



Devalakunda
Vadiraj



DIRECTORATE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND MUSEUMS

By Professor S. K. Ramachandra Rao

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Directorate of Archaeology & Museums
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Devalakunda Vadiraj: A book on life and works of sculptor
D. Vadiraj written by Prof. S.K. Ramachandra Rao

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Devalakunda Vadiraj



M. Veerappa Moily
Chief Minister

Vidhana Soudha
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Dated 15th March, 1994

A TRIBUTE

The Directorate of Archaeology and Museums has done a commendable work by publishing this interesting book in praise of one of the great sculptors of our times – Devalakunda Vadiraj.

This book not only depicts the personality of the remarkable sculptor, but also provides an excellent presentation of Vadiraj's work during his life time. It is indeed a befitting tribute to Vadiraj in its real sense.

I hope this book serves as reference material for students of art and architecture and also art lovers. I am happy to see that many good pictures have been used along with Vadiraj's drawings in this book.

Prof. S. K. Ramachandra Rao, who has written this book deserves special accolades for the comprehensive study of the life and works of Vadiraj. The lucid style of the author best suits the matter that is presented.

I wish that the Directorate brings out many more publications of this kind in the course of time, to preserve and propagate Karnataka's cultural tradition.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "M. Veerappa Moily".

(M. VEERAPPA MOILY)



22 February, 1994

FOREWORD

More often than not, remembering our celebrated artists, writers, sculptors, musicians and dancers, ends with a few customary messages and speeches, as a matter of homage. Rarely are efforts made to translate their dreams and visions into reality, even after their death.

It is in this context, I consider myself privileged to write this foreword to a documentation work titled – “DEVALAKUNDA VADIRAJ” which vividly portrays the man and his mission, thus ensuring a step ahead in making Vadiraj’s dream come true. As we all know, Vadiraj always wanted his drawings, sketches and the study of finished sculptures to reach the young generation of artists so that they can study them and, if possible, adopt the same in praise of the tradition.

Most of us know that Late D. Vadiraj was a rare combination of tradition and modernity. Though not born in a sculptor family, he became a legend in his life time. One need not use words to explain his works in detail as his sculptures themselves, both in India and abroad, speak volumes and stand testimony to his ingenuity and skill.

We are fortunate that this book has been authored by Prof. S. K. Ramachandra Rao, a top ranking art historian and a great artist of our times. Since Prof. Rao knew Shri Vadiraj intimately, the book naturally contains most valuable information about the sculptures of the artist.

Apart from giving a biographical sketch of the artist, Prof. Rao has provided an insight into the philosophy of this towering personality which might have guided him to scale such great heights. This book would definitely serve as a reference book for the students of sculpture as all the sketches have been prepared by the late maestro himself.

It is heartening that Shri Chiranjiv Singh, IAS, evinced keen interest in this publication.

With these few words, I join the thousands in paying homage to Shri D. Vadiraj who has enriched Karnataka by creating innumerable sculptures which are timeless in their appeal.

D. V. DEVARAJ

INTRODUCTION

It was indeed my privilege to have been associated closely with the renowned artist, Vadiraj, for many years. He was undoubtedly an extraordinary artist, probably one of the greatest the country has produced. He sculpted hundreds of exquisite pieces in stone and wood, each of them a model of painstaking perfection. He lived a life entirely dedicated to the traditional idiom of art. Every moment of his waking life saw him as an artist at work. His mind was uninterruptedly preoccupied with matters concerning art, artists, art-education and art-appreciation.

Although temperamentally and professionally wedded to traditional art, he readily responded to the elements of beauty and creativity in the modern trends of art. He was in fact constantly experimenting with forms and techniques and he valued his acquaintance with painters and sculptors of Great Britain. He was appreciative of all forms of art and he had a special fascination for Classical Indian music.

However, what attracted me to him was his qualities as a man. For an artist, he was a perfect gentleman. His childlike simplicity, honest modesty, austerity in life, an utter indifference to the commercialization of his art and devotion to the higher values of life were qualities that were all too evident. Art for him was not a means of livelihood, but a way of life. Art was in fact religion for him. He did not regard art as anything but a spiritual expression.

I was therefore full of admiration for Vadiraj both as an artist and as a man. I had planned to write a book on him even when he was alive. I had succeeded in overcoming his initial resistance, and had prepared the major part of the manuscript, a couple of years before he breathed his last. It is unfortunate that the production of this book was delayed until a year after he disappeared from our midst.

His devoted disciple Smt. Kanaka Murty, who was also closely associated with all his artistic endeavours from the year 1964 right upto his death, has co-operated with me in the preparation and production of this volume, which is our heart-felt tribute to the great soul. She had in fact kept a record of all the important art-events in his life, ever since her association with him began. She also preserved numerous photographs pertaining to his life and sculpture-pieces, which are now scattered all over the country and abroad with private collectors and in art-museums. This was of invaluable help in the preparation of this volume.

Another close associate of Vadiraj, and a valued friend of mine, H. N. Suresh, was the one who constantly prodded us to undertake this work. Interested in art in its various forms and enthusiastic about exhibitions, seminars and publications in this field, he is also active and knowledgeable about the art of producing art-books. He was a pillar of strength in the activities of Shilpa-Kala-Pratishtana, which was Vadiraj's brain-child. He has helped us at every stage in the production of this volume; and the elegance of the volume is a testimony to his taste, devotion and perseverance.

Shri Chiranjiv Singh, IAS who was the Secretary, Information, Tourism & Youth Services Department, Government of Karnataka, when this volume was taken up as a publication of the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, is an unusual administrator. Thoroughly cultured, disarmingly gentle and modest, poetic in disposition and spiritual in orientation, he is also a discerning and keen art enthusiast. It is small wonder therefore, that he became an admirer of Vadiraj and his art. Vadiraj in turn, also valued his opinions, criticism and suggestions. As a person, who was temperamentally and sometimes fiercely averse to approaching any corridor of power or favour, Vadiraj found in Chiranjiv Singh a good and valued friend. After the death of Vadiraj, when Shri Singh learnt that a publication on Vadiraj was being planned by us through Shilpa-Kala-Pratishtana, he offered to take it up as a Project of the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, which he was at that time heading. This is how this excellent volume was made possible.

Dr. Devaraj, who is at present the Chief of the Directorate, also evinced keen and sincere interest in this work and helped us overcome all hurdles. He has proved a worthy successor to Shri Singh in the office that he currently holds.

We have included here, some excellent photographs of Vadiraj taken by his admirers, the Late Sri Kesar Singh, Sri K. G. Somasekhar and Sri M. Sridhara Murti. And many of the photographs of Vadiraj's art-pieces included here were taken by Vadiraj himself.

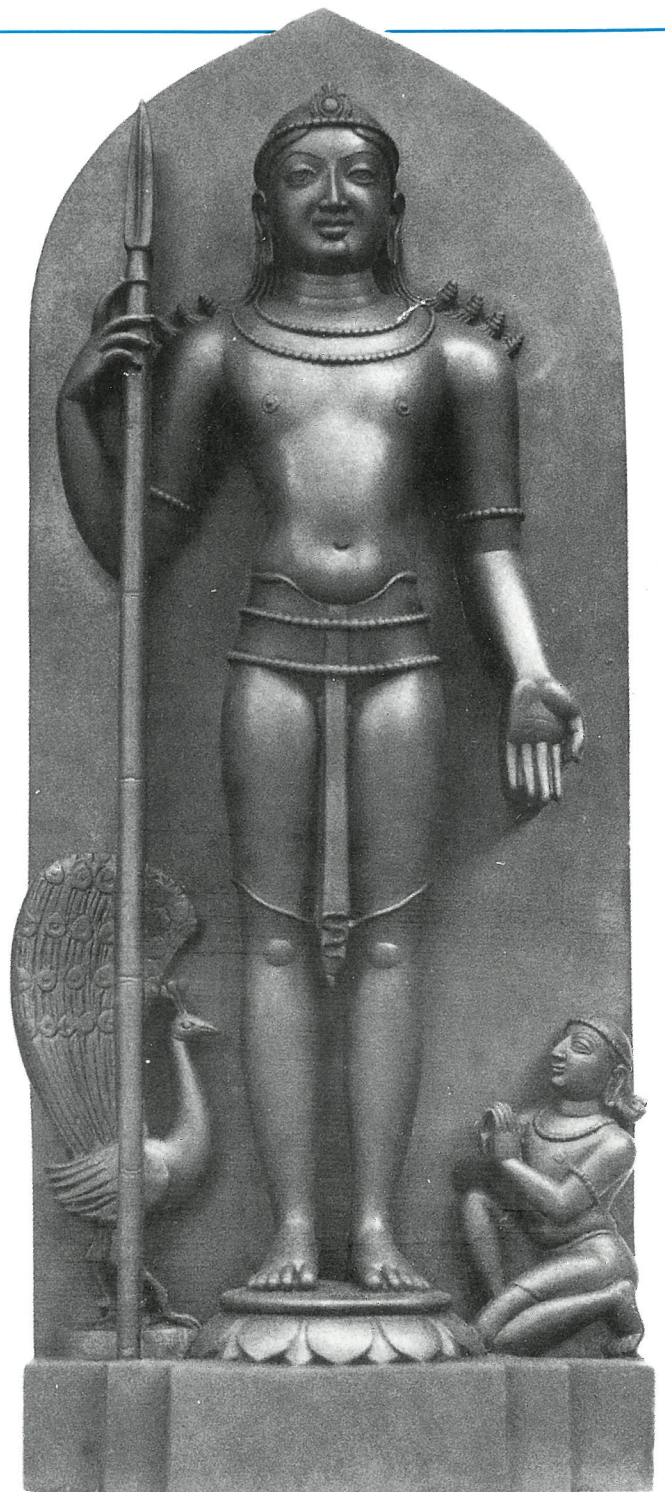
We are beholden to the numerous friends who have made this volume a proper tribute to the great man and with whom, all of them were associated in one way or another.

S. K. Ramachandra Rao

President

Shilpa-Kala-Pratishtana

Vadiraj



Karthikeya - Shalestone - 2½ ft. at Sandur -1980

In the contemporary art-scene, even in India, there is much talk about modernity.

K. K. Hebbar, one of the leading lights of modern Indian art, once chastised Vadiraj : "You are staying where you were, while others have moved on!"

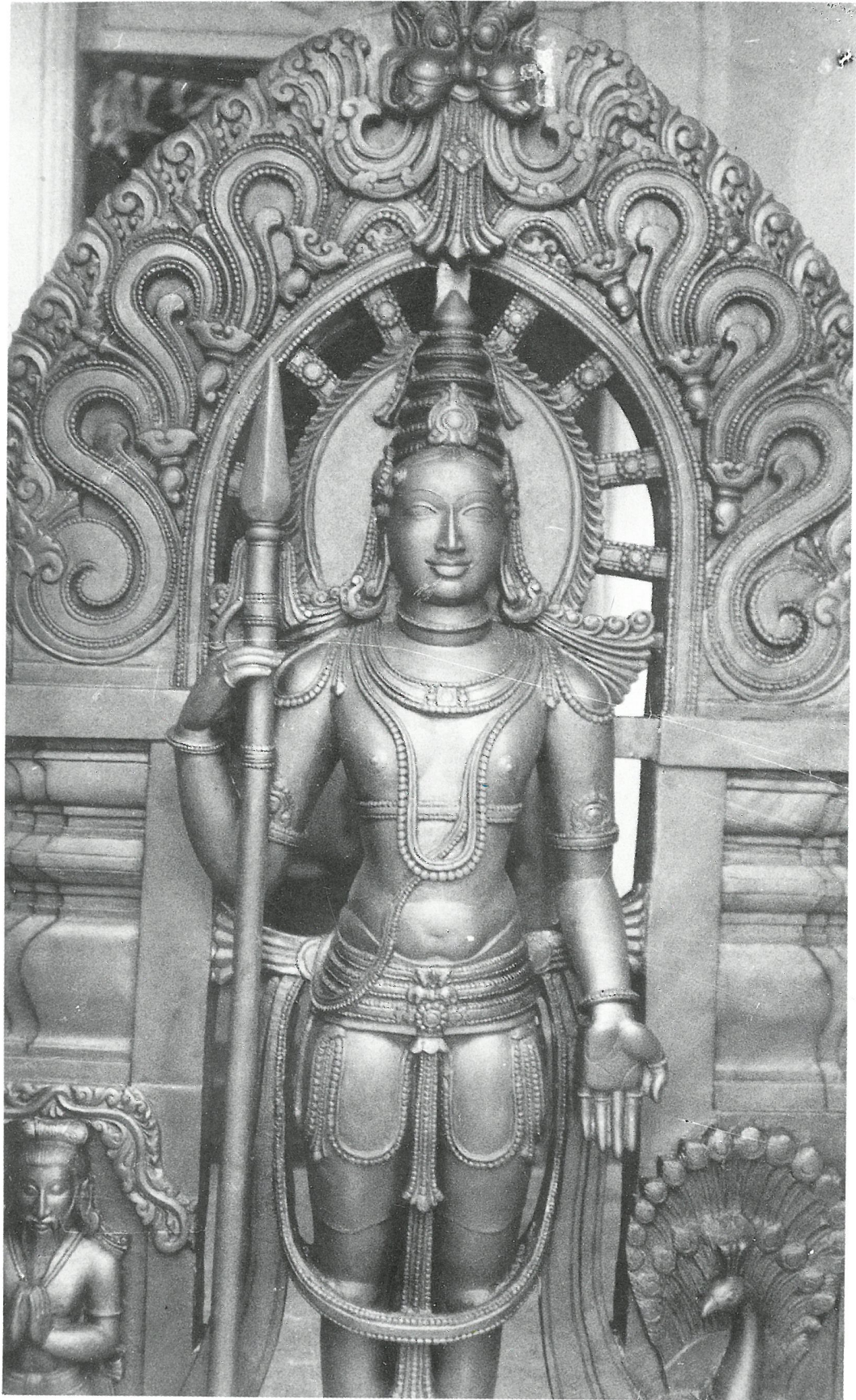
Vadiraj merely smiled, for he knew precisely what it was to stay where one was, and what it is to move on. The artist of international renown was in fact being critical of what is generally known as traditional art.



In the world of art, there can hardly be a condition of stagnancy. Art, whether it is modern or traditional, is an expression or outcome of society, and society is constantly changing. As life moves on, the needs change, and in accordance with the needs, inclinations alter. Inclinations dictate several individual and social processes. Art is a process which is at once individual and social. It is also an inclination. That it is a need as well, is however, not recognized well enough. There can be no response without a need, and art fulfils a very real need felt by the people, and perceived as a value. Is this need 'modern' or 'traditional'?

Needs and values are essentially cultural phenomena. There are needs and values that endure like rocks and needs and values that appear and disappear like bubbles on water. Some cultures are dominated by the needs and values that endure, and others by the needs and values that are transient. Culture is not a matter of a few individual leaders who articulate their views, but by the mass of people that hold on to things and thoughts that are very much relevant to their lives.





Kartikeya

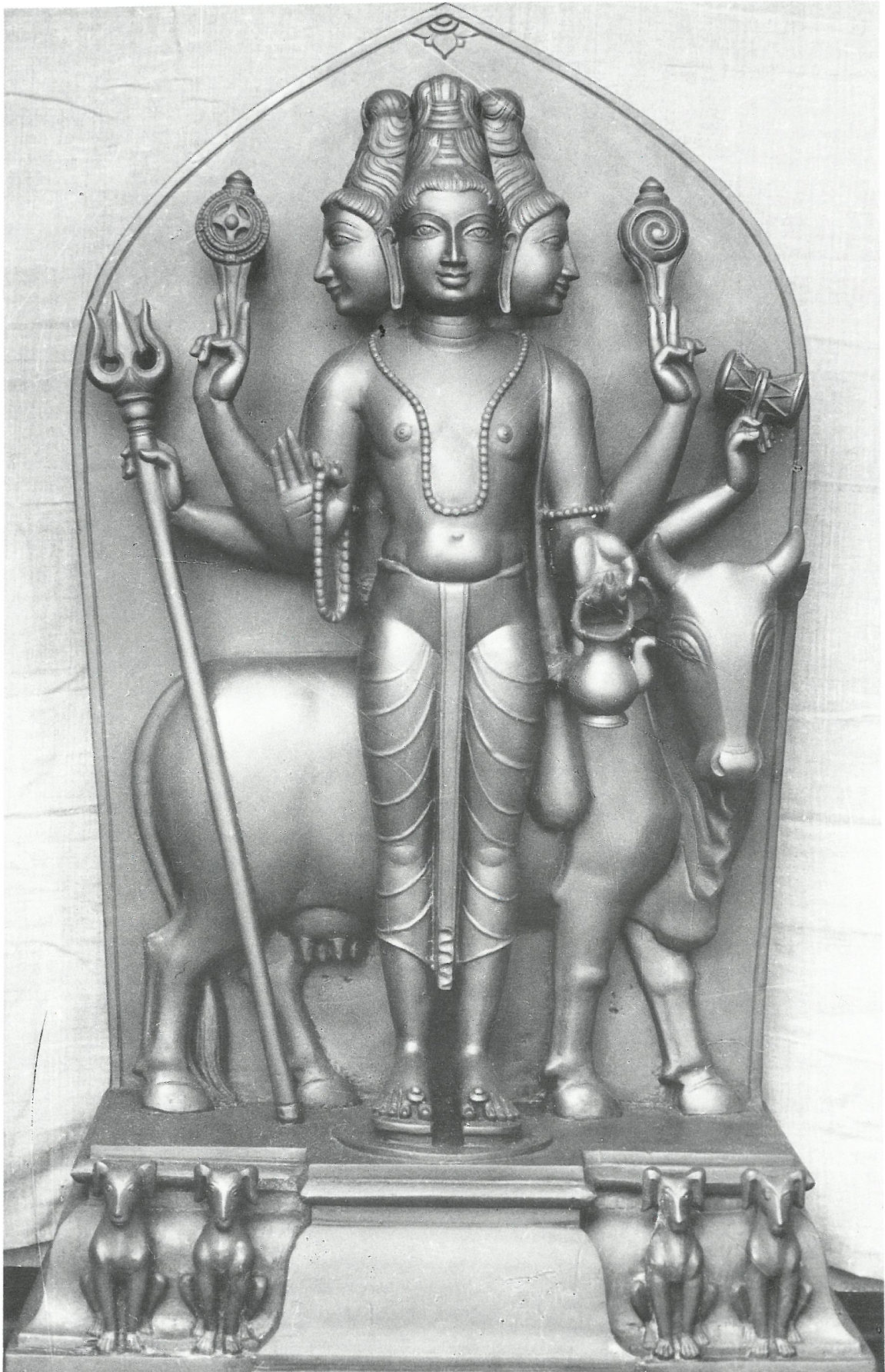


India, whatever the perceptions of the enthusiasts of modernity, and despite the glittering changes that are sweeping across, is essentially a traditional society; and the values that matter today are almost the same as those that have mattered all the centuries that have gone by. Art that is appreciated and understood by the people at large is undoubtedly of the traditional variety. The so-called modern art is confined to art schools, saloons, art galleries and mansions of aristocratic art enthusiasts.

But it is an error to look upon traditional art as dead or stagnant, and 'modern' art as dynamic or as in tune with the changing times. It is a greater error to regard traditional art as in fact craft, while modern art is really art. The distinction between art and craft at any rate in India has never been absolute or valid. Utility here does not preclude aesthetic appeal; economy does not interfere with creativity. There are indubitable art involvements for instance in jewellery, pottery, carpentry, textile weaving, basket making or smithy.



Sharade - Fibre Glass - in front of NMKRV College, Bangalore



Dattatreya - Shalestone - 3 ft. own composition. In collection of Sri M.Y. Ghorpade, Sandur 1980



And is there no role of craft in painting or sculpture? Art without craft would lack finish and finesse; craft without art would be crude and colourless. Art provides the idea or inspiration, but it depends upon craft to accomplish its execution. Imagination brings the art and the craft together, and integrates the abstract with the concrete.

It is common for art-critics who are dazzled by the glittering but unmeaning forms that have flashed forth in the wake of modern art, to denounce craft as imitative and un-imaginative. There is doubt that shapes and themes are repeated in traditional art, but repetition is not a vice. Nature, not only history, repeats itself endlessly; bodily functions repeat themselves without a diversion; mind also becomes a slave of habit and custom even as communities tend to become so. The child imitates the elders, the pupils imitate their teachers, the backward people imitate, consciously or unconsciously, the forward groups. Imitation is a law of life. Why should it not rule the roost in the field of art?

And is imitation a mechanical and unthinking reproduction of models? Imitation is found in nature and in life, to throw up new forms, new meanings and new values. Why should it be different in art? Consider our bronzes of gods and goddesses. They were never mass-produced; each icon was individually prepared. There were of course models, both textual and pictorial; there were dhyana-shlokas to provide major details, but little more. But the artist-craftsman had also to use his imagination and was free to



Flying Gandharvas - wood, after Chalukyan style 1 1/2' ft. 10". In collection of Dancer Ramagopal - 1989



1982 - Festival of India at Great Britain - with other artists from all over India

introduce changes and innovations. His freedom was not the licence to create entirely new shapes and forms, but it was freedom within a framework. It was guided by tradition, but no shackles were imposed.

Or look at the sculptures in the well-known temples? Themes are largely drawn from legends and myths; but not all of them are sacred in character. Numerous secular sculptures are to be found amidst the gods and goddesses that abound in the big temples; and regional folklore also provides themes. Even the representation of gods and goddesses has a rich variety; handling of the same themes in different ways can be seen everywhere. Decorative details especially present a wealth of variations.

Traditional art does accord a place of importance to imitation, but not at the cost of the creative urge of the artist-craftsman. Nor is the representation of any classical object so strictly stylized that aesthetic appeal takes a back seat. Beauty, however, is the focus of attention; emotions other than tranquility do not merit main representation. Ugliness, oddity, pain and cruelty are not regarded as proper subject-matters for artistic



At Serpentine Gallery - Festival of India - 1982 - with other artists and admirers.

representation. Indian idiom differs from its European counterpart in this. Sublimation of the ordinary details of life is what has caught Indian imagination: there is also a partiality for the romantic element.

The works of Vadiraj illustrate the dignity, subtlety and classicism of Indian art. They bring out the unique aspects of Indian art-craft complex. They point out that this art style is a living tradition, and not dead-wood. The life and philosophy of Vadiraj show the strength of Indian traditional art, and explain what go to make up its distinctive appeal. The man has an uncompromising aesthetic sense, and an immense courage to reject all that interferes with this. His attitude is typical of the contented genius who is devoted to the cause of art with a strange fervour and stranger discipline. An utter indifference to monetary rewards, a fidelity to the old ways of life, a preference for ideas and ideals, and an inclination that is disarmingly friendly are the dimensions of his life that make him a character apart from the ordinary.



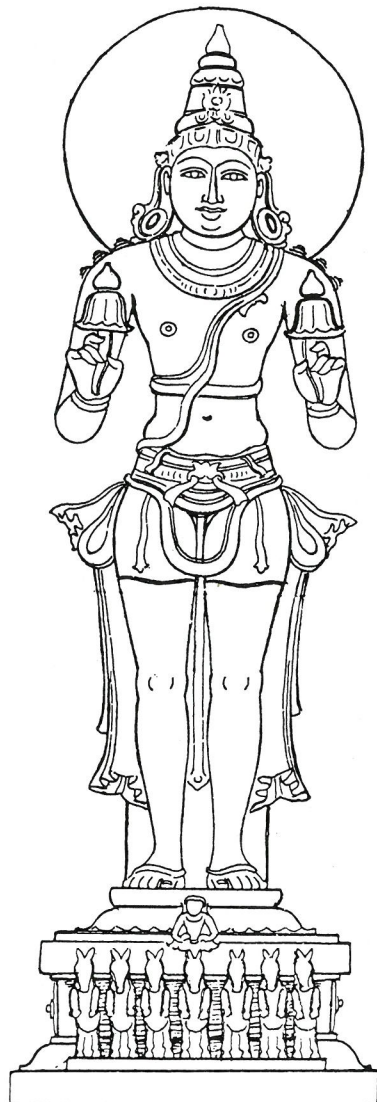
Devalakunda Vadiraj hails from a family of temple-priests in the coastal district of Karnataka. He was born on the twentieth of March 1920 in the small village, Devalakunda, in the Kundapur taluk of the Dakshina Kannada district. His father Subbaraya Bhatta was the priest of the village temple dedicated to Vishnu; he was learned in Sanskrit and the traditional lore. He was also a teacher in the village communicating stories from the puranas to little children. It was thus that young Vadiraj was exposed to legends and myths that dominate our religious life and also to the traditional attitudes and ways of living.

He was particularly interested in the narrative sculpture in the village temples, which presented in visual forms the age-old stories that he had heard from his father. Even as a small boy, he could not only identify icons of the gods and goddesses in the shrines but also understood in a general way the symbolisms in iconic representations. Art however was not in the family; priests were not artisans. There were also rigid caste prescriptions, which made art and craft taboo for a Brahmin boy of the priestly class, which Vadiraj was.

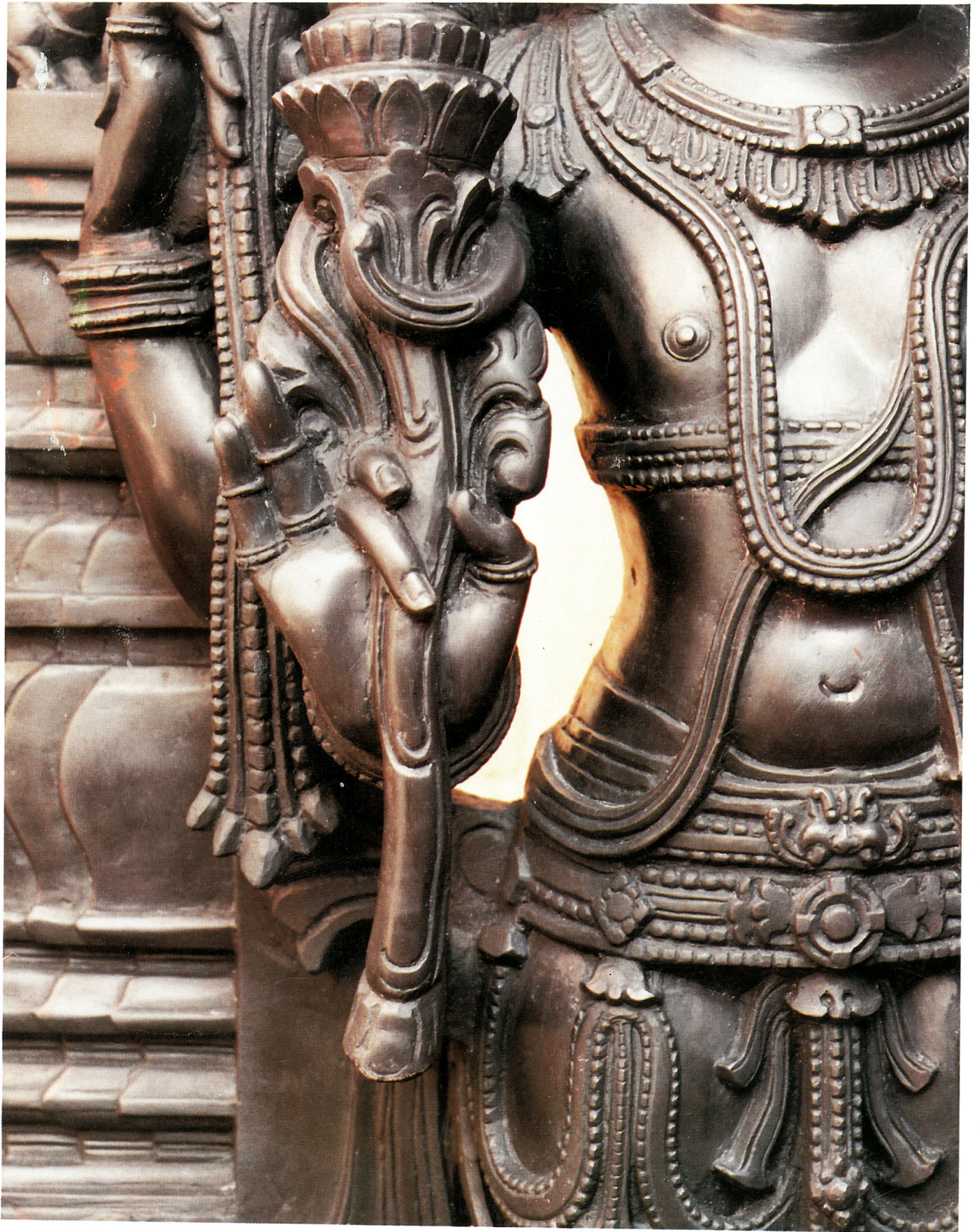


Traditional Head 1½ ft. Granite - demonstrated at Festival of India

Surya - 4 ft - Granite - Chola style - demonstrated at Festival of India 1982. In collection of Prasad Granites, Bangalore.



