

Design Resource

Orissa Stone Carving

The Craft of Stone Carved Sculptures and Idols

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral and Mr. Antony William

NID, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://dsource.in/resource/orissa-stone-carving>



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2. Tools
3. Romancing The Stone
4. Stone Emblishment Process
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Introduction

Stone carving is a traditional of Orissa as is evident from the innumerable archeological monuments, rock cut sculptures, caves and temples built and has been practiced for centuries.

- The huge repertoire of stone carving is best revealed in the architecture and rock cut sculptures of Lingraja, Jagannath, Mukteshwara and other temples of Orissa. Other noteworthy monuments include the temple chariot of the Sun God at Konark, Stupas of Ratnagiri and Udaygiri.
- There are 'Apsaras', the heavenly beauties playing different musical instruments carved on the Konark Wheel.
- The products include book rests, ashtrays, paper weights; candle stands, kitchenware and other products are also made. The magnificent temples of 'Parsurameswar', 'Mukteshwar', 'Lingraja', 'Jagannath' and 'Konark' is the progeny of the artisans who built these temples. Besides the beautiful Stupas and Monestaries of Lalitagiri Ratnagiri and Udayagiri have kept alive the traditions of their forefathers.

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One of the sculptures exhibiting the excellence of the sculptors of Orissa.



One of the sculptors sculpting the half finished piece of art.

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Some of the sculptures displayed at a shop in Orissa to attract the tourists from all over the world.



A statue of Buddha exhibiting the marvellous talent of the sculptors and the exquisite beauty of the stone craft.



Sculptors shaping a block of stone in a desired form carefully hammering and scooping the extra material out.

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The more experienced sculptor teaches the art of sculpture making to the younger sculptor sharing his experience and skills.

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Tools

India has a vast resource of different types of stones and the artisans of Orissa are at complete ease while working with them. Tools such as hammers and chisels known as 'Muna', 'Patili', 'Martual' and 'Nihana' in local parlance are enough to carve the ultra soft soap stone or Khadipathara.



The sculptor chisels out the material from the surface of the soap stone, gearing up to start working on the stone.



Measuring a large piece of stone so as to keep the proportions accurate during the carving process.

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All different kinds of tools used in the stone carving process including a hammer, chisel, and different kinds of files.



Grinding the stone using an automated grinder lessening the labour involved and cutting out time involved.

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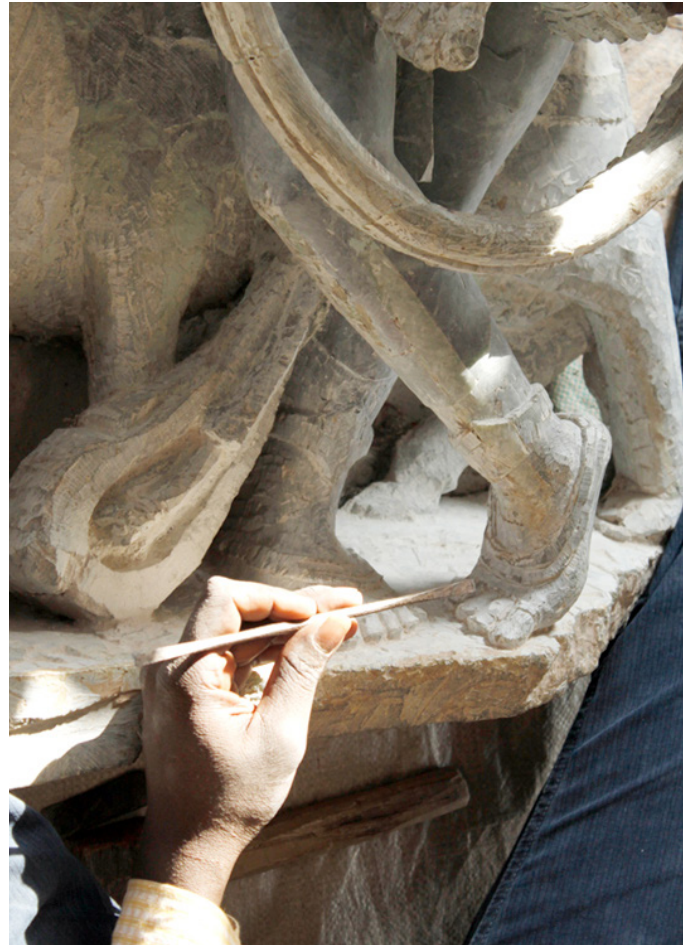
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An artist using a small file to polish and smoothening the surface texture.



The idol still incomplete being lightly hammered to achieve the shape as desired.

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Romancing The Stone

Unlike sculptors of other places, the artisans of Orissa are at home with a variety of materials. They handle the ultra soft white soap stone with equal facility as the slightly harder greenish chlorite or 'Kochilapathara' and the still harder pinkish Khandolite and the hardest of all the black granite 'Mugunipathara' by just using tools like hammer and chisel. Whether the stone is hard or soft the outline is first drawn on the stone and then is accordingly cut. The motifs used are not uncommon and the carvings on the temples also provide models.



Half finished sculpture yet to be beautified and adorned with embellishments.



An artist polishing the statue before being painted after it has been carved out.

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An exotic statue of the Buddha gratifying the eyes.



An artist painting the idol after it has been carved to give it the final finishing touches.

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A sculptor measuring the stone before shaping it as desired.



A sculptor giving the final touches to the sculpture with light hammering.

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Stone Emblishment Process

The motifs used are exquisitely embellished like the indolent damsels 'AlasaKanyas' and 'Salabhanjiska' lady with the bough of a sal tree and the heavenly beauties adorn the topmost tier of the Konark Temple, Konark wheel, Konark horse, elephant, lion composite mythical figures like 'Gajabidala', 'Gajasimha' are quite popular. Other motifs include representation of deities such as Krishna and Radha, Laxmi, Vishnu, Durga, Ganesha and Haraparvati. These carvers also make images for installations in temples as presiding deities and Parswa-Devatas as well as large pieces for decoration of public places. One may find samples of these in museums. The four colossal Buddha images and the friezes depicting the life of the Buddha and Ashoka in the modern 'Shanti Stupa' at Dhauri are also the handiwork of Orissa's craftsmen.



A large piece of stone is intricately carved out in the shape of a wheel, with two delicately carved birds on top.



The sculptor files the stone with a small file to smooth the surface texture of the stone.

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The artist scoops out the extra material from the surface of the stone to carve the required design on the surface.



A fully carved idol of one of the gods from the Hindu mythology.

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Links

- [Craft Design in India](#)
- [Online Infomation Centre for Crafts](#)
- [Handmade in India](#)
- [Crafts Council of India](#)
- [Craft Mark](#)
- [Arts and Crafts - Handicrafts and Handlooms](#)

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This documentation was done by **Professor Bibhudutta Baral** and Mr. Antony William at **NID, Bengaluru**.

You can get in touch with Professor Bibhudutta Baral at [bibhudutta\[at\]nid.edu](mailto:bibhudutta[at]nid.edu).

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