

# Gondhal

Commune with Divine

Submitted By,

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## Approval Form

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for partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for Masters of Design Degree in Industrial  
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## **Acknowledgement**

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I also thank my friends my family for always being there in all the journey of my academics.

# Background



[Source](#)

Maharashtra like all other states in India is rich in culture; heritage and traditions. There is a variety of rituals, ceremonies and traditions which bring people close to the divine energy. Out of many, Gondhal is also one.

Gondhal in literal translation; means 'chaos', which depicts chaos through good vibrations which dispel all evil.

Gondhal is one of the Kulachara or Kula dharmas, that is, the family traditions of certain Brahmin and Maratha families in Maharashtra.

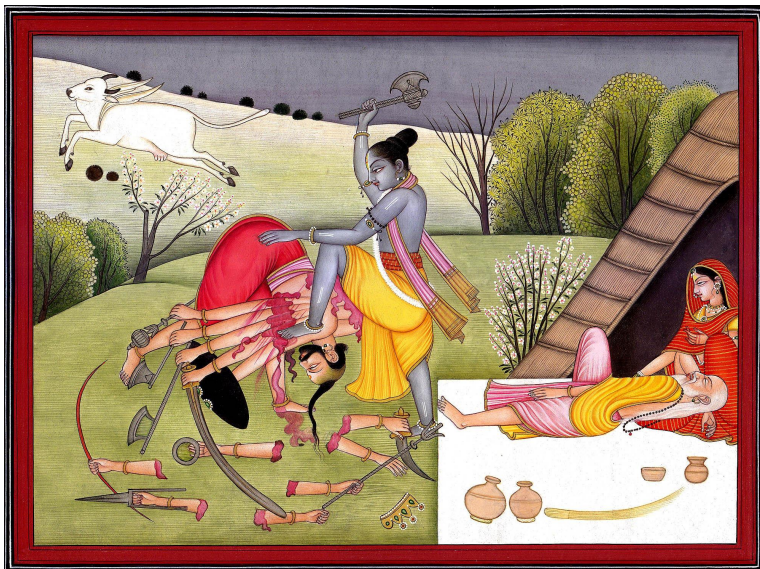
Gondhal The ritual of gondhal is considered 'vidhinatya' which means ritualistic performance. It is mainly performed after auspicious events such as marriage or upanayana (initiation into studentship), in some regions its performed as part of the festival of Navaratri.

A gondhal is performed to express gratitude to the kula devata (patron deity of the family). Its believed that the ritual calls the deity to the house and asks her to bless the family members and to kill all the evils.



# Background

According to Mythological legend of Renuka Mahatmya, the 'gondhal' dance form originated when the warrior sage Parshuram beheaded the demon Betasur. He made a musical instrument 'tuntune' out of the head by sewing it into a crown. Parshuram performed a dance in honour of his mother, the goddess Renuka, to thunderous, ominous rhythms. This dance by Parshuram was called the gondhal . Even today, people perform the gondhal as a traditional folk dance to please Renuka, also known as Bhavani or Amba.



[Source](#)



[Source](#)

# Background



[Source](#)

We can trace the origin of the gondhal back to the "Renuka Mahatmya."

It appears that gondhal was first initially associated to a goddess called "Bhootmata" from the references to it in ancient literature. Later, this Bhootmata was incorporated into the well-known Renuka and Tuljabhavani.

In the Dnyaneshwari poem "Dasopant Krit Gitarnava," the word "Gondhal" is used to refer to a ghost. This suggests that Bhootmata may have been the inspiration for the gondhal's initial method of worship. Additionally, it is evident from the information in some publications that this type of dance was performed in a confused manner by people donning ghostly attire and mimicking ghostly behaviour.

Alternatives to the word 'Gondhal' are also found as 'Goundli Nritya', 'Goundli', 'Gundli', and 'Kundali'. The chaos has been receding lately.



# Background

Gondhal is par with the chains and shackles of caste and creed systems. The tradition of gondhal is widely and lovingly accepted throughout the state of Maharashtra and has also developed as folk art form of Maharashtra

Gondhalis have two distinct groups amongst themselves based on deities. The Kadambrai worship goddess Bhavani, whose seat is at Tuljapur in Osmanabad district, while the Renurai sect sings songs of the goddess Renuka of Mahur in Nanded.

There are Brahmin gondhalis, Renukrai gondhalis, Kadambrai gondhalis, Kumbhar gondhalis and so on. The tradition of gondhal was also brought to Thanjavur when Marathas became the rulers of the Thanjavur region.



