

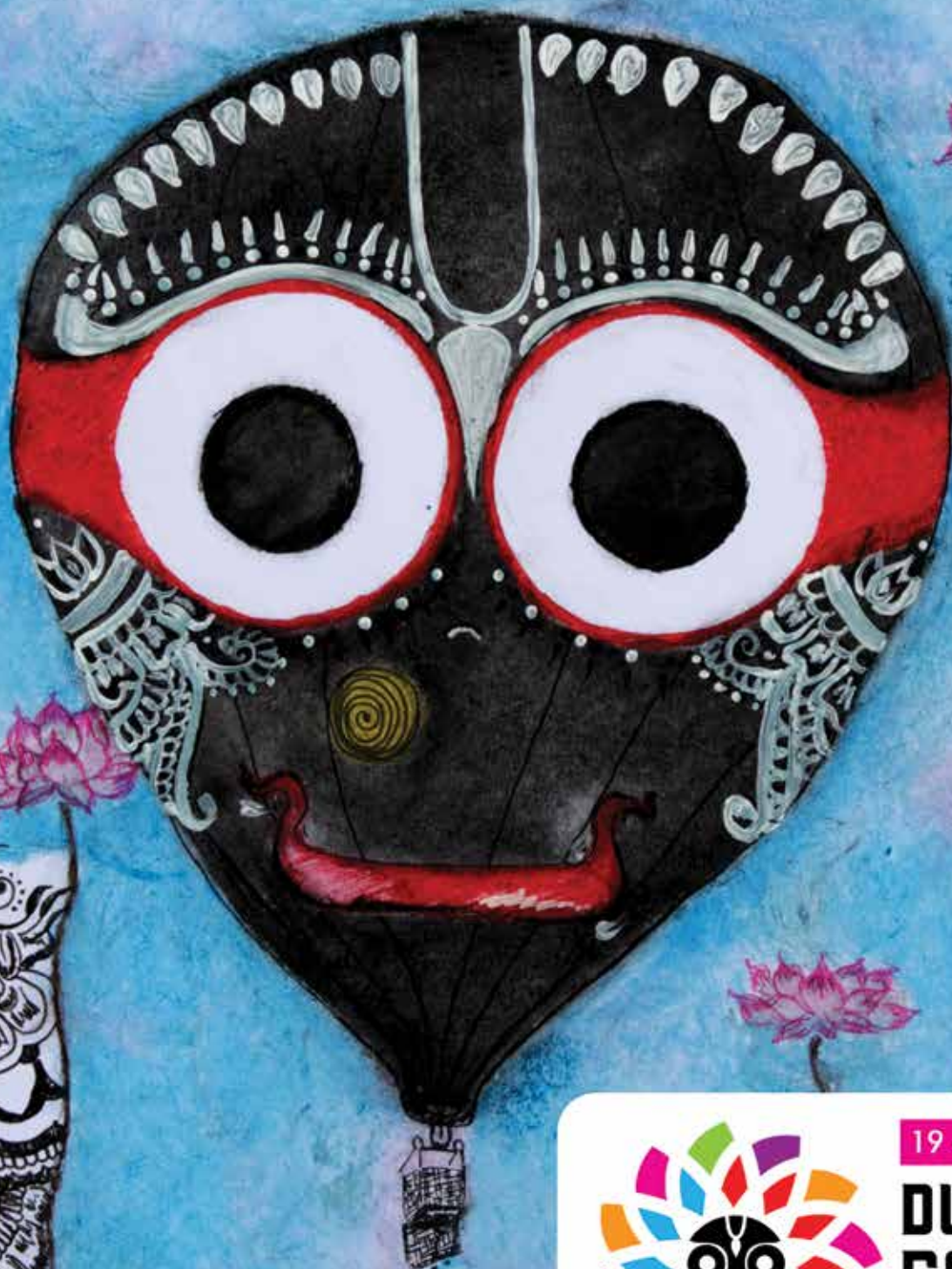


INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS
Founder Acharya: His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

HARE KRISHNA NEWS

March / April 2019

Art by Dee Smith



19 - 22 April

**DURBAN
FESTIVAL
OF CHARIOTS**

Old Durban Drive-in

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Editor's Note

This issue of Hare Krishna News is our invitation to spend time with us — at the Durban Festival of Chariots held over the Easter weekend (19-22 April) and to celebrate the appearance of Lord Rama, the weekend before (13-14 April).

I haven't met a child or an adult in the last twelve months who didn't say they were busy. And I'm guessing I'm not alone. What is going on? Is time moving faster or has life become so hectic that we can't say where the time went. I think it's a little of both and something else.

Krishna declares that He is time. So the question must be raised: has God become more elusive to us? Never having enough time means never having enough Krishna in a sense. Isn't it time to rethink Time. Time is the single most valuable commodity. Therefore when time is spent in His service, in giving (volunteering) or receiving (like attending a festival), is time gained. The result of that time spent exponentially increases. Time spent on Krishna is, as Krishna assures, "no loss or diminution." Now, that's a good investment!

And yes, we have to spend on survival. BUT has the picture moved into focus? Everything is all related to Krishna. He is never separate from any aspect of our lives yet we try with an uncommon determination, to drive Him out of the equation. And the result?

There is just not enough Time!

So let's pray to the Lord who can expand and contract time to help us align to His rhythm.

I look forward to celebrating Rama Naumi and the Durban Festival of Chariots with you.

