

siri devi
khandavilli







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kama

ESSAY: Marilyn Zeitlin

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materal girls

Marilyn Zeitlin

At first glance, you could mistake Siri Devi Khandavilli's *Kama* sculptures for “the real thing:” bronze idols of Hindu female deities. And in many respects, not just resemblance, that is exactly what they are. Siri Devi Khandavilli models her sculptural images using traditional formulae to portray the female goddesses of the vast Hindu pantheon, a vocabulary that has endured through millennia. Further, she produces them in a traditional foundry where relationships, method, and tools have changed little since the Bronze Age.

But the works are unmistakably contemporary. Look: the female figures are poodles. Sometimes they are just poodles; more often, human figures with poodle heads. The incongruity is made plausible by the cohesiveness of the forms. They just look right. But the poodle identity places the work outside the tradition, creating tension that forms the work's edge.

The artist's intentions are materialized by her canny use of traditional forms modified to her own ends—to comment on the world of now, a present that with increasing intensity is happening both in the U.S. and India. And they are reflections on her own nature. Khandavilli pays homage to the tradition—both the craftsmanship and the images, both of which are intertwined with deep-rooted cultural significance and religious meaning, working both within and beyond tradition, and in the process, conjoining several polarities: traditional Indian village ways with the global contemporary world, the religious with the secular, and her own hybrid identity of Indian and American, traditional and modern. The work is beautiful and witty, luring the viewer to look closely and enjoy. We are captivated by the work, so when we do look closely, we realize that with Khandavilli's portrayal of female sensuality and her incredible skill, we are seduced, and participate in her critique.

These figures are completely at home—in charge, in fact—in our time and place.

The goddess Transformed

In these bronze works, Khandavilli examines an aspect of female experience, that of being the object of lust or the male gaze.¹ The degree of sexual explicitness in the figures is, in the West, rarely seen in portrayals of divinities where female sexuality is still frequently used to sell products or is itself commodified, the province of prostitutes or entertainers. But Siri also delves into aspects of her own identity. Devi is her middle name. And she has even said that she is the poodle. She is a serious person, disciplined, a good mother and wife. But she also acknowledges her own playfulness and susceptibility to vanity, her love of things. It is a powerful admission that she is aware of her internal conflicts and contradictions. They may arise, in part, from her being both at home and estranged in both American and Indian contexts. She is the goddess, the icon embodying her, in the early performance works. Without deliberately creating self-portraits, Khandavilli sees herself in her bronze figures and sees them as avatars of herself. They mirror her and vice versa in a two-way exchange.

In her portrayals of lush female divinities, Khandavilli references the international fashion world, street-level pop culture, and canonical forms from the great Chola bronzes.² This is a body of work that peaked in south India in the 10th to 12th centuries that portrays the deities with extreme grace, dignity, and sensuality. The Chola figures show the ripe, voluptuous body, the *tribhanga*, now enhanced with a twist as well as the S-curve. With exaggerated rounded hips and breasts, she is the embodiment of the object of sexual desire, fulfillment of the fondest of male dreams but also a promise of fertility. The *dhoti* clings to her hips and long legs. The proportions are elongated, not to the degree of a Barbie doll, but still sinuous. Her limbs seem almost boneless.

In the West, fertility figures and female goddesses in general are not sensual by modern standards. It is difficult to imagine anyone lusting after the *Venus of Willendorf*. Small clay figures from Tlatilco in central Mexico dating from the 1st to 9th centuries B.C. are wasp-waisted with charming hairdos; but they are crafted like gingerbread men (or women), frontal, with no *contrapposto* or élan. One cannot simply blame Christianity for redlining sexual power from its deities since the absence of sensuous goddesses long

predates Christianity. While the contemporary Western promise of beauty is the basis of huge cosmetic, plastic surgery, and diet industries, sensuality in Western contemporary contexts is largely the province of Beyoncé and other pop icons of female beauty. That the god of monotheism and even the broad pantheon of Catholic saints of both genders are largely de-sexualized³ seems like a huge opportunity lost. But India more than compensates for the de-sexualized Western forms of gods and goddesses. In Indian images, sexuality is more than accepted, it is celebrated, and Khandavilli upholds the tradition with aplomb.