[Source](#)





[Source](#)







# Objective



'Gondhal' is performed as a cure to the suffering caused by age old spiritual defects in the premises and also to terminate distress caused by negative energies, continuing for generations. The Goddess is awakened with a loud sound and praising songs, then she is requested to bless the family and destroy the evil.

Along with this gondhal is primarily performed after marriages, upanayan and cradle ceremonies as they are beginnings of prominent phases in persons life. On these occasions deities are worshipped and asked for their blessings.

Gondhal is not meant for entertainment purposes only, it has always been a community dance, or a ritualistic performance or Vidhinatya as mentioned before; accompanied by a small puja for the goddess.

It is believed that while performing the gondhal, loud sound is created to which Tej and Shakti waves get attracted. This restricts the movements of the negative energies within the surroundings and most of them are destroyed.

Also during Navratri the Shakti tattva associated with Tej is active, if gondhal is performed for the Goddess on these days, benefits are more compared with other days.





There are two parts of the whole gondhal ceremony namely; Purvaranga and Uttar ranga. Purva ranga includes preparation and ritual of poojan, where uttaranga comprises of the associated performances.

Purvaranga starts with sthapana of the pooja. For this; initially a swastika symbol is made on; chauranga (short square wooden platform); with rice grains. Over that decorative auspicious fabrics are laid. On this fabric a pattern and a small mount is made with rice grains.





A metal kalasha kalasha (pot) with coconut on it is kept at the center on rice mound. Swastik and tilak is made on kalasha and coconut with kumkum and haldi. This represents the primary goddess to be worshiped.

A tripod of sugarcanes called Maan with a ghatmala (flower Garlands) is set up over the chauranga. The whole setup is decorated with rangoli and flowers.







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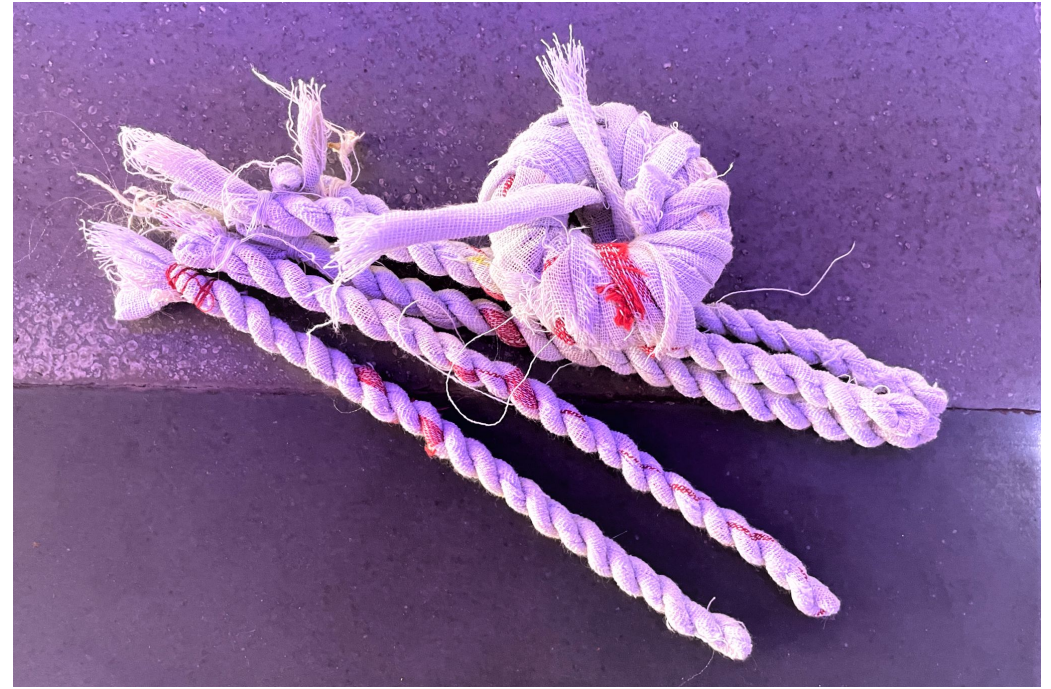


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Gondhal includes a special type of torches or lamps in the ceremony. They are called 'divti and 'kakda'.

These are thick wicks made of cotton cloth and they are soaked in water. Divti is a metal torch which keeps burning throughout the ceremony while kakda the thinner wicks are used in dance performance in the ceremony.