Warmest wishes

Rasa-sthali Dasi

I would love to hear from you. Send your feedback, realizations, or art submissions to rasasthali@iskcondurban.net

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A Beautiful Monster

Meditations on Gratitude

All he wanted was a son. The king sat there in self pity at the foot of his throne thinking about nothing else except having a son. Palace guards in gleaming armour standing in attention lined either side of the throne room. The ankle bells of his many beautiful wives, daughters, and their maidservants chimed as they walked through the marbled palace with their gleeful laughter accompanying the sweet perfumes that filled the air. A cool breeze graced the leaves of the palms making them rustle and dance rhythmically to the angelic voices chanting Vedic hymns. And yet, despite the serenity of the atmosphere, King Chitraketu's insufferable disposition remained.

Like a cracked earthen pot, Chitraketu's heart could not be filled. He was the sovereign ruler of the earth planet, owning every patch of land as far as the horizon stretched, and had chambers laden with gold, jewels, and precious ornaments. Although he had immense wealth, he couldn't afford the price to mend his broken heart because he was poverty-stricken in gratitude.

Peace and internal satisfaction can only be carried by the vessel of gratitude. Gratitude is the condition of the heart that allows us to see Krishna (God) in everything. Just as nature wastes nothing, so too a grateful heart wastes no experience that life may present. All circumstances in life, whether perceived as good or bad, are transformed into nourishment when met with a grateful heart. It is only in a heart made fertile and soft by gratitude where the flowers of humility, spiritual wisdom, and love can grow.

Gratitude, however, is often forged in the crucible of pain and sorrow. King Chitraketu was fatefully cursed to take the shape of a gruesome monster in his next life. His name was Vritrasura.

Vritrasura was hideous in his physical features, gigantic in size, and had flaming red hair that scared even the most seasoned demons. In spite of the stark reversal of fortunes, Vritrasura carried with him the blessing of remembering his previous life as a devotee

king and the lessons of gratitude he had received through the compassion of the sages Anghira and Narada. Having now being endowed with the gift of gratitude, he accepted the curse to become a demon as part of a natural reaction of life and as part of his service to the Lord.

When a great battle between the demons and demigods ensued, Vritrasura led the demon army against the demigods. He smashed, grabbed, kicked, crushed, and bit the demigods. He spared no single ounce of his energy terrorizing them, discharging his duty as a demon, whilst he internally meditated

on the beautiful form of Mukunda. He was a beautiful monster, a devotee demon, deeply absorbed in the gratitude of carrying out his mission to serve the Lord.

We find that the real treasure of life consists not in having great possessions but in having few wants.

When Vritrasura was finally subdued by the king of heaven, Indra, he spoke the following words to him, revealing his meditation on gratitude:

"Since everything is dependent on the supreme will of the Personality of Godhead, one should be equipoised in fame and defamation, victory and defeat, life and death. In their effects, represented as happiness and distress, one should maintain oneself in equilibrium, without anxiety."

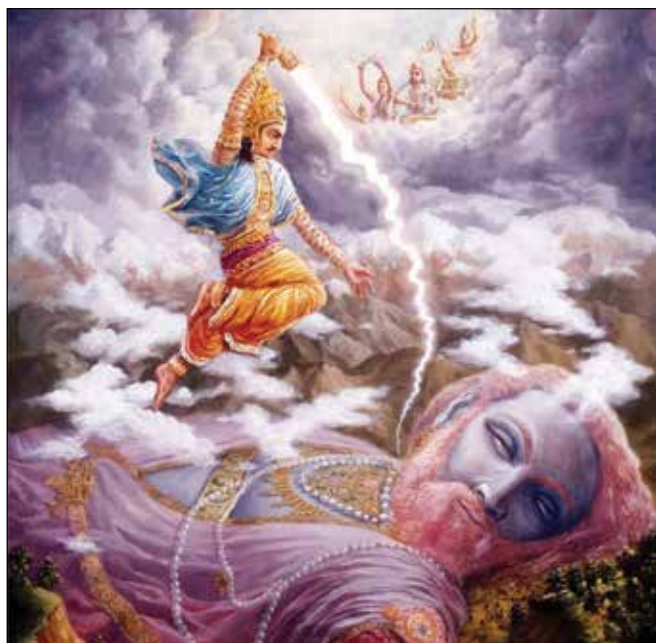
— *Srimad Bhagavatam* 6.12.14

We find that the real treasure of life consists not in having great possessions but in having few wants. If we always desire happiness from things outside ourselves then we will forever remain poor. The single most important virtue to nurturing the qualities of peace, happiness, and love within our hearts is gratitude.

"My dear Lord, one who earnestly waits for You to bestow Your causeless mercy upon him, all the while patiently suffering the reactions of his past misdeeds and offering You respectful obeisances with his heart, words and body, is surely eligible for liberation, for it has become his rightful claim."

— *Brahma's Prayers to Lord Krishna, Srimad Bhagavatam* 10.14.8

By Mukundanghri Dasa
14 March 2019



Wheels of Unity

Living With Srila Prabhupada

By Gaura Bhumi Devi Dasi

Abhay was awestruck. Accompanied by a festive atmosphere and uproarious *kirtan*, three large chariots rumbled past him down the street, from the Radha Govinda Temple; along Harrison Road and returned to the temple. A large *prasad* feast would soon follow. The largest Ratha-yatra festival in Calcutta was hosted by the Mullik family in honour of a centuries-old festival held in Jagannath Puri, celebrating the Lord of the Universe. Abhay's yearly attendance gave rise to a burning desire to host his own festival within his neighbourhood. Abhay's Ratha-yatra ran for eight consecutive days, with much pomp and fair. More than sixty-five years later, he brought Ratha-yatra to the Western World.