The artisans who made iconic representations of deities for worship and who built temples and decorated them were a class apart; the priests who worshipped them belonged to a different strata of society. That Vadiraj in later life gave up worshipping in a temple and took to the preparation of icons for worship was a curious reversal of roles. It was frowned upon not only by the priestly class but also by the artisans, who resented the intruder. But the early influences were irrevocably settled. Vadiraj was more interested in making the icons than in worshipping them.



Details of Vishnu - Hoysala style - soapstone



The family background for Vadiraj all through his formative years was rather poor and depressing, and prevented the flowering of early influences till a late period in his life. Once a reasonably affluent family, it had been reduced to dire poverty owing to the whimsicalities of his father, who had been separated from his wife. The boy lived with his father till the father died, when the boy was but nine. Then he came under the care of his mother, who by now had become almost a destitute.

The mother took her son to the distant city of Mysore, in the hope that an employment could be obtained for herself and education for the boy. It so happened that she found shelter in the house of the famous violin



Vishnu - Hoysala style - 4 1/2 ft. at Ranchi - Private Collection 1985



maestro T. Chowdaiah; and the boy joined a school. This early exposure to music not only kindled in him an abiding interest in classical music, but provided contact with some of the leading musicians of the day. He developed a keen ear for good music. But the subjects taught in the school bored him and his aversion to the school atmosphere increased every day. However, while he sat in the back benches of the class-room, he scribbled sketches of various gods and goddesses that he had seen in the temples, to while away the time. The teachers who saw these sketches advised the boy's mother that the boy would learn more if he was admitted to an art school.

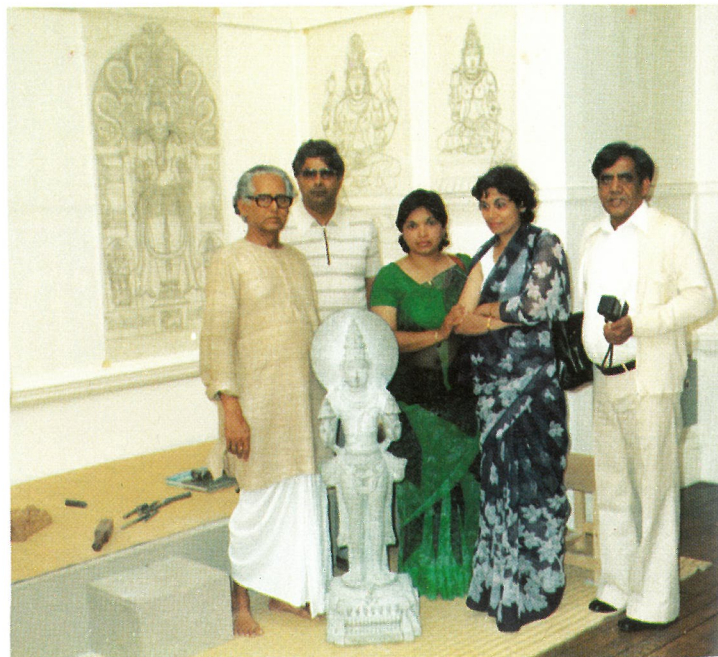


Mysore State had the advantage of being governed by enlightened rulers. Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV (1884-1940), in particular, was enormously interested in science, technology and art; and he it was, that made Mysore a model state. One of the gifts of this king to the city of Mysore was the starting in 1906 of the Chamarajendra Technical Institute, which incorporated the Industrial and the Engineering Schools, both of which had been functioning since the



days of the previous Maharaja. Sandalwood carving and painting were two of the several subjects that were taught in this institute. Thanks to the good offices of Vadiraj's well-wishers, he joined this institute to learn sandalwood carving.

He was, in fact, more interested in drawing and painting, for it was in these areas that his first interest lay. But chance brought him to the wood-carving section. There were two eminent master-craftsmen who taught sandalwood carving here – Venkappa and Ganapatappa. Both of them belonged to the ancient gudigara families (traditional workers in sandalwood, pith and ivory) from Sagāra and Soraba of Shivamogga district of Karnataka. The gudigaras (literally meaning 'temple-builders') are craftsmen who specialize in carving minute and complicated designs (involving scrolls, floral decorations, gods and goddesses, fairies, mythical beings, narrations of pauranic stories) on boxes, caskets and cabinets in sandalwood. They were also engaged to fashion doors and windows in palaces and mansions, to prepare chariots for temples, and to make ornamental garlands, elephants and bulls, and jewel-boxes. The professional families, less than a



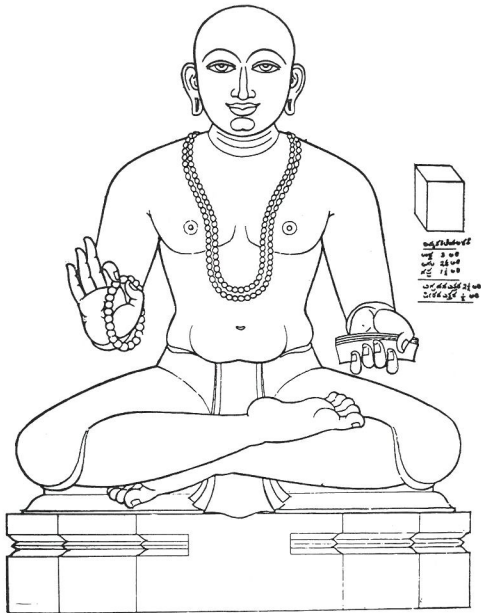
With admirers, at Festival of India London-1982 – Serpentine Gallery.



With an adminer at Serpentine Gallery, London

hundred in number, are distributed in Soraba and Sagara (in the Shivamogga district) and Sirsi, Kumta, Honnavara and Siddapura (in Uttara Kannada district). Their excellent works were included in international crafts exhibitions as early as 1871. And this craft was taught not only in the Chamarajendra Technical Institute at Mysore but also in the J.J. School of Arts in Bombay.

Venkappa, who taught in the Technical Institute at Mysore, was a great artist, with a large heart and a genial temperament. His work was an object of marvel for art-connoisseurs. It was the good fortune of Vadiraj that brought him to this master. The young man recognised his luck, and applied himself assiduously to learn this craft. Within a few months, he mastered wood-carving so well that the tiny caparisoned elephant that he made won the admiration and affection of his master Venkappa. The master took Vadiraj home after the working hours in the Institute



and gave him further instructions in the art. He had recognized talent in this pupil, and communicated to him all the secrets of wood-carving. He it was, who told Vadiraj that while most craftsmen were content to imitate (gudigaras have a reputation of being excellent imitators), he should go beyond and create forms that were aesthetically valid. Another teacher with whom Vadiraj learnt in the same school was Ganapatappa – a master-craftsman from the Gudigara community.

Vadiraj had served as a student in this Institute for three years, when his mother, hard pressed always to eke out a livelihood, was advised by some kindly folk to try her luck in the nearby pilgrim centre, Nanjangud on the banks of the river Kapila. Nanjangud was a small town, and living there would not be as expensive as in Mysore, which was a big city; she might get the job of a cook in some household there, and her boy may join the school to pursue his education. Vadiraj had to bid goodbye to wood-carving, which he had in the meantime set his heart on, and joined the school in Nanjangud.





At work - Festival of India 1982



The school in Nanjangud was not more attractive for Vadiraj than the school he had attended in Mysore for a brief spell. But Nanjangud had an advantage for him that Mysore had not offered. There was a big temple of Shiva in the small town. The Nanjangud temple was an ancient one, but the royal family of Mysore had made the temple remarkable for its size, architecture and sculptural wealth. It abounds in stone figures of the twenty-five sportive forms of Shiva, and of the sixty-three saints of the Shiva cult. The outer wall of the temple was surmounted by stucco figures of various gods and goddesses in all the directions.

Vadiraj, who was then thirteen years of age, spent hours every day absorbing the beauty and skill of these sculptures. He learnt a lot more about traditional art this way than what could be acquired by studying texts or by serving as an apprentice under a professional sculptor (sthapati). He studied patiently and painstakingly each of the stone figures in this temple, and refined his art-sensibilities; he sharpened his own skill by observation and developed a deep insight into traditional art in the most direct of ways, viz. by exposure to excellent specimens.



Flying Gandharva - Red Sandstone - Chalukya Style - 2 ft. With Nathan David, sculptor London 1985



However, his stay in Nanjangud was not destined to be long, for he had to return to Mysore to get his ailing mother admitted to a hospital. She was seriously ill, and her hospitalization had to be a prolonged one. Vadiraj, still in his teens, had now to earn his livelihood and support himself and his mother. He joined as a server in the hotel run by one Narayanacharya, who also hailed from the neighbourhood of Vadiraj's own place of origin. Within weeks, the mother breathed her last in the hospital, leaving Vadiraj literally an orphan. It was an ordeal for Vadiraj even to cremate her body and perform the obsequies.

Fate had another turn in store for the young genius. As soon as he completed the last rites of his mother, he himself fell ill. He got himself admitted in the free dispensary of the Ayurvedic Hospital, for that was all that he could do. He was an inpatient in this hospital for as long as six months. His sickness had a bad prognosis, and the attending physicians had abandoned all hopes of saving him. But to their amazement, he recovered slowly but steadily. One of the physicians, Dr. Sampath Iyengar, became convinced that this boy was destined for some great mission in this life; and that his survival was only an evidence of divine grace.

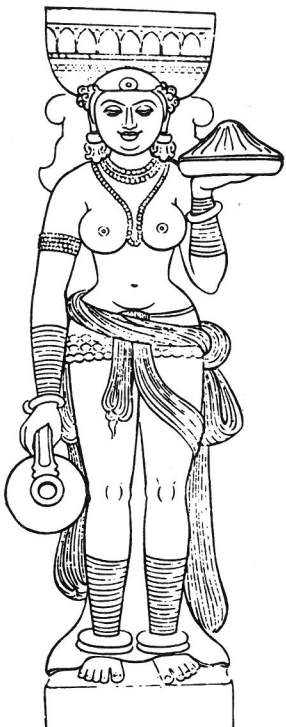
With artists of 'Art in Action' London 1985





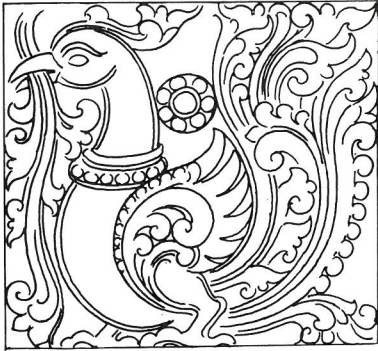
To add to the wonderment of the humble healers, Vadiraj began carving with his nails excellent sculptures (elephants and bulls) in the soap-cakes that were kept beside his bed in the ward. The common article meant to remove dirt was being transformed everyday into an uncommon art object, even as the young man lay on his bed with illness dogging him. It is small wonder that the hospital staff looked after Vadiraj exceedingly well, nursed him tenderly and brought him back to life. They were both happy and unhappy when he recovered, happy because his health was completely restored and unhappy because he would leave the hospital and go away from them.

When he came out of the hospital, he was all alone in the world; his mother who constituted all of his family was no more. And he had nowhere to go. But the need to eke out a living drove him back to Narayanacharya's hotel. He lived in the premises of the hotel and worked as a server. After three years of life like this, he ran away to Shivamogga in sheer despair. He did the same job, the hotel server's, even in that town, for another three years. He had come here with the hope that he would get some job, which would help him resume his interest in art. Disappointed, he came to Hosanagar, a village nearby, and worked in the areca-nut plantations, doing odd





Naga - Shalestone - 3 ft. Chalukyan style at London 1985



jobs but having more leisure. He was exposed to the rustic songs and dances and some happiness returned to his life.

This was when he got married, in his early twenties. His wife, Nagamma by name and an orphan like himself, was living in her uncle's house close to where he was working. Her uncle also had a small plantation of areca-nuts. Vadiraj was now entrusted with the routine administration of the plantation. This was too much of trouble for the desperate artist. He promptly disappeared and wandered about in distant towns like Gadag and Hubli. In Gadag, he worked as a server in the hotel by the side of the monastic enclosure of a renowned musician, Panchakshari-gavayi. Unremitting strains of music would emanate from this enclosure, and this rekindled Vadiraj's interest in music and art. He decided that, come what may, he would dedicate his life to some form of art and not waste his days in dreary jobs like serving in a hotel.

He returned to Mysore, looking for an opportunity to resume sandalwood carving. He joined a small businessman, Achyuta Rao, who was getting sandalwood carvings made for sale in outstations. He was once more in the field that was dear to him. But he was not carving much. One of the physicians of the Ayurvedic Hospital, who had looked after Vadiraj when he was an in-patient, Dr. Sampath Iyengar chanced to meet Vadiraj one day and invited him to stay with his family for boarding and lodging. Vadiraj agreed and began living with the doctor, helping in the household.

Soon, however, the doctor was transferred to Bangalore, and he prevailed upon Vadiraj to accompany him to set up his trade in that city which offered more opportunities for a person of his talents and interests. This is how Vadiraj arrived in Bangalore, the capital of the State of Karnataka and one of the cultural centres of the country.

Nataraja 7½ ft. Karkala stone - Chola style at Sandur 1989



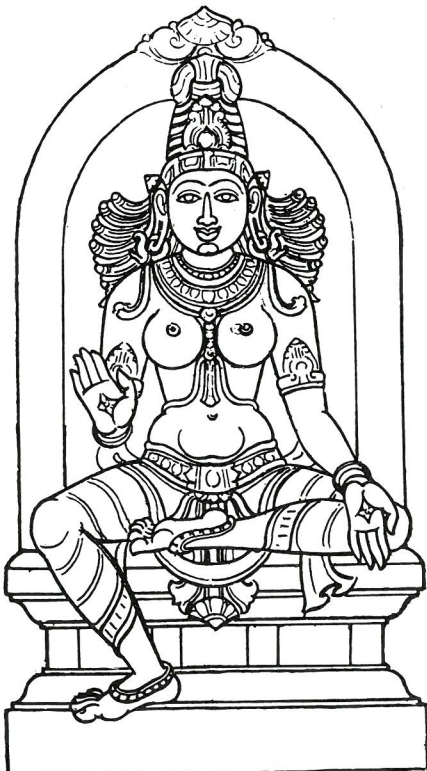


He came to Bangalore, nursing an ambition to set himself up as a craftsman-artist. A few days after he arrived in the city, he was once aimlessly walking on the streets in an area called 'Nagarthara-pete', when he found a group of craftsmen sitting near a small workshop, engaged in sandalwood carving. He stopped at once and stood watching the work that was going



Couple - soapstone 2 ft. Chalukya style sold at London 1986

Gana playing musical instrument 1 1/2 ft. - soapstone - Chola style - Art-in-Action



on. The master of the establishment, Sankarappa, happened to come out, and he inquired who he was and what made him tarry to watch the work of the craftsmen. Vadiraj replied that he had once learnt this craft, adding that he was also a good hand at it. Sankarappa at once invited him to walk in and giving him a bit of sandalwood and some implements asked him to try his hand.

In an hour or so, Vadiraj transformed that block of wood into a beautiful swan, complete with classical decorations. Sankarappa was astonished at the design and finish, and offered at once to employ him. Thus began the carver's career once again. He was happy that he was at last in the field of art, rather firmly positioned. But Sankarappa's establishment was turning out routine pieces for sale on order; and the pieces had to be done in identical forms. This endless repetition of themes tired Vadiraj before long, and he was itching to do creative pieces.

The opportunity presented itself, when his boyhood friend Narayana Murthi, introduced him to a dance-teacher, Udaya Rudra, who was also running a school for children. This dance-master was impressed by the artistic sensibilities of Vadiraj, and invited him



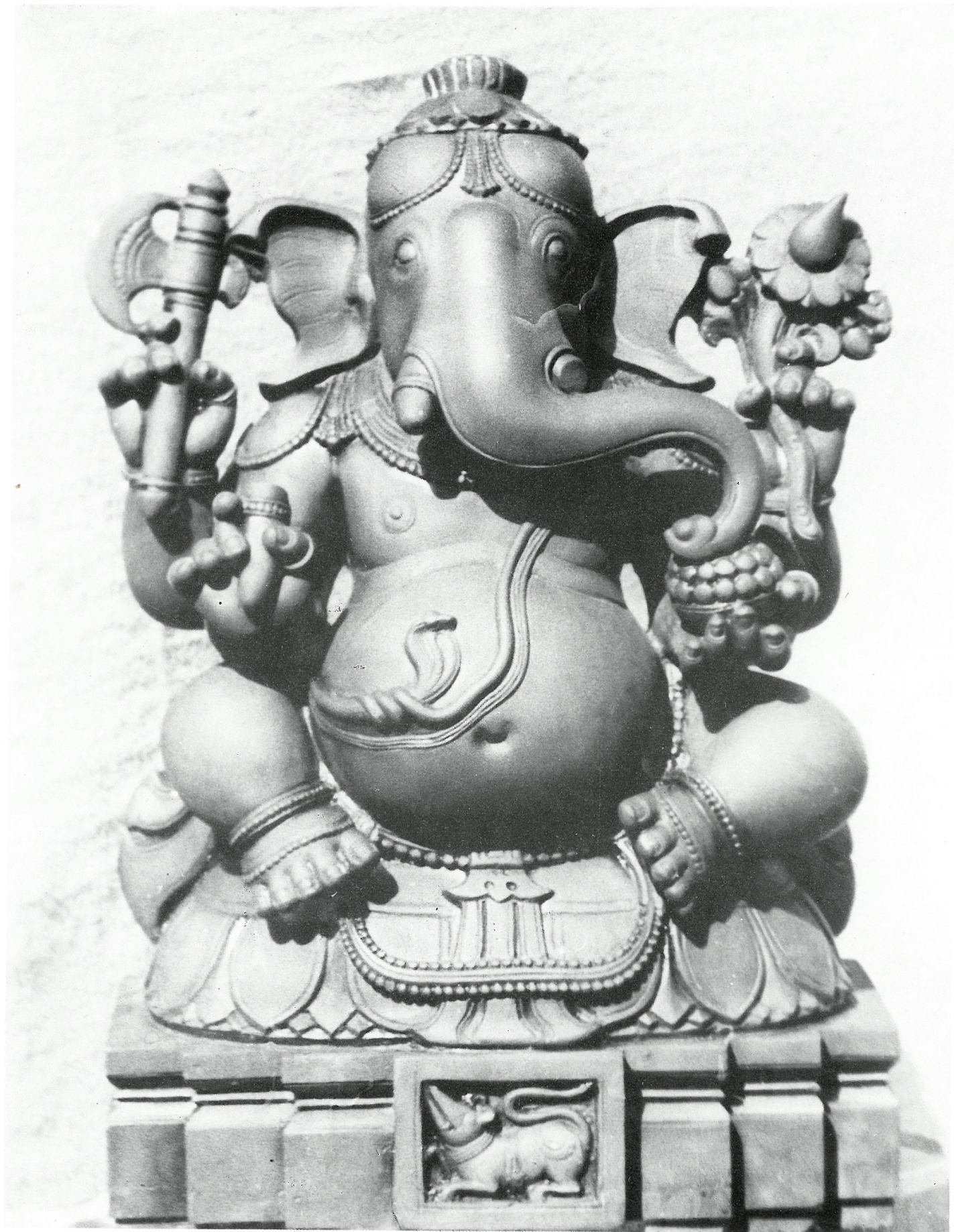
to join the school and help them. Vadiraj shifted his residence to the school, and spent his time making narrative drawings illustrating stories for children, designing ornaments that were needed of him. He stopped going to Sankarappa's workshop, and gave up wood-carving for a spell. He was now being drawn into the wider field of art.

His friend, Narayana Murthi, was a pillar of support for him. This young man had secured a job in Bangalore, but he was deeply interested in music and dance. He was learning dance from Udaya Rudra and music from another celebrity: A. Subba Rao, who was a professional classical vocalist. Vadiraj was naturally introduced to Subba Rao, and the two took an instant liking for each other. Subba Rao was then living with his mother in a small house in Chickpete; and he asked Vadiraj to come over and live with them.

This was a turning point in the young artist's life. Subba Rao, who had been hailed as a boy-prodigy, was an excellent musician, with a sweet voice and genius for creative tunes. He was also inordinately interested

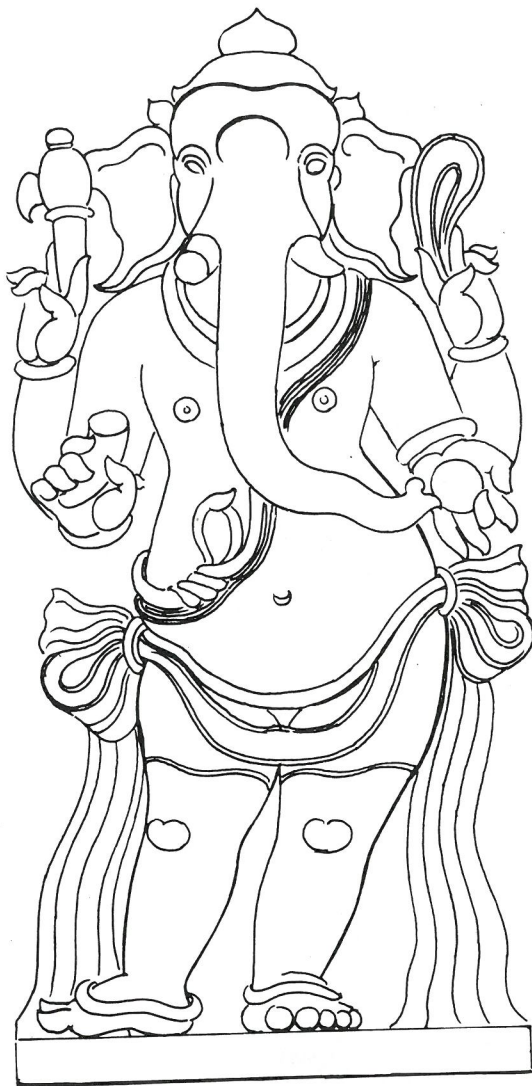


Traditional Head - Chalukya style 1½ ft in collection of Nathan David, sculptor-London



Ganesha 1 1/2 ft. - Shalestone - Chalukyan style Art-in-Action, London, 1986

Standing Ganesha - 3 1/2 ft. soapstone - private collection - Bangalore 1986





in sports (especially cricket), cinema and literature. Vadiraj developed new interests when he began living with Subba Rao, and an aesthete that the musician was, groomed the wood-carver in the niceties of art-presentation. Vadiraj for the first time in his life understood that different art forms were essentially inter-related, and that proficiency in one area would naturally spread over to the kindred areas. To be an artist was to grow out of professional confines; beauty was one, whether it was presented in painting, sculpture, music or dance. The principles of art-production and art-appreciation were the same in all these disciplines.

The temperament of a true artist involved total absorption in his work for its own sake, being utterly indifferent to money, fame and status. Vadiraj and Subba Rao were kindred spirits; they had the same artistic temperament. But Vadiraj profited a lot by this association. Subba Rao had college education, and had been taught by one of the greatest musicians of all time, Bidaram Krishnappa in Mysore; he had already



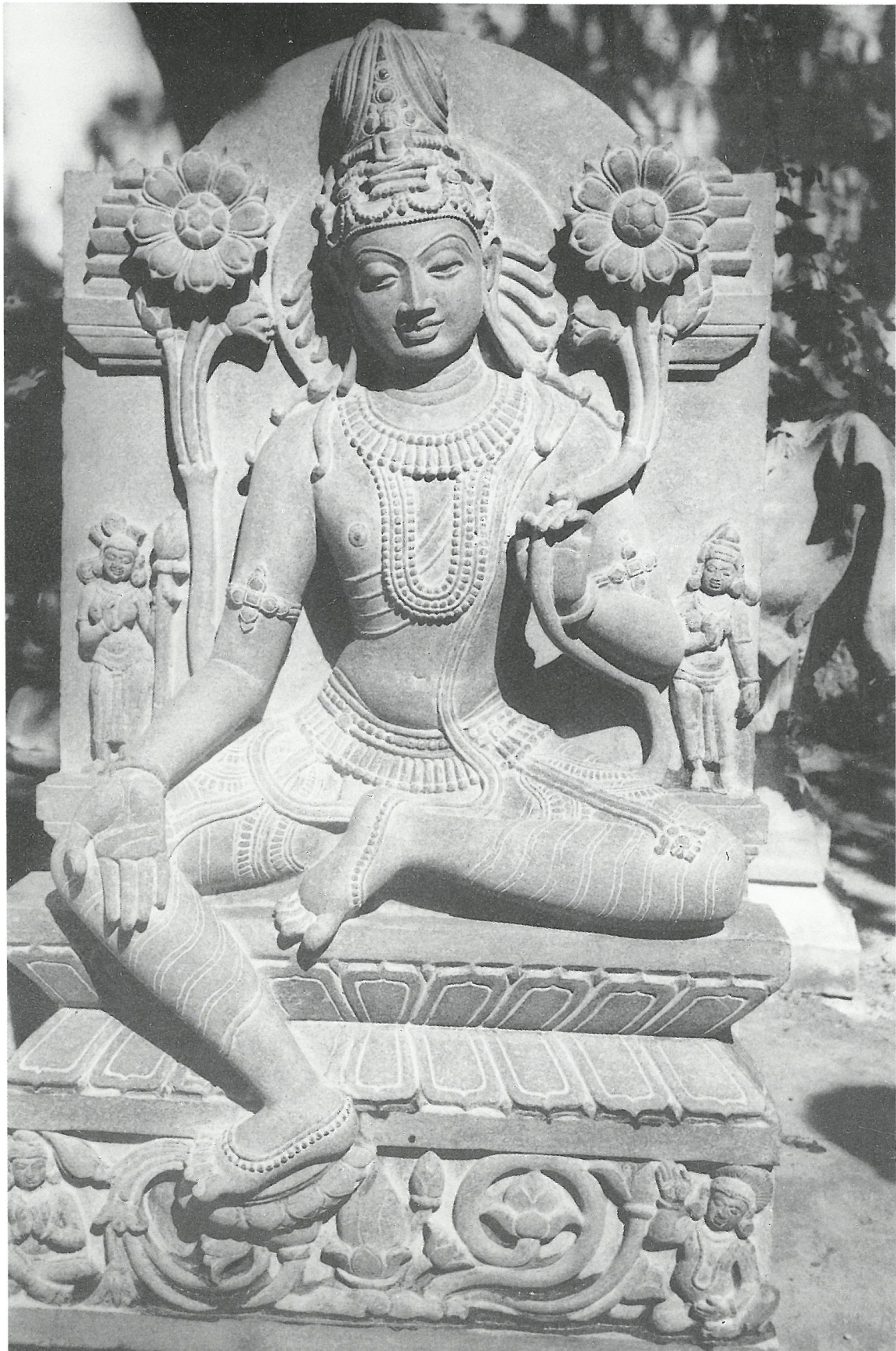
Shivakami - 6 ft. Karkala stone with Nataraja at Sandur 1989-90



Shankaracharya - 1 ft. soapstone at Waterperry House London 1987

made a mark as a popular vocalist, and had gathered many admirers and friends. He had polished manners and a refined approach. Vadiraj had very little schooling, and had never moved even in upper middle class society. His life had been spent with petty craftsmen, and he had no opportunity to win friends or admirers. But he was by nature gentle and his manners were refined naturally; he had a pleasant exterior and an amiable disposition. The tragedies of his life had not soured his spirit. He was ready to learn lessons in life, and Subba Rao's guidance in the matter of appreciation of the best in literature, cinema, music, dance and sports was welcome to him.

During the days that he spent in Subba Rao's house, Vadiraj tried his hand in relief sculpture in plaster of paris. He made portraits and imaginative pieces, took copies of them in plaster of paris, and sold them. This was the first venture of his to set up an independent business, and he also began making some money. His plaster of paris pieces became popular among the people who visited the music-shop owned by a close friend of Subba Rao's A.Veerabhadraiah's Aruna Musicals in Balepete, where they were put on sale.