Khandavilli's four female figures are remarkably close to the goddesses that enliven the stone surfaces of temples and live on in the Chola bronzes. They also recall celebrated images of women—though rarely divinities—from Western art. And Khandavilli, by grafting the poodle's head to these female deities, is following a pervasive practice in India of portraying the complexity of the gods—and of us, through our identification with the gods—by allowing their animal nature to be incorporated rather than suppressed. Ganesha is a chubby boy with an elephant head; Bhairava has tiger teeth that protrude from his lips and is often accompanied by two lithe dogs; all three wear anklets of bells like those of a 2nd century B.C. dancing *devi*. Vishnu in his many avatars has a pig head as Varaha, and also appears with a fish head, tortoise head and a host of other animals. In most cases, the animal-headed avatar is of the fierce manifestation of the deity. Ganesha is benign but mischievous. The animal head functions in a way similar to the masks of dancers. The being bears many identities, characteristics, and moods.

Khandavilli has created a new deity with her poodles, and by grafting a poodle head to a goddess, she elevates an animal low on the Indian scale to a daringly high place. But dogs in Hindu iconography do appear as companions, as with Bhairava. In the epic *Mahabharata*, the god Yama takes the form of a dog and follows the Pandava brothers during their final journey and tests the teachings of Yudhishtira, the eldest embodiment of justice. Dogs are venerated, especially in village ritual, for their own fine qualities. In Nepal and some parts of northern India, on the second day of the festival Tihar (called Diwali in southern India), dogs are honored, garlanded with marigolds, *tika* (the sacred vermillion dot), and incense sticks. Fear of dogs in India seems to be modern and urban, since stray dogs

roam the teeming cities. Dogs as pets, cuddled and loved, is a relatively new phenomenon in India.

The work in contemporary context

These works have different meanings in different places. Here in the U.S., we might think of them as comparable to the bronze dancers of Eduard Degas, who also worked in bronze, or of Jeff Koons, who casts ordinary objects to raise them to the level of art. The Western viewer sees beauty, exquisite craftsmanship, and a celebration of female sensuality. These are objects of desire, and about desire, with implicit social commentary that indicts consumerism stated in a visual vocabulary that in itself is seductive. And she maintains a light hand in her critiques.

How will the work read in India? Khandavilli, in grafting a poodle head to her female figures, is not only doubling down on self-regarding vanity, she is following the tradition of animal-headed deities. She does so in much the same spirit that it is done in the tradition: to express complex nature in both gods and human beings. The animal head implies that lust could transmute into voraciousness. We do not see the poodle fangs, but they are there. In her material girls with their poodle heads (and minds) she reminds us of and suggests that we accept our own animal natures.

In contemporary India, the ancient Hindu iconography has been recruited for political, nationalistic purposes. Durga, a fierce avatar of the Devi, is claimed as a defender of a retrograde return to purity that has a racist and classist agenda.¹⁰ In popular practice of the religion, the icons are exaggerated—saccharine sweet or grotesquely bloodthirsty. These are ubiquitous in Indian markets.¹¹ The lurid kitsch prints of the gods are the distant cousins of iridescent-colored images of Jesus or the Corazon Sagrado in the West. The Hindu pantheon has also been freely interpreted, largely for a Western audience, as a New Age alternative to other religions that seem to have grown stale.¹² Khandavilli does not exploit the imagery or religious meaning in so distorting a way. She simply brings it into contemporary and global relevance. But they carry a feminist subtext: beauty is a decorative and often deceptive scabbard for an aspect of femaleness that can be dangerous. In feminist terms, Khandavilli

achieves a complex image of beauty that is powerful and, through that powerfulness, subversive.