Srila Prabhupada described the historical significance behind Ratha-yatra as the commemoration of Lord Krishna and His Siblings visit to Kurukshetra during a solar eclipse and Their subsequent reunion with the residents of Vrindavan. Spiritually, this festival has a profound meaning. The naïve may consider Lord Jagannath's form to be incomplete with no hands and feet but He walks with us. Lord Jagannath accepts our service of walking with Him on the chariot procession. He will accept all devotional service that is offered with love and devotion. There is no material condition or restriction of any kind that can stand in the way of devotional service. This is the mission of Krishna consciousness — to enlighten humanity at large and stir a revival of love within the heart.

Srila Prabhupada introduced Ratha-yatra to the West to show that spiritual activities are the only way to achieve true and everlasting unity among people. In spite of advanced education, economic development, and philosophy, the world is still plagued by an atmosphere of suffering and unhappiness. This is because we do not know who we truly are and what our actual purpose is. This frustration will plague us as long as we identify with our bodily designations. Practicing spiritual life, as evangelised by Lord Chaitanya would clean the dusty mirror of the heart and eradicate the misconception of taking the material body to be the self. Srila Prabhupada concludes in a lecture given in New York City (July 19th, 1976), "Here is unity, when you accept Jagannath. There is unity. So, actually if we take Krishna consciousness movement very seriously, scientifically, then there is unity."

Yogesvara Das recalls, "Achyutananda, one of Prabhupada's first disciples from the early days in New York, had been living in India for nearly three years when he received a box of Back to Godhead magazines by air parcel. The cover featured a full-page photo of a Ratha-yatra festival in San Francisco with thousands of people chanting and dancing around the colourfully decorated chariot. In the centre of the photo stood Prabhupada, leading the dance with his arms raised high in the air. Achyutananda showed the magazine to Prabhupada's godbrother, Madhav Maharaj. The elderly *sannyasi* stared, and his eyes opened wide. Their guru, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati, had given his life to see Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mission

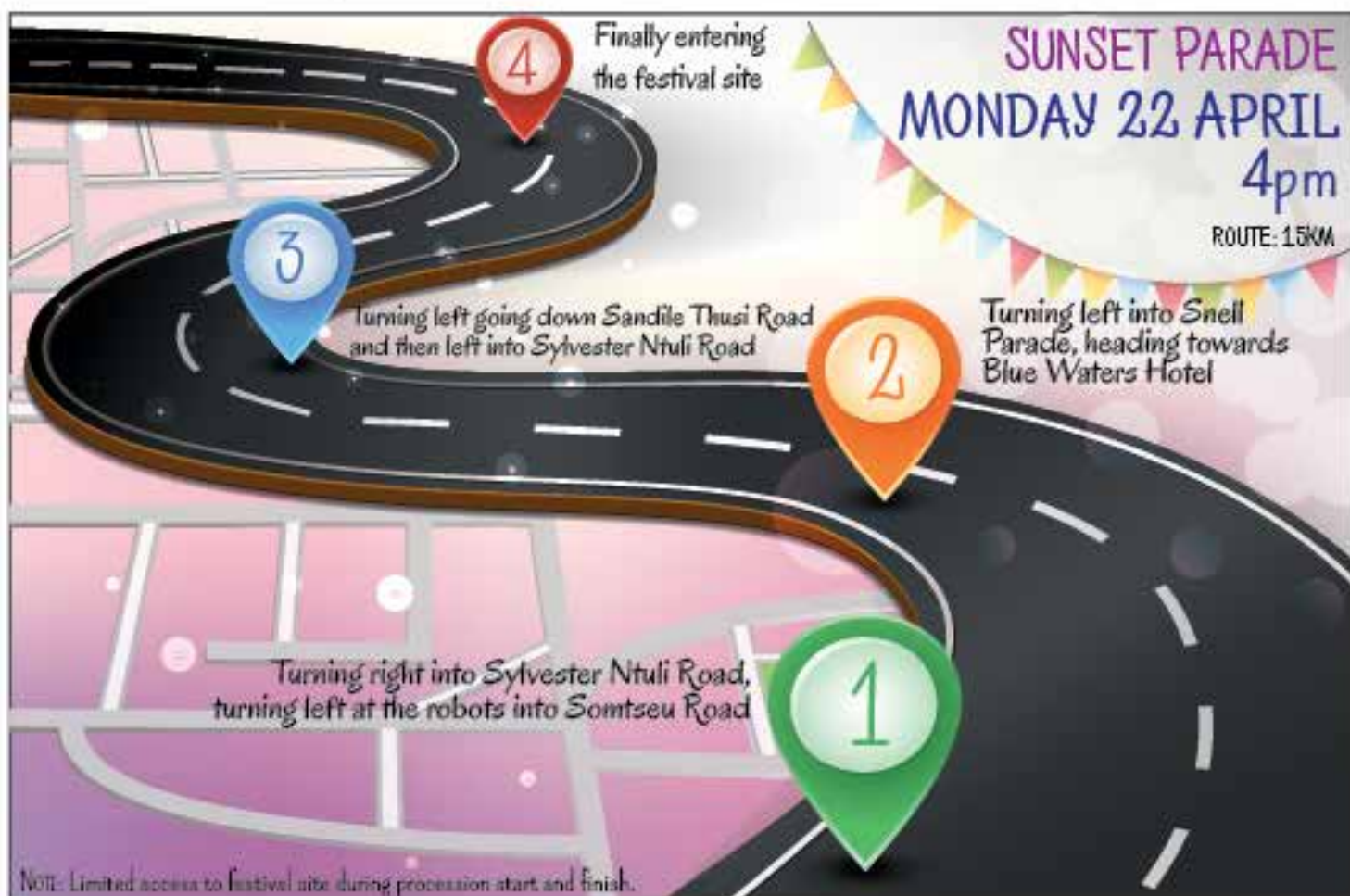
go abroad – and there was Abhay Babu, before a Ratha-yatra chariot – in America! – With Americans chanting and dancing around him. It was the fulfilment of Mahaprabhu's prophecy, the harbinger of a golden interlude within the tragic Age of Kali. Madhav Maharaj had spent years with Abhay in the Gaudiya Math. They had shared their guru's dream of witnessing the holy names leave India and circle the globe. Travel had been an enormous enterprise in those days, expensive, and dangerous. Yet there was Abhay Babu, arms raised, white people all around him – 'Go, Swamiji!' Madhav Maharaj yelled at the photo, arms raised. 'Go!Go!Go!'"



