifier of the Indian culture and reflects its hospitality, spirituality and graceful consciousness. It is also representative of paying homage to the Lord and showing our humility and gratitude for giving us this supreme human birth, unlike some other types of greetings which are merely physical acknowledgement of others’ presence.

Now you know the real meaning of Namaste let us remind our children to greet by saying Namaste.



Krishna and Arjuna Chariot-the Oil Painting

by Om Sharma



The magnificence of divine life like image of Lord Krishna and Arjuna Chariot is incredibly soothing and beyond worldly descriptions. It seems so real to watch Krishna narrating shlokas of Bhagvad Gita to Arjuna in the battlefield of Kurukshetra. Painting spreads an elaborate and detailed dramatic layout amidst the din and roar of the war of Mahabharata, fought for the righteous cause over 3000 BC. Krishna gives the priceless, divine spiritual message of Geeta to Arjuna amidst the breathing, palpitating environment of the clash and carnage of a battle-field. Geeta depicts the highest and the best in Hindu philosophy. The Geeta is a banquet composed of the beautiful flowers of spiritual truths collected from the Upanishads.

Soon after inauguration of The Hindu Temple of Toledo in 1989, we envisioned this glorious image of Krishna and Arjuna Chariot on the temple wall to give us inspiration to follow the path of Gyan, Bhakti and Karam Yoga as elaborated in Geeta. In early 1990's we planned to have the chariot mural etched on white marble from Jaipur, India. A few years later we scrubbed the project as the results were not up to our satisfaction. However, the image of this beautiful chariot always lurked in our minds. Last year we again explored the possibility of enlarging the photograph on a canvas. We also explored other possibilities. Finally it was decided to have it as an oil painting.

We started looking for an artist and we were lucky to find Paul Geiger, a Toledo native who had recently painted the beautiful 70 foot mural on the walls of historical Valentine Theater. Accolades of his masterpiece accomplishment appeared in The Blade and television; and did not remain unnoticed by us. The third of nine children, Paul Geiger was born in Hot Springs, South Dakota to Dr. Paul E. and Mary Ellen Geiger. He grew up in Ottawa Hills and graduated from St. Francis de Sales High School in 1972. He earned an art degree at the University of Toledo and a Master's degree from the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, N.Y. in Printmaking, specializing in etching and engraving. Mr. Geiger had no formal training in art until he took classes at the University of Toledo for drawing and printmaking. These classes made clear his life's work. The artist's father painted as a hobby and hoped to return to it in his retirement that never came as Dr. Geiger passed away in 1988. According to Mr. Geiger. "I was drawn to this project (Krishna Chariot) not only because of the beauty of the subject matter, but, also because Dr. Om Sharma spent his residency under my dad at Mercy Hospital." The artist teaches classes at his downtown studio and has also taught for years at The University of Toledo, Bowling Green State University and The Toledo Museum of Art.

We are fortunate to have Mr. Paul Geiger, create this magnificent painting. Only imaginative artists like him can correctly envision and describe the beauty and philosophical depth of Krishna's posture, the serene look of Arjuna, or rejoice sun-rays reflecting from the legs of the horses. Finally we are proud to have the unveiling of Lord Krishna and Arjuna Chariot. We are sure it will bring a new dimension to the glory of our temple and inspire us for generations to come.



Seeking the Definition of Right Karma

by Rupan Vij

“Your right is to action only and never to the fruit thereof. Be not instrumental in making your actions bear fruit, nor let your attachment be to inaction.” – Gita

Like Arjun, I have been seeking what should be labeled as right karma, and, like Yudishtra, I always want to apply my knowledge into my life.

