Design Resource
Holi
The Festival of Colours
by
Sachin Jadhav
IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:
http://dsource.in/resource/holi

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Source:
http://dsource.in/resource/holi/about

About

Holi:
From its mythological past to its present. The festival of Holi actually starts the night before with a bonfire made up of all the dried leaves and branches left through the winter. It is a way of clearing these and making way for spring. Metaphorically though, the fire is meant to signify the destruction of evil - the burning of the 'Holika' - a mythological character. The heat from the fire is also a reminder that winter is behind and that the hot summer days are ahead.

The following morning begins with worshipping Krishna by lovingly smearing his idol with 'gulal' - the colours used to play Holi. This is a festival that is as much a gateway to celebrate the arrival of spring as much as it is a way to celebrate the season of love. Krishna is the ultimate lover with his 'gopikas', who are a bunch of beautiful women that Krishna forever seems to be chasing. And yet this icon of love spends most of his time seeking out his only lover Radha. So Krishna's love is the epitome of the freshness of youth amidst all its playfulness. Without Krishna and his lover Radha there can be no Holi.

Krishna's mythological presence in Holi is undisputed. It is said that the festival is also a celebration of the death of Pootna - the demon who nearly killed Lord Krishna. The effigy of Pootna burnt the night before, therefore, ends up signifying death itself just as Pootna typifies winter and darkness.

There are more stories. This is the one about Holika who believed herself to be immuned to death by fire. And yet when she questions her nephew Prahlad's devotion to the ultimate of Gods, Vishnu and threatens to walk through fire with the intention to destroy the prince, she is herself consumed by the fire whereas the prince comes out unscathed. This is the Holika that is burnt the night before Holi as the triumph of the good over evil.

This is where the celebration with colours comes in. Holi is supposed to be an exuberant show of goodwill and cheer. The riot of colours follows a revelry of colour play - quite unmatched in its boisterousness - and takes place amidst the sprinkling or the shower of coloured powder. And when this is combined with water it is anything but a damp squib. Everybody is welcome and everybody is pardoned for his or her revelry.

What do we do on the day of Holi
Smearing colors on friends and dear ones is the basic idea of Holi, no one is spared. Both the young and the old enjoy throwing water balloons, dry colors, and washable dyes on anyone in sight on the day of the holi. We go around in streets, with a tin drums, armed with tonnes of colors and big syringes filled with colored water. And at the end of the day no one will even remotely resemble themselves. To join us in our celebration you can particapate in many ways by joining us through virtual holi.

Holi at Adiware

Days before the actual Holi begins, people start preparing for various rituals and customs at Adiware, Vadapeth which is made up of fourteen small villages called Vada situated near the beautiful coast line of Maharashtra. People from these villages gather at Mahakali Temple to perform in front of Devi Mahakali. These performances called Khele which is based on the martial art transformed into dance.

Through out the night on Phalgun Shuddha paurnima (full moon) people dance and sway with the five areca palm tree called onde kept on the steps of Mahakali temple. Early in the morning they do the homa and the other rituals

The actual day of Holi, in the early afternoon all Khot meet at the temple and put gulaal on devi which is the sign of celebration to start. With all acoustic music and dance, everyone with coloured faces get ready to take Holi which is the areca palm tree from specified vada.

With the immense enthusiasm and with holy heart, everyone enjoy their participation to carry the areca palm to the place where it gets erected. The khot comes and burn the hay around the erected palm tree and the celebration with color start from that day.

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Contact Details

This documentation was done by Sachin Jadhav freelance desinger located in Mumbai at IDC, IIT Bombay

You can get in touch with him at vcsachin[at]hotmail.com

You could write to the following address regarding suggestions and clarifications:

Helpdesk Details:
Co-ordinator
Project e-kalpa
Industrial Design Centre
IIT Bombay
Powai
Mumbai 4000 076
India

Phone: 091-22-25767820/7801/7802
Fax: 091-22-25767803
Email: contact[at]dsource.in/ dsourse.in[at]gmail.com