CHARIOT PARADE ROUTES



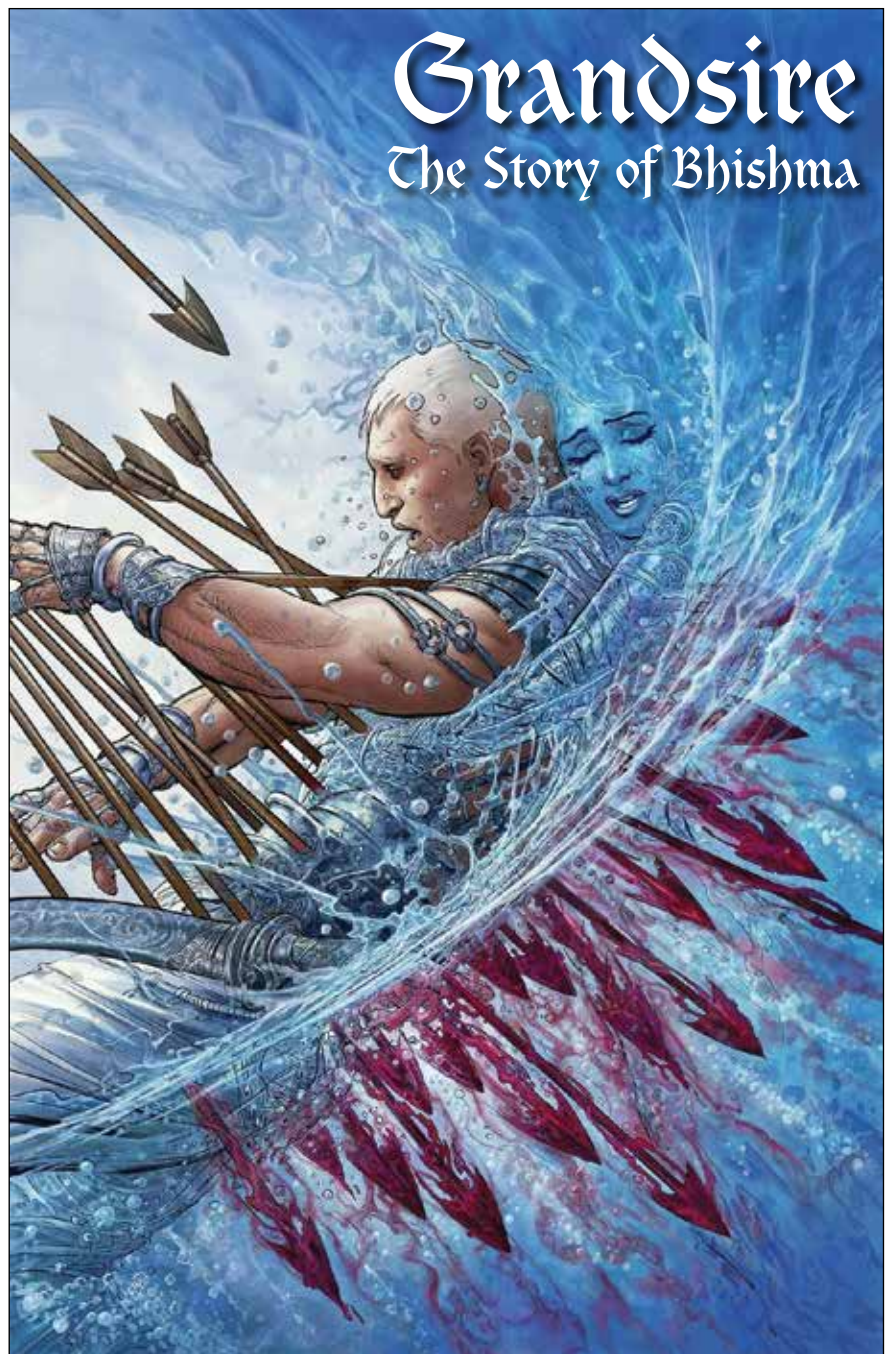
DURBAN
FESTIVAL
OF CHARIOTS



Bhaktimarg Swami's 20th Year at the Durban Festival of Chariots

In an interview in Sridhama Mayapur India, Bhaktimarg Swami shared: "20 Years! It's hard to believe and it's been a blessing all the way through. I would say that I have grown to love everybody, cast, crew, and the audience. I got to learn about the South African culture, as well as the beach, and the walking spaces. In these twenty years I have come to be more experienced and more comfortably situated at the Durban Festival of Chariots and I'll come until they put me in a box! I enjoy the South African hospitality, the wonderful fresh food, and the fantastic *kirtan* that take place in the morning sessions before we have our practice. Everybody over there are sweet and co-operative and that's what keeps me attracted to coming all the time.

