

The Origins of Navratri

2011

The nine days of Navratri also commemorate the battle between Lord Rama and King Ravana of Lanka. Ravana was slain on the tenth day, or Vijayadashami, when the victory of good over evil is celebrated.

During Navaratri, devotees of Durga fast, and offer prayers for the protection of health and property. A period of introspection and purification, Navaratri is traditionally an auspicious time for starting new ventures.

There are many legends surrounding the Navratras, or nine nights of worship, devoted to the many aspects of the Goddess Durga. Although regions of India have different interpretations of her stories and varying names for the aspects of Goddess, her worship during these nine days does not change. In North and Central India as well as Bengal the Goddess is invoked in these forms.



Dear Friends,

Durga Puja is one of the most celebrated of festivals all over India. It is an integral part of our culture and our heritage.

With the passing of the years, however, many of us have forgotten its origins and the names and powers of the Goddess, who is worshipped in her many aspects during this time. I have chosen this as the subject of this calendar, and I hope it will be of interest to you all!

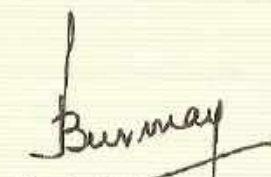
I have started with Lord Ganesh, the god of good beginnings, who clears our path when we embark upon new ventures. In choosing this painting of Lord Ganesh, I wish

to commemorate my dear friend and school mate, Mr P.K. Ray, who painted it. An artist by inclination and an architect by profession, he passed away last November. A great loss to friends, family and colleagues.

The nine goddesses are all aspects of the Goddess Durga, whose portrait appears in the eleventh month.

December is adorned by the portrait of Lakshmi, Goddess of wealth and prosperity. May She bring good fortune and happiness to you all throughout the year.

With Best Wishes for the New Year


Pradip Burman
Chairman

Sanat Products Ltd.
Auyrvet Limited



Gautam Partho Roy

I was immensely inspired by the *Pattachitra* (The term *pattachitra* is a compound of two Sanskrit words *Patta* meaning cloth and *chitra* meaning picture) which has been used from ancient times, before paper or parchment were made. These representations are taken from the tribal art of North East India and are the earliest known pictorial representations of the Goddess.

I have introduced more colours than were available to the primitive tribes and have also introduced shades and textures which are not part of the original art forms. I feel these additions, without distorting the originals, bring more life and beauty to the paintings.

For me this was a journey into the spiritual word. It has given me immense joy and satisfaction to portray the Goddess in her earliest forms.

Educational Qualification:

Bachelor of Fine Arts (First Class) from Rabindra Baharati University, Kolkata, 1980.

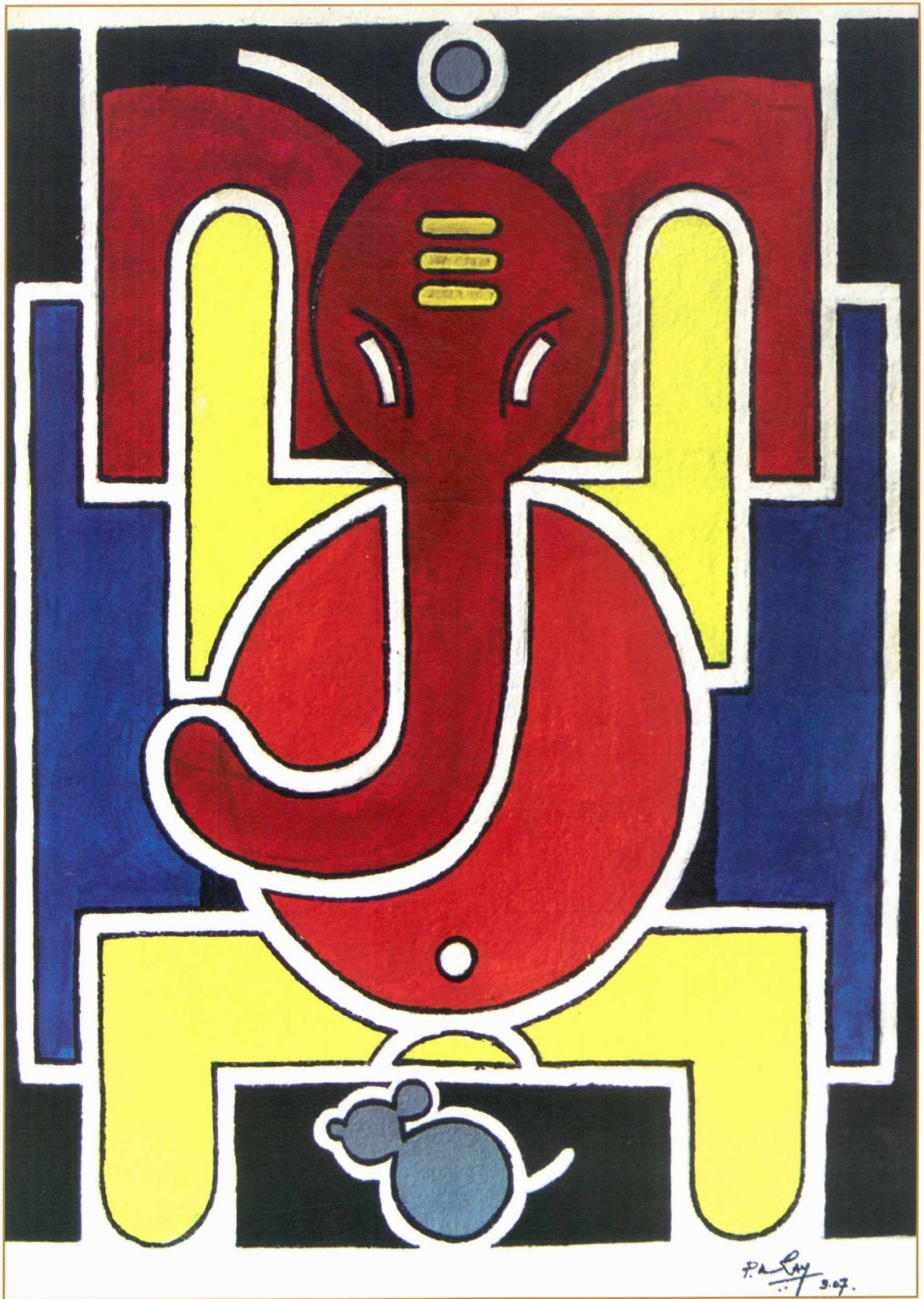
Exhibitions:

ONE MAN SHOWS:

- Tagore (Airport) Art Gallery, Kolkata, 1980. • World Trade Centre, Colaba, Mumbai, 1992. • SALWAN'S, DLF Outab Plaza, New Delhi, 1996. • SALWAN'S, Connaught Circus, New Delhi, 1997. • Warriors of Light, at The Ashoka, New Delhi, March, 2007. • Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai, 2008.
- 18 Group shows, from 1980 to 2010, in Mumbai, New Delhi, Kolkata, and Harayana, including shows in Delhi at IFACS, Lalit Kala Academy; in Mumbai at Nehru Centre Art Gallery, Jehangir Art Gallery and All India National Art Exhibition; in Kolkata at Birla Academy and Academy of Fine Arts.
- ART CAMPAT ART MALL, NEW DELHI IN JANUARY 2009.

Media Coverage:

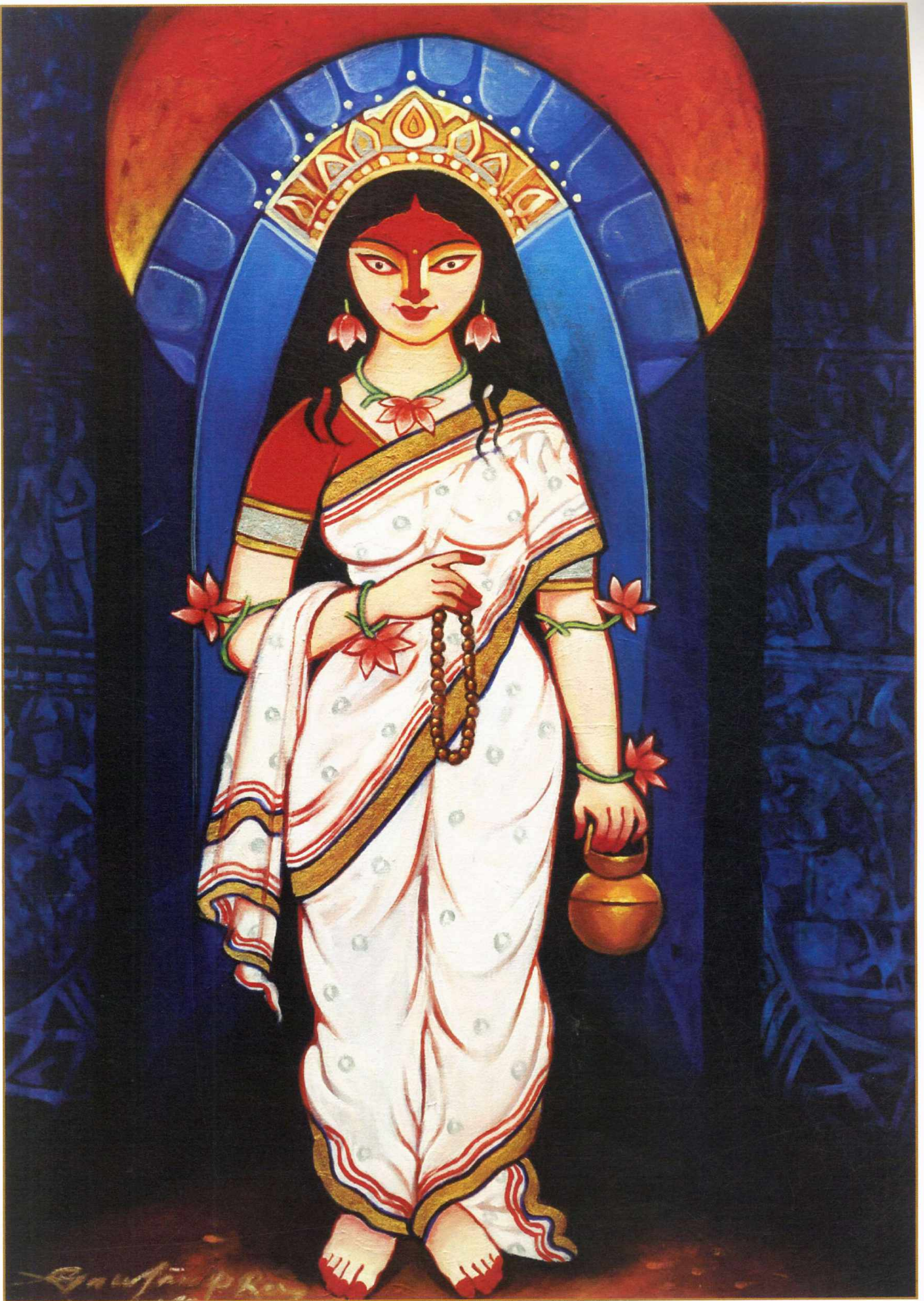
- Personal Interview telecast by ZEE Bangla January, 2001.
- Interview by ETV in 2006 • Personal interview telecast by Doordarshan Kendra, New Delhi, 2008.



