



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Pacific Asia Museum Announces Exhibition
Discovering Ganesha: Remover of Obstacles



Ganesha. India, 19th C.. Gouache on Paper. Pacific Asia Museum Collection, gift of Dr. John B. Ross.



Ganesh (one in a series). By Shana Dressler. 2004. Photographic Print. Courtesy of the Artist.

Pasadena, CA: March 6, 2009 – Pacific Asia Museum presents a multi-media exhibition that examines the enduring significance of the Hindu god Ganesha. Curated by Yeonsoo Chee, ***Discovering Ganesha: Remover of Obstacles*** will be on view from March 18 through September 20, 2009 and includes works by multi-media artist Shana Dressler, photographer Sudharak Olwe, and objects from the Pacific Asia Museum and Norton Simon collections.

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Discovering Ganesha: Remover of Obstacles documents one of India's most spectacular religious and cultural festivals, the Ganesh Chaturthi as celebrated in Mumbai. Ganesha, the elephant-headed god, son of Shiva and Parvati, is one of the most beloved deities of the Hindu pantheon. Though Ganesha has more than 1,000 names, he is best known as the Remover of Obstacles, the Patron of the Arts and the Lord of Wisdom.

In a series of stunning photographs, New York-based multi-media artist Shana Dressler and photographer Sudhakar Olwe depict the festival from start to finish as it suffuses the entire city of Mumbai in an atmosphere of celebratory worship. Juxtaposed with pre-modern representations of Ganesha from Pacific Asia Museum's collection, Dressler and Olwe's vibrant photos connect the past and present of India while illustrating the historical legacy and spiritual significance of Ganesha in Hindu society.

For more information on Dressler's multi-media exhibition, from which the photos on display have been taken, please visit: www.discoveringganesh.com

Discovering Ganesha: Remover of Obstacles was made possible due to the support of the following generous donors: Prof. Arnold Kaminsky, the Solanki Family, the Prabhakar Family, Sushma & Bishamber Batra, Eunhak Bae & Robert D. Kwak, Anna Bresnahan, Ms. Meera Deo & Dr. Manoj Kulkarni, Dr. Elizabeth Short & Dr. Michael Friedman, Nilima Gupta, Rashi Gupta, Surekha & Avinash Khedekar, Margaret Leong Checca, Aditya Prabhakar, Patricia & Kenneth McKenna Ttee, Kuldip & Parmjit Sadhal, India Sweets & Spices, and Dolphin Party Rentals.

The artists would like to thank Tegya Thomas, the associate producer of *Discovering Ganesh*; Incredible India, India's official government tourism board; Fuji Professional; and Duggal Digital Solutions.

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About the Artists

SHANA DRESSLER's career as a documentary journalist and producer has spanned a wide range of forms from stills to video to multi-media. She is the founder of Swimming Elephant which creates multi-media projects that explore a wide range of world cultures and produced her most recent endeavor, the multifaceted project, *Discovering Ganesh*, from which the photos on display at Pacific Asia Museum have been taken. Her photography has been exhibited both nationally and internationally at such venues as the United Nations; New York University's gallery space, Casa Italiana; and can be found in the permanent collection of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in Harlem. As a video journalist and producer, Shana has work on many projects around the globe for such companies as World Entertainment Network and Link TV, as well as several independent productions. She has been a consultant for the Global Peace Initiative of Women on their international youth summits, Link TV's Music and Cultural Programming Department, and has consulted for many major music labels and entertainment companies in their new media departments in New York. She is a graduate of Vassar College with a B.A. in Medieval and Renaissance Studies and received her photographic training at the International Center of Photography in New York where she took courses in photojournalism while studying comparative religion and anthropology at Columbia University.

SUDHARAK OLWE has exhibited work on various social issues from India to Bangladesh, Sweden, Portugal, Holland, the United States and Japan. In 1999-2000 he was the recipient of the National Foundation Media Fellowship. The following year, the World Press Photo Exhibition chose him as the only photographer from India to be invited to exhibit at their exhibition held in Amsterdam for his stories on gender and the environment. In 2004, he published his first book, *Spirited Souls: Winning Women of Mumbai* (Samay Books) and in 2005 he was honored with the prestigious All Roads Photographers Award from National Geographic which included an exhibition of his work on street workers of Mumbai in Los Angeles and Washington D.C. He is currently heading the Photography Promotion Trust which aims to support, showcase and encourage the use of photography as a powerful tool for social change.

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Pacific Asia Museum is one of only four institutions in the United States dedicated exclusively to the arts and culture of Asia and the Pacific Islands. The museum's mission is to further cultural awareness and understanding through the arts. Since 1971, Pacific Asia Museum has served a broad audience of students, families, adults, and scholars through its education and outreach programs.

Pacific Asia Museum is located at 46 North Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena, California 91101. Museum opens Wednesday through Sunday 10 am to 6 pm. Admission is \$9 general, \$7 students/seniors, and free for children ages 11 and younger. Admission is free every 4th Friday of the month.

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