"I personally like to see the procession to take off in a way that will be a little more appealing, little more percussion, little more power, little more boom. South Africans definitely have an interest and a cultural slant, which is attractive. To me, there is the music, the dance, and all of that but like anywhere in the world, we are all confronted with our desires, our hates, and our passions and in that regard, everyone is the same. So, the stories that we bring to the Durban Festival of Chariots have a universal appeal. The stories are emotional and have an interesting drive. I always try to incorporate some good battle scenes, soft dance pieces, and variety, a touch of the East, a touch of the West, a touch of what's old and also what's new – fusion material, and of course – African material. There are battles in the dramas because aggression is very much part of life. And sometimes it is necessary to be firm in a defensive way. At all costs we should try to avoid aggression and violence. But in the matter of defence it sometimes becomes a part of life and that is a reality that we present to the stage and under the lights."



Cultural Entertainment Arena
Fri 19th, Sat 20th & Sun 21st April
Show time at 8pm each evening.

2019 Drama – Grandsire

Grandsire is the story of a benevolent warrior, whom everybody loves. He was unusually sacrificial even though he was of the *kshatriya* order, which means he was of the warrior class and that means he was a man of passion. So, even though he comes from that genre or lifestyle, he got all of his family members married and settled, and yet he made a vow that he wouldn't marry. Everyone else was first. So that is why I love him, but the last scene is very touching. You gotta come out and see it for yourself!

WALKING

The Wisdom of the Road

A Documentary by Michael Oesch

"The Walking Monk" documentary will be screened at the Durban Festival of Chariots. It is a Canada Shorts Film Festival official selection for 2018 and a recipient of the 2018 Award of Merit. Bhaktimarg Swami shares, "I think the documentary speaks very loud about how we all have to simplify our existence. Just to quote Gandhi, 'simple living, high thinking.' I think the documentary by Micheal Oesch encapsulates that in a good way. I think he did a splendid job and has brought out the essence of pilgrimage, walking, what its all about, and how important and profound it is for anyone who takes up walking seriously. Walking is personally important to me because it helped me with lower back issues, its allowed me to become more sensitive to the world around me, especially the elements, the people, and the wildlife I meet along the way. If you look at our physical structure, our frames, our bodies, are designed to walk. To put it lightly, these bodies are made for walking, and thats just what they will do."

Cultural Entertainment Arena

Friday 19th, Saturday 20th and Sunday 21st April.

Screening will be at 7:30pm each evening.



Bhakti Cloud

12pm-8pm Everyday

Our pulse is creative expression. If you feel that beat, come chill with us. Bhakti Cloud is the "soft place to land" at the Durban Festival of Chariots for the young at mind and heart.



We greet each day with pumping power yoga by Imani and slide into a thoughtful discussion in our holistic living segment.

Bhaktimarg Swami, the Dance Master will keep you levitating, don't miss it. Catch our Reggae guru Texito, in Mighty Vibration.

Or partner up and enter our Amazing Race competition - Bhakti Cloud Style. We


An all time highlight is our open Creative Space. If you can dance, rap, sing, paint, draw or 'poet' then check out our themes and be inspired.



keeping the rhythm and beat with a daily drumming circle. And end each night with mantra powered Sound Storm.

The Floor is Yours! 

For themes & updates follow us on

 @bhakticloudsa

Jagannath Mandir

Come greet Lord Jagannath in His temple!
Offerings of fruit and flowers will be accepted.
Join the continuous melodious kirtan and a
Vedic Initiation Ceremony

International Guest Speakers/Performers

His Holiness Bhakti Anugraha Janardhan Swami
His Holiness Bhakti Chaitanya Swami
His Holiness Bhaktimarg Swami
His Holiness Charudesena Swami
His Holiness Kadamba Kanana Swami
His Holiness Ram Govinda Swami
His Holiness Partha Sarathi Das Goswami
His Grace Madhava Naidoo



@ the Festival

Network with Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple. You will find:
Sri Sri Radha Radhanath designer (by Hidden Detail) branded items
A new Sri Sri Radha Radhanath jewellery range
Unique evening bags made from the Deities clothes and jewellery
Shweshwe bead bags that have touched the lotus feet of Sri Sri Radha
Radhanath and Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu
Packed maha-prasad nuts, dried fruit, and water

Join Our Campaigns

Master Plan - Amphitheatre Restoration

Bold plans include a complete overhaul of the amphitheatre with a
majestic mosaic over the stairs.

The Quest to Ahimsa

We can all be part of the change. Happy Cows give happy milk. Ask
us how!

Radha Radhanath Goes Green

We are serious about honouring Mother Earth and have already
banned ALL polystyrene at the Temple. Plastic is being phased out.
Our challenge is finding sustainable and affordable substitutes.

Come in a chat to our consultants to learn more on how you can make
a difference!

The Gift Store

We take great pride in sourcing new items and
is no exception. Women are spoilt for choice with
Gharara-style pants outfits, Abhaya-style puri,
wide range of cotton saris, cotton kurtis, palazzos
(including ones in lace), a budget range of gopi
the new Kalamkari gopi outfits, and a new
traditional costume jewelry. Men can look to
a new style of 100% cotton Bhagal Bhandi kurta
T-shirts. For worship we have a new range of
quality incense, blowing conch shells, peacock
limited sets of 10cm Jagannath deities. There
for the young ones, such as digital print soft dolls
Krishna, Asta (Eight) Gopis, Prahlad Nrisimha, C
Ram Lakshman & Hanuman; cotton skirts; T-shirt
games; and story & activity books.
Local is lekker!

Afro-Vaishnava Fashion - Be pleasantly surprised
a local fashion forward design duo who will present
range of impeccably tailored kurta tops to custom
anarkali dresses using African print in bold and
colour palettes, as well as beautiful beadwork
seen before designs. Their latest range of power
thought-provoking statement T-shirts is a must
the higher thinker. Finally, keep an eye out for a
range of locally handcrafted neckbeads.

Don't miss the preview opening on Thursday
@5pm.

