

Shiva Nataraja (Indian, Southern Region, 13th century)
Bronze, 29 ¼ x 21 x 9 inches (74.3 x 53.3 x 22.9 cm)

Accession Number: 73.77

Shiva, the god of dance and cosmic movement, is the most dramatic and popular Hindu deity. Shiva dances a cosmic dance (Anandatandava) in which the universe is the light reflected by his limbs as he moves in the orb of the sun. In most sculptures of Shiva this sun is evident, here it is missing. Multiple arms suggest his protection of the worshipper. Shiva holds the fire and drum in his hands which symbolize his dual nature of destruction and creation. Pressed under Shiva's foot is a prostrate demon, representing ignorance.

Before researching a work of art from the MFAH collection, it is helpful to view the work first hand. The information in books and journals will be more meaningful if you have taken advantage of the opportunity to inspect the object itself.

"Reference" books you will find on the library's main floor, and "Ready Reference" books are behind the information desk. Other books can be obtained by asking at the information desk.



Object Specific Information

Marzio, Peter. *Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, A Permanent Legacy*. (Page 70-1) N 576 .H7 A63 1989 Ready Ref.

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston: A Guide to the Collection, 1981. (Page 7). N 576 .H7 A6 Ready Ref.

General Surveys of Indian Art

Honour, Hugh & John Fleming. *The Visual Arts*, 5th ed., 1999. (Especially Chapter 6) N 5300 .H68 1999 Ready Ref.

Gardner's Art through the Ages. 12th ed., 2005. (Chapter 6) N 5300 .G25 2005 Ready Ref.

Stokstad, Marilyn. *Art History*, 1995. (Chapter 9) N 5300 .S923 1995 Ready Ref.

Hinduism

Dallapiccola, Anna. *Hindu Visions of the Sacred*, 2004. N 8195 .A4 D35 2004

Coomaraswamy, Ananda. *Hinduism and Buddhism*, 1943. BL 1201 .C6

Bonnefoy, Yves. *Asian Mythologies*, 1993. (Part 2) BL 1005 .D5313 1993

Dye, Joseph. *Ways to Shiva: Life and Ritual in Hindu India*, 1980. BL 2001.2 .D93

Shiva

- Kramrisch, Stella. *The Presence of Śiva*, 1992. NB 1007 .S67 K7 1992
- Maxwell, T.S. *Gods of Asia*, 1997. (Especially chapter 3) BL 1216.6 .A785 M38 1997
- Munro, E. "Shiva: The Armed Vision." *Art in America* 70 (May 1982): 112-21. [located in serials]
- Kaimal, P. "Shiva Nataraja: Shifting Meanings of and Icon" *The Art Bulletin* 81, no. 3 (September 1999): 390-419. [located in serials]

India

- Johnson, Gordon. *Cultural Atlas of India*, 1996. DS 421 .J6 1996 Ref.
- Koul, Sudha. *Come with Me to India*, 1997. (Chapter 5) DS 407 .K68 1997
- Keay, John. *India: A History*, 2000. (Chapters 10, 11, 12) DS 451 .K365 2000

Chola Dynasty Art and Bronze Sculpture

- Dehejia, Vidya. *Art of the Imperial Cholas*, 1990. NA 6007 .S6 D44 1990
- Dehejia, Vidya. *Chola: Sacred Bonzes of Southern India*, 2006. NB 1007 .S67 D443 2006
- Blurton, Richard. *Hindu Art*, 1993. N 8195 .A4 B58 1993
- Coomaraswamy, Ananda. *Introduction to Indian Art*, 1999. (Chapter 13) N 7301 .C583 1999
- Saraswati, S.K. *A Survey of Indian Sculpture*, 1975. (Chapter 7) NB 1002 .S3 1975

Symbolism

- Dallapiccola, Anna. *Dictionary of Hindu Lore and Legend*, 2002. BL 1105 .D35 2004 Ref.
- Jansen, Eva. *The Book of Hindu Imagery*, 1993. BL 1216 .J26 1993 Ref.
- Hall, James. *Illustrated Dictionary of Symbols in Eastern and Western Art*. N 7740 .H35 1994 Ref.
- Chevalier, Jean. *Dictionary of Symbols*, 1994. GR 931 .C4413 1994 Ref.

This reference guide is just the tip of the iceberg on helpful resources in the library's holdings. Many of the suggested resources above have their own **bibliographies**. Each of these may lead you to other resources that would also be helpful in your research here in the museum or in another library. To find additional resources, use keywords such as "Hinduism" and "Shiva" in the **on-line catalog** and **periodical indexes**. Once you find a few relevant titles, pay attention to the subject headings to identify similar materials. **Examples of useful subject headings are:**

Hinduism
Art, Hinduism
Indian mythology
Sculpture, Chola
Art and religion

For guidelines about writing it may be helpful to look at **Sylvan Barnet's A Short Guide to Writing about Art**, which includes tips for looking, reading, and writing about art. Ask for it at the reference desk. At every stage of your work, please allow the library staff to help you. Contact us at 713-639-7325.