Avalokiteshwara 4 ft. Karkala Stone - Pala style at Japan 1987

There was another turn in his life in the offing. He needed plaster of paris to make his art-pieces, and was buying it periodically from the Porcelain Factory, which was headed by an artist, art-lover and patron, P. Hariharan. When Vadiraj met Hariharan one day, and told him about what he was doing, Hariharan suggested that he could as well make his art-pieces in porcelain, which will also take a fine glaze. When Hariharan saw the creations of Vadiraj, he was promptly impressed, and remained an ardent supporter of Vadiraj from that moment onwards.

Padmanabhan Hariharan, who hailed from Kerala, was himself an artist trained in painting and clay-modelling in Shantiniketan (founded by the great poet Rabindranath Tagore in Bengal). A zealous advocate of Indian values in art, his heart was set on reviving the indigenous traditions of art and craft in the country. He had learnt the techniques of ceramic artware in Japan, and on his return to India was serving as the General Manager of the Government Porcelain Factory in Bangalore. He discovered the genius of Vadiraj, and encouraged him to be on his own. He asked Vadiraj to set up a centre of his own, improve the techniques of modelling and provide for the common people art-objects of traditional value. Initially he got Vadiraj do some small figures in glazed porcelain (Buddha, Siva, Parvati and so on) and marketed them.

Close-up of Simhanada Avalokiteshwara - Karkala stone - 4 ft. at Japan 1987.







Vadiraj obtained from Hariharan not only a new direction in life but a fresh outlook on art. Hariharan taught Vadiraj to understand the beauty and greatness of Indian traditional art and craft. Till then, Vadiraj was executing imaginative and small realistic pieces, mostly on the lines of sandalwood carving that he had learnt in Mysore. When as a boy he visited temples (like the one at Nanjangud), he was no doubt attracted by the sculptures that they contained, but he had not looked deeper into their import. Hariharan opened his eyes now to the ideals of traditional art, to the fascinating principles that directed the representation of our gods and goddesses in icon and in drawing. He made Vadiraj proud of our heritage; this pride characterized Vadiraj till his death. His spiritual involvement with traditional Indian art began with his association with Hariharan.

This was also the period when Vadiraj turned his attention to clay modelling and set up a small studio of his own in the extension known as Visvesvarapuram in the City. He brought his wife from the village (after





nearly a decade of living away from her) and had a settled life for the first time in his life. A son was born to him in 1955. Some students also gathered around him.

The Government of India had in the meantime started, at the behest of Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya – a remarkable woman who devoted all her life to the cause of handicrafts and craftsmen – the All-India Handicrafts Board for preserving traditional designs and indigenous skills, which were receiving a set-back owing to modernization and urbanization. The Board had several Regional Centres, for focussing attention on the designs and crafts current in different parts of the country. The Regional Design Centre for South India was located in Bangalore, and naturally Hariharan who was well-known as an exponent of traditional art, was selected to organize this Centre.



Shiva - Red Sandstone - 1½ ft. sold at Art-in-Action 1990 - London



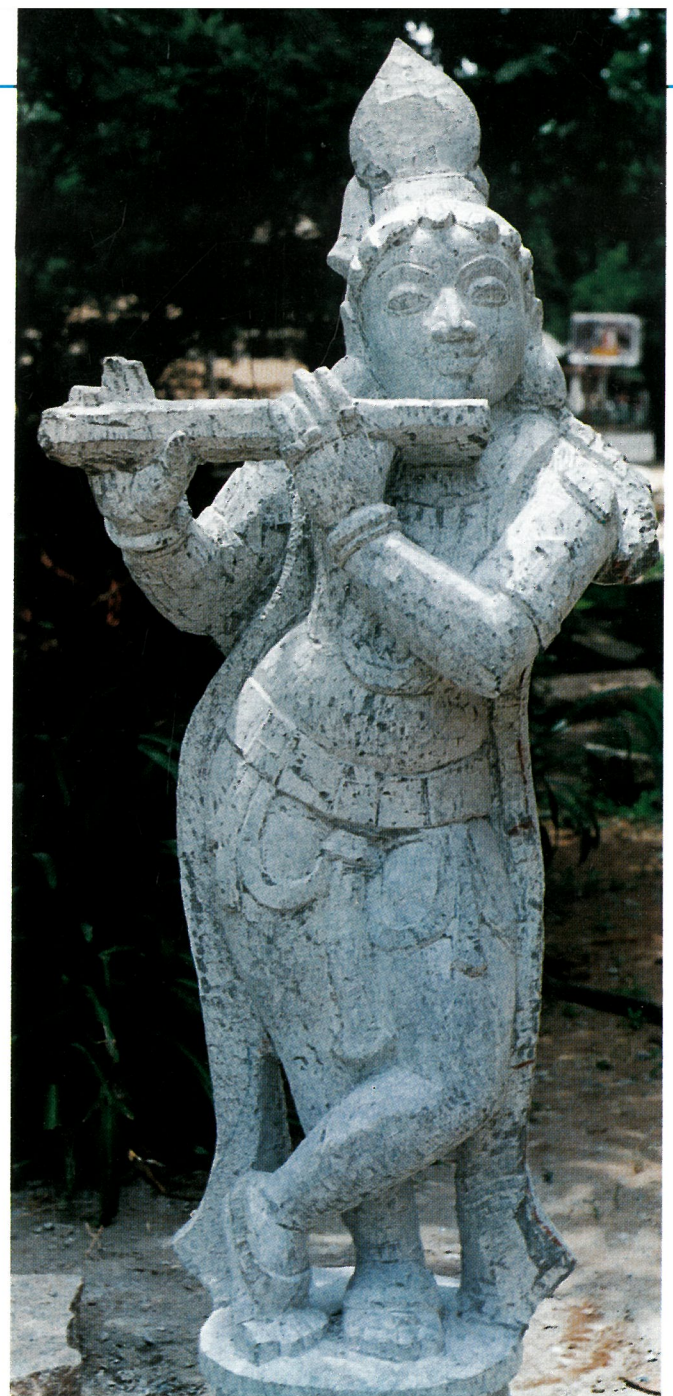
Receiving Rajyotsava Award from Chief Minister Ramakrishna Hegde - 1989

Hariharan chose Vadiraj to head the section of wood-carving in this centre. The village boy had come a long way; he had bagged a government employment on a monthly salary, and he was to do the job that he liked most. His job was in the main to copy the traditional designs, collected from various temples, places and other sources, and also to incorporate the traditional details in new designs. Although his charge was only wood-carving, he was free to get acquainted with the other areas of handicraft that were represented in the Centre. He did utilize this freedom and in a few months he acquired proficiency in stone-carving and knowledge in terracotta work, sheet-metal work, wax modelling and metal casting, Tanjavur painting, ceramic modelling and mould-making in plaster of paris.

An added advantage was that he spent his time for the major part of the day amidst artists and craftsmen drawn from different parts of the country. He could obtain first-hand knowledge about the artistic traditions which were spread over the regions. And he could learn skills that were not available in regular art schools, to which he had never gone after he left



Krishna-Cow at Saibaba Ashram - Soapstone 4 ft. 1990



Mysore. Further, he taught himself here the distinctions between several styles of sculpture and architecture, the principles which were textual and practical and the areas in which research was indicated. Dialogues with master-craftsmen who worked in such Centres and with scholars who visited these Centres helped him to develop the correct perspective in the field of art. He not only worked in the field of art, he thought continuously about art.

The six years that he spent as a master-craftsman in the Regional Design Centre saw him grow into a mature, confident, broad-based and accomplished artist.



But the politics of administration, usual in any organization of this type, was not to his taste. He promptly resigned (1962) from his position and became a free man once again. During his tenure in this Centre, he had served not only under his patron-teacher Hariharan (who had become the Director of the Handicrafts Development Centre at Delhi), but also under an eminent artist who became his friend Asit Kumar Haldar (a renowned painter and student of Rabindranath Tagore). He was encouraged by both of them.

His acquaintance with Ambika Prasad Dubey while he was working in the Centre was a notable gain for Vadiraj. Dubey who had served as a design artist in the Bharat Kala Bhavan at Banaras joined the Regional Design Centre in Bangalore as Design Artist a week after Vadiraj joined the institution. His artistic sensibilities were of a very high order, and he was a fine man, a gentleman to the core. Naturally he and Vadiraj were drawn to each other, and a close friendship developed between them. (Dubey also left the Centre and started a 'Toy Centre' in his own residence). Through Dubey, Vadiraj came to know the eminent art-patron Rai Krishna Das of Banaras and founder of the celebrated Bharat Kala Bhavan. Rai



Close-up of Krishna



Ganga - Red Sandstone - 1½ ft. Ellora style 1990

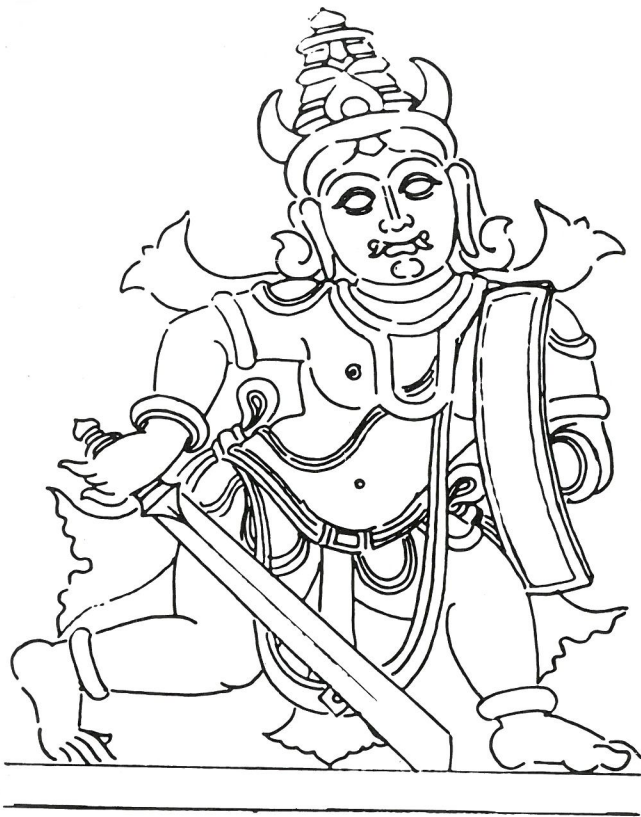
Krishna Das, who admired Vadiraj's work and personality, invited him to occupy a senior position in Bharat Kala Bhavan in Banaras. Vadiraj of course politely declined, for he was in no mood to get away from Bangalore.

When Vadiraj worked in the Centre, he recognized the importance of making working drawings before carving or sculpting. He realized that any craftsman must acquire proficiency in line-drawing; for this would contribute greatly to his skill in a particular craft. The drawing of the design would not only fix the idea in his mind, but guide his hands when he actually set out to work. Vadiraj paid great attention to this preliminary aspect of sculpting or carving; and developed a talent for preparing differential drawings in accordance with the medium. He believed that every craftsman must prepare his own working drawings. In the Design Centre where he worked, an artist was employed to provide drawings for the craftsmen. Vadiraj voiced his protest against this procedure. This was one of the causes for his wanting to get away from the Centre.

Vadiraj had a characteristic style of preparing the preliminary and preparatory drawings for sculptures. He would form a complete picture of the subject in his own mind before he set his pencil on the paper to make a drawing. Even his drawing would present a preview of the sculpture that would later take shape. He would be absorbed in the business of drawing with a concentration that was remarkable. He would make

With students' work at Ellora Camp 1990





several drawings before the one that satisfied him emerged from his pen. A good drawing, according to him, was half of sculpture. Whether he worked in stone or in wood, the drawing would be transformed into an etched outline which would linger and show till the work neared completion. He felt that if the outline strokes could be retained till the end, there would be no fear of a wrong move or a faulty play of the hammer or chisel. The different stages of his work were indeed a joy to watch, and great education for his students.

His inventive skill was already evident. For instance, in metal casting, it is usual to prepare the original figure in wax, cover it with mud leaving an opening for molten metal to be poured, so that it replaces the wax which will melt and come out. For every metal icon, the wax model had to be prepared afresh. Vadiraj showed that it was possible to reproduce the wax model also mechanically, by preparing piece-moulds in plaster of paris of the original wax icon. Further, Vadiraj experimented with rubber as a medium for taking moulds, and also with fibreglass and resin.

However, Vadiraj was never secretive about his experiments. He readily shared all the details of his experiments not only with his students but whoever was interested in them. Because his mind was not on the commercial aspects of the new techniques that he evolved, he was open-minded and generous. He did not grudge passing on the know-how of his successful experiments to the business concerns that asked for them, without expecting anything in return.

For an artist to choose to throw away a Government job with a regular income and security attached to it appeared foolhardy to many of Vadiraj's friends and



With famous dancer Rohini Bhate & her portrait - Bhava Shilpa Shibira 1990 at Pune



acquaintances. But he was an artist not only by accomplishment but also by temperament, and valued his freedom more than anything else. He was indeed happy to be thrown on his own devices. And among the few that congratulated Vadiraj for coming out of the shackles, was Hariharan himself, who had been responsible for Vadiraj securing the Government job. Hariharan too was essentially an artist, and had always advocated freedom for the artist. He had also instilled in Vadiraj the spirit of self-reliance and self-sufficiency; and Vadiraj had always a flair for adventure, in his life as well as in his art.

Vadiraj was now an established traditional artist; he had finally settled down to the classical idiom of stone sculpture. And he did not have to languish without income after he quit his comfortable job at the Art Design Centre. Orders for traditional sculptures began to pour in. He was asked to prepare a eight-foot ornate, sandalwood 'mantapa' for the Ananda-mayi Ashram of Varanasi. He was also commissioned to sculpt in stone a bust of Sir M. Visvesvaraya (the famous Engineer and Administrator who had made Mysore a model State in the country) for installation in front of the Industrial and Technological Museum in Bangalore. It was to be one and a half times larger than life-size. He had been acquainted with the well-known industrialist and art-lover, Naval Kishore Kejriwala, for whom he had carved an icon of Krishna in ivory, and three and a half foot tall Venugopala image in stone in Hoysala style. Kejriwala now wanted Vadiraj to carve a 4½' x 1½' Vishnu in stone for the Birla Hospital in Calcutta.





In the meantime, he was selected (in 1965) for the Presidential Award for excellence in wood-carving, instituted by the All-India Handicrafts Board. And there was also a scheme instituted for providing training for the aspiring artists and artisans under the National Awardee master-craftsmen. Vadiraj was selected as one of the senior sculptors to impart this training. This was an honour at the national level. Four students were selected to receive training under him; and he chose to conduct his workshop in the Handicrafts Development Centre, situated in Victoria Road Layout in Bangalore. Two of his competent disciples, (Mrs) Kanaka Murthy and Shyamachar, were among this early group of trainees. They continued to work under Vadiraj till his death.

Vadiraj realized that the best way of imparting training to students was the ancient guru-kula system where the student lived with the teacher and watched him at work and imbibed his style; skills were learnt not by class-room lectures and formal demonstrations, but by intimate and continuous exposure to the teacher's own principles and methods of work in real-life situation. Vadiraj assigned work for his students and sat along with them to do his own work; and while working he explained the practical techniques, advantages and disadvantages of different methods, precautions to be taken, production of aesthetic effect and other details relevant to sculpting. He also encouraged his students to make their own working drawings.

An important and unusual assignment to Vadiraj during these early years of independent life came from Hariharan, and this was in connection with the Nanking Restaurant which a Chinese gentleman had



Portrait of Dr K.V. Puttappa - Karkala stone - 1½ times life size 1989 - at the birthplace of the poet.



thought of starting on Grant Road in Bangalore. As the restaurant was being planned to breathe Japanese atmosphere in all details, Hariharan (who had worked in Japan, had learnt some Japanese arts and had married a Japanese lady) was consulted. Hariharan, whose involvement with anything that was entrusted to him was total, set about to create a completely Japanese piece out of this projected hotel. The roof composed of several plaster of paris blocks (2½' square) each containing a typically Japanese decoration in relief was entrusted to Vadiraj. Vadiraj got this done with the help of an artisan in turned wood, Krishna Murti of Chitragupta Toy Centre. The decorations in relief in Japanese style were executed by Vadiraj himself.

Vadiraj was also commissioned to paint on six glass sheets (6' × 3'), meant for the main hall of the proposed restaurant. In four of the sheets, Japanese beauties in various postures had been shown, and lovely Japanese flowers in the other two. Hariharan gave Vadiraj a small book with these motifs; the illustrations given there were not bigger than 4" or 5". These had to be blown up to paintings of 6' or 3' square; and the paintings had to become vivid and life-like when illuminated from behind. This was a new experience for Vadiraj; it was something that he had never done before. But he accepted the challenge and completed the task with the help of his students, Kanaka Murthy and Shyamachar, to the complete



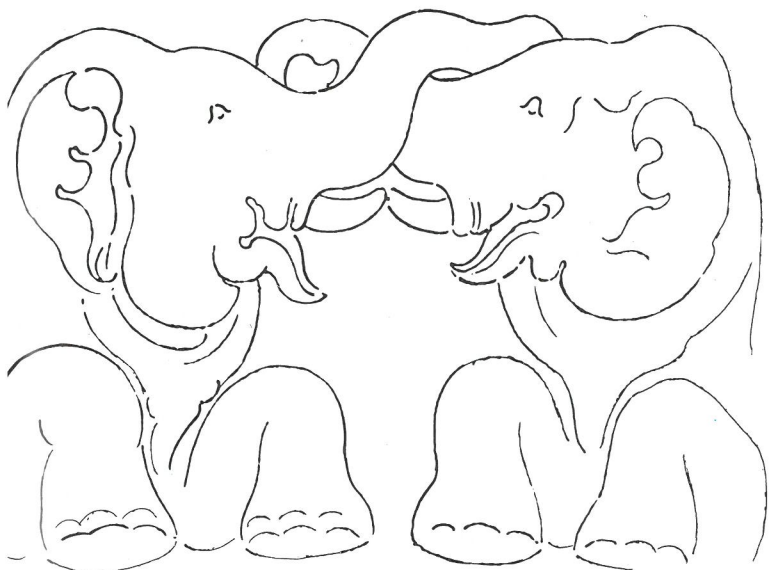
*One of the two elephants 4 ft. - Hotel Gateway, Bangalore - Soapstone
1991*



satisfaction of Hariharan. The paintings were so entirely Japanese in character and spirit that visitors wondered if they were not got from Japan!

Things, however, were not always rosy for Vadiraj. In his independent career, there were many ups and downs. For a spell, he had to spend all his time making plaster of paris panels (3' x 4') of ordinary appeal for hotels and other places, making little money and having less satisfaction. The themes were not to his liking, but he executed them as meticulously as the ones that excited him. He had no doubt to make a living, and so he accepted these orders. But once he accepted, he put his heart and soul into them. What money he got from them was of no importance to him; as an artist he would do full justice to what he set about to do.

Hariharan, with his manifold involvement in Japanese culture, decided to start a handicrafts training programme under the banner of Indo-Japanese Association. He founded Hind-Nippon Crafts Centre in 1970 and asked Vadiraj to organise some activities

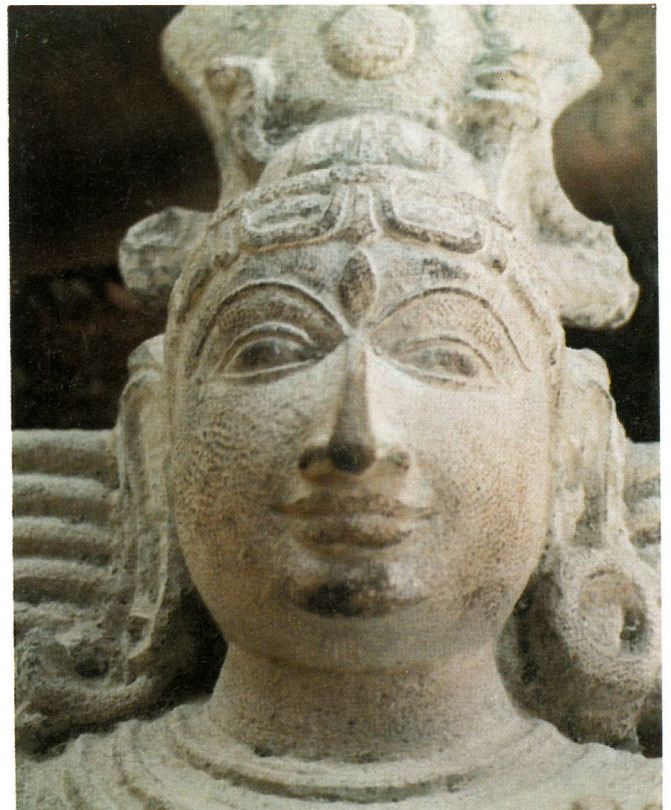




there like wood-carving, toy making, leather batik, screen printing, ceramic painting and flower-arrangement (Ike-bana). This was meant to be more in the nature of social service than as a business enterprise. Vadiraj and his student Kanaka Murthy conducted the first of the planned six-month courses, beginning with March that year, under the guidance of Hariharan. But Hariharan passed away six months later, and Vadiraj had to fall back on his own resources. He continued this programme for three years, before the Crafts Centre was wound up.

He then undertook to carve a four-foot stone figure of the river goddess Kaveri for the hotel, Kaveri International. The figure is the artist's own design, the drawing however being drawn from the Hoysala idiom. The fine sculpture can be seen in the hotel, in a splendid setting.

Attracted by his sculptures, three Japanese engineers working on contract basis in the New Government Electric Factory in Bangalore, approached him with a request to teach them the art. Vadiraj agreed despite the drawback that he did not know English and communication therefore would be extremely difficult. Kozaki, Sugai and Yagoyama did learn the art of sculpting in the Indian way for a year, until their contract period was over. This was an advantage to Vadiraj, for he now acquired some ability to converse in English.





In 1973, the Government of India resolved to institute awards for the best works of art through the Handicrafts Board as a measure to commemorate the silver jubilee year of its independence. The announcement of the institution of award left little time for making new pieces. Vadiraj, who thought of sending one of his works for consideration of the award, wrote to Mr. Kishore Kejriwal of Calcutta asking him to lend the four foot Venugopala stone figure in Hoysala style that he had made for him in 1964. After Mr. Kejriwal sent the figure, Vadiraj worked on it again and made it even more attractive than it was before. The competitors had to send their works for selection by a committee of experts to the Design Centre in Bangalore and only the pieces selected here were to be sent to Delhi for final selection of the award. It so happened that Vadiraj's work was rejected in the Design Centre. Vadiraj was hurt and pained at this result which was in fact engineered by persons who were inimical to him. But he was in no mood to do anything about it.



But his friend Sri Dubey was infuriated at this vicious treatment to an artist of Vadiraj's eminence, and he forced Vadiraj to write to the Government of India about the injustice meted out to him. In effect, the



Venugopala Soapstone 6 ft. Hoysala style to Natesan Antiquarts 1978



Government altered its original procedure of getting the art-works preliminarily received in Bangalore, and invited the artists and craftsmen to bring their works directly to Delhi. Dubey and Vadiraj went to Delhi with the stone figure. The piece fetched a special award. But this episode left Vadiraj sour, and he resolved never again to send any of his works for competitions and for consideration of others.

By now, Vadiraj had become a celebrity, his works were sought after, and students eagerly gathered round him. The days of hardship were things of the past. He experimented in new media, and besides making copies of his stone works in plaster of paris he tried making



'Praganparimitha' - Teakwood - Japanese style at All India Handicrafts Board - New Delhi - 1965

With Sri P. Hariharan, Japanese students and Mrs. Satoko Hariharan in his house – 1969

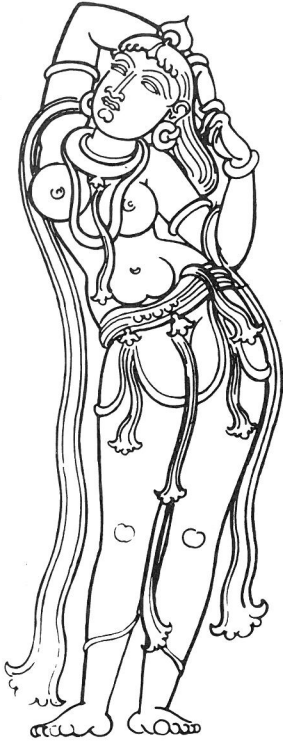


them in fibre-glass. He also perfected the making of moulds in rubber.

In 1975-76 as preparation for the India Festival, an All-India Sculptor's Camp was held for fifteen days by the Central Lalit Kala Academy. Nine sculptors from all over India were invited to participate in the camp and work on a piece during the camp. Vadiraj was one of the invitees and the sculptured panel, entitled 'Shilpi' that he made, was easily the best; the Academy purchased it.

Hariharan, during his last days, had struck a business deal with a Japanese firm to send Indian stone for sculpturing to Japan. After the death of Hariharan, Vadiraj had to shoulder this responsibility. But he was not cut out for business; he was credulous, and naturally he was easily deceived. The business was now a losing proposition. Tension was mounting, and he was unable to concentrate on his own art-work. This told on his health and one day suddenly he found that his legs had become utterly useless; he could not get up and stand, much less walk. The physician that was consulted feared that he may not again get the use of his legs, the prognosis was bad.





Two days later, Vadiraj consulted a physical culturist, Prof. Srikantaiah, who was running a gymnasium in the city. Vadiraj knew him well. He examined Vadiraj and reassured him that recovery was certain. He prescribed some exercises and massage with oil. Vadiraj recovered completely in about six months, and this was a near miracle. The physical culturist, who had great regard for the artist, declined to take any fee for the cure that he effected.

During the period of his disability, Vadiraj did not undertake any big sculptures. He spent his time making copies of his earlier works in plaster of paris, and experimented with new casting techniques. He tried aluminium as the casting medium.

But in 1979, proprietors of Usha-Martin Block Factory of Ranchi wanted him to make four stone figures for their shrine-room; he had earlier made for them a large Vishnu image in stone in Hoysala style. The four figures that they wanted now were Parvathi, Ganesha, Subrahmanya and Hanuman, all in standing posture. Vadiraj chose the Chalukyan style for these figures.

Soon after, he was invited by the Arts Council of Great Britain, to participate in the Indian Festival and



Parvathi - front view Chalukya - soapstone 1978 at Ranchi



demonstrate his skill. The organizers wanted him to make a big Devi image in stone in Chalukyan style; the design was entirely his own. He also made a stone figure of Surya for the Art in Action programme in the United Kingdom, which was scheduled to be held from May 22, 1982 till the end of September of that year; and to which he was invited as a participant-artist. He had also to carve a figure in stone as a demonstration programme during the sessions. Vadiraj visited England for this purpose and met celebrated sculptor, Nathan David. He was pleasantly surprised that even in England, where modernity had made a big dent, there were enthusiasts of the traditional idiom. He was impressed by their sincere interest in Indian art. The Art-in-Action was an important event in Britain; a principal attraction in the summer of 1982. For the Festival of India at Great Britain, the Government of India selected Vadiraj to represent stone-sculpture for the "Living Arts of India" exhibition. The organizers wanted Vadiraj to sculpt an image of Surya in granite in Chola style. This was the first time that Vadiraj worked on granite. He also took with him a plain block of granite, out of which he carved a head in traditional style for purposes of demonstration. The Festival was scheduled to be held from May 22, 1982 till the end of September that year. Vadiraj led a team of nine other artists who participated in this exhibition. They hailed not only from different parts of the country but represented forms of art, like Kalamkari, bronze, terra cotta, embroidery and traditional painting.



With Prof. S.K. Ramachandra Rao, at 'Bastar Exhibition' arranged by his Shilpakala Pratishthana – 1989.



Vadiraj participating in 'Bhavachitra-Shilpi Shibhira,' – organised by Bangalore Art Circle. Model: Noted Veena Maestro Dr. V. Doreswamy Iyengar.

The exhibition of Vadiraj's works attracted large crowds and received prominent reports and reviews in the newspapers. The exhibition went round five important cities of the United Kingdom. He visited five galleries in England, Scotland and Wales, and he demonstrated his work in the Living Arts of India exhibitions at Serpentine Gallery in London, Chapter Gallery in Cardiff, Third Eye Centre in Glasgow, Cartwright Hall in Bradford and Mappin Art Gallery of Sheffield. He was delighted that he received an overwhelming response from the visitors in all these galleries. The sculptor of Waterperry House, Mr. Wheatley Oxford, met Vadiraj in a party in his honour; and the discussion group met in the studio of the celebrated British sculptor Nathan David. This was the first time the foreign artists and art-connoisseurs were exposed to a traditional artist-craftsman. Needless to say, they were all impressed not only by the art works of Vadiraj but by his personality which was also traditional.