Just as the *puja* in the foundry transforms the sculptural image into the goddess, Khandavilli's works are transformed at the moment they enter the art world. They now are part of the global art dialogue and of the global art market. What is perhaps most impressive about the work is that it makes this transit so elegantly and without sacrificing the original meaning of the female figure in its indigenous, Indian glory.

rajakuman

Before coming to sculpture, Khandavilli worked in performance, video, and painting. She made the transition from two- to three-dimensional work in *Rajakumari* (Princess), a wall work made of bronze sheet metal rather than cast, the image created by *repousée*, hammering from the reverse side. She places the poodle goddess in profile in an altar-like frame in the form of a traditional Vyali. Used to honor a figure held in high regard, the frame, which is typical of traditional painting, incorporates a dragon-like creature that protects the place where rites are performed and against the evil eye. It is a common image, sold in popular markets, usually placed in front of the house. The title also evokes T.R. Rajakumari, a Tamil film actress, Carnatic singer and dancer, the first “dream girl” of Tamil cinema.⁴ From the start, the bronze works link traditional and popular associations.

kama

For the self-titled earliest work in the cast series, *Kama*, a poodle is standing in profile, alert and elegant. In this work, Khandavilli takes on Desire in its many aspects, one of which is vanity. Her intention is not to condemn Desire but to question its addictive pervasiveness. Kama is a male deity whose name means Desire, but here Kama is female. The change in gender may be related to Khandavilli's earlier video work, *TWO BIRDS*, in which the central subject—Khandavilli—consumes a mango with great lust. She is shown moving from “being the woman [or object of desire] to becoming the desired object.”⁵

The poodle goddesses are Khandavilli's invention. Like the artist herself and the works, they are hybrids. Before leaving the U.S. to return to India, the idea of a poodle in the place of a deity was already on Khandavilli's mind. She chose the poodle because it flaunts a showy artifice that bespeaks commodification, it is associated with wealth and snobbery, and, at least in the West, it holds a lofty place in the canine social hierarchy.

In *Kama*, Khandavilli is referencing Kamadhenu, the wish-fulfilling cow, a female deity with a bovine body, human female head, and wings. She has a peacock's tail, decorative, like the pompom tail of poodles in show. Like Kamadhenu, *Kama* is caparisoned with jewels and bells. Kamadhenu holds many other deities within her body. In a similar way, *Kama* is the touchstone for the other works in this series.

Khandavilli says she also had in mind Max, the poodle companion of Lady Gaga. Khandavilli's attitude toward vanity and consumerism is similar to Lady Gaga's: both pay homage to fashion and glamour, exaggerated female sensuality, and consumerism. At the same time, they shoot us a knowing wink. Both these references are to popular culture: Lady Gaga from the West and Kamadhenu from the Hindu pantheon. They both take their portrayals to exactly the same edge: where praise confronts the ridiculous. It is critique without condemnation.

nayika

In *Nayika* (Leader or Heroine), one poodle, larger in scale, poses hauntily, showing off her elaborate adornments. This Alpha Dog is flanked by lesser poodles who stand guard. Khandavilli says that the work demonstrates how "society organizes itself into a hierarchical socio-economic order." Like the beasts of George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, having poodles play these social roles adds the absurd, bringing the inevitability of social stratification into question.

diva

The poodle-headed *Diva* is named from a term incorporated into English via Italian. A star soprano at the Met, a self-adoring celebrity and, of course, a goddess. She and her sisters are analogs to the voluptuous movie queens of the 50s and 60s in Europe and the U.S. Like Marilyn Monroe, they were

all substantial, voluptuous, and powerful in part because of their heft. In India, the stars of Bollywood are equally as luscious, the ideal of an era before anorexia was a common affliction among movie stars. Lady Gaga parodies these *zaftig* women, taking glamour to a camp extreme. “An extravagant admiration for divas is a common element of camp culture.”⁶ And what better way than a poodle head to elevate the camp diva to divinity?