Food Court

If you want to skip the wood-fired breyani, then
court offers a variety of cuisine from around the world.
And if you into fine dining, then come to the C
sit down restaurant, which offers delectable lunch
supper menus

Mantra Meditation

Breathe deep and allow the mantra to fill you. A
begins with one step. Take the mantra challenge
steps of mantra and feel the transformation.

Blue Mountain Children's Village

This is a children's spiritual activity centre filled with
devotional arts & crafts, story-telling, games & puzzles
cook-offs. This year children can get a birds eye view of
festival from the Ferris wheel or take a tour of the
site on a train!

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19 - 22 April

**DURBAN
FESTIVAL
OF CHARIOTS**

Old Durban Drive-in

HIGHLIGHTS

Lifestyle

Cooking, feasting, wellness, and meditation form the central part of the Hare Krishna lifestyle and we can expect a variety of topics.

Cooking

The Hare Krishna way of cooking is intriguing – delicious food made without onion and garlic. You can look forward to experienced cooks sharing their secrets. Preparations will cover North and South Indian Cooking, Italian Cooking and Ekadasi (grain-free) delicacies.

Wellness

Practical yoga for the body and mind
Discussions by healthcare practitioners and on alternative healing

Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Women's Forum

Featuring women's health and living your best & a balanced life.

Body Art

Henna Art
Gopi Dots
Face Painting
Temporary Tattoos

PR & Communications

Krisangi Radhe 083 254 8339

Kindly note the following facilities at the site: parking, toilets, security, first aid & ATM. Mom & Baby feeding and change area in the Blue Mountain Children's Village.

Undisguised

Oh Govinda!

By Achyuta Gopi

Hanuman ignored the strange feeling of tree branches scraping against bare skin and reminded himself, for the thousandth time, to slow down. His disguise would never work if he didn't act the part. And he was on a mission.

Adding a small limp for good measure, Hanuman ambled closer to the two strangers. He was sure he had never seen them before. Deep within Hanuman, beneath his disguised exterior, past the Vanara — the celestial beast which sometimes ruled his nature — near Hanuman's very soul and at the core of his being, something awoke. He felt as though this were the most important mission of his life to date.

They looked the part of forest dwellers but their broad chests and well built arms, crisscrossed with bowstring marks, spoke of their *kshatriya* (warrior) nature. Also, walking as they were with their bows in hand seemed to give them away. Hanuman stifled a smile at their thinly veiled deception but then again, he was not what he seemed either. Crossing their path, Hanuman decided it was finally time to find out who these handsome men were.

"Sirs?" Hanuman had planned an elaborate speech, but found that speech fled in the face of whoever it

was that stood before him. His lustrous skin was a dusky green, like Durva grass, a hue which called to his woodland nature and made him feel as though Hanuman had somehow found a piece of home. His brown eyes saw deep into Hanuman's soul, he was sure of it, and even as Hanuman trembled in response, he found that he didn't feel as though he were in danger. In fact, he had never felt safer. Hanuman had protected everyone around him for as long as he could remember, but it felt like this one person was the one who could finally protect him. Who was He?

The overwhelming tide of devotion, awe, and love slammed into Hanuman and he rocked back on his feet.

Hanuman must have mumbled the question aloud because the stranger was answering. And His voice called to Hanuman, called to every instinct that Hanuman had and made him want to serve. It made him want to lay his head at the strangers feet and offer up his very life.

"I am Rama, son of the illustrious King Dasarath. I've been traveling through the forest with my brother Lakshman..." The rest of the story was lost on Hanuman. He didn't need to hear it. He knew it. Hanuman KNEW Him! He stared at the two brothers mutely, joy blooming in his heart and tears springing to his eyes. The overwhelming tide of devotion, awe, and love slammed into Hanuman and he rocked back on his feet. He had been waiting for this moment his entire life.

"Hanuman?" Rama looked at Hanuman with a knowing smile and like shaking off excess water, Hanuman shed his disguise, the air around him rippling for just the blink of an eye as he breathed back into his true form. He pressed his hands together and bowed his head.

"My Lord, I am Yours." His voice was quiet, choked as it was with Hanuman's unshed tears but he was absolutely



sure that Sri Rama had heard him. After all, his Lord heard all, even those things which were unspoken. Hanuman sank to his knees, and simply gazed at Sri Rama's feet. He had almost missed his opportunity. He had almost let the two travellers go on their way. He would have missed the chance of a lifetime. Sri Rama raised Hanuman gently and Hanuman was met with the Lord's effulgent smile. But there was something Hanuman had to know.

"My Lord... from the moment I knew myself, I have been serving You. My entire being is meant for Your service. My heart, my soul and all of me would know You anywhere. How is it that I didn't recognize You on sight? How could I have missed You?"

Rama's smile grew. "You came to see Me in disguise. So I met you in disguise. I reciprocate the way I am approached but our true natures couldn't hide from one another for long."

His explanation sounded so matter of fact. So simple! But Hanuman had felt it. It was as though all of him had suffered from some sort of emotional memory loss, but he had regained the treasure of his life. He would never lose it again.

"My Lord, how can I serve You?" It was such a simple sentence, but with those words, Hanuman surrendered his entire life and looking into the glorious face of Sri Rama, he knew he would continue to do so for all eternity.

Oh Govinda...

How many lifetimes have I been hiding from You? Claiming that I am fine? Boasting that I can do life on my own? How long have I been hiding what I am from You? And because I hide from You, I have forced You to hide Yourself from me. I have forced You to watch as I stumble through countless obstacles, afraid and seemingly alone, all the while claiming that I didn't need You!

What have I done?
My Love, forgive me.

This disguise is useless. It has only hurt me. I have been pretending but now it's over. I want to be me, really, truly, me. I want to be what I really am.
Yours.