[Source](#)







Purvaranga also includes pooja of the deities as a primary part. Couple from the host family does the pooja under guidance of the head gondhali. They pray to deities namely Ganesh, Shrikrishna, Annapurna, Bhavani Mata, and Khandoba / Malhar. They ask for blessings and initiate the ceremony.



Starting the Uttarranga the head gondhali welcomes all the audience to the gondhal on behalf of the host family.

Like most hindu rituals; the gondhal also begins with a prayer to Lord Ganesh. Following to this they pray to local deity of the town and the family.

After the initial summons, the gondhali bellows a spirited verse calling upon all the 33 crore gods and goddess in Hindu scriptures for the recital.

They call the deity praising and requesting her to visit the gondhal. This call has authority, love, pleading.





After this various song and dance performances are held dedicated to different deities like datta, amba mata, bhavani mata, yellamma devi, Malhari Martand, etc. These performances also include folk art forms of gana and gaulan mesmerizing way.

Further in this performance gondhali also explains why gondhal should be performed and its significance. In this he creates very playful atmosphere by mocking audience, host couple and also his crew members.

In one of the performances gondhalis narrate stories about importance of Jogwa, the alms given to people who serve god.



The performance comprises a stories from the Ramayana ,Mahabharata, or the Puranas with several interpolations.The narration proceeds through dialogues, jokes, songs, dances and prose commentary, without any written script.

The main Gondhali dances and songs are fixed conventions, in circular, spinning movements, performing mudras with his fingers .The chief Gondhali, holding a flaming torch, has three to six comrades with musical instruments like tal or cymbal,sambaland chaundke drums, conch, and the stringed tuntune. Other social and mythological songs are also delivered with equal interest.