My earliest memory of an introduction to my religion is through my mother. Every evening we would sing prayers (Aarti) asking God to provide us with wisdom, guidance, and protection. She always put emphasis on not doing anything knowingly that would hurt another person. My mother told me stories of Lord Krishna’s character and valor, and she also introduced me to the concept of karma and reincarnation, according to which the soul never dies and keeps taking birth as different life forms depending upon one’s karma. To take birth as a human being is the most precious chance for us to do right karma and work towards breaking the cycle of rebirth to attain moksha. This brings us to the concept of karma in Hinduism, which is the theory of cosmic cause and effect – to my innocent mind as a child, it meant if you do good karma, you will get good things, and if you do bad karma bad things will happen to you. Furthermore, I was taught to simply keep doing the right Karma and to not expect any results in return. When I was little, karma was difficult to comprehend. On the one hand, I was told good karma gets you good things, but on the other hand I was told that one should not expect good things as a result of the good karma that one does. I used to think that I study and work hard, so how could I not expect a good grade in my class? So when I used to question the concept of karma, I was told that I would understand by reading the Geeta. So I read the Geeta, but I found it too complex for my mind at the time. In my mind I used to question some religious stories and their teachings – teachings that may have been right for that era but not applicable in today’s culture and society. A lot of our cultural aspects are derived from religion. It is when cultures evolve but religion stays static that questions arise in one’s mind.

I read a quote, “The more one knows the less one follows blindly.” Therefore, for my clarification, I needed to acquire knowledge. I read the Geeta again and understood it better since I was older. Understanding the Geeta was one thing, but there were still some aspects of the teachings I had difficulty applying into my life. In my heart of hearts, I still wanted the fruit of my labor. In Geeta, it is said that there are three ways of living life – Gyan Yog, Bhakti Yog, and Karma Yog and you can also mix and match the three. Gyan Yog is living life through knowledge, Bhakti Yog is living life through prayer, and Karma Yog is living life through doing the right actions (good karma). I believe in practicing Karma Yog. To follow karma yog one needs to know what is the right karma in a given situation and for that one needs Gyan (knowledge).

To follow the path of karma I needed to know exactly how to apply it into my life. I have read many books but among those there were three books (Revolution From Within, Seat of the Soul and Kore Kagaz) that helped me in my personal and spiritual growth. I believe that personal growth is a must to achieve spiritual growth and beyond. In Kore Kagaz a novel by Amrita Pritam, there is a conversation between a guru and his disciple – which made the concept of right karma very clear to me. The conversation goes something like this:

Guru: “During our lifetime, one time or the other we all have to swallow poison in the form of taking a difficult decision, but we all do not become like Lord Shiva by doing that.”

Disciple: “Why?”

Guru: “Because there is a difference between the poisons.”

Disciple: “Oh, then, the one who knows the difference between the poisons, can become like Lord Shiva?”

Guru: “No, there is a huge difference between Gyan (knowledge) and karma! Lord Shiva translated his knowledge into action...our knowledge lacks action. If we don’t drink the poison at the time when we should have...then later on, no matter how much we repent we cannot become Shiva by drinking that poison of repentance. Our actions are bound by social norms. We do not gather the courage to take the right action.”

Action should not be result-oriented, but one should commit a certain action because that is the right action to do at that time regardless of what the outcome will be. One should be able to derive satisfaction from the right action itself. The desire of a specific result should not be the driving force behind an action. To live a righteous life, one needs to perform right actions. To know what the right actions are, one needs to seek knowledge. To put the knowledge into actions, one needs courage, even if it means breaking the shackles of social norms.

Result-oriented action is not the path to follow but one’s life-path should be charted by the right karma.



Evolution of Hinduism

by Om Sharma

Hinduism is the most ancient religion of the world. While other religions seem to be more or less static, at times fanatically adhering to sacred religious gospels, Hinduism has been constantly evolving through thousands of years, worshipping the glory of God, to uplift our minds & souls. It teaches us to control our desires & passions. It teaches us to understand the true meaning of Karma. It constantly commands us to do self-evaluation of ourselves, try to rectify our failures & misconceptions to make us better human beings. It tells us to practice Ahimsa making the world a better place to live. Hinduism is the pillar of civilization, the very essence of our life in the planet Earth and consciousness of humanity. Hinduism is deeply rooted in our ancient Vedas and other religious rituals & philosophies, but it is dynamic at the same time, constantly evolving. Just like the word Om, that is eternal with no beginning and no end.