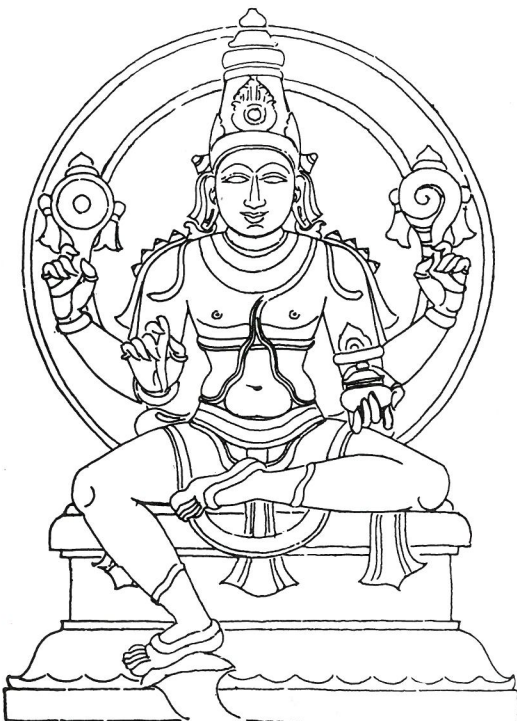
Vadiraj did not know sufficient English to converse freely with the English people; but this did not prevent his effective communication of his views on Indian art. His listeners – all scholars and experts – admired his



skill in making himself perfectly understood despite his smattering knowledge of English. They were also taken in by his childlike simplicity, disarming candour and deftness of his hands. Here was an artist who was truly Indian, altogether unspoilt by alien influences. And traditional Indian art, in its ideals as well as in execution, came naturally to him.

Close to Serpentine Gallery where the camp was held, was a gallery of modern art. Vadiraj visited it and acquainted himself to this art. Real art projected only eternal values, values relevant to the culture of man that can endure; its business is not to uphold passing fancies, whims and fads which are all too transient. Art cannot be bound up with segments of time, present and past. Its roots are deeper, well within the very make-up of man. Vadiraj explained all this in his own improvised language, to the art-enthusiasts who came eagerly to listen to him. But he recognized that modern art did contain something vibrant and vital. But he felt that any worthwhile art results only from discipline, hard work and extensive experience. The Indian word for this requirement is *sadhana*.

Vadiraj's travel in the United Kingdom reassured him that the path he had chosen was the right one, that traditional art stood on firm grounds, and that once people were exposed to it in the right way they would be fascinated by it. Vadiraj returned to India with his spirit revived, and ready to launch on big projects. It was never his way to seek orders; orders would come to him. He had so much work on hand that he had to refuse orders. Students also thronged round him. His residence reminded one of the ancient *gurukulas*.





Many talented youngsters now gathered around him, and learnt from him the traditional skills. Among them were Ashok Gudigar, Venkataramana Bhatt and G. L. Bhatt, who have now become master-craftsmen in their own right. Earlier disciples, Kanaka Murty and Shyamachar continued to support Vadiraj and his training programmes.

As said earlier, Vadiraj believed that the old method of imparting education while the students lived with his teacher (viz., the gurukula system) was the best for learning craft. The student would have ample and uninterrupted opportunity to observe the teacher's style and methods of working, and also to obtain personal and on-the-spot instructions. A rapport would also develop between the teacher and the taught, there would be greater intimacy between the two, and the young student would learn not only the crafts but the art of living. Vadiraj impressed upon the students who lived with him that art could be a stimulating and an all-absorbing call. He talked with them about arts and crafts all the time; there was hardly a work in which he did not involve his students. He would treat his students as his children, take good care of them, and frequently entertain them. There was no financial arrangement of any sort; the students were not expected to pay him. This was the type of school that he conducted for his students – Kanaka Murthy, Ashok Gudigar, Shyamachar, G. L. Bhatt and Venkataramana Bhatt. The school began around 1965 and continued till his last days.

The Japanese temples required several statues of Buddha in hard stone, and there was a contract with the sculptors in Karkala to make them in that town in the coastal district of Karnataka and tranship them to

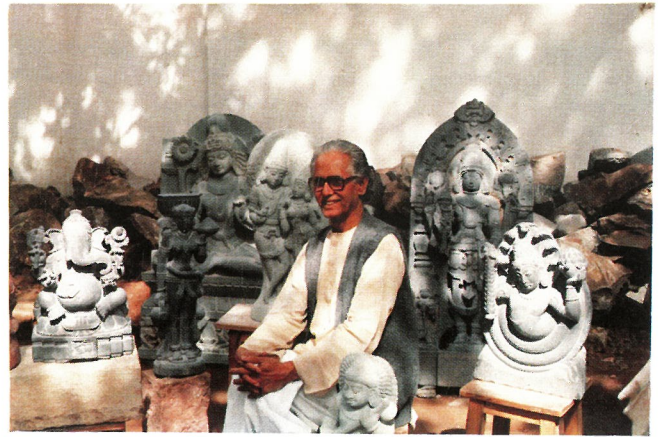




Japan. Some Japanese artists also arrived to supervise the work of Indian sculptors; a few senior executives also came to look after the other details. Vadiraj was now experimenting with different varieties of stones for his sculpture; soft soap-stones, hard granites, red sandstone from Badami, and varieties from Bagalkot, Kadur and Karkala. He wanted stone from Karkala, and when he visited this place he got acquainted with the Japanese-artists and promoters. The latter visited Vadiraj's studio in Bangalore, and were impressed by his work.



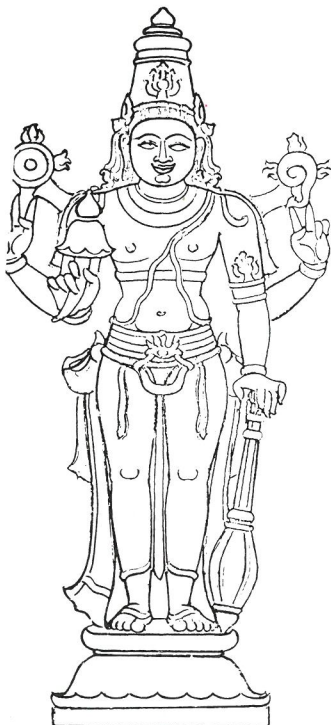
Smiling proudly along with his sculptures-1987 – A preparation for Art-in-Action.

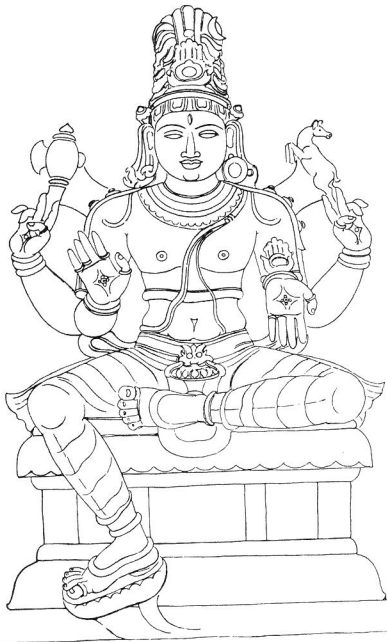


They wanted Vadiraj to carve a sixty-feet tall stone image of the Buddha for a Japanese monastery. Vadiraj declined this request for he honestly felt that it was an impossible task for him. In his characteristic frankness, he pleaded inability on several counts – he had no experience in undertaking such gigantic statues; he had no place to work on it; it was not a job that could be executed by the few artists that worked with him; and he had no means of estimating the expenditure such work would entail. The Japanese promoters headed by Koboyashi were charmed by this candour, but they pressed him to make something for them. He accepted to carve a four-foot tall Avalokitesvara in Pala style for a Japanese shrine; this was done in hard stone from Karkala. It took him two years to complete this figure, which is a remarkable work of art.

During 1979-80, he became acquainted with M. Y. Ghorpade, the erstwhile ruler of the Sandur State (now merged with Karnataka) and an industrialist and administrator of repute. Ghorpade is a man with fine artistic inclinations; he is an excellent photographer. He requested Vadiraj to carve for his palace shrine a figure of the great saint Chidambaradikshita in his boyhood. Vadiraj made an ingenious design and this imaginative statue won the admiration not only of the patron but of the celebrated non-agerian pontiff of Kanchi Kamakoti-pitha, Chandra-shekharendra-Sarasvathi, who passed way recently.

Ghorpade, thereafter, remained a zealous supporter of Vadiraj. Several images (Subrahmanya, Dattatreya etc.) were got made by him for the shrines in Sandur; and he deputed craftsmen to be trained under Vadiraj at Bangalore as well as Sandur. Ghorpade prevailed upon Vadiraj to sculpt a large Nataraja in stone for him. The stone used was got from Karkala, and preliminary





work was done in Bangalore; the actual sculpting was done in Sandur. The figure of Nataraja is seven and a half-feet in height and three feet wide. Nataraja is accompanied by Siva-kami (Consort-goddess), who measures three and a half-feet in height. This is one of the best art-works of recent years.

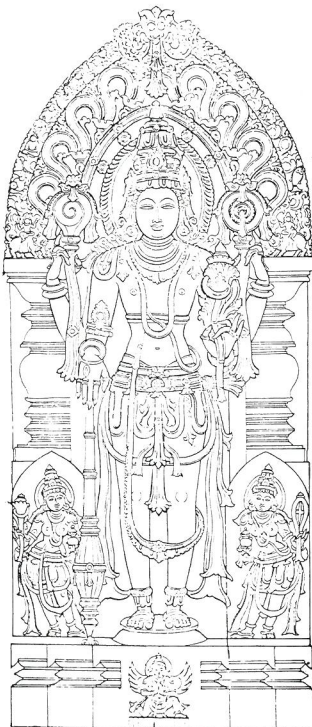
Vadiraj organized during the latter part of his career several camps for his student-sculptors and others interested in the art. The first of such camps was at the behest of the South Zone Cultural Centre of Nagpur.

Vadiraj made it clear to the officers who sponsored this camp that it was best to have the camp in a place well-known for its sculptural wealth, that the participants should have ample opportunity to study in detail the best traditions of sculpture illustrated in that place, and that the camp should be reasonably long (say about fifteen days) so that the participants would be able to sculpt whatever specimen attracted them. He also suggested that the stones indigenous to the region of the camp should be utilized for sculptures, so that the students would be able to acquaint themselves with different varieties of stones.

He selected the Chalukyan style of sculpture for the first camp, which was held at Badami during the



With sculptor couple at London 1985.



second week of February 1988. Vadiraj himself went there with his students to guide; four traditional stone-sculptors from each of the four States within the jurisdiction of the Centre (Karnataka, Andhra, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh). It was a novel experience for the students of traditional sculpture. Vadiraj took care to take all the participants to visit the famous temples in the area and explain the salient features of the Chalukyan style. He helped the participants to study carefully each of the exquisite sculptures in Badami, Aihole and Pattadakallu, and encouraged them to prepare line drawings of whatever they wanted to sculpt. Miniature copies of sculptures in plaster of paris were also got made during the camp.

Next year, the camp was held in Vadiraj's own residence, under the aegis of Shilpa-Kala Pratishthana, which had been founded by Vadiraj himself with other scholars and art-enthusiasts. The theme of this camp was Hoysala school of sculpture. In August of 1989, another camp on Chalukya art was organized in Mysore, along with a scholarly and well-attended seminar.



The next art-camp (February 1990) which was directed by Vadiraj and his associates was held in the world-renowned Ellora. Vadiraj was then seventy, and his health was none too good. But his enthusiasm was irrepressible. He had not seen the famous caves, although he had heard about them so often; he had admired the photographic reproductions of the Rashtrakuta sculptures there. His eagerness to visit this magnificent site was understandable. Although he did participate in the camp and direct the students, his failing health made it impossible for him to visit all of the thirty-two caves.

Next month in the same year, a camp of portrait-sculpture was held in Poona under the guidance of Vadiraj. Many eminent persons in the fields of music, dance and literature attended the camp as models.

The last sculpture-camp (1991) that was held under the leadership of Vadiraj was in Warangal in Andhra Pradesh. This time, the theme chosen was Kakatiya art-style of the region. Vadiraj's health was declining fast, but he had the satisfaction of training his students in four of the major art-styles: Hoysala, Chalukya, Rashtrakuta and Kakatiya.

All India Handicrafts Board, a Central Government agency, had plans since 1964 of arranging training programmes for the interested students under accredited master-craftsmen for a period of three years. Vadiraj was the first master-sculptor to receive the President's Award, the highest honour a craftsman in India may aspire for. Vadiraj undertook in 1965 to impart training to students in stone and wood-sculpture under this plan. But soon the officers in charge of the Handicrafts Board chose to ignore the master-craftsmen, and arbitrarily reduced the training period to a year and a





half. Vadiraj dissociated himself from the scheme. In 1985, the Board approached Vadiraj again and persuaded him to accept a training programme for the duration of a year; now a provision was made for the master-craftsman to select six to twelve students for training.

In the meantime, the Crafts Council of Karnataka elected Vadiraj as its Vice-President. The Canara Bank utilized the good offices of the Crafts Council to start a centre for handicrafts, named KAUSALYA, meaning skill and creativity. The Bank purchased a plot of land in Jogaradoddi and founded a village for arts and crafts with the guidance of Vadiraj. Known as Artrap, this institution imparts training in stone-carving, wood-sculpture, pottery, sheet-metal work and allied crafts. The students of Vadiraj - Ashok Gudigar and G.L. Bhatt, are imparting training at this centre and are contributing to the dream of Vadiraj being actualized.

The latter part of Vadiraj's career was thus devoted to the training of competent sculptors in traditional style, as well as to the spreading of the value of traditional sculpture among the educated and progressive people. His final days were filled not only with activity but with a missionary zeal to procure for traditional art a place of honour in public life.

During 1990, his health began to fail. He was for years suffering from gastric ulcer. Nevertheless he attended the Art-in-Action festival in Britain that year. But he fell seriously ill as he was preparing for the exhibition. He was admitted to the John Radcliff Hospital of



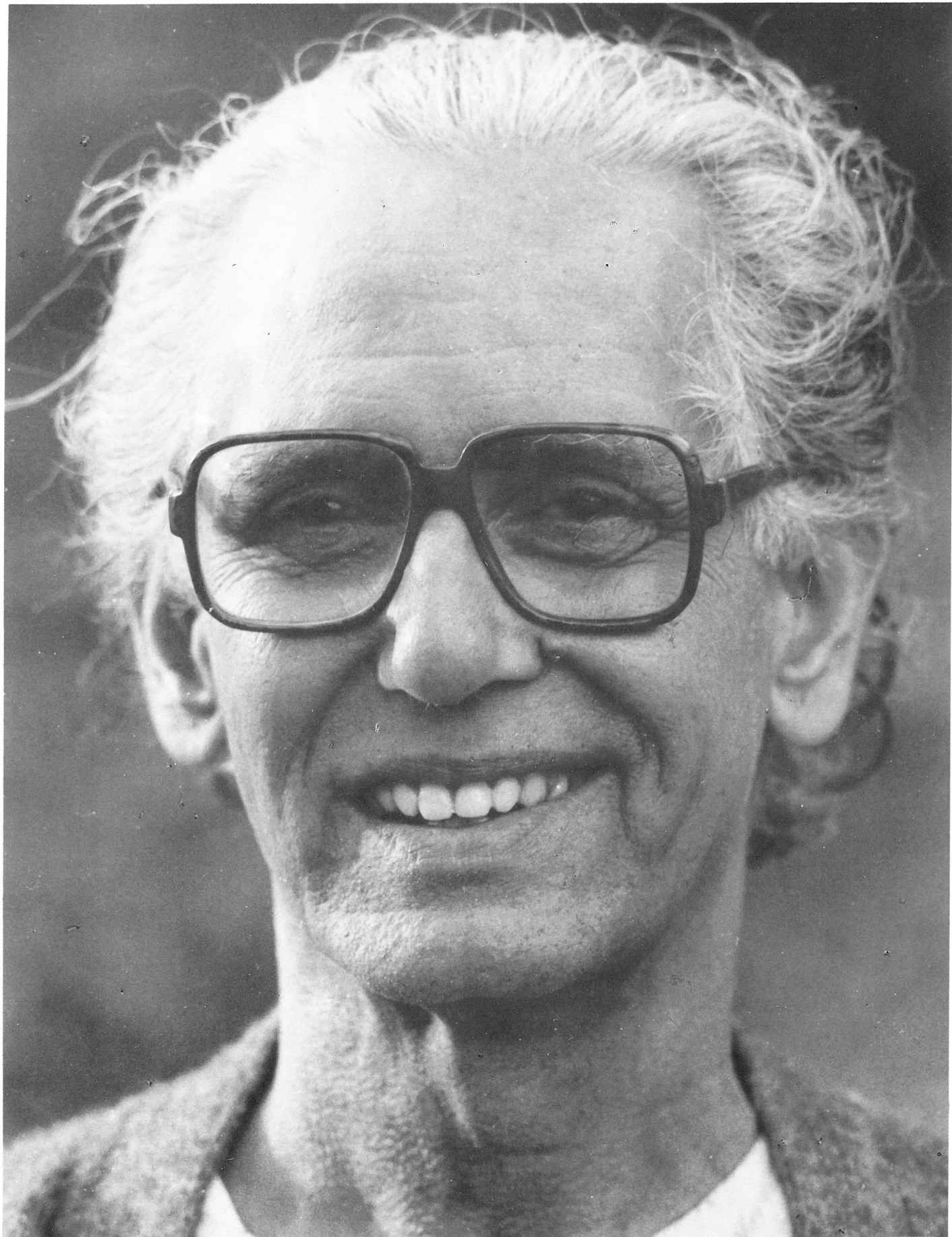


Oxford, where he was nursed for about ten days. He was brought back to India a sick man. He recovered after three or four months, and was well enough to resume his sculpture-work. During December 1992, he fell ill again and he died on the 27th of February 1993.

The State Government of Karnataka ordered an official state funeral to be accorded to the great son of the land. Hundreds of admirers and students had gathered to give him a warm and final send-off.

Thus ended the eventful life of a great artist, who was also a good man and a perfect gentleman.







Yeshodhara - plaster model 1948-1950

Vadiraj on himself and his art

I was born into a family of temple priests who have been the hereditary guardians and teachers of our religious learning, both oral and written – the Vedas, Puranas and Shastras – and in charge of the temple worship. My childhood was spent in the precincts of the Vishnu temple in Devalakunda, Karnataka, where the Vishnu icon was a source of great delight to me. My elders recited the scripture verses and told stories about the deities and their struggle against evil. I grew up learning about many deities whose icons I had seen, and many I had not seen.

When my father died, we moved to the famous temple-town of Nanjangud. I was sent to school, but I could not concentrate. I used to run away and roam about the vast temple compound, searching for all the

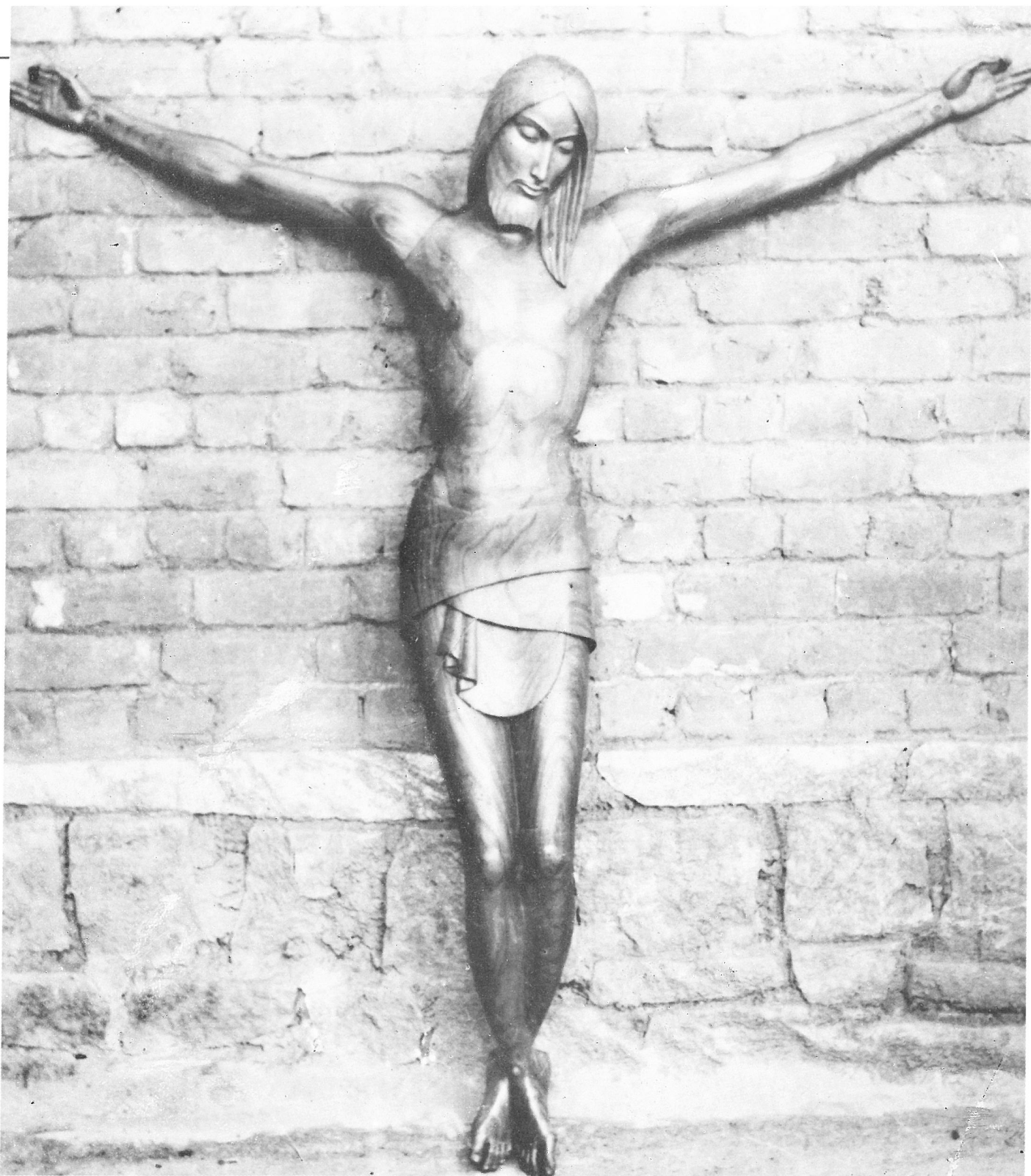


nooks and corners with beautiful carvings in them. There was a seven storied gopuram (sculptured gateway) where I spent hours finding my favourite deities in stone and their stories of bravery and righteousness.

I dreamt only of making such carvings. With my family's help I was sent to the school of art started by

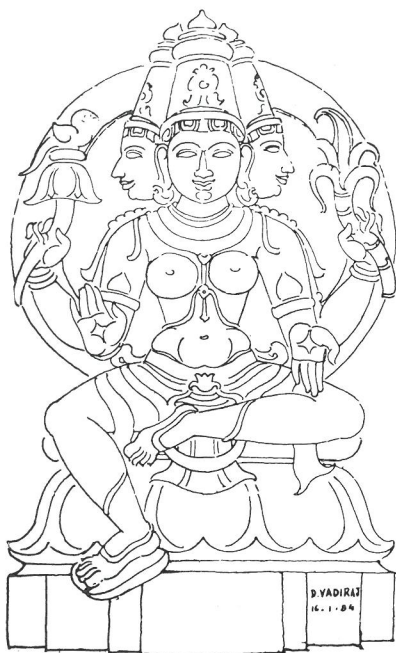


Gopala Krishna - 10" - Ivory - Hoysala Style-1960. In collection of Birla's



Jesus Christ - Teak Wood Life Size-1961. St John Seminary - Ramanathpur-Hyderabad

the Maharaja of Mysore. Here I had two gurus, both from families who for many generations had been masters of the temple- arts. They taught me at the Institute and also took me home into their loving care, and let me help with their private work. My gurus sought perfection and God-realisation in everything they created. I learnt the dhyana shlokas (contemplative verses) which describe each deity, and which I always recite before I start my work.



My gurus taught me carving on stone, wood and ivory. I continued my studies by travelling and comparing the different schools of stone sculpture – Chola and Pallava in granite, Chalukya in sandstone, Hoysala in soapstone – always looking and seeking my own style and identity with the traditional discipline. I prefer working in granite. Wood and soapstone provide greater scope for detail, but I am bored by detail.

There is more pleasure in seeing a block of stone come alive in shape and form than in carving details like the beads of necklaces.

The shilpa-shastras (manuals of art) tell us about the proper proportions for each icon and what materials are appropriate. A finished image in stone should ring when it is tapped, like the small cymbals which a musician uses to sound the rhythm. If the stone is cracked, it won't ring and cannot be used for worship. When craftsmen find a quarry with stone which rings true, the word goes round and that stone is used for temple images.

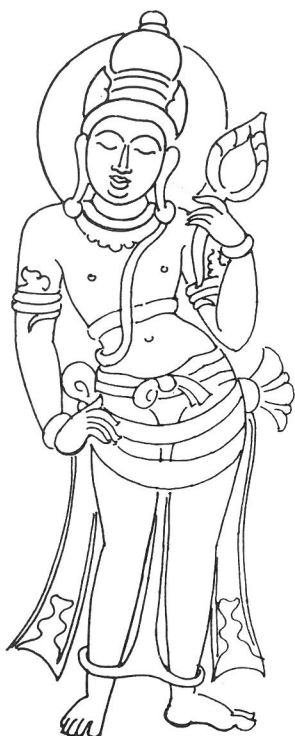


*Receiving the National Award from the President
Dr S. Radhakrishnan - 1965*



When an image is ready for worship, the sculptor takes it to the temple where there is a ceremony resembling childbirth. At an auspicious moment the image is laid in water and then in paddy (unthreshed rice). The priest offers ghee (clarified butter) warmed on wood fire. Then the image is ready to receive the soul of the God. It is placed on a pedestal which contains a compartment that holds nine precious stones. A cement is made of ground herbs and lac (resin). When the image is in place on the pedestal the sculptor scratches the line of the pupils on its eyes with a gold or silver needle. When the eyes are opened in this way, the soul of the god comes alive in the statue.

Ninety per cent of my work now is commissioned by individuals or galleries rather than temples. Mostly people ask me to make classical images which I like doing. My search for beauty and perfection – in my work during the last forty years – I consider a legacy received from my gurus, and an offering to our guru-shishya parampara (the traditional teacher-pupil relationship).



Guilds of masons and stone carvers have existed in India since the seventh century BC. At first they were maintained by a system of apprenticeship (antevasika 'a boarder'); later the skill was handed down as family lore from father to son. As in classical music and dancing, the teacher-pupil relationship (guru-shishya parampara) is all-important for the artist, and typically paternal in feeling.

Large architectural undertakings required the masons to move and settle near the temple on which they were working for a generation or more. In this way, a great new building site also became an art centre, from which the local school and style developed, depending on the character of the stone and of the patron.

By the sixth century AD the technical and aesthetic grammar of each stone was codified into shilpa-shastras (manuals of art) which every apprentice memorised. The architect and master-mason could recite the relevant verses, and the workmen would know without possibility of error what was expected of them. The artist learnt the shilpa-shastra so completely that his work combined the traditional discipline and his personal vision in a living synthesis.

He believes the deity will come to live in the icon if the material and the workmanship are perfect. The shastras describe the texture of each stone and the sound it should make when the finished image is struck.

SHASTRIC APPROACH TO HANDICRAFTS

In India, it is the 'tradition' or 'Shastra' that has accomplished the task of protecting and preserving the best methods that evolved in art across the centuries of time. Not only does it serve as a model, but it also serves as guidelines for mastering art. There are hundreds of such shastric stipulations relating to sculpture or painting. The same ones naturally apply to handicrafts too. Such stipulations or traditions serve like grammar. They are essential for the development of handicrafts too.



At work - 1955



Ganesha resting on Gana, wood - 13" at London - 1989

We see the force of 'traditions' in art not only in India but also in all other countries. Such traditions built up across the centuries, lends a distinctive character to the art of these various countries; this also leads us to recognise the country of its origin. These characteristics give a special status to the art of each country at the international level.

The indepth study of these traditions and practices and a mastery of these modes and forms, will provide a solid foundation for progress. Indian handicrafts too are no exception to the rule and these regulations help us to retain the 'Indianness' of these products.