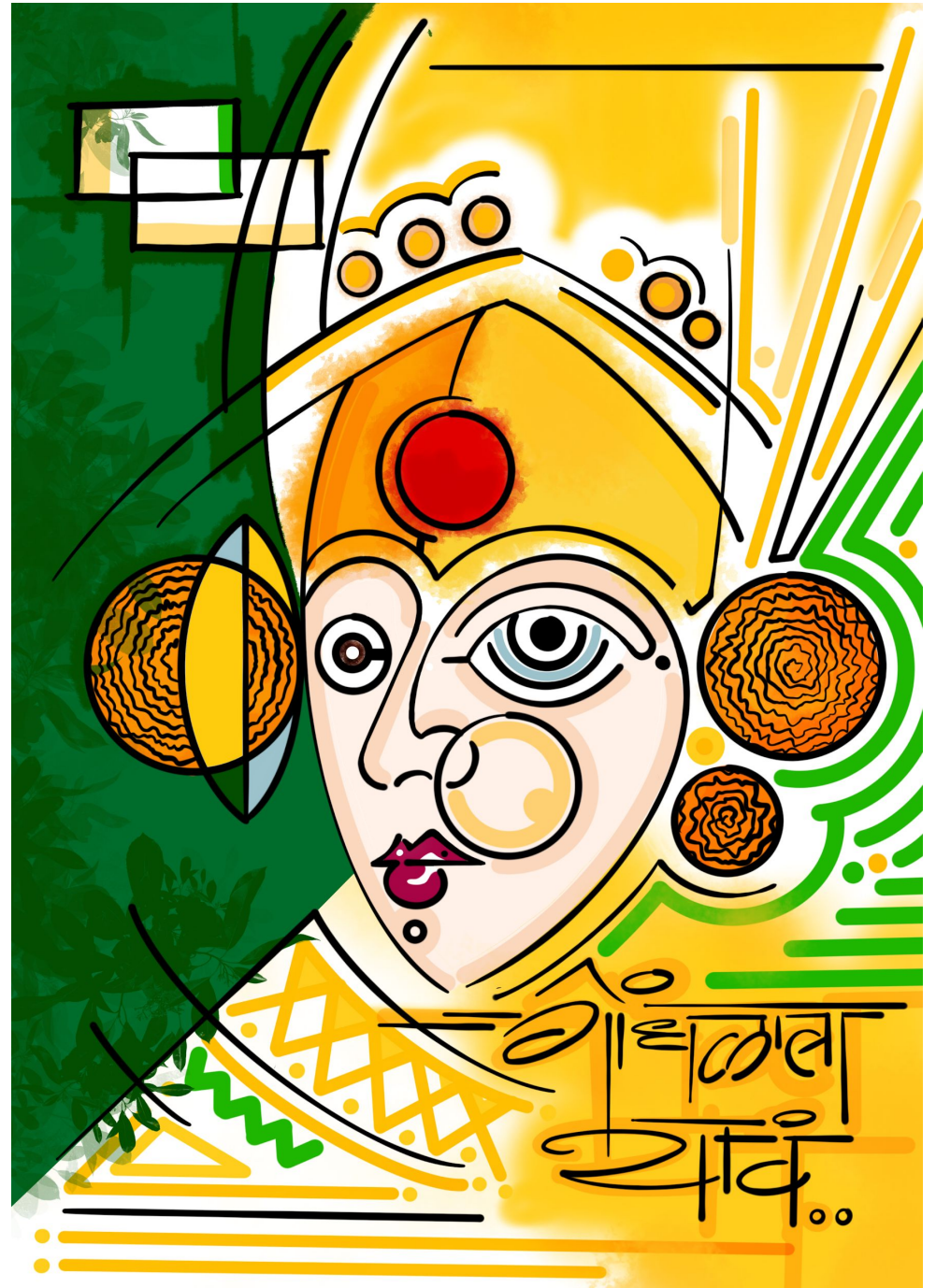


Gondhal creates a very dynamic and energetic atmosphere. Being present at the moment one can readily feel the positive energy which gondhal's main objective stands for.

The gondhali narrates folklores, mythological legends and prayers in the performances. Along with this they also speak about social, political issues in very intriguing manner.