The origin of Hinduism antedates most other religions, it is intertwined with the origin of man, origin of ancient civilization. The story of Indian history and Hindu religion revolves around Indus civilization, long before the dawn of Christianity and Islam.

Many historians use to place Hinduism to around 2000-1200 BC. There are various reasons for the misconceptions:

History of the modern world has been documented and written mostly by Western, Europeans who gave more glorifications to ancient Egyptians, Chinese, Greek & Roman cultures & their religious beliefs. Discovery of Harappa & Mohenjo-Daro is presently dated around 2900 to 1700 BC. Originally Indus Valley culture was thought to be pre-Vedic or non-Indo-European, but presently it is reinterpreted as an Indo-European and Vedic Culture.

The great river of India so eloquently spoken in Rig Vedas –the Saraswati has recently been rediscovered. Satellite imagery has been used to trace the course of Saraswati river, which is scientifically dated to have dried up around 2000-1800 BC. The sacred river ran west of Modern Delhi, parallel to & a few hundred miles east of Indus River. So Vedas existed much earlier than 2000 BC. It was on the banks of sacred river Saraswati that the Vedic ashrams thrived. The chronology of Hindu era started with Vedas (Rig, Sam, Yajur and Atharv Veda), Upanishads, Puranas, Ramayan and Mahabharat. The age of oldest Rig-Veda dates around 4500 BC, on the strength of astronomical statements contained in Vedic literature and their scientific calculations.

Recently the oceanographic department had located the submerged Dhwarika, where Shri Krishna spent his lively childhood. Scientific tests confirmed existence of Dhwarika at around 3000 BC. It further establishes Vedas spoken & practiced 5000-4500 BC. Rig-Veda not only mentioned the ways to keep pure our mind & soul, there has been clear references to artificial water channels used in irrigation as practiced in that era, mentioned in Rig-Ved and Atharv-Ved. Reservoir of water has been referenced in Mahabharata. Our ancestors have been far advanced more than 5000 BC; although we have been rarely if ever credited for that by historians.

Gyan-yoga, Bhakti-yoga and Karm-yoga are the essence of Hinduism. Gyan or the knowledge is better than practice without discernment. Meditation on God is superior to knowledge, and renunciation of the fruit of action is even superior to meditation; for peace immediately follows from renunciation.

There has been reemergence of Vedic philosophy in the last few centuries by great men like Swami Vivekananda & Swami Dayananda Saraswati. He integrated educational, philanthropic & religious activities & founded Ramakrishna Mission, Math, Vedic Center.

Swami Dayananda Saraswati was a great Hindu religious scholar and the founder of the Arya Samaj, starting a Hindu reform movement in 1875. Swami Dayananda was a great scholar, philosopher, a social reformer and a political thinker. He preached against many rituals of the Hindu religion, caste system, animal sacrifices and many restrictions of women. He voiced against dowry system and Sati pratha. Arya Samaj encourages converts back to Hinduism. He pioneered in the revival of the Indian educational system. He translated Vedas from Sanskrit to Hindi so that the common man may be able to the revival of the Indian educational system read the Vedas.

The religious tolerance exhibited by Hindus has remained an historical landmark in the epic of human existence; they have given refuge to persecuted minorities from across the World. The average Hindu you meet in a million villages possesses this simple innate spirituality and accepts much diversity. There are about a billion Hindus, one of every 6 persons on this planet. They form one of the most successful, law abiding and integrated communities in the world. May God bless mankind and bring health, wealth, peace and prosperity to the entire world, irrespective of any religious background. Long live Hindus and dynamic principals of Hinduism.