Surely the most beloved of the Gods, devotion to **Lord Ganesh** is widely diffused and extends to Jains, Buddhists, and beyond India. He is revered as the Remover of Obstacles and more generally as Lord of Beginnings. He has the head of an elephant, and always carries a sweetmeat for his companion mouse.



Shailaputri Lord Shiva's wife, Sati, unable to bear the insulting behaviour of her father to her Lord, threw herself into the sacrificial fire. She was reborn as the daughter of Shail, King of the Himalayas and again sought Shiva as her spouse in this new aspect. She is the first of the Navadurgas and is worshipped on the first day of Navaratri.



Brahmacharini means one who practices devout austerity. She is the way to Moksha. She is the second form of the Mother Goddess and is worshipped on the second day of Navaratri.



Chandraghanta is worshipped on the third day of Navaratri, to attain peace, tranquility and prosperity. She has a 'chandra' or half-moon in her forehead in the shape of a 'ghanta' or bell, hence the name 'Chandraghanta'.



***Kushmanda** is considered the creator of the universe. The meaning of the name 'Ku-shm-anda' is as follows: 'Ku' = a little; 'ushma' = 'warmth'; 'anda' = 'the cosmic egg'. The universe was a void full of darkness, until her light spread in all directions. In this aspect, she is worshipped on the fourth day of Navaratri.*



***Skanda Mata** the fifth aspect of Mother Durga, is the mother of Skanda or Lord Kartikeya. He was chosen by the gods as their commander-in-chief in the war against the demons. In this form, she is depicted accompanied by the Lord Skanda in his infant form.*



Katyayani was born as the daughter of Katyayan Rishi, of the Katya lineage, thus She is called Katyayani, "daughter of Katyayan". He underwent long austerities and penance in order to receive the grace of the Mother Goddess. She is worshipped on the sixth day.



Kaal Ratri the seventh form of Mother Durga is worshipped on the seventh day of Navaratri. She is black, and holds a sparkling sword in her right hand to battle evil. She destroys demons, devils, and all the wicked. Her gesture of protection assures us of freedom from fear and trouble. So, she is also known as 'Shubhamkari' - one who does good.



***Maha Gauri** means extremely fair and pure. She is worshipped on the eighth day of Navaratri. She developed a dark complexion after her long austerities. Lord Shiva washed her with the water of the Ganges. She regained her beauty and is thus known as Maha Gauri.*



Siddhidatri is worshipped on the last day of Navratri, Mahanavami. She possesses occult energies, which are named 'Ashtasiddhi.' She blesses saints, yogis tantrics and all devotees.



Durga was created by Vishnu, Shiv and Brahma to fight the demon Mahishasura. Durga's feminine power contains the energies of the gods. She rides a tiger and wields weapons given to her by various gods, like Rudra's trident and Vishnu's discus.



Lakshmi is the Goddess of Wealth and Prosperity. The legend states that when the gods churned the Kshirsagar, or Ocean of Milk, to find amrit, the Goddess Lakshmi arose during the churning. She emerged holding a lotus, and is usually shown either holding a lotus or sitting on one.