Acyuta Gopi is a disciple of His Holiness Radhanath Swami. She serves at the ISKCON Brooklyn Temple as a Pujari, Sunday School Teacher, and Kirtaniya. She has recently published a book, Prema Mala. You can follow her on Facebook (Acyuta Gopi), Instagram (lowercase. gopi) and acyutagopi.me



Distractions

Creatures in Bhakti

By Shaunaka Muni Das

Every moment we waste being distracted creates regret. With our lifestyles, procrastination is certainly something we cannot afford. Procrastination is a common enemy. The problem is deeper, therefore the surgery has to be of the same depth. In the *Katha Upanishad* it is said that the objects of sense enjoyment are situated higher than the senses, and the mind is superior to the sense objects. This mental attitude is described as *param dristva nirvartate* – if the mind is engaged in the transcendental service of the Lord, there is no chance of it being engaged in the lower propensities. To put it into further perspective, we visit an episode in the life of Hanuman.

Sugriva, the Vanara king, dispatched four parties to search in the four directions for Sita. Hanuman was in the party heading south. When the party arrived on the shores of Mount Mahendra, which was an ocean away from Lanka, a decision was reached to let Hanuman go alone to search for Sita and report back. It was at this point where he leapt across the ocean.

During his leap, he came across a mountain that rose to the sky, which he took to be an obstruction.



*Impressed by the hero's
uncanny wit, she blessed him
to be victorious on his quest
and thus he took his leave.*

Before he could strike it with his chest the mountain assumed a human form explaining to him it was ordered by the sea-god, as a service to Rama, to come and offer the warrior monkey shelter. But Hanuman wasn't keen on stopping and instead extended his gratitude for the offer and continued his mission.

Shortly after, he met a terrible demoness by the name of Surasa, who told Hanuman that she was given the boon that anyone who crosses her path will not leave with their life. Unmoved by her threats the great monkey rephrased to the demoness the importance of his mission. Steadfast on her intentions she enlarged her cavernous mouth to swallow Hanuman. With a smile, he repeated that this service to Rama was dear to him and that he cannot be impeded. He asked her to await his return to satisfy her boon but the demoness was not having it. She stretched her jaws

for eight miles, and he quickly grew to sixteen miles. She stretched her mouth again to twenty miles and again Hanuman exceeded that size. When she grew even further; the wise

Hanuman contracted his form to the size of a thumb. He entered her mouth, went down her throat, came out again and resumed his normal size and said that he had fulfilled her boon. Impressed by the hero's uncanny wit, she blessed him to be victorious on his quest and thus he took his leave.

As Hanuman soared high in the sky, another demoness by the name of Simhika, gazed hungrily at him from below and used her mystic power to seize his shadow as it sped over the water. Unable to progress and feeling arrested, he saw beneath him an enormous form rising from the sea with its mouth open in eagerness to gulp him. Fearless and sober, with a body as hard as a diamond, he entered her mouth and tore through her body and exited through the side of her body.

The author Ritchie Norton shares that when principles guide you, the shiny stuff aren't a distraction; that it's just a pretty thing to admire as you walk by on the path to success. This is a vital guideline we learn from Hanuman's quest. That in order for us to remain unperturbed in our own lives there has to be fundamental precepts in play, specifically those that are beyond the realm of the mind. It is natural for the mind to idle even when it's meant to be focused on something in particular, (BG 6.26). And just like Hanuman we should bring it back by reminding ourselves of our real identity and true cause.

Reference: Ramayana - Retold by Krishna Dharma

For the Kids

Spot the Difference

There are 10 differences. Can you find them?



Thank you
Serena Naidoo &
Krishna Kirtan
Naicker (10years)
for your cover art
submissions.

Art of Sailing

Marriage Matters

By Sri Radha Govinda Dasi

Serious Business

When embarking the ship of marriage, know the art of sailing before you lift anchor. Crossing an ocean is a serious project, which should not be attempted lightly; similarly marriage – living for decades with a spouse and building a family – should not be tried carelessly. Srila Prabhupada wrote: “This marriage is serious business and not to be taken lightly.” Therefore you need to explore your motivations and make sure that they are solid, mature; not flimsy or sentimental. You need to seriously consider: Am I ready for a lifetime commitment? What do I need to do to prepare? Are my expectations realistic and Krishna conscious? Or are they impractical, selfish, and motivated by sensual needs.

Many people are propelled toward marriage without really understanding the serious commitment involved and how to prepare. This lack of maturity and emotional ground-work causes couples to experience exaggerated turbulence and such a marriage may not survive. Unless you are clear about your expectations and both you and your partner are spiritually grounded, it's likely going to be a troublesome journey.

A Sacrifice for Mental Peace

In the *Bhagavad-gita*, Srila Prabhupada explains marriage as a sacrifice. There are many purificatory processes for advancing a human being to spiritual life and a marriage ceremony is considered to be one of them. It is called *vivaha-yajna*. Any sacrifice which is meant for human welfare should never be given up. The *vivaha-yajna* is meant to regulate the human mind, making it peaceful for spiritual advancement. This is an important concept: Marriage is meant to make us peaceful. Not in the absolute sense of never having to meet any disturbance but peaceful in the sense of fixing one's mind on one person: “This is my husband or wife; I won't desire any other for the rest of my life.” Srila Prabhupada explained that we should cultivate this mentality: God has sent me this person as my partner and whatever Krishna has offered me is sufficient. Nothing more.

Ashrama

Another expression for “getting married” is “entering



the *grihastha-ashrama*.” Srila Prabhupada said that *ashrama* means in connection with God. *Grihasthas* are those who live together transcendently, with the aim of realizing the ultimate truth. Simply getting married doesn't guarantee that your home will be a true *ashrama*, a genuine place of spiritual cultivation. A *grihastha* places Krishna in the center of their relationship as opposed to each other or how we relate to each others physical forms. The sexual connection is simply one component and not the essence of marriage.