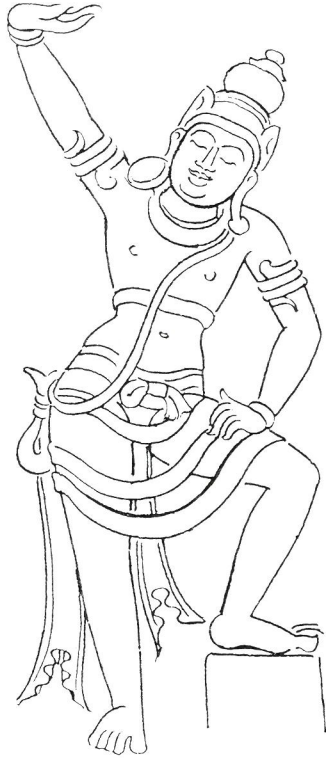
Handicrafts can be divided into two parts :

1. Beautification or articles in use.
2. Producing articles exclusively for ornamentation.

Art is inherent in both these forms. We have to intelligently see that beautification does not in any way hinder durability or usefulness. Ornamentation should not hinder these factors. This point should be recognised by craftsmen.

With Late P. Hariharan and other staff, at Regional Design Centre, Bangalore in 1955





In preparing ornamental material, art becomes the major consideration. How exactly it should be done or how much of it should be for decoration and what type of ornamentation should be provided are the basic questions. For example: A temple, a drawing room, a conference hall – each poses different problems. Their needs are different from each other. One has a dhārmic accent, the other has a status accent and the third one has to fulfil a public purpose. In such a complex situation we have to evolve suitable and varying approaches befitting the purpose. It is here that we see that the unerring guidelines are provided by ‘custom’ or ‘tradition’

Nothing can ever remain static. Art also has to grow according to times. We see changes in all the fields including handicrafts. At present, a strong wind is blowing from the West. Is this ultimately good for our art, is the moot question. Mere change of style or content does not always denote progress. We have the problem of retaining our distinctive characteristics evolved in our tradition. Which are these distinctive characteristics? How to retain them and how to protect them from this overall onslaught? These are certainly very crucial issues.

There are many useful aspects in the modern approach, true, but it has the potential of erasing our distinctive



Bust of Sir M. Visveswariah in soapstone - $1\frac{1}{2}$ times life size - at Museum, Bangalore - 1965

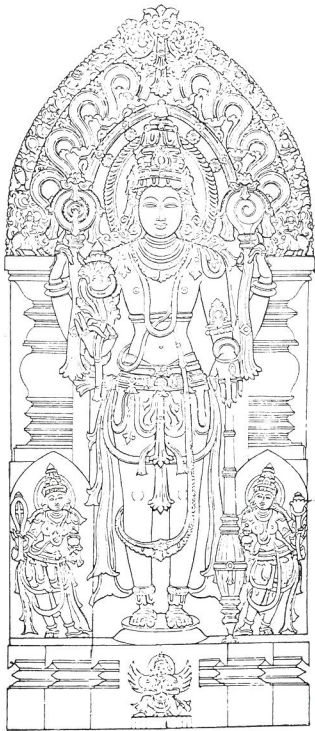


Honoured by the State Chief Minister Sri S. Nijalingappa, after receiving the National Award - 1965

Indianness. In some cases our art today is not exclusively religious as in olden days. The moderns, by and large, are using art for decorating purposes. Art has entered social life in a big way. There is a growing demand for the craftsman and his skills. This is a very welcome feature. But now, how is the artist making use of this new situation?

Is he aware of the valued tradition he has inherited? Is he trying to retain and see that it does not evaporate into nothingness? These are some of the questions that are troubling the minds of our artists who have inherited the tradition in the proper spirit.

These are problems that need special attention. Every art has its own tradition handed down to the practitioner across generations. Despite the onslaught of various alien influences for centuries, our Indianness has survived. To retain that specific quality is the



Vishnu - soapstone 4½ ft. Hoysala style - Bilviy Clinic
Calcutta - 1967

Shilpi - His own composition - soapstone 2 ft. height, done during All India Sculptor's Camp-1974 - In collection of State Lalitkala Academy



responsibility of the artists in the field. They have to consider seriously the course of action to be taken to effect certain changes without transgressing the framework of our tradition. They certainly should not adopt a completely alien idiom nor surrender entirely to the new style. It is better for a worker to ponder over the weaknesses inherent in such changes and adopt the right measures to retain our own idiom.

The handicrafts today have enlarged into a big business. They have an international market but we find that some of them are departing far away from our Indianness. Of course we cannot pinpoint these departures or appoint people to rectify the situation. Still we cannot ignore these departures and if we do so we would be inviting disaster.

The primary question we face here is of 'design'. As we talk of design we should also have to think of medium. Not all designs suit all mediums. Suitability and durability are two primary factors. For example – stone cannot be used for utensils of daily use like



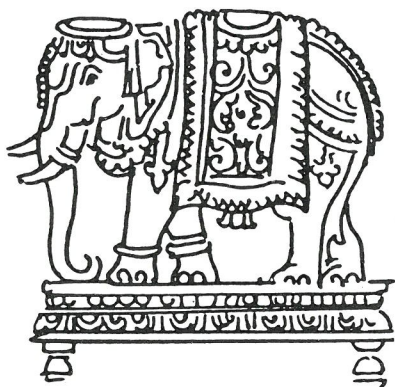
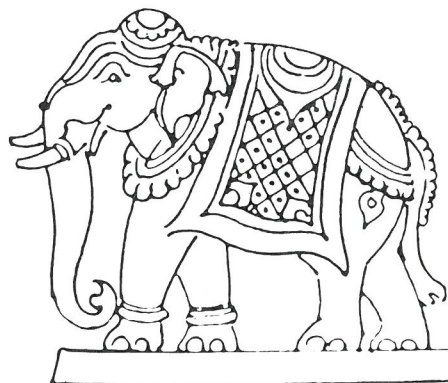
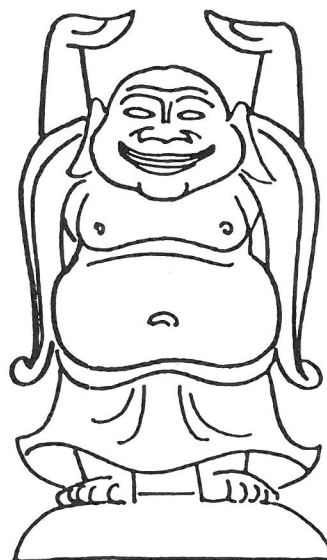


With other sculptors in the All India Sculptors Camp-1974

plates, cups, small boxes etc.; but utilising the same technique to create flower vases of different shapes with flowers etched on them would be ideal. Even icons can be etched in stone. This way we evolve new forms that naturally grow out of our old traditional forms.

Take sandal-carving for example. For centuries, Karnataka was famous for this art. It is now found only in museums sometimes. The workers too, by and large, have lost their former skills and are producing shoddy pieces, having no traditional impress and not suitable to the medium. Alas, a few skilled ones are there, but they are languishing in far off places.

In certain cases these changes have been pressed to ridiculous lengths. They make a Ganesha of an inch or two, recognisable only by the trunk and ears. The workmanship is woefully inadequate. Then they fit a pedestal of about 4" and a prabhavali of about 6". The figure altogether gains in height, though imbalanced. It is because the price is fixed on its height. Such are the contortions found in a number of cases. Behind this we find one group specialising in production of the tiny god, another group produces pedestals, and still another

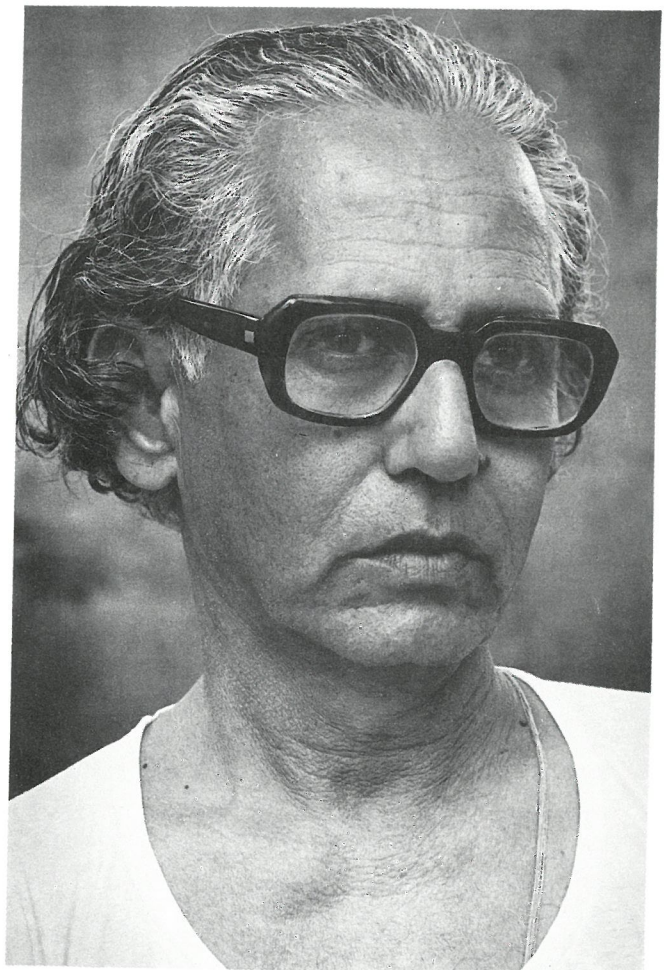




group produces prabhavalies on a mass scale. There is yet another group who specialise as agents or middlemen. Such are the commercial urges that promote this kind of art and strange are its ways.

Under these circumstances how could anyone expect art, design and tradition to survive? If any of these have to survive the only way would be by providing wholesome art education in a big way. A few attempts to set up small training centres here and there, would not meet the situation. A radical remedy would be possible only by arranging art education in a large way on a big scale in areas where these artists are settled in large numbers. Merely sporting big building and arranging minimum training facilities as is being done now, cannot solve these problems.

As a contrast, let us see the progress of wood carving in Tamil Nadu. It has been producing wooden doors for a long time. They have the tradition of executing panel figures in wood from a long time, and now they have started etching these panel figures on to the wooden doors and have created an excellent market.



Portrait - photograph by Sri K.G. Somashekar 1980



Though the figures are rough hewn and workmanship lacks finesse still the art idiom which they had mastered for long, gives it a great charm and lends dignity to these doors. Such an attempt of utilising tradition in a new way is very welcome.

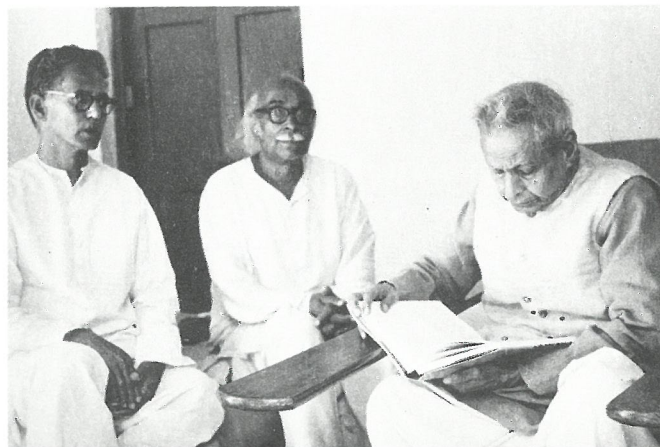
The task of retaining the awareness of tradition cannot be left to one or two individuals. The government has to come forward and open museums preferably near places where groups of artists live. They can get inspiration from the works displayed and also in turn produce their own work and sell them. Photographs of great works of art and sketches of the grand designs should be available here and these copies would inspire the artists and indirectly raise the standard of their workmanship.

In the area of sandalwood carving, supply of designs would be very necessary. The craftsman would be inspired to produce excellent work. There is abundant skill and talent in the field but the absence of guidance and lack of knowledge of good designs and lack of exposure to old works of art have produced this situation.

Let me enumerate a few good instances of good designs being used properly.

The inlay work in Cauvery Emporium is very attractive. The skill and expertise is of a high order. I saw at the Design Centre, Lepakshi panels beautifully etched in their inlay work. This lends a special Karnataka touch to these pictures which appear very artistic to all who are familiar with our traditional work. The work on adopting the Kinhal toys and figures is really another appreciable attempt.

In my long experience as an artist, I have a fairly good idea of how artists can progress amidst prevailing opportunities. The role of the Handicrafts Board is



With Sri Roy Krishna Das & Sri A.P. Dube, at Bharath Kala Bhavan, Banaras - 1972



Receiving the Special Award from Prime Minister Indira Gandhi during the Silver Jubilee Celebration of Independence

laudatory in this matter. They are providing appropriate facilities for craftsmen and helping them in various ways to achieve progress. It is certainly the duty of the artisans and craftsmen who are beneficiaries to utilise these facilities and enrich their respective fields of art-activity. I for one, have been a believer in the wholesome effect of tradition on our artists. The extensive knowledge and skills imparted by tradition always makes for progress in the field. Every artist or craftsman while executing any design on his own should ponder over how the earlier masters had executed similar designs. At every step he should concentrate on achieving the best possible results. Such devotion and faith help open the gates of progress.

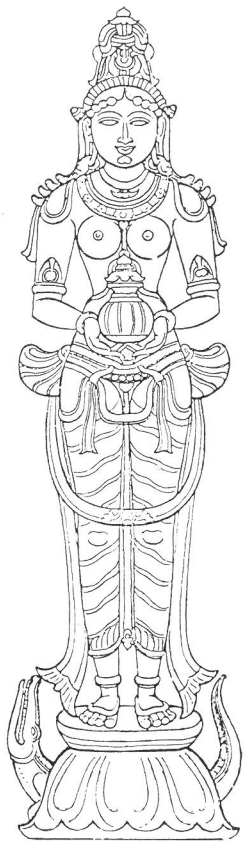
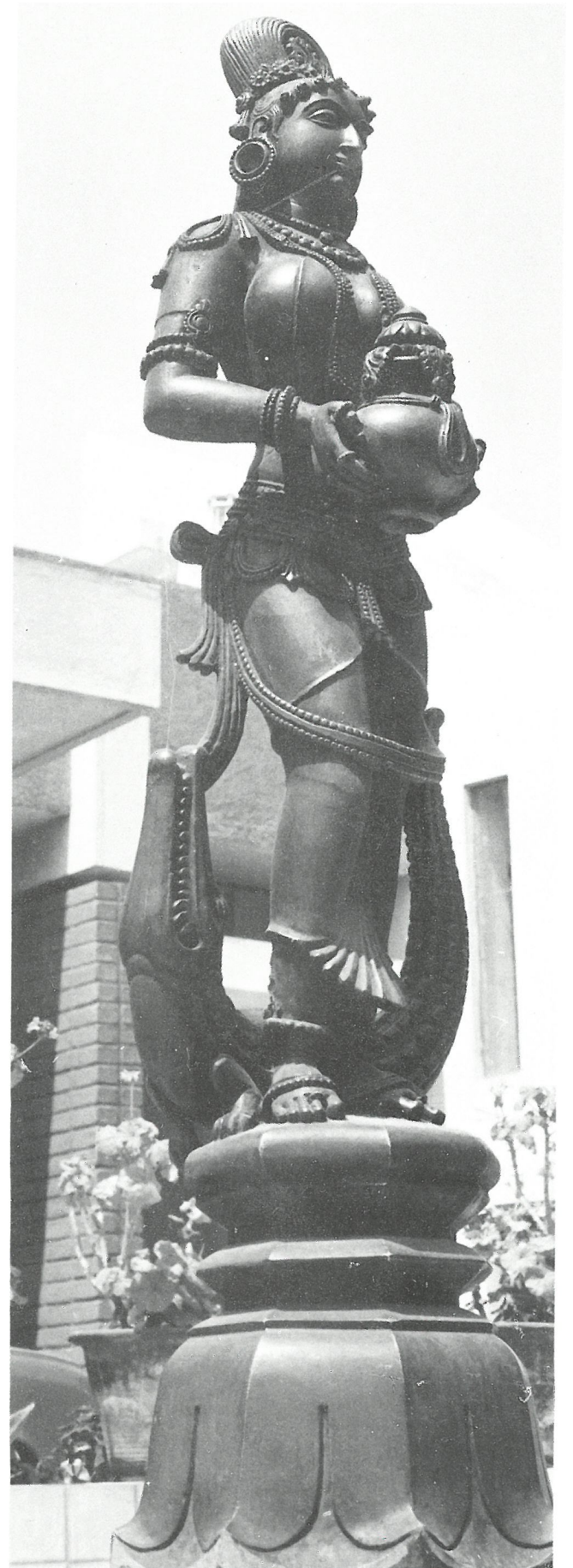


Dear Madam,

I am in receipt of your letter dated 16th October 1986 and thank you for the same.

Let me first of all, thank you very much for giving me an opportunity, to attend the 10th Asian Assembly, on behalf of our craftsmen community. So far it was only a practice to invite the craftsmen for demonstrations at such meets, but this time a chance was given to attend the meet, which is very useful, interesting and at the same time highly educative. I will be failing in my duty, if I do not thank you again, for having given me such a rare opportunity, and I am very grateful for that.

After attending the meet, apart from thanking, I would like to share my feeling with you that it benefitted me quite a lot.

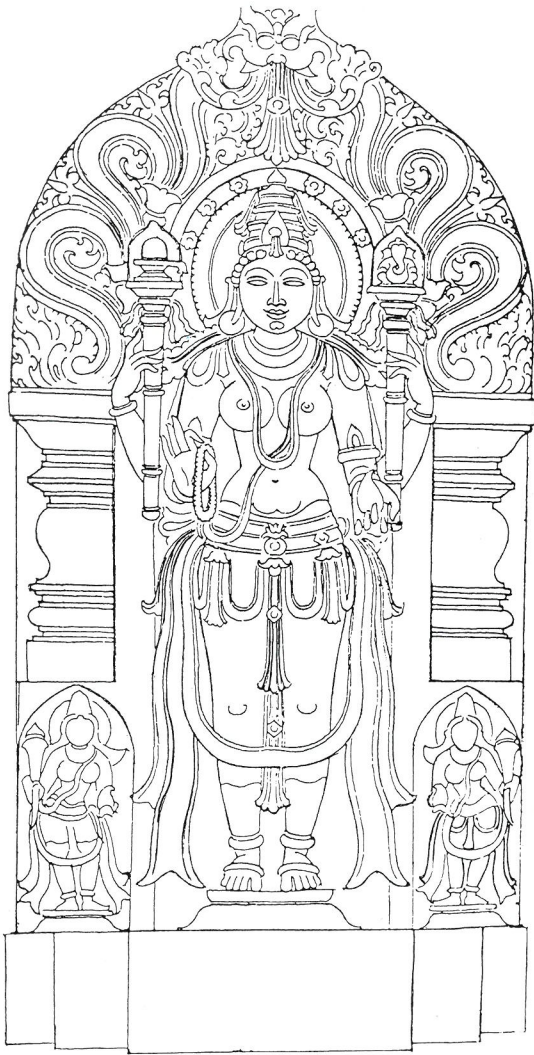


At Hotel Cauvery Continental



At work - Chalukya Parvathi - 5½ ft. soapstone - 1978

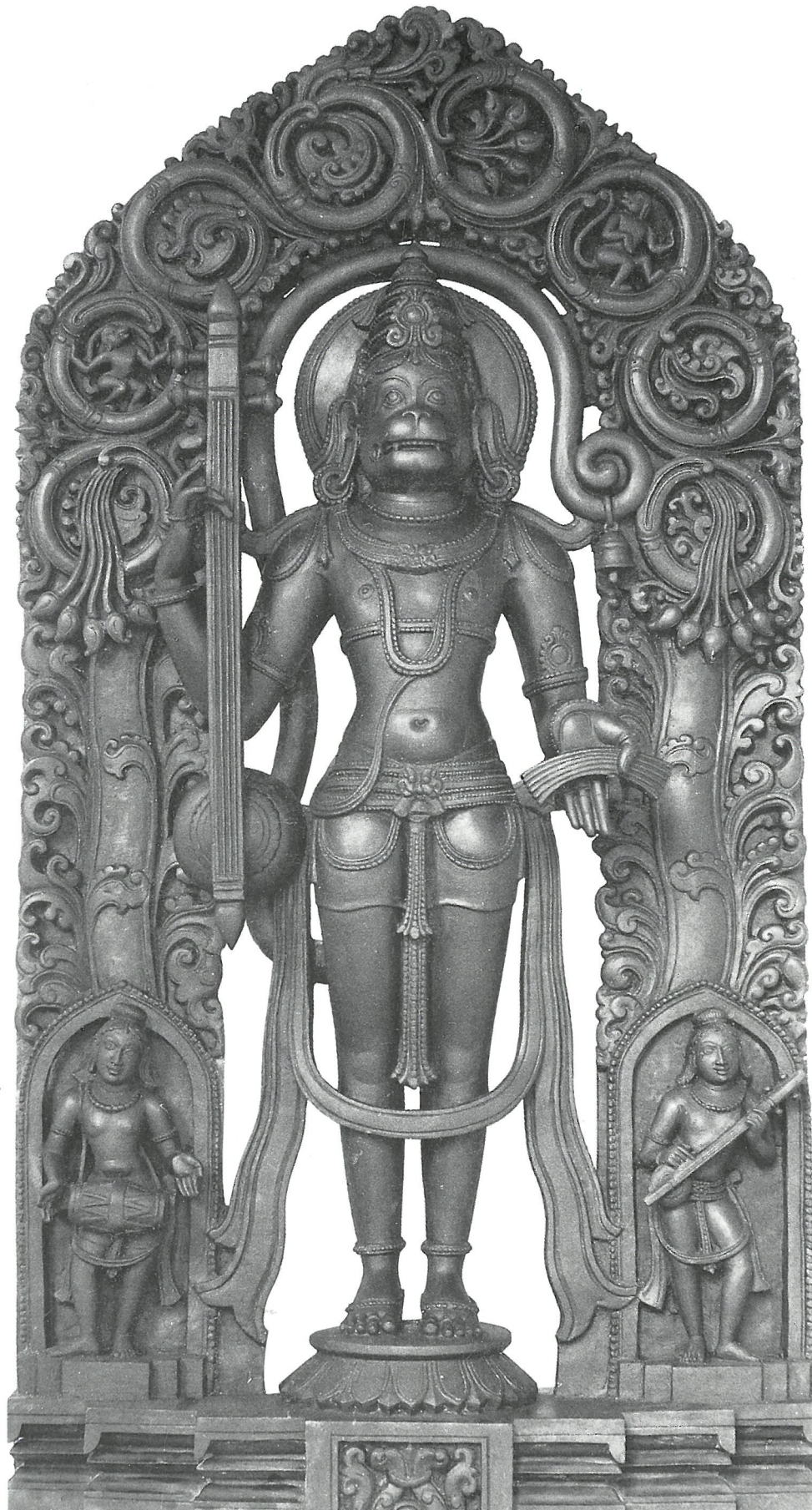
1. A craftsman will know the greatness of the tradition and the heritage of the craft, which makes him feel proud of himself and of the craft he is practising. With the knowledge gained like this, if a craftsman can talk about the field, it will carry more value, as they are the outcome of his experience in the field, along with the new knowledge acquired. Such attempts always guide him to keep up the standard of work, which is very very essential today when only marketing attitude is growing more. Also this helps him to understand that when the standard is maintained, marketing automatically will have no problem.
2. The craftsman plays a main role in educating the general public about the tradition and culture, through his works, more effectively, than words. So, it has become his responsibility, directly to educate the general public, for which his own education is very essential and that can be done through such meets.



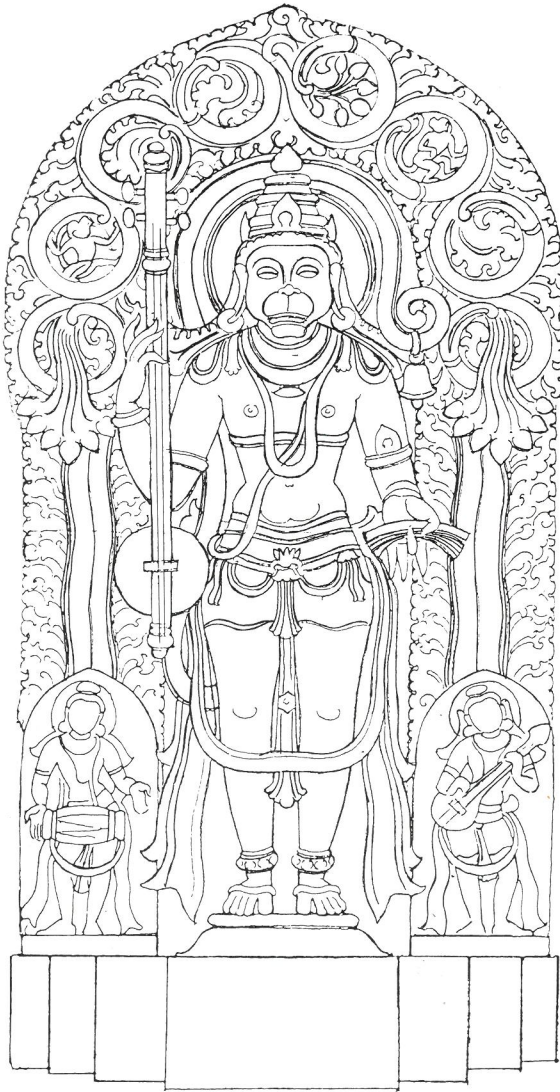
3. The craftsman will have opportunity to meet people of different calibre in society, who are directly or indirectly responsible for the development in the crafts field and exchange views.
4. It is a general feeling that traditional crafts are to be used for the needs of the modern society to make the living of traditional craftsman stable. Of course, I agree. But a craftsman should always have an eye on tradition and can make any needed change without neglecting the tradition and the value it carries. This view, of maintaining the tradition and meeting modern needs, can be effectively achieved by attending such meets, which is a must for a craftsman today.
5. An essential and most important suggestion, is to involve more and more master craftsmen like me, to have exchange of ideas between craftsmen and the craft councils. This helps mutually to understand various problems and their solutions.



Chalukya Parvathi 5½ ft. soapstone - 1978, in the temple at Ranchi



Maruthi - 5½ ft. soapstone in a temple at Ranchi - 1978.



So such meets should be arranged at least twice or thrice in a year, and with that experience, a craftsman can participate in assemblies like the Asian Meet, easily. Moreover, we all know that general education is lacking in the craftsmen class and because of this, they always try to keep away. But, if bringing them together with the educated class is not done, and if the ideas and views of the craftsmen, though not educated, are purely an outcome of vast experience in the field, and is not considered, no improvement can be made, suitable to the craftsmen and also to revive the tradition.

In a previous meeting I had suggested, that National Awardee Craftsmen should be taken as Honorary Members to the Crafts Council of India and I would like to know if anything is done regarding this.



*Bala Chidambara - Shalestone 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ ft. at the birthplace of Chidambara
Dikshitar, Murugodu - 1979*



I have a group of interested young students, working with me. I have been trying to make them understand all these views, apart from learning the traditional sculpture. I would like to show this experience of teaching, with you all. Some of my students would like to become members of the C.C.I. So kindly send necessary details regarding this.

I had requested you to send me the copies of all the papers received in the Asian Meet and you had promised me also. Kindly send them, as I am eagerly waiting to study them.

No more to write at present.

With regards,
D. Vadiraj
To
The Honorary Secretary
Crafts Council of India
18, Archbishop Mathias Avenue
Madras 600 028



With his sculpture Balachidambara - 1979



Ganesh 5 1/2 ft. soapstone - chalukya style - in a temple at Ranchi - 1979

Kamaladevi's Letter to Vadiraj

20, Canning Lane
New Delhi

29-11-86

Dear Shri. Vadiraj,

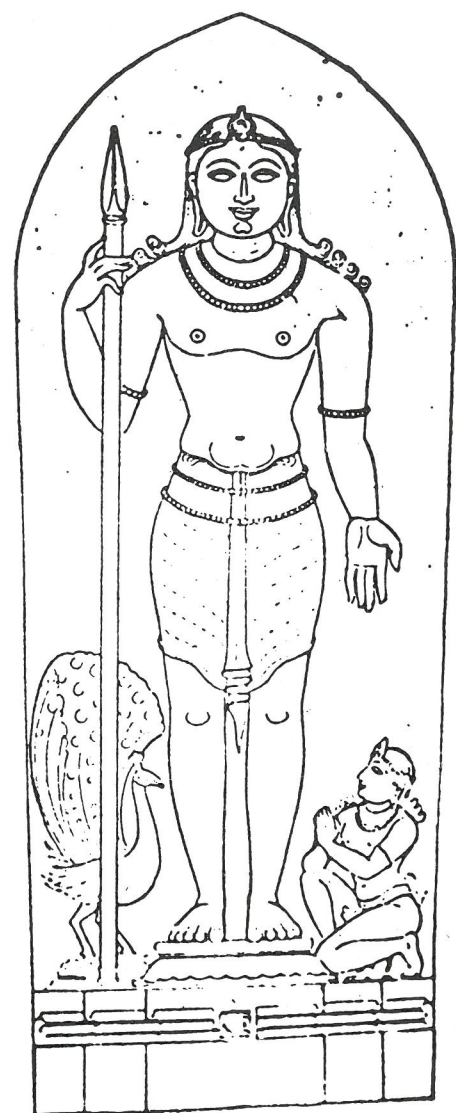
You must please forgive me for this very long delay in writing to you to accept the beautiful Murti of Ganesh which you so generously sent me. It is indeed a masterpiece as all your work is. I don't know really how to convey to you my gratefulness for this very precious gift. I am hoping to have a special pedestal so that its beauty can be brought out. It is for us, a matter of great pride and pleasure that this great art is still being preserved by artists like you. I thank you again with all my heart for your very generous and beautiful gift.