Siri’s middle name, Devi, which sounds close to diva, means goddess. She gives *Diva* the most expensive handbag in the world, studded with diamonds. Like a trophy wife or model, she holds it in front of her body to advertise her value.

vilasa vihanu

Vilasa Viharini takes the logic of *Nayika* one step further. *Vilasa* means pleasure, luxury, or pastime. *Viharini* comes from Vihara, to stroll; Viharini is a woman who takes a stroll. But she is not walking at all. Here a poodle is being carried by men because she’s too elegant to touch the ground. She is on a chariot like the carts used to parade the *utsava murthi*, a miniature version of a central temple deity that never leaves the sanctum sanctorum.⁷ The miniature replica, following Vedic tradition, is decorated with flowers and taken out in procession on festival days, where it can be seen and honored by those who cannot go to the temple. The idol is taken out to facilitate *darshan* (divine sighting) on a festival day, to enter the outside world and to allow greater access to the divinity.⁸ So here a simple pleasure, taking a leisurely walk, is transformed into a ritual with a poodle replacing the goddess. Khandavilli conflates a glamour queen with a show poodle, and suggests both may be representations of a divinity—an implication that is double-edged. Khandavilli honors the tradition and, with the poodle in place of the goddess, adds a skeptical subtext.

darpana sundan

Darpana Sundari (Beauty Holding a Mirror) links to a tradition of female figures contemplating themselves in mirrors in both Western and Asian art, from the woodblock masters of Japan to the modernists. A 12th century example from Mysore, just down the road from Bangalore, shows an overripe, mannerist female figure, the *tribhanga*, exaggerated with the jewels in

overkill, gazing into a mirror. Khandavilli's figure makes a graceful twist, reinforcing the image of voluptuousness. It is about vanity, of course, but also about self-absorption and self-examination.

shayana sundari

Overlaying her awareness of art history and religious iconography onto her Indian figures, Khandavilli outdoes herself in *Shayana Sundari*. *Shayana* means reclining or sleeping, *sundari* means beauty, thus Reclining Beauty. From *The Rokeby Venus* by Diego Velasquez, *Portrait of Madame Récamier* by Jean-Louis David, Titian's *Venus of Urbino*, Manet's *Olympia*, Goya's *Majas*, clothed and nude—the list goes on. Khandavilli notes an Indian example by Raja Ravi Verma, a painter of portraits, episodes from the epics, and domestic scenes. Khandavalli inserts references to historic precedent, even in the details of the furniture which are hybrids: they recall both the French Empire but also are quotations from Indian furniture.

Since she is “creating a goddess of luxury,” Khandavilli says, “it seems natural for me to make a reclining poodle.” But the image also reflects religious use of this pose. It is Vishnu reclining and having the cosmic dream⁹ and the Parinirvana or death of the Buddha, in which he is portrayed lying on his side. Again, Khandavilli conflates pop culture, Indian aesthetics of beauty, and religious meaning.

pravasini

If there were any question of whether these works held an element of the artist's autobiography, *Pravasini* nails that notion. The title means traveler, migrant, expatriate. The figure has roots for feet, but she is winged, ready for flight, and exultant.

sources: khandavilli's earlier work

Siri came to the United States shortly after she married. She lived in Chandler, Arizona, where the major industry is Intel. She enrolled in art school and earned a degree in Intermedia from Arizona State University. She sees herself as a hybrid, Indian but also American. Her fluency in both cultures allows her to see both her native country and the place where she became an adult, each from a sympathetic yet critical position.