## Visual Explorations.



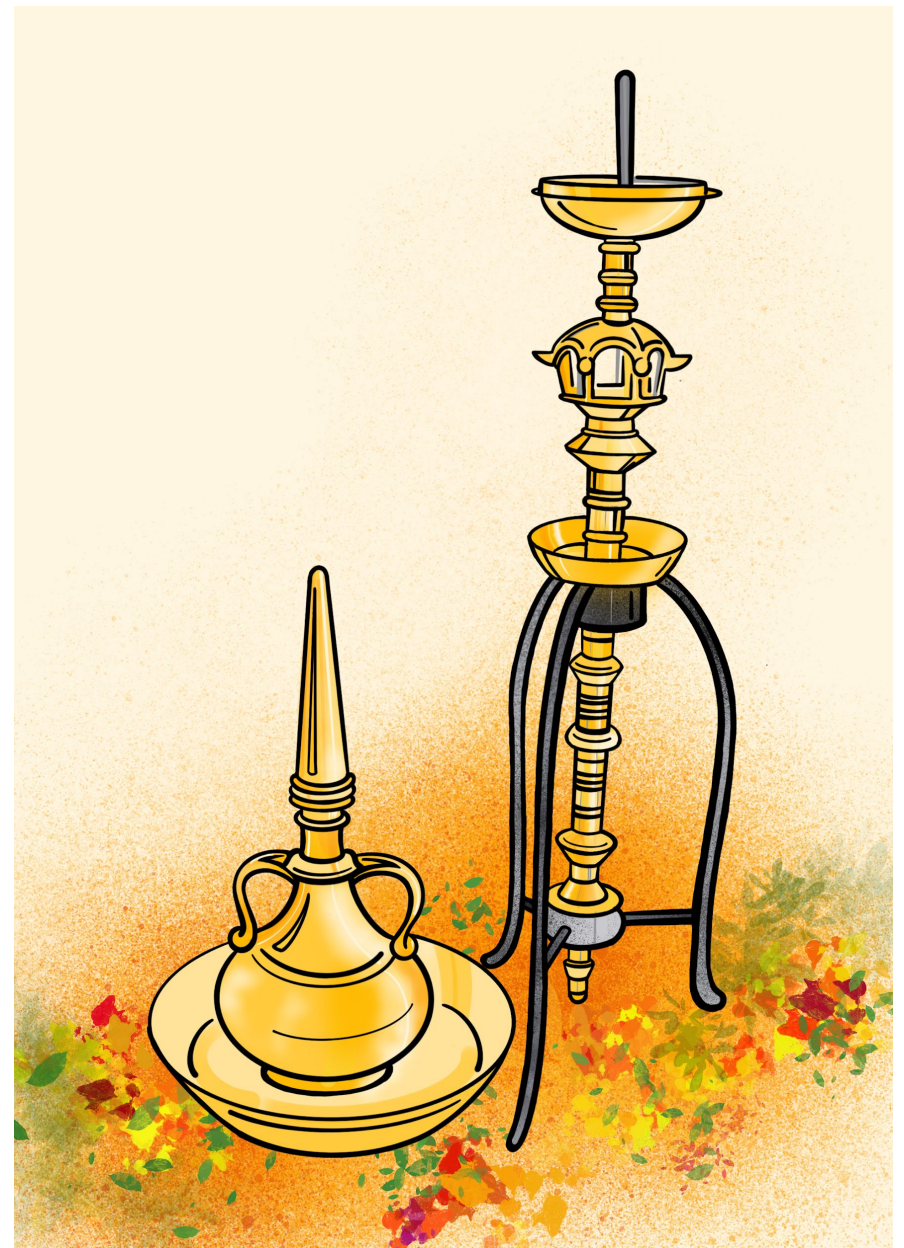
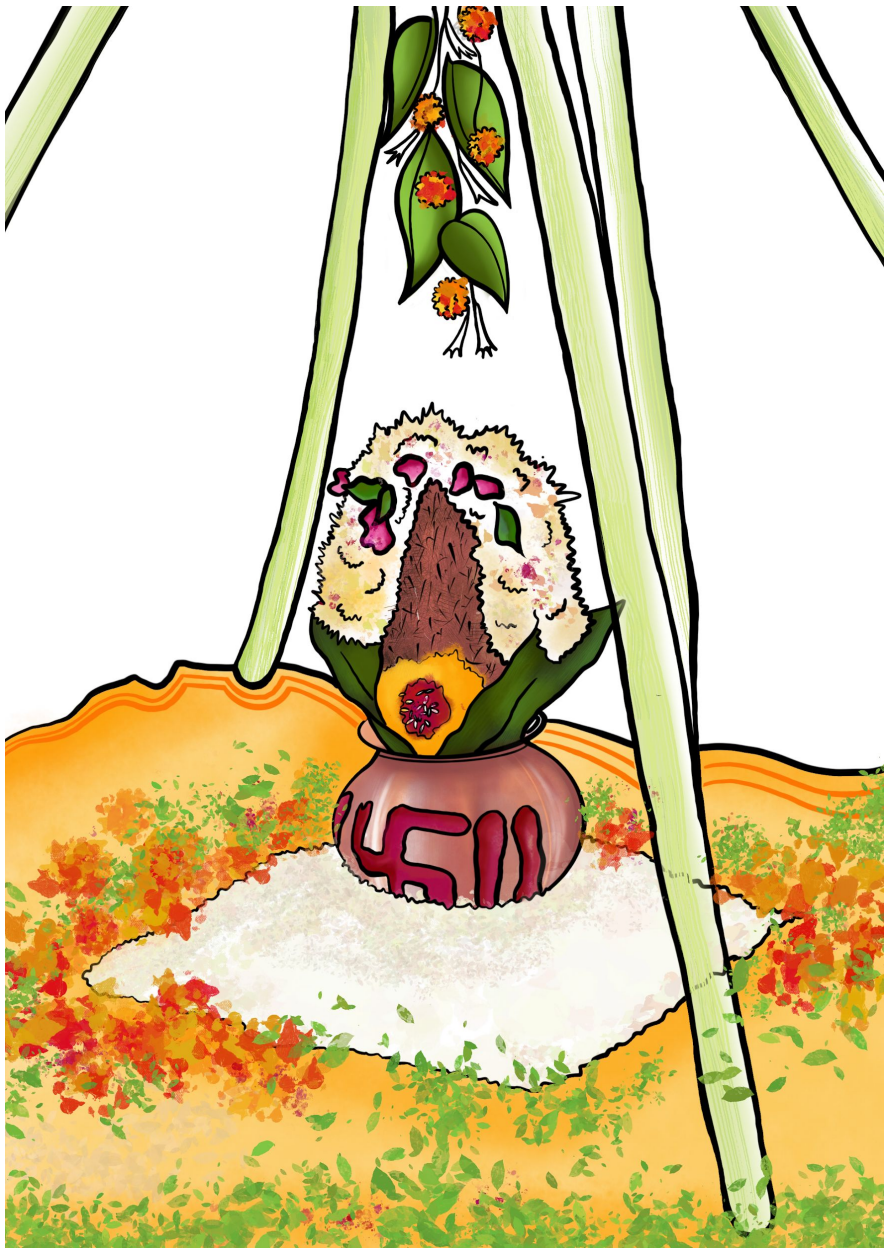


















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