With my very kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay

Shri. D. Vadiraj, Sculptor,
26, Vanivilas Road
Basavanagudi,
BANGALORE - 560 004



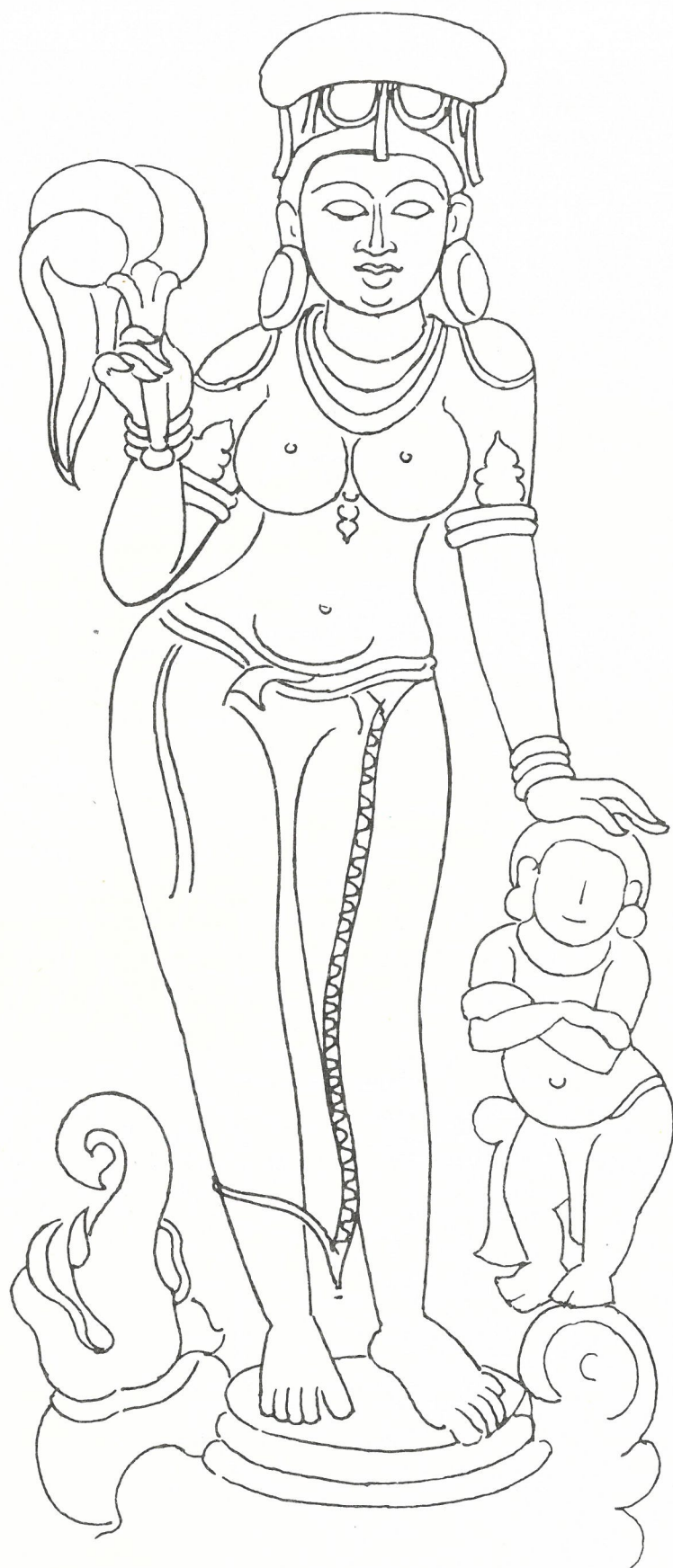
*Dancing Ganesha 3 ft. Karkala stone - in collection of Mistry Architects
Bangalore - 1979*