Khandavilli's earlier performance and video works are directly related to the current body of sculpture. The content she explores in these works is desire and consumerism. Clustered together are gluttony, vanity, and lust for money. She uses popular American cultural clichés, grafting them onto Hindu rituals to underline the ludicrous promises of American advertising that play on unrealistic hopes. In *Two Birds*, a two-channel video piece from 2008, Khandavilli takes a verse from the *Mundaka Upanishad*¹³ that differentiates the physical body from its Divine Self or *Paramatma*. On one channel, Khandavilli slowly devours and relishes a juicy mango. The juice runs down her chin as she sucks the pulp from the stone. On the second channel, she is shown observing herself eating the mango. In *EAT ALL YOU WANT AND STILL LOSE WEIGHT* performed in Delhi in 2008, she consumes dark chocolate covered in gold foil and dipped in honey. She has honey poured over her head. The syrup runs over her face and neck much like the honey and milk that are poured over a *lingam* and figures of deities, given as ritual gifts to feed the gods. During the duration of the piece, she moves from desire to relish to revulsion until she finally vomits. The piece dramatizes the exploitation that the promise makes, urging over-consumption and simultaneously assuaging guilt by promising that there will be no penalty. In *Get Out of Debt Free*, she engaged people in a shopping mall. She dressed as Lakshmi, the goddess of good luck and prosperity, and featured an image of herself in the cameo of an American dollar bill. She hawked these as lucky dollar bills that would relieve the buyer of accumulated debt. In this work she conjoins Indian iconography and popular religion with its promises of luck and easy money with the squawking ads that are featured on American late-night television. She hones in on the misguided belief that one can somehow spend without paying up later, a notion that can only be magical consumerism.

She brought her Indian education to Arizona, earned an education in Western contemporary art, and carried both bodies of knowledge back to India when she returned. In the United States, she made work that expanded far beyond the traditional. But even before coming to the United States, she had been raised in a household in which art was present not only in traditional forms. Her father, N. Lakshminarayan, was a filmmaker and the house was a meeting place for artists. The artist says of her father, "My father was

a pioneer of what is now called realistic cinema or bridge films. He had a meticulous eye for cinematic detail and sketched each of the scenes he was planning to shoot. Even as early as the 1960s, in a conservative India, he tackled difficult subjects such as sensuality of a woman closeted in tradition and surrounded by male chauvinists!”¹⁴

sources: the chola bronzes

It is Siri’s father who introduced her to the bronzes of the Chola Dynasty. These images are known well beyond India, even in the popular imagination. The *Nataraja* or *Shiva Lord of the Dance* is a beautifully resolved image, one repeated again and again with variations. The figure is always pictured with one leg raised and multiple arms forming a corona within a circle of flames. It is balanced yet suggests elegant, trance-like motion.

Long before the Chola period, images of sensuous *devis* embellished temple surfaces. The *stupa* at Bharhut, dating back to the 2nd century B.C., shows a stone female figure with many of the characteristics that become canonical: she is sensuous, with round breasts and a soft belly; she shows an early portrayal of the *tribhanga*, or hipshot pose that in the West is known as *contrapposto*. This pose suggests movement, the body swaying, often with a foot raised in mid-step. The *devi* wears ankle bracelets of bells still worn by the dancers of Kathak, a traditional dance form that has a long history in India and continues to evolve today.¹⁵ She wears a *dhoti*, a skirt that clings to her hips and legs. This treatment of drapery indicates that the figure is not nude. But it functions in the same way that wet tee shirts of the 1970s did in the U.S: the *dhoti* covers but hardly conceals. Known as the “wet-drapery” technique, it was an import from Greece to northern India where it became more clingy and intrinsic to the presentation of the erotic female figure.

This treatment of drapery to both cover and reveal is perfected in India by the 10th century and employed by its artists continuously to the present. To put the Indian level of sensuality in this technique in perspective, see the way it is handled in the far more reserved context of China. Instead of wet drapery, the Chinese sculptor organizes folds like concentric ropes over only the slightest suggestion of an underlying body. The figure has zero erotic appeal. The drapery is more revealing in Gandharan sculpture, that synthesis of Greco-Roman and Indian forms for representation of the

figure. This fusion was the result of conquest and trade. Alexander the Great conquered northern India in 334 B.C. But it is the Silk Road that joined Asia to the West, from southern Europe to China, across Central Asia to Afghanistan, picking up additional charm as it transits Persia.