Know that your house is not automatically going to be an *ashrama* unless you put some real effort into making it sacred. And of course you need to choose a spouse with similar disposition and values.

The vivaha-yajna is meant to regulate the human mind, making it peaceful for spiritual advancement.

A true *grihastha* develops a sense of responsibility beyond his immediate family. Srila Prabhupada wrote in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (1.14.43, purport): “It is the duty of a householder

to feed first of all the children, the old members of the family, the *brahmanas* and the invalids. Besides that, an ideal householder is required to call for any unknown hungry man to come and dine before he himself goes to take his meals. He is required to call for such a hungry man thrice on the road. The neglect of this prescribed duty of a householder, especially in the matter of the old men and children, is unpardonable.”

A *grihastha* also exhibits spiritual compassion by sharing spiritual knowledge with his friends and neighbours. By investing in acts of spiritual compassion, his earnings are purified. Understanding how treating our marriage as an *ashrama*, a sacred environment for spiritual growth, is an essential tool in the art of sailing.

Sri Radha Govinda is the Director of Bhakti Marriage System and is Amazon's best-selling author of *Awaken Your Spiritual Destiny*. Follow her on Youtube and Facebook.

Rocky Road Bites

The Vaishnava Chef

By Chandrasekhara Das

This is an easy and healthy on-the-go snack perfect for the long days on the beach at the Durban Festival of Chariots. You can prepare them a few days in advance and pack what you need for each day.

Ingredients

¾ cup food grade coconut oil, melted
180g dark chocolate/carob chopped
¾ cup cocoa powder/carob powder
10 Medjool dates
¾ cup rolled oats
½ cup coconut flakes
Zest of 1 orange
100g pistachios
100g almonds
¼ cup cranberries
¼ cup cocoa nibs (optional)

Method

Melt chocolate/carob in microwave in 20 second intervals stirring well between to avoid scorching the chocolate/carob. Add melted coconut oil. Place melted chocolate/carob mixture, cocoa powder/carob powder, and dates in a food processor, blending until smooth. Combine the date mixture with the remaining ingredients. Pat into a lined 20cm square pan and refrigerate until firm. Slice into bars or squares. Offer with love. Store in an airtight container preferably in the fridge.



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On The Cover

Dee has been living at the Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple since February 2018. Being a photography student means anything creative gets her juices flowing. She is an avid doodler. She has been practicing Krishna consciousness for 3 years. She has now returned to Cape Town.

Dee tells us about her drawing: "This wasn't my initial idea, but I was inspired by the Johannesburg CBD Ratha-yatra flyer and was keen to try a mixture of abstract inspiration. This mixed media piece is a 'playful' representation of Lord Jagannath using a combination of pastels, paint, and fine-liners (the best friend of a doodler!). To me Lord Jagannath is larger than life in so many ways, larger than our problems, larger than our conceptions and certainly, larger than my faith! He is able to grow anything in any circumstance. The mustard seeds falling from the basket represent the unlimited universes, which emanate from His energy. It is described in the biblical text, Matthew 17:20: 'Faith the size of a mustard seed is said to move mountains.' The lotuses represent the *bhakti-lata* (the creeper of devotion), which grows from within the hearts of sincere devotees as beautifully described in the *Chaitanya Charitamrita*. Lord Jagannath became more real to me when I visited Jagannath Puri in Orissa in November 2018. Still, the form of Lord Jagannath, which is the ecstatic embodiment of separation, is far beyond my understanding. I wish to thank the devotees for this opportunity."

Event Guide



Rama Naumi Appearance of Lord Sri Rama
13 April | Saturday
Fast until noon



Durban Festival of Chariots
19-22 April 2019



Appearance of Srimati Sita Devi & Srimati Jahnava Devi
13 May | Monday



Appearance of Sri Sri Radha-Ramana
18 May | Saturday



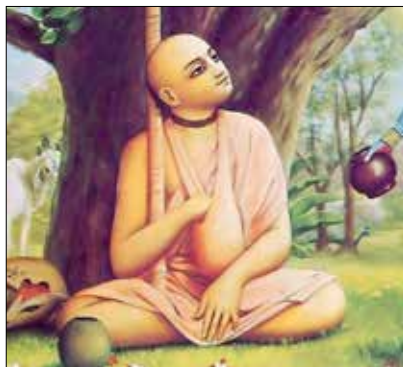
Sri Hanuman Jayanti
Sri Balaram Rasayatra
Sri Krishna Vasanta Rasa
19 April | Friday



Appearance of Sri Gadadhara Pandit
4 May | Saturday



Disappearance of Sri Jayananda Prabhu
16 May | Thursday



Appearance of Sri Madhavendra Puri & Sri Srinivasa Acarya
18 May | Saturday

EKADASI

Fast from all grains, beans and legumes.

This fast awards spiritual benefits and detoxifies the body and mind.

Ekadasi

15 April | Monday

Break fast

16 April | Tuesday | 06:15 - 10:02

Ekadasi

30 April | Tuesday

Break fast

1 May | Wednesday | 06:24 - 10:03

Ekadasi

15 May | Wednesday

Break fast

16 May | Thursday | 06:33 - 10:06

Ekadasi

30 May | Thursday

Break fast

31 May | Friday | 06:42 - 10:09

Pandava Nirjal Ekadasi

13 June | Thursday

Break fast

14 June | Friday | 06:48 - 10:13



Nrisimha Caturdasi:

Appearance of Lord Nrisimhadeva

17 May | Friday

Fast until dusk