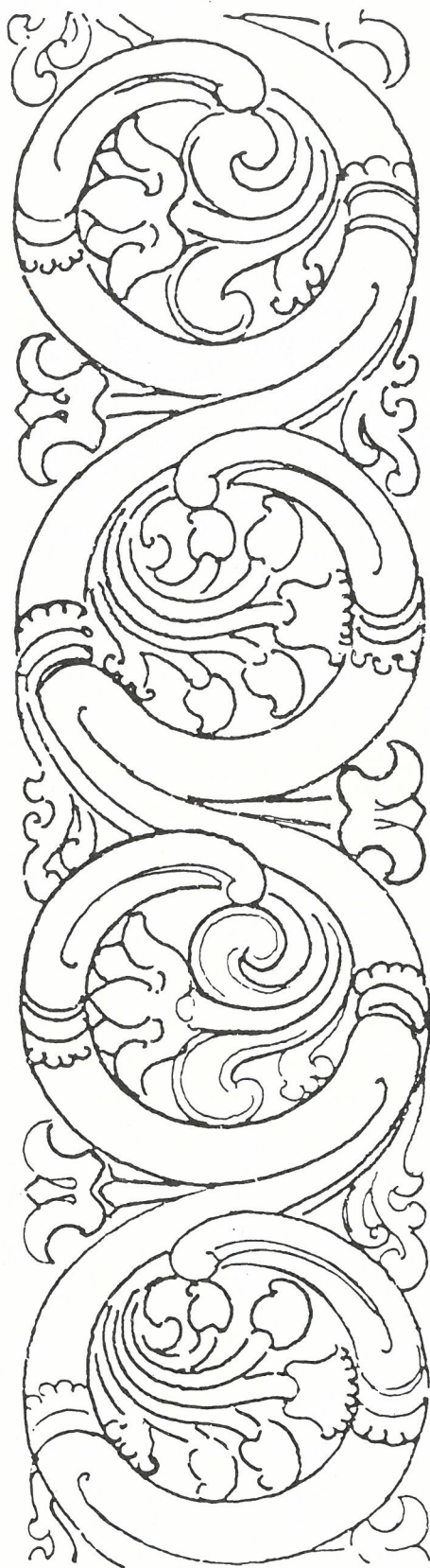
Vadiraaj

DRAWING AND KEY SKETCHES
- FOR SCULPTURE WORK



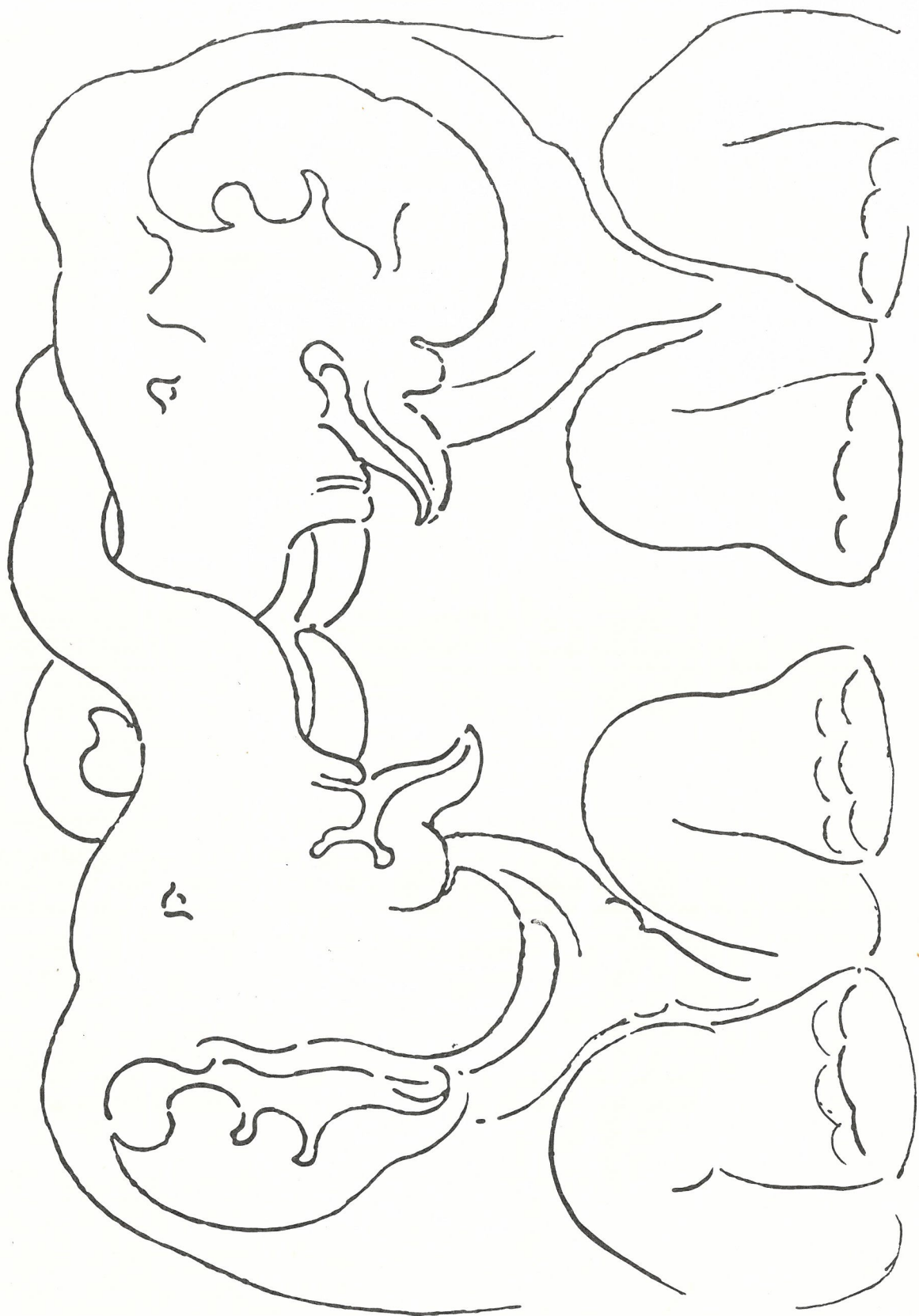








Traditional Head - Chalukya style



Elephants from Badami - Chalukyan style







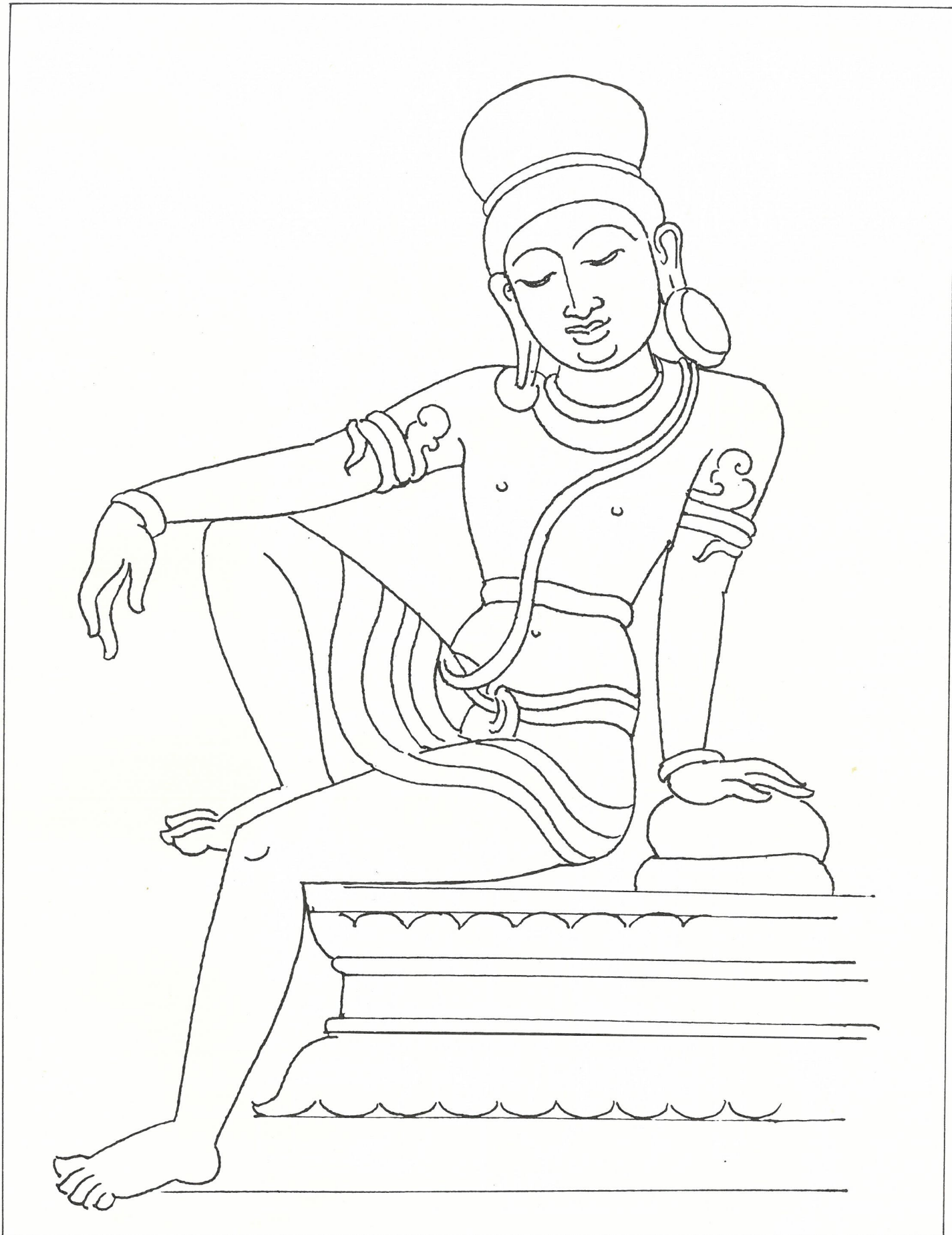


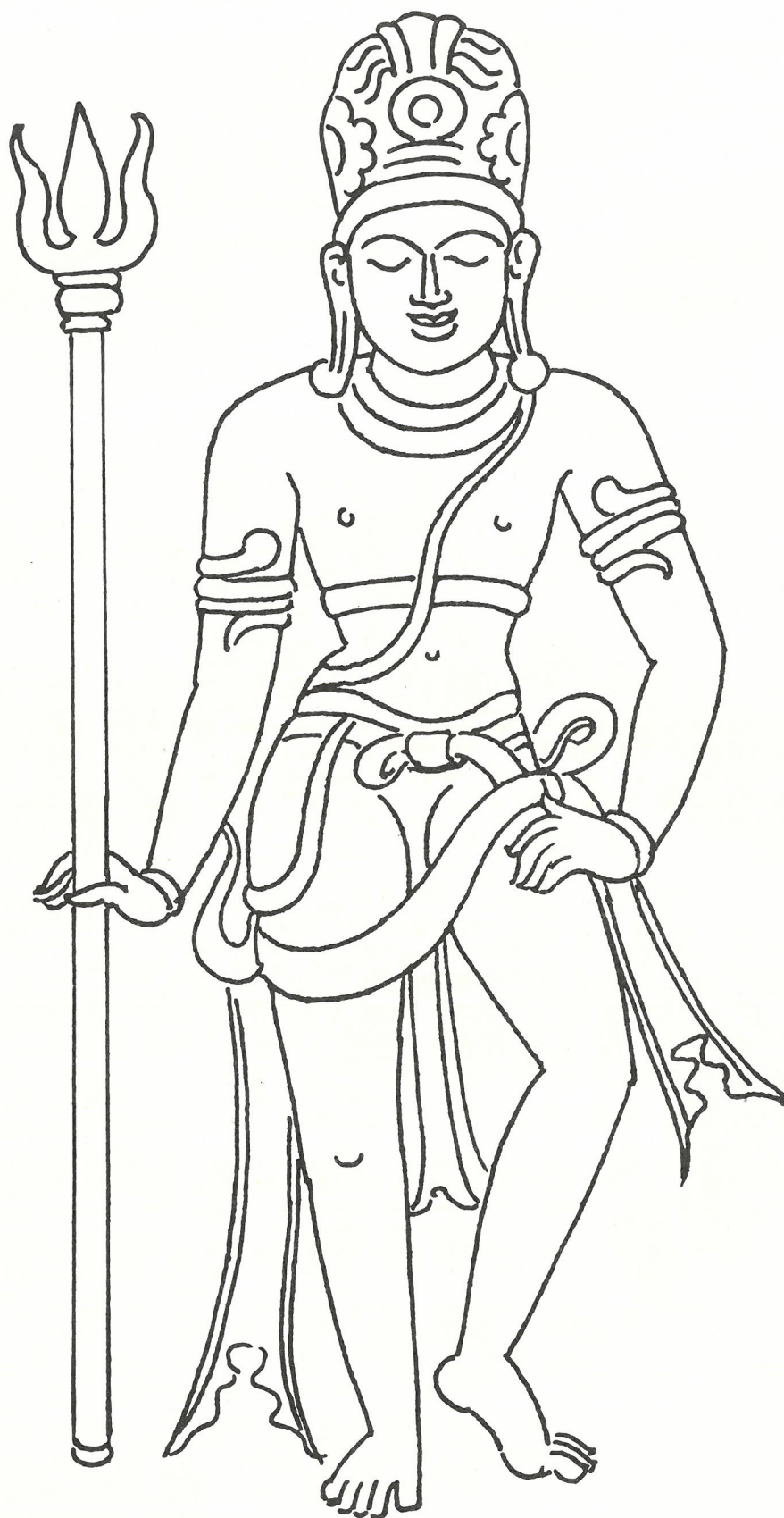




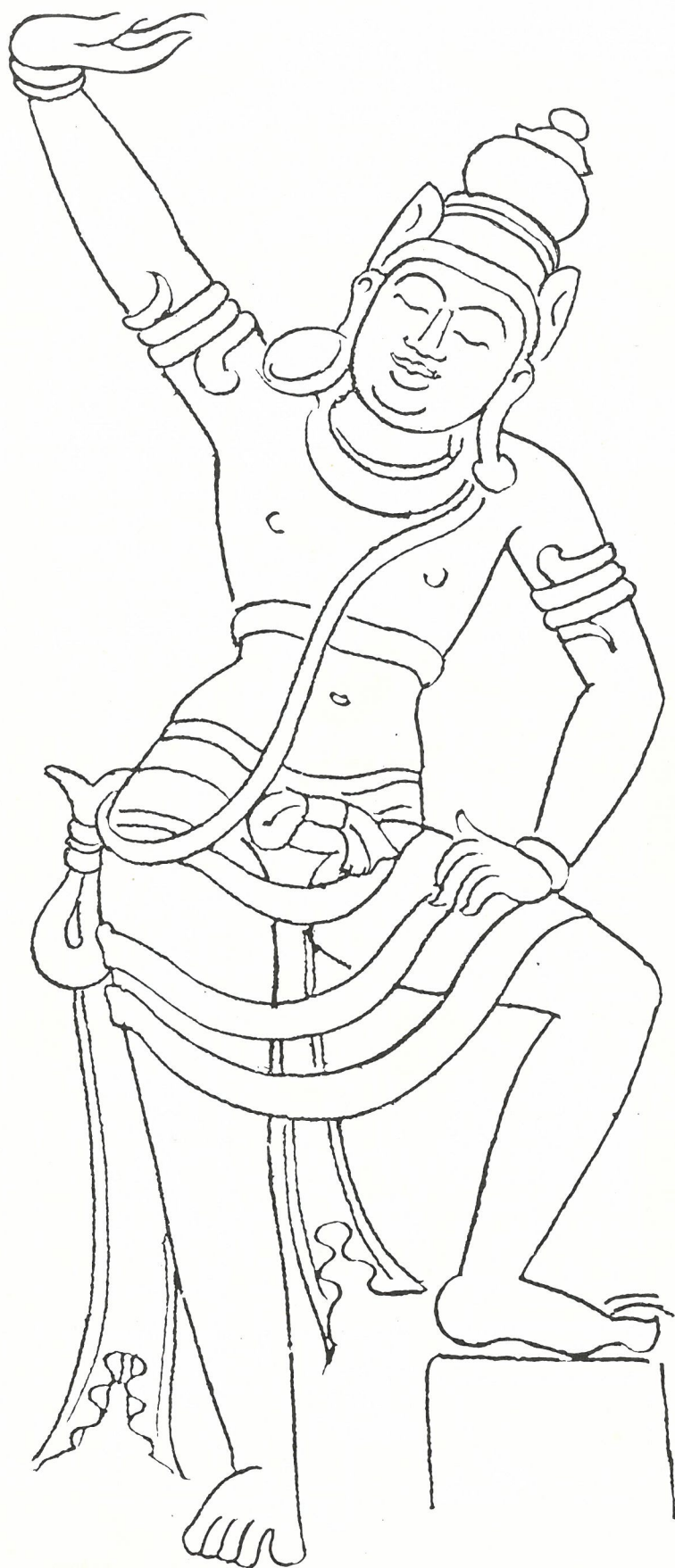


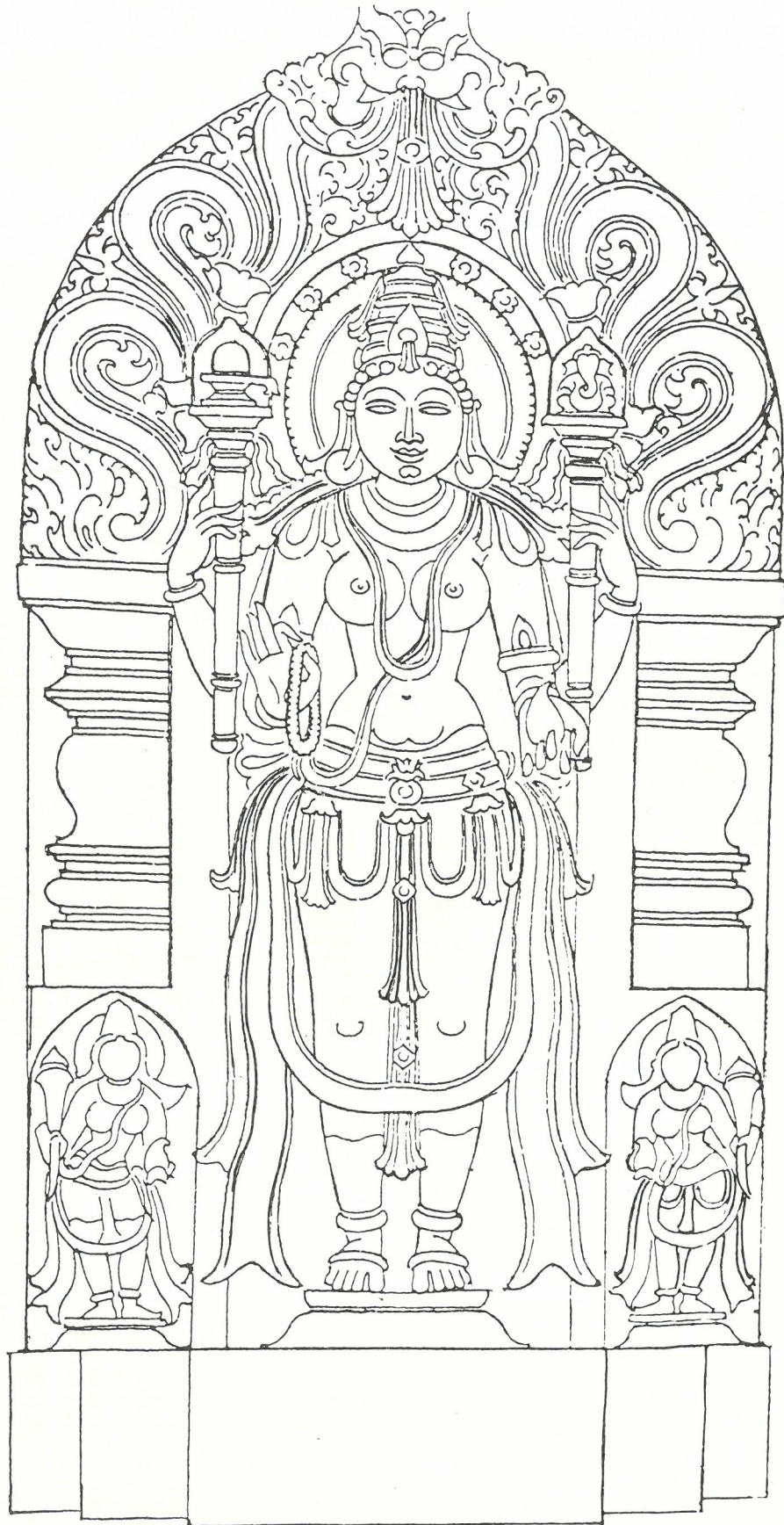


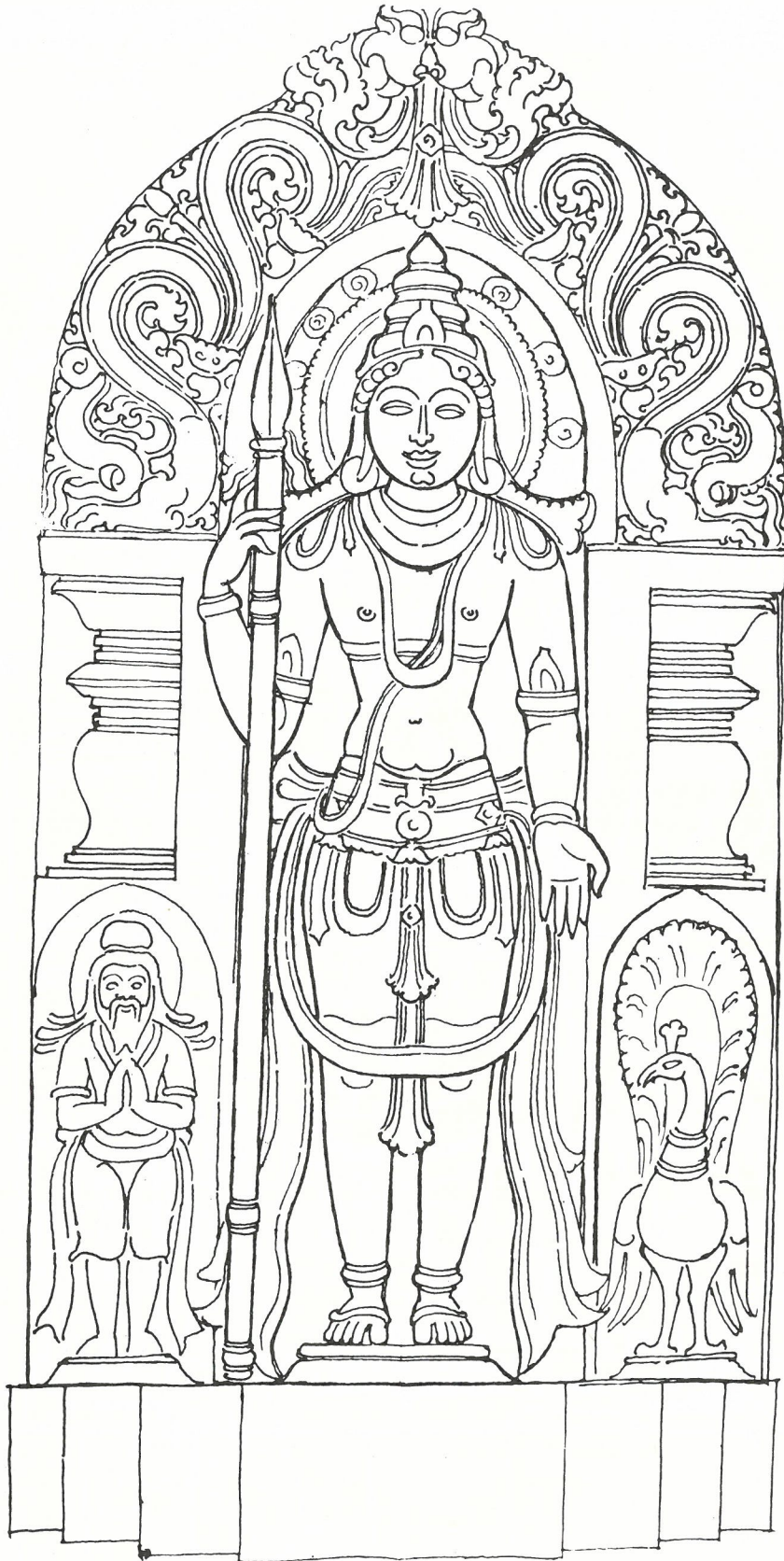


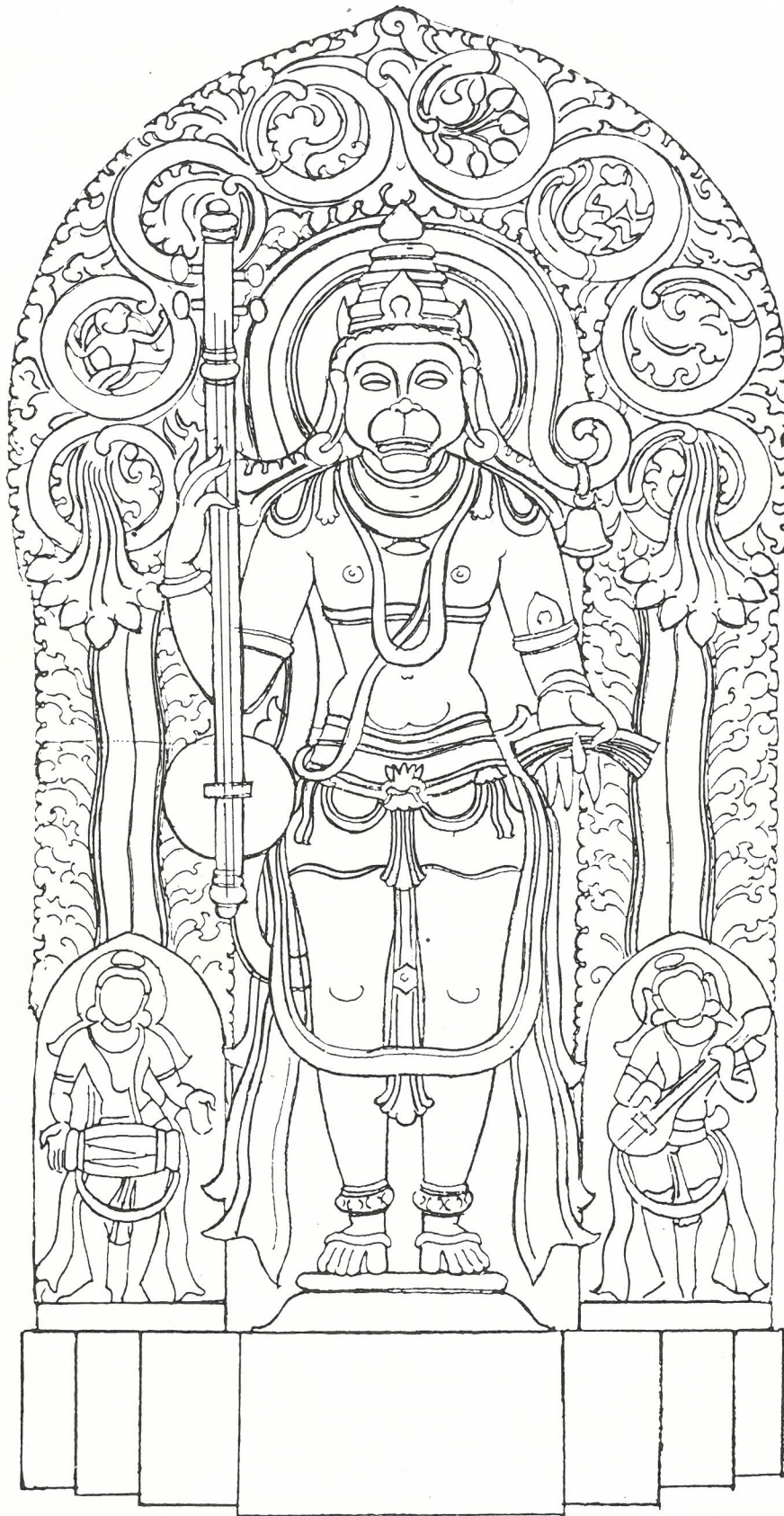


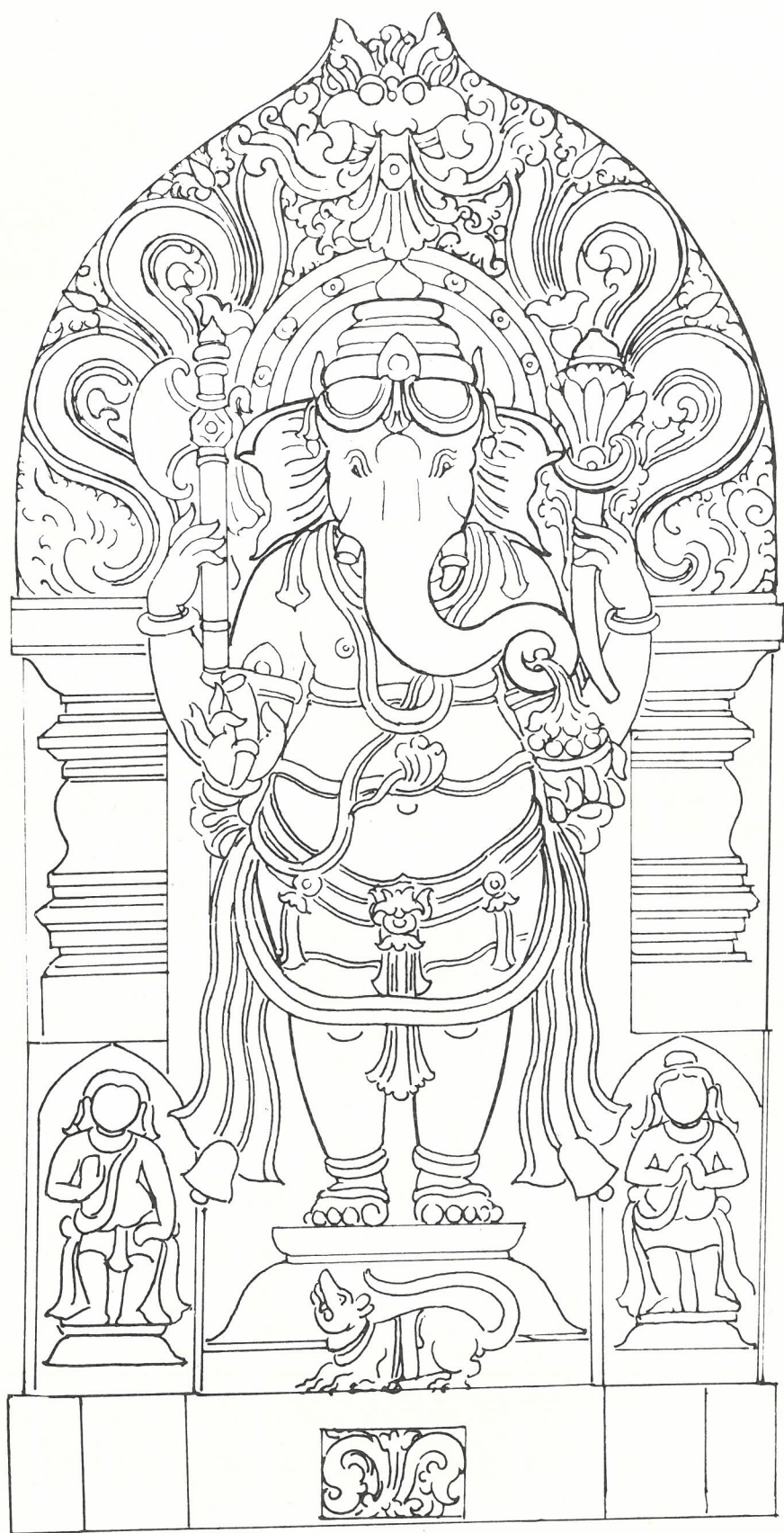


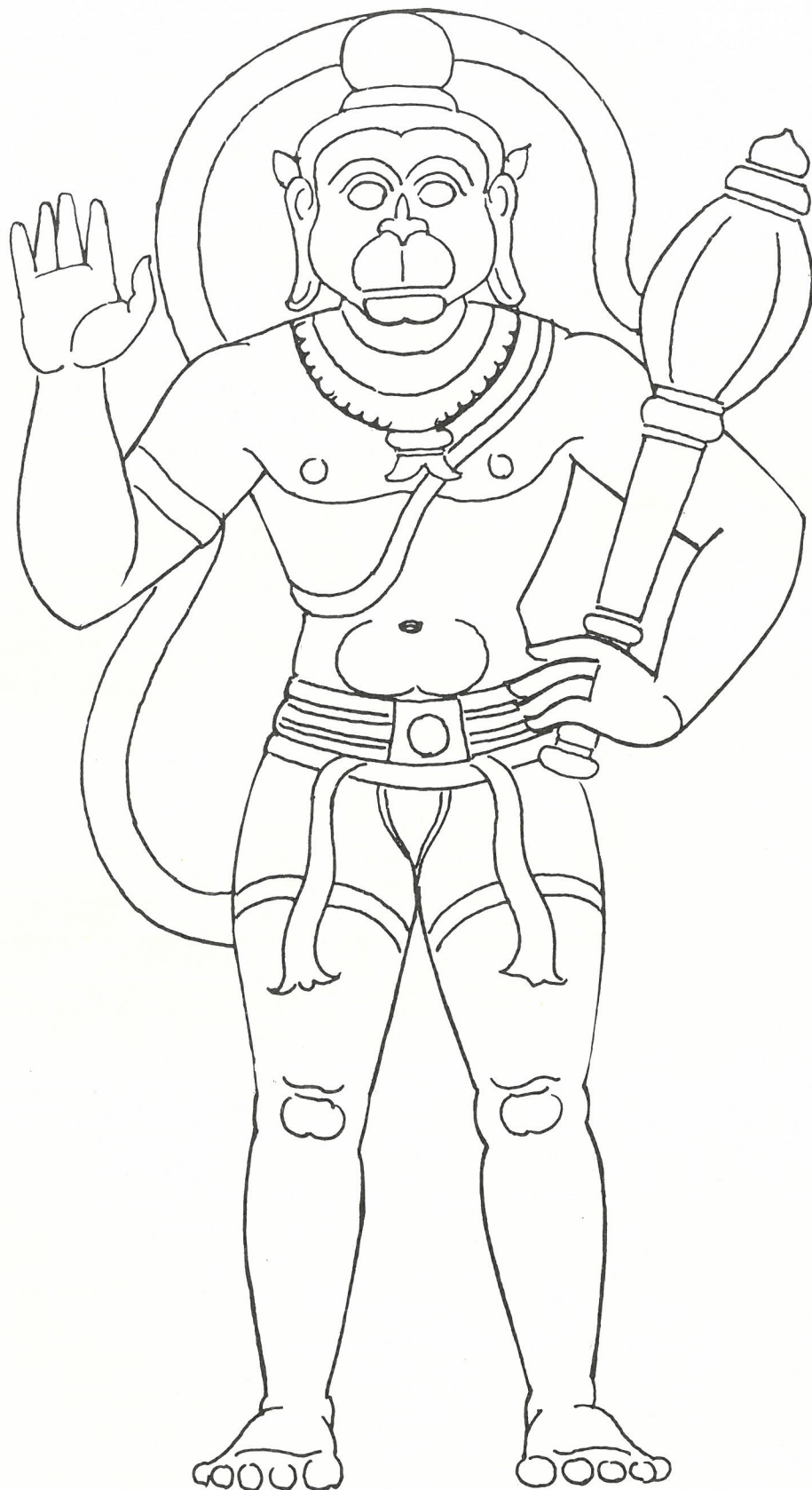






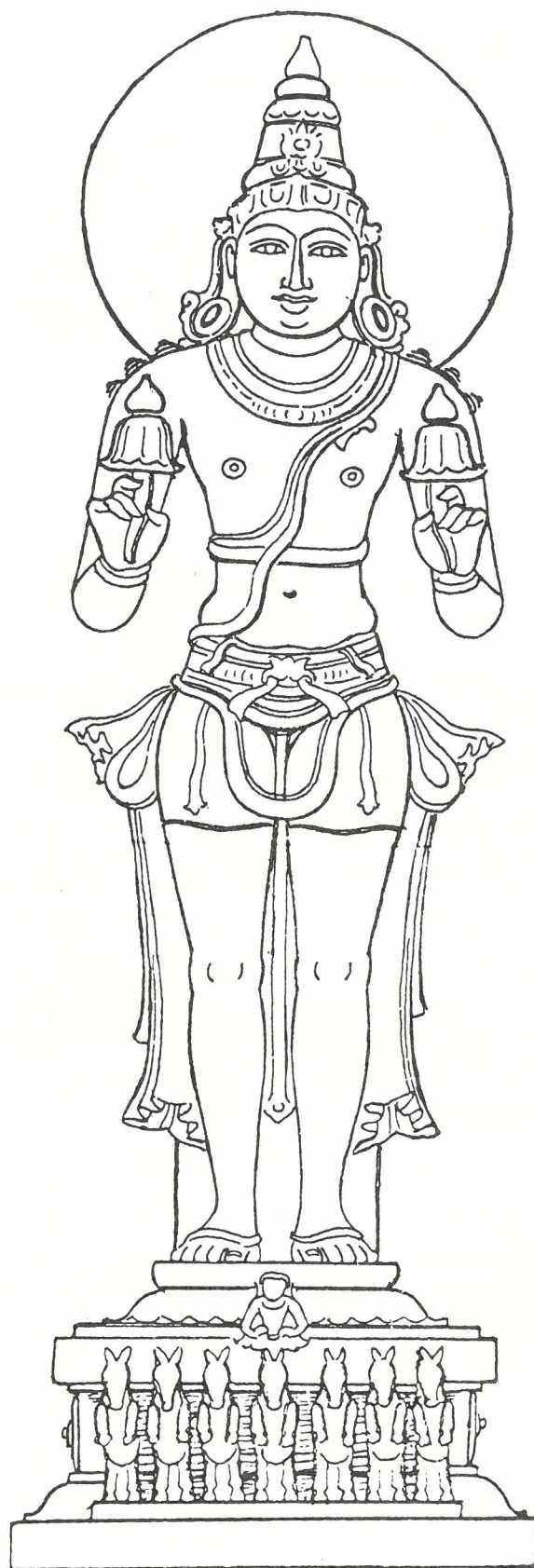