Those of us who are accustomed to jet lag have a cramped notion of travel in the ancient world. What the Silk Road represents is an earlier form of globalization. Slower, of course, but transformative not only for religion but for art. It might take a lifetime, but a traveler might traverse Asia from China to Persia and even to Venice. And some of the voluptuousness of Venetian art must owe thanks to India. It was not just about silk. War, conquest, and crusades destroyed much of the material culture that they encountered, but they brought astonishing new notions that syncretized with what was indigenous. But it was the caravans along the trade routes used over millennia that injected a perpetual flow of influence. The traveling salesmen carried not only objects but ideas, and ideas concretized in objects such as the portable altars. These were packed for worship along the road, but no doubt they were seen and sold along the way. These exchanges of goods and intellectual property were bi-directional: Greco-Roman portrayals of the figure came eastward; Indian sensuousness warmed images both toward the West and east toward China.

The formulation of the sensuous female deity reaches a zenith in the Chola Dynasty by the 10th and 11th centuries, by which time representation of religious figures, male and female, had been feminized. They are more graceful, their poses more fluid, reflecting more flexibility. By this time, she is at her glorious fruition. This is the goddess as Khandavilli finds her and transports her into the contemporary world.

The process

Siri lives in Bangalore, the locus for the high-tech industries that are part of the economic miracle transforming India into a global economic colossus. But this modernity is a phenomenon that exists within a vast country in which traditions and village ways are still pervasive. A few hours down a modern highway from her home, toward Mysore, is the village of Ramanagara. It is here that she works, side by side, with craftsmen who earn their livelihood by producing the bronze figures that become deities for home shrines and

temples. They perpetuate the Indian tradition of bronze, a material that in its malleability is ideal for representation of the figure and for creating surface detail, benefits that were exploited by artists throughout art history in works such as Donatello's *David*, Delafontaine's *Napoleon*, and Mercié's monumental *Robert E. Lee*. She works in the village workshop, which is essentially indistinguishable from its counterpart five millennia earlier.

Khandavilli's ability to charm and cajole the men in the foundry into working with her says much for her powers of persuasion. She has had to implore them, since they were at first reluctant to work with a woman and skeptical of producing works that might be dangerously impious. After all, their job is to create not just images but to bring divinities into tangible form. The bronze figure becomes the god or goddess through a ritual, a *puja* performed in the foundry by a qualified holy man. At one time Khandavilli wanted to make a multi-armed figure, but the craftsmen balked, and for now, that idea is shelved. These craftsmen maintain their limits to protect their *bona fides* as creators of divinities.

The method, *cire perdue* or lost wax, is simplicity and direct. Khandavilli first models the figure in wax. The tools for the minute patterning that Khandavilli lavishes on her figures are simple, resembling dental instruments. She enlivens every surface with pattern. Once she has made the wax, a mold of lake clay, roof tile powder, and earth from anthills is built up around it. The entire package is heated, the wax melts and drains out, and a negative of the form is left. Then brass, copper, and either gold or silver are melted together to form the bronze compound, and the liquid metal is poured into the mold. Because it is liquid, the bronze can run into the troughs to pick up the detail. Small parts such as hands are cut from the mold and made separately, then later welded onto the central form. The sculptures are individually finished after being taken out of the mold, the entire surface clean and filed. Then Khandavilli meticulously carves by hand the entire surface to bring detail into vivid relief. Finally the figure is placed on a traditional pedestal, often a ready-made base, usually a stylized image of the lotus, a symbol of purity that arises from the muck at the bottom of a lake, a standard metaphor for the proximity of the earthly and the divine. No mechanical technology is involved at any stage of the process. Because Khandavilli makes limited editions and works the figures

so intensively after they emerge from the mold, the detail remains precise, giving the work a vivid freshness.

This process has a history in India that harks back as far as 3300 B.C., to the Indus cultures of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa. From Mohenjo-daro, dated from approximately 2500 B.C., is the minute cast figure—4 ½" tall—of a dancing girl. Even this early, the goddess is glamorous: slender, moving with her head thrown back, one knee lifted, the other bent to shift the balance of the body into the hipshot pose that endures throughout the development of the portrayal of the female form in India. She sports a necklace and bangles. This girl has attitude, as will all that follow her up to and including Khandavilli's contemporary, worldly goddesses.

endnotes

- 1 Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Screen*, 16.3, autumn, 1975, pp. 6-18. Published in full at imiportfolio.uac.edu/ctcs505/MulveyVisualPleasureNarrativeCinema.pdf.
- 2 C. Sivanamamurthi, *South Indian Bronzes*, New Delhi, 1963.
- 3 A brilliant case to the contrary is presented in Leo Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and in Modern Oblivion*, Chicago, 1983.
- 4 T.R. Rajakumari, born 1922, died in 1992; but she lives on in perennial serial re-broadcasts of her films, perhaps comparable in her immortality to *M*A*S*H* in the U.S. which has been rerun from 1970 to the present. See Tubetamil.com.
- 5 See <http://johnmyl.blogspot.in/2010/08/performing-desiring-subject-siridevi.html>.
- 6 See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Divya>.
- 7 See <http://www.nithyaevents.info/donate/utsava-murthy-anandeshwara-andanadeshwari.html>.
- 8 Stephen Huyler, *Meeting God: Elements of Hindu Devotion*, New Haven, 1999, pp. 36, 131, and 192.
- 9 The textual basis is from the *Bhagavata Purana*, 6.16:
"Every universe is covered by seven layers—earth, water, fire, air, sky, the total energy and false ego—each ten times greater than the previous one. There are innumerable universes besides this one, and although they are unlimitedly large, they move about like atoms in You. Therefore, You are called unlimited."
- 10 Anja Kovacs, "You don't understand, we are at war! Refashioning Durga in the Service of Hindu Nationalism," *Contemporary South Asia*, Dec. 2004, vol. 13, issue 4, pp. 373-388.
- 11 Also available online at <http://www.craftsofindia.com/posters/hindu.shtml>.
- 12 Rachel Fell McDermott, "New Age Hinduism, New Age Orientalism, and the Second Generation South Asian," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Dec. 2000, vol. 68, issue 4, pp. 721-33.
- 13 The Upanishads were written anonymously over many centuries, from as early as 1000 B.C. to the 3rd century A.D. See Patrick Olivelle, trans., *Upanisads*, London, 2007.
- 14 This and other quotations from meetings with and e-mail from the artist, 2011 through April 2013.
- 15 The Chitresh Das Dance Company performed both traditional story-dances such as *Sita Haran*. Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts, April 6, 2013.