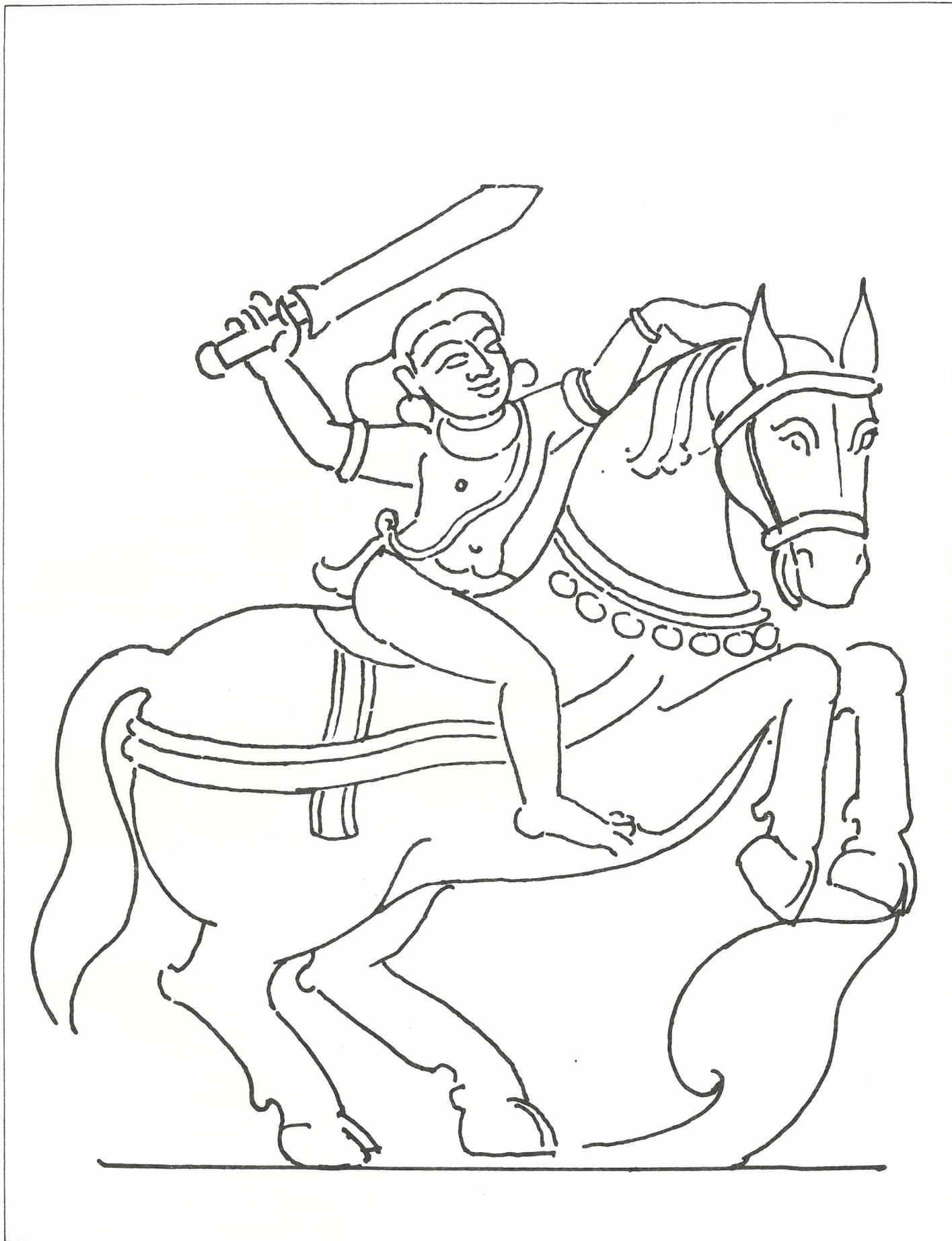








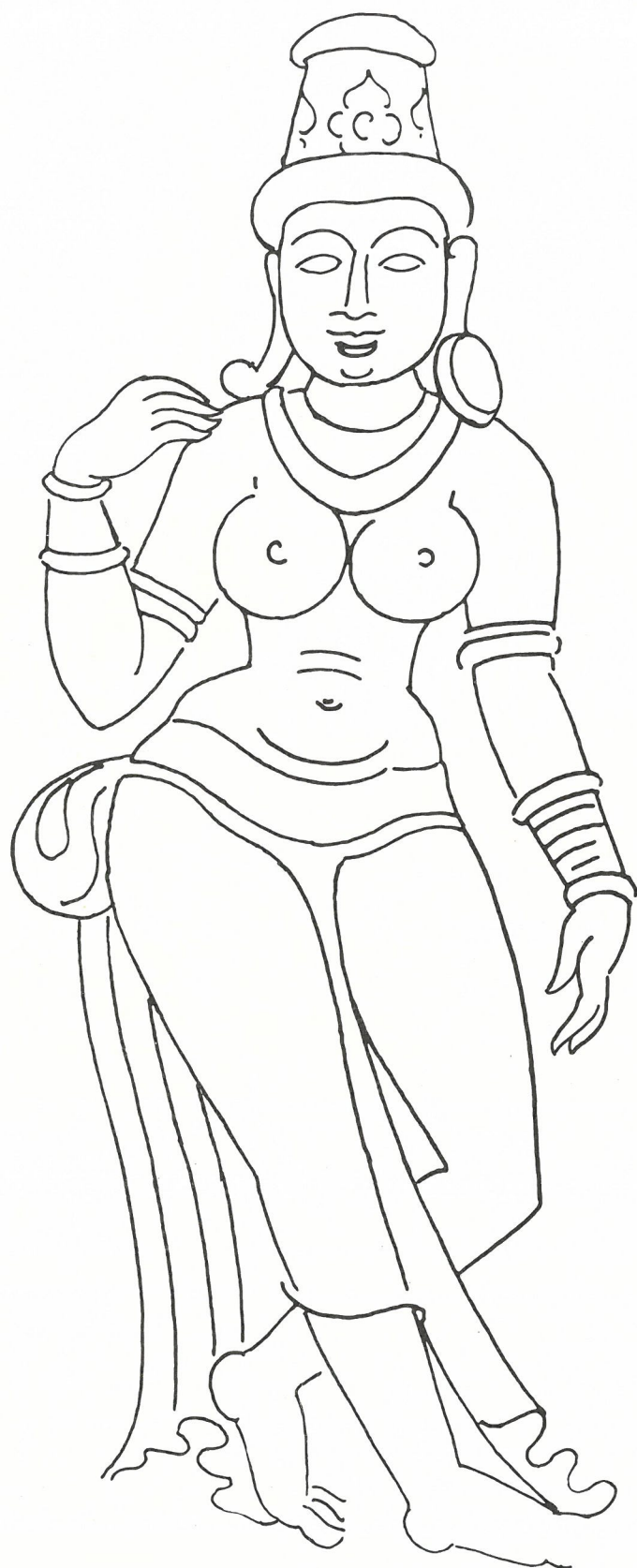
Drum Player - drawing for Hoysala Camp





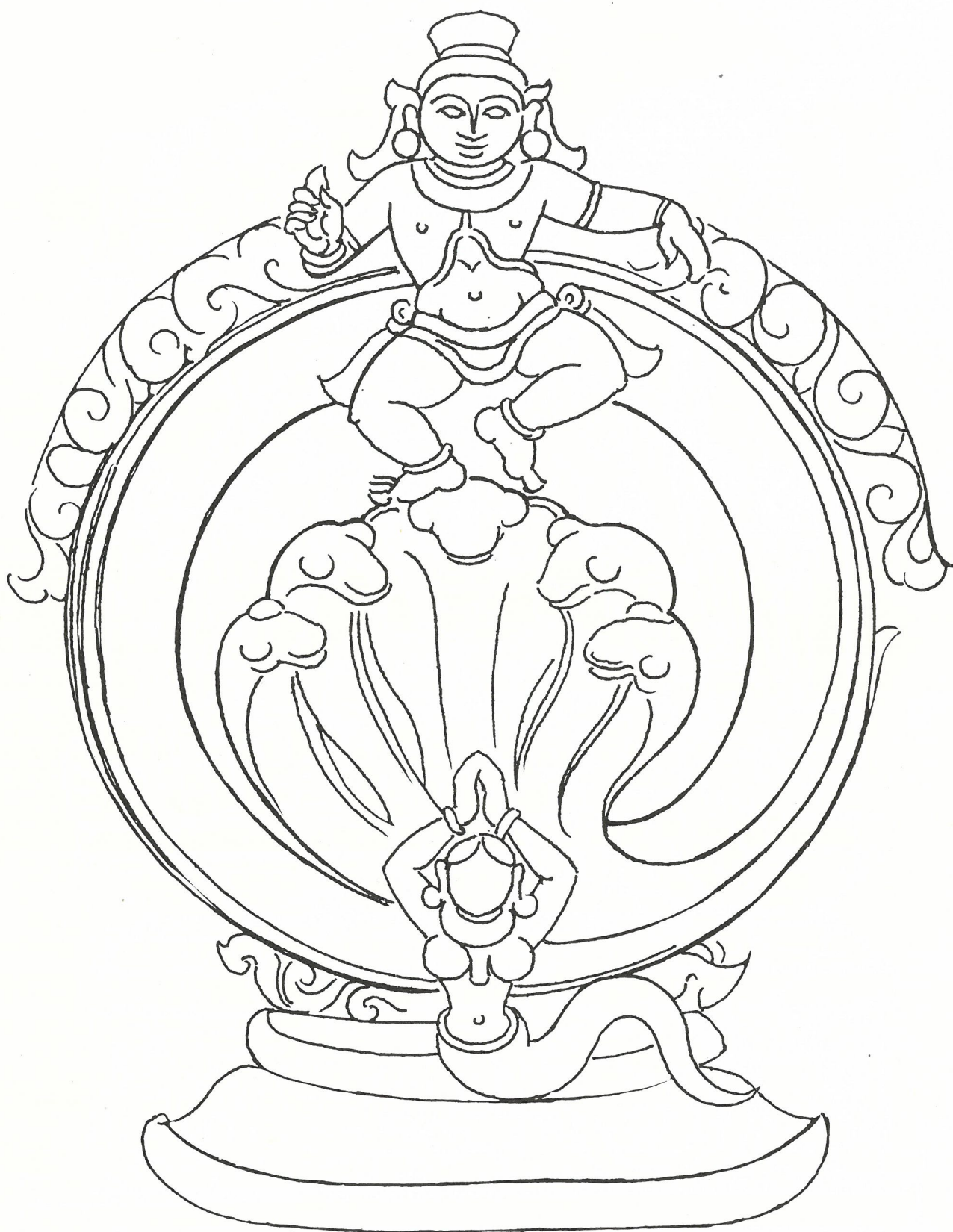


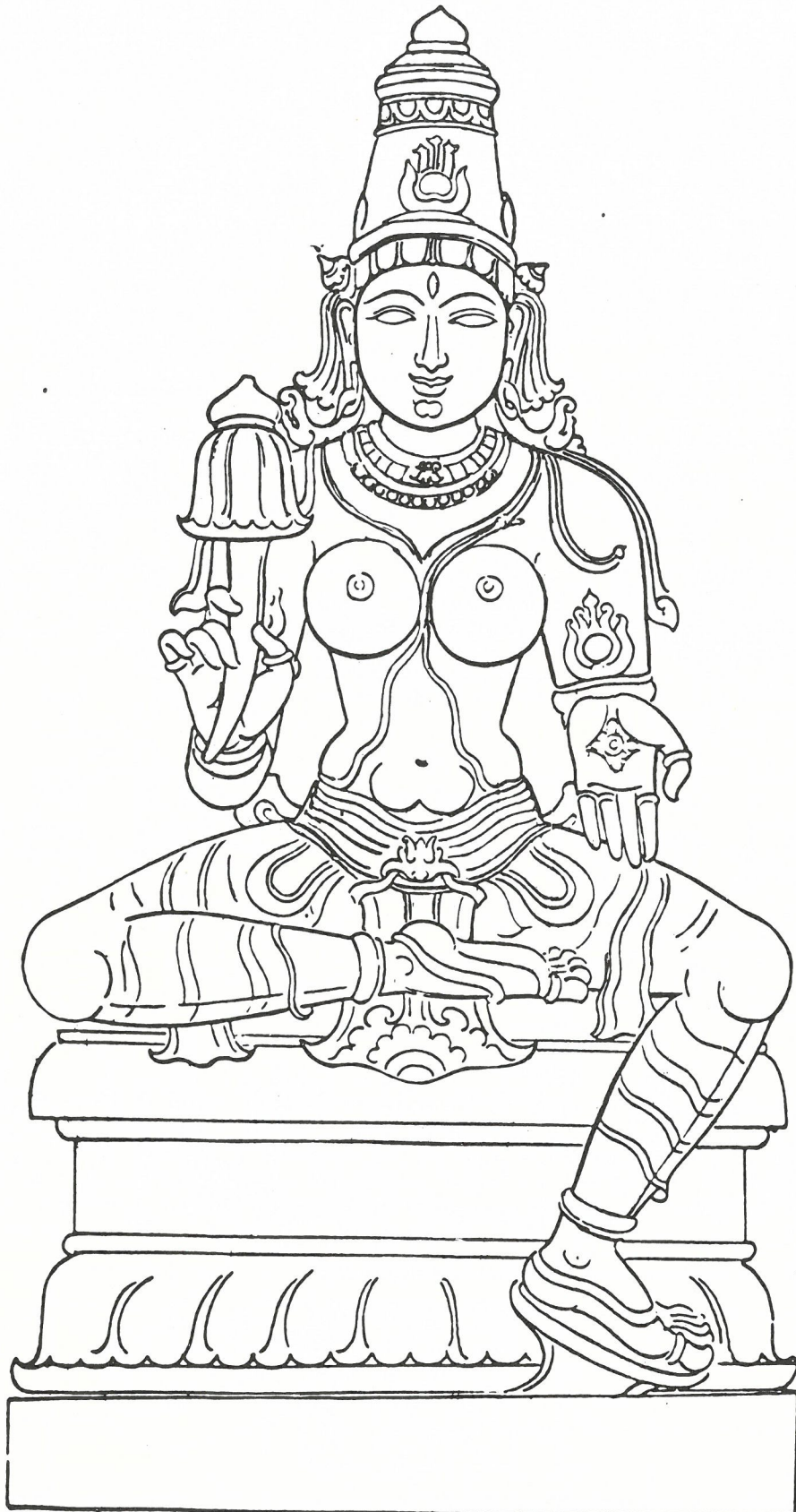


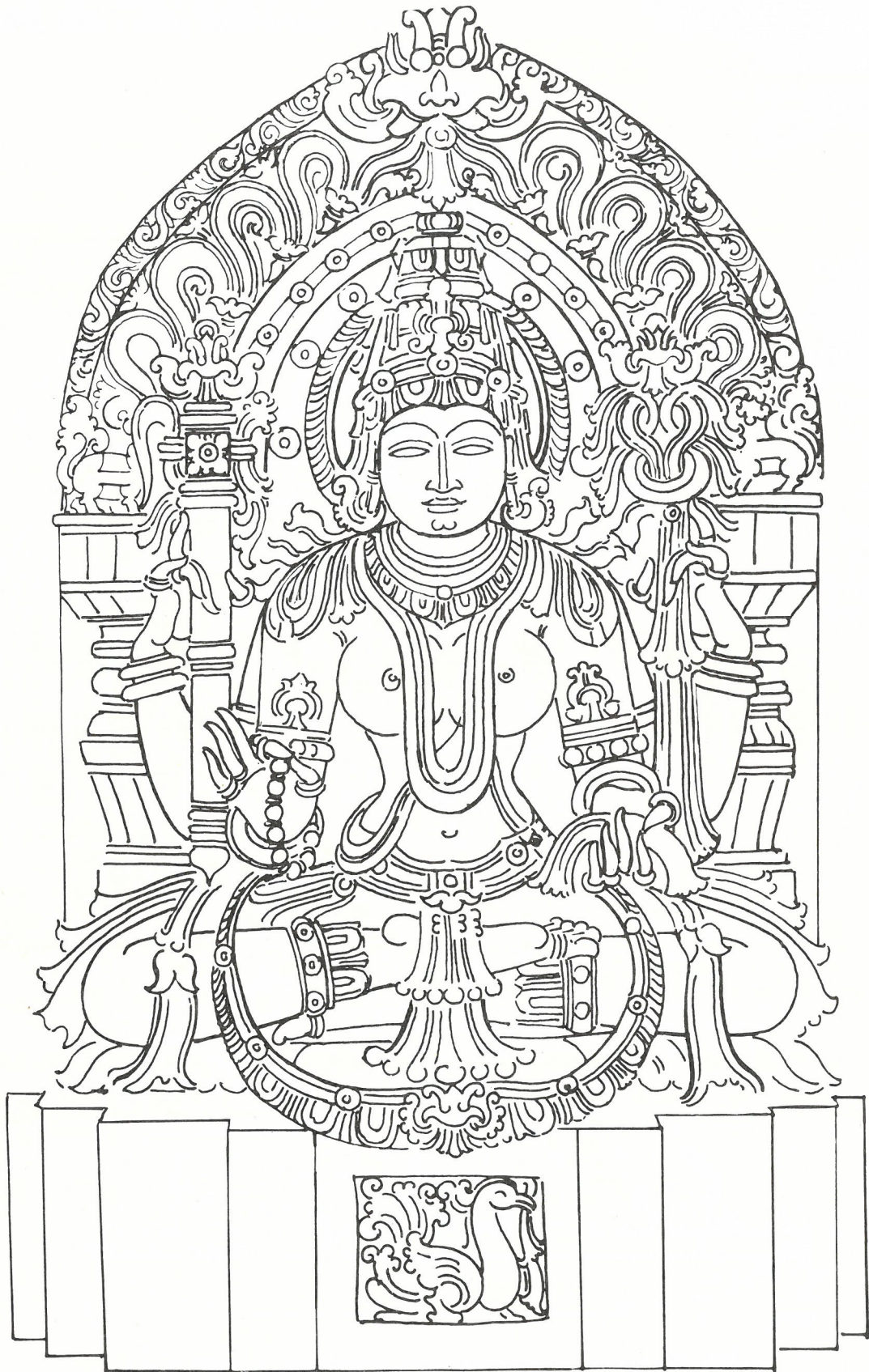


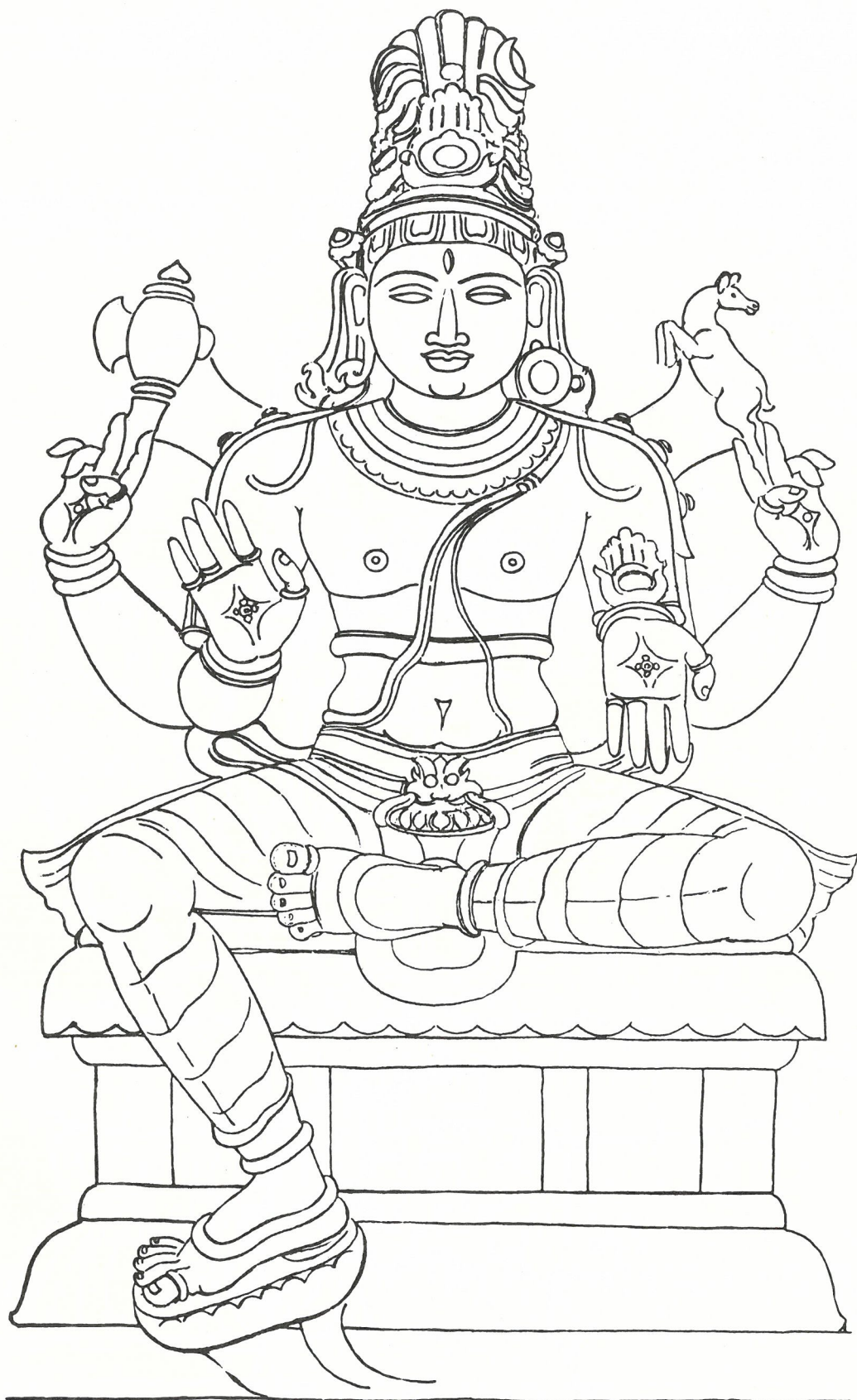


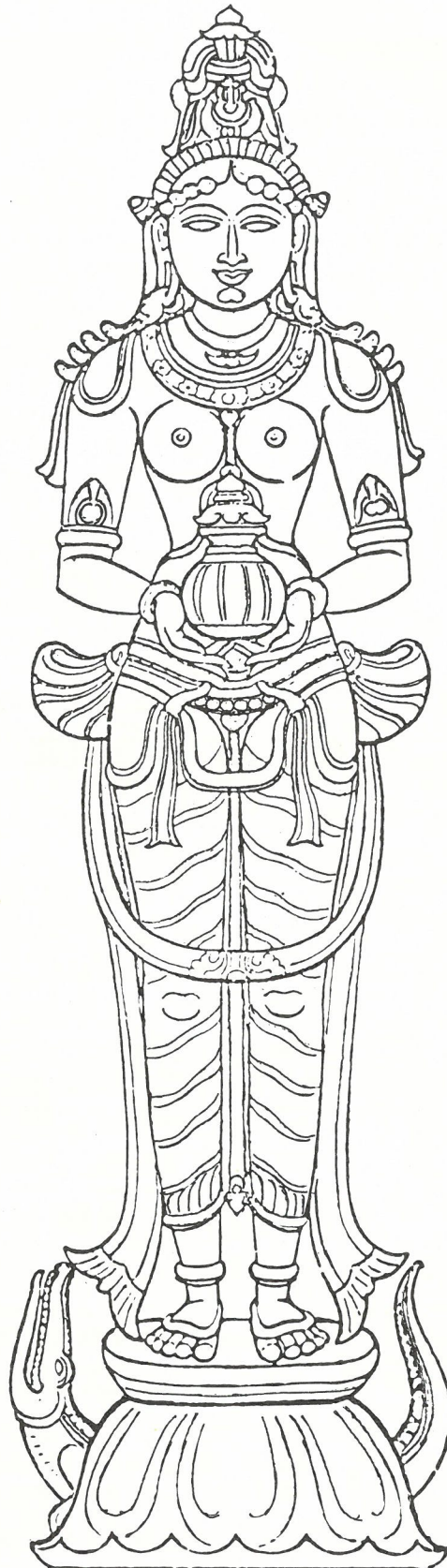








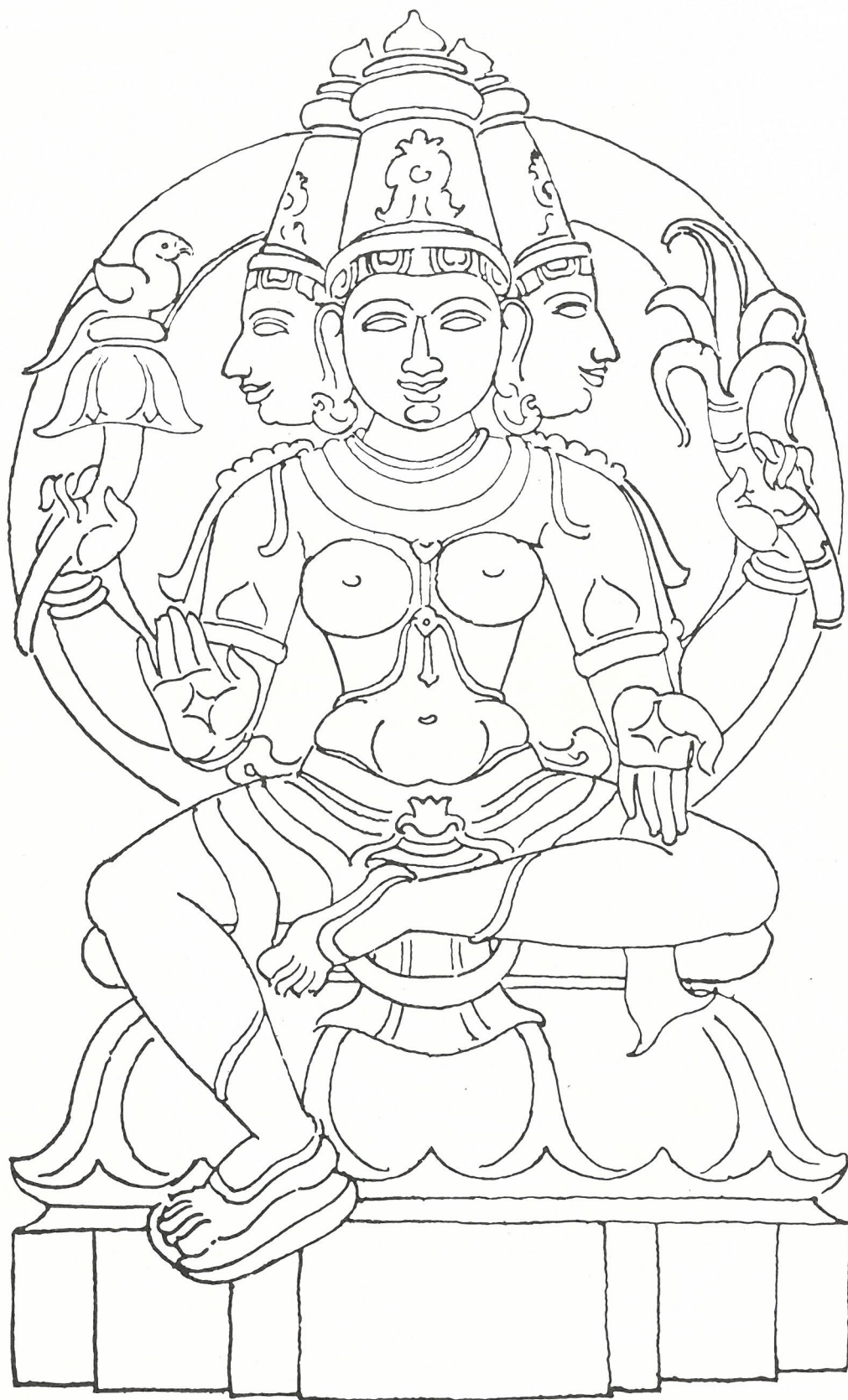


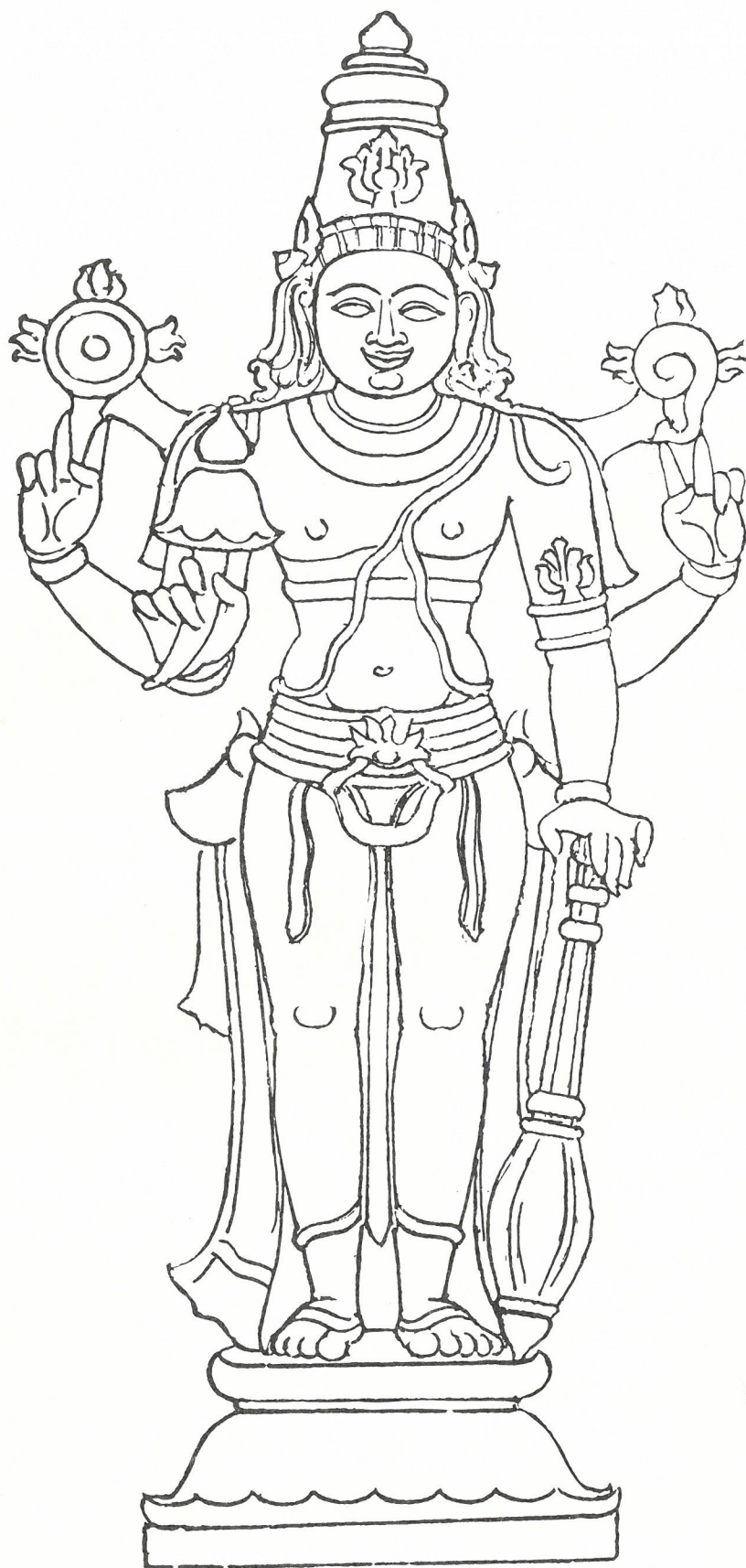






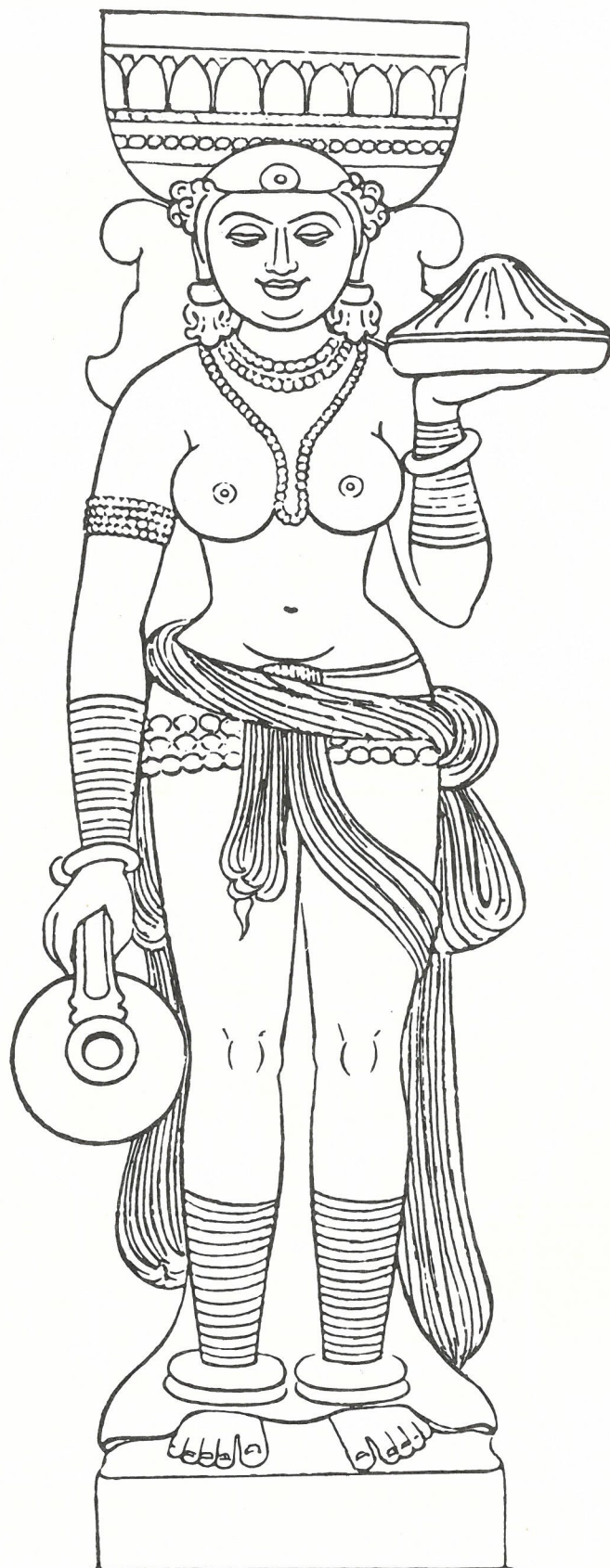










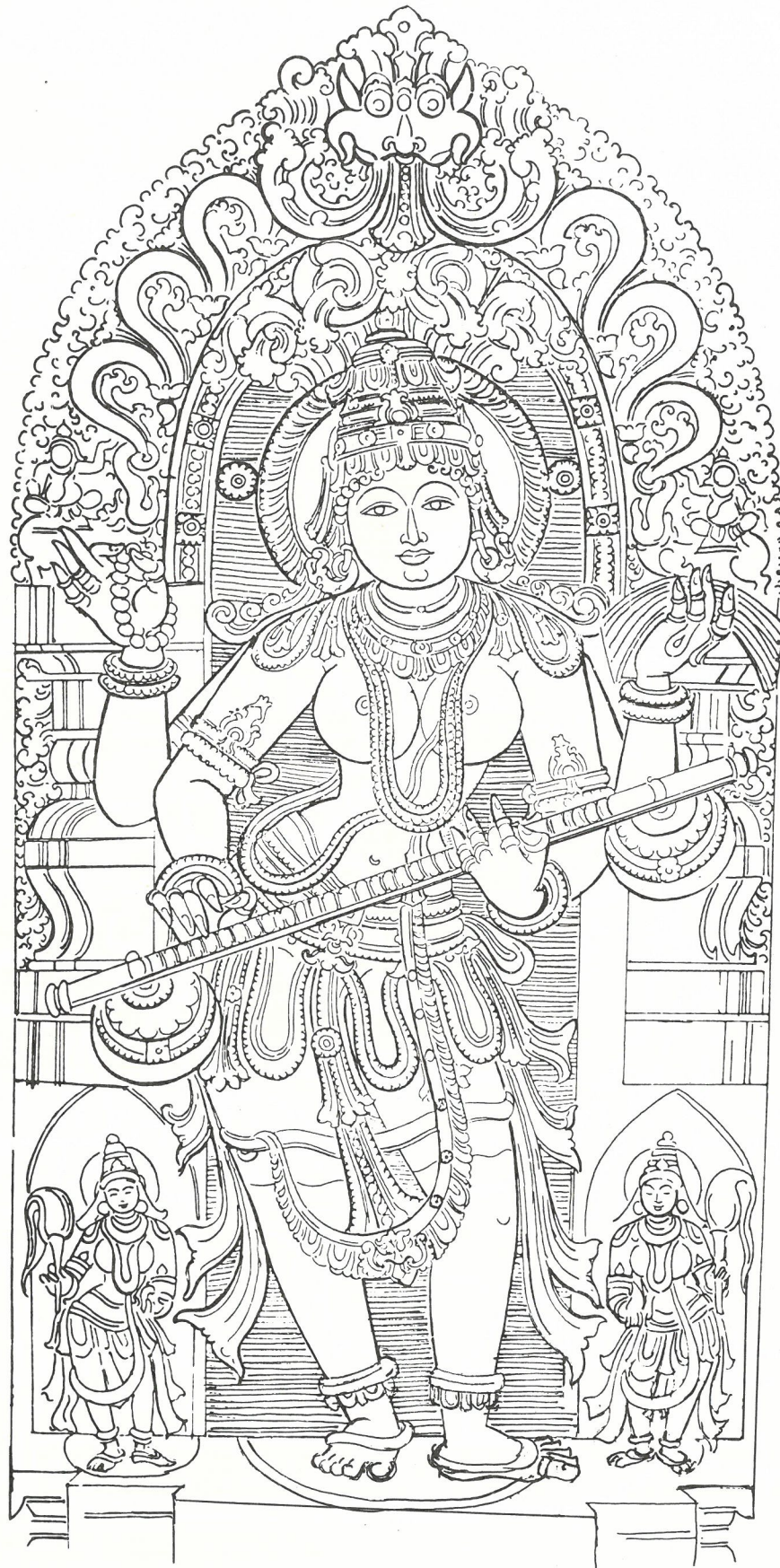


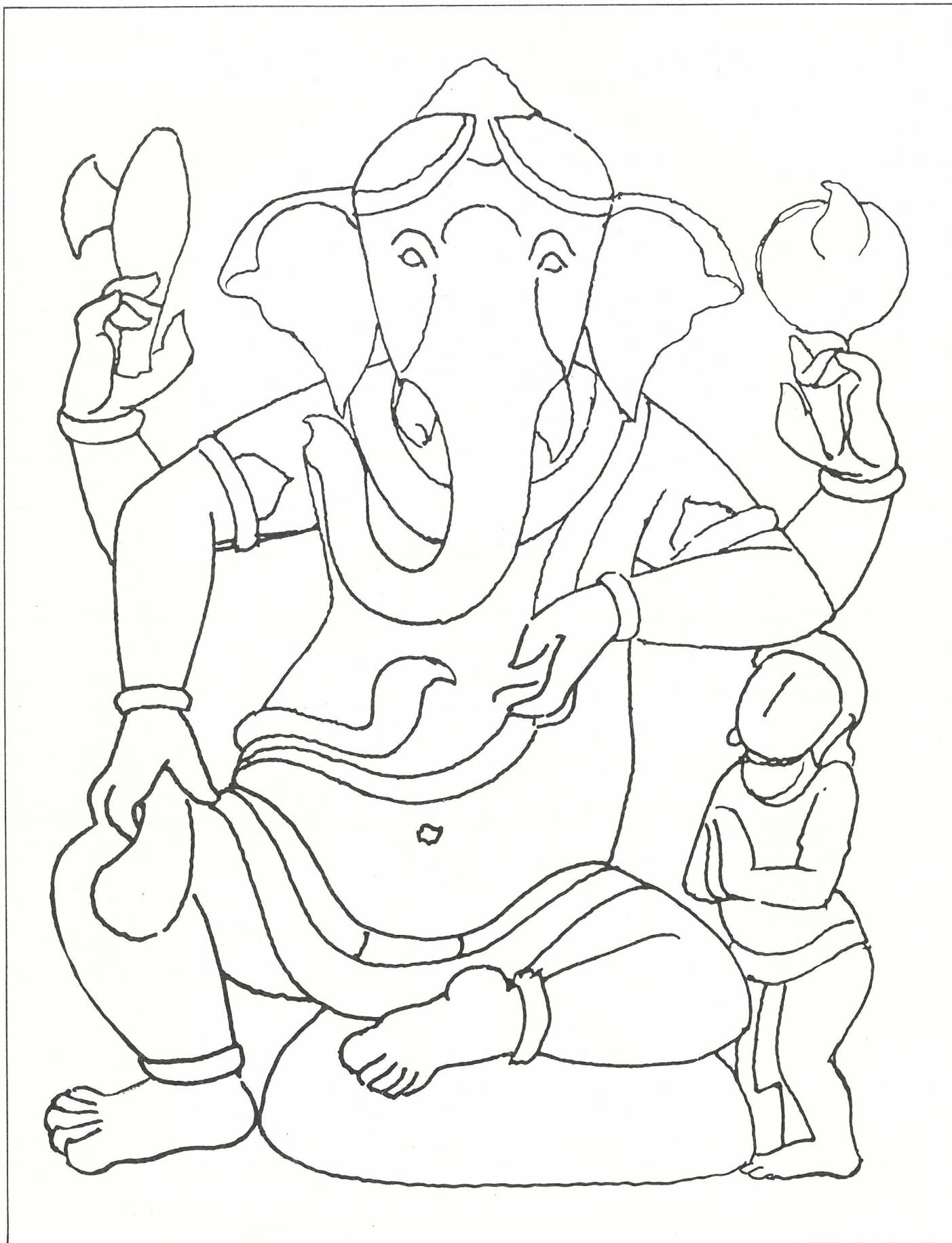