diva



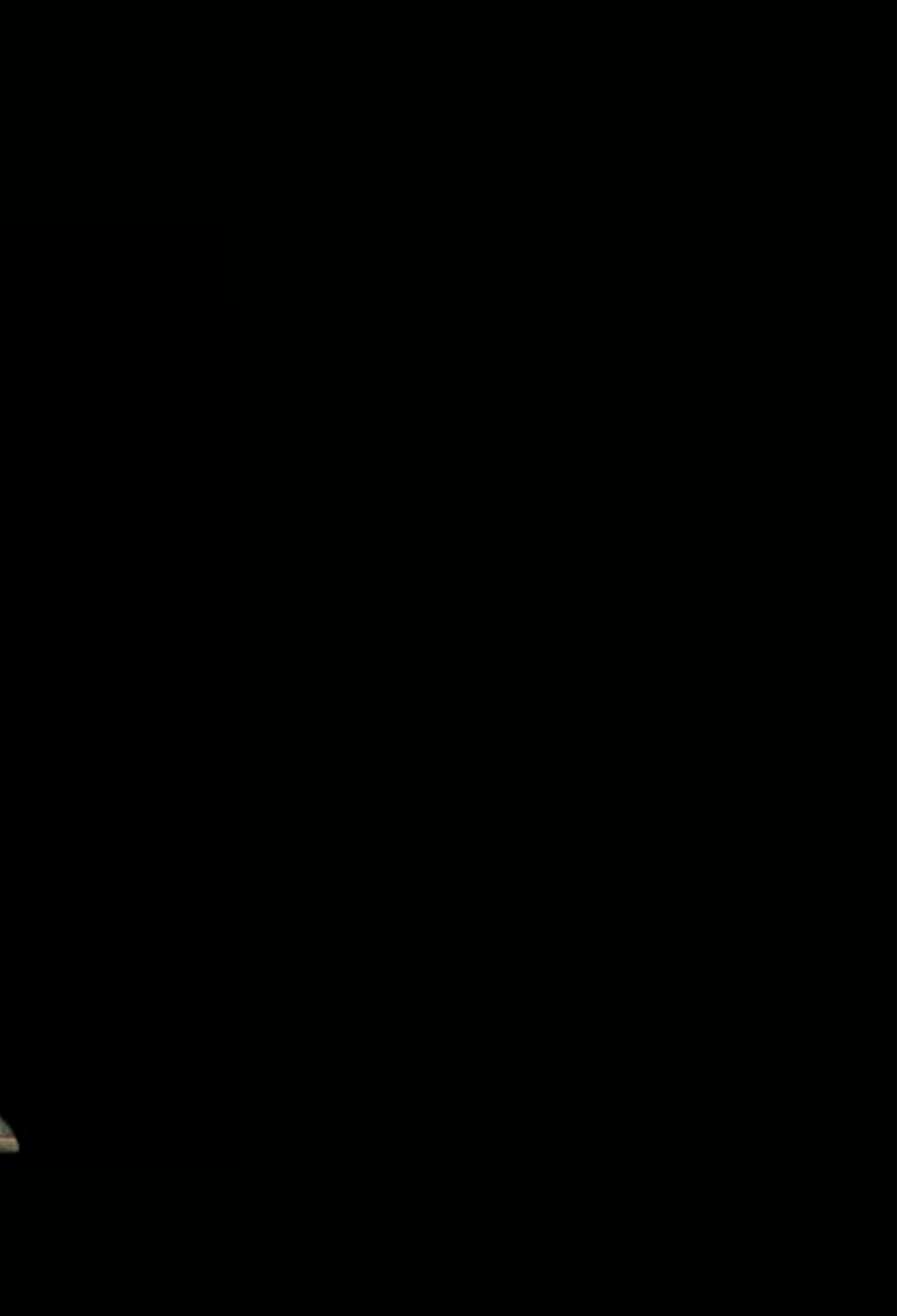


nayika









darpana sundari







kama













shayana sundari





pravasini













Vilasa Viharini





rajakumari





siri devi khandavilli

kama

diva

2013 | Cast bronze | 84" x 29"
Edition of 7

2013 | Cast bronze | 11.5" x 4"
Edition of 7

nayika

2013 | Cast bronze | 6.25" x 7.5" x 6.25"
Edition of 7

darpana sundari

2012 | Cast bronze | 12" x 4" x 5"
Edition of 7

kama

2012 | Cast bronze (antique finish) | 12" x 10.5" x 6.5"
Edition of 7

shayana sundari

2012 | Cast bronze | 8" x 12" x 4"
Edition of 7

pravasini

2013 | Cast bronze | 13" x 6.5" x 4.5"
Edition of 7

vilasa viharini

2013 | Cast bronze | 8.25" x 13" x 6.5"
Edition of 7

rajakumari

2012 | Bronze sheet metal | 25.5" x 25.5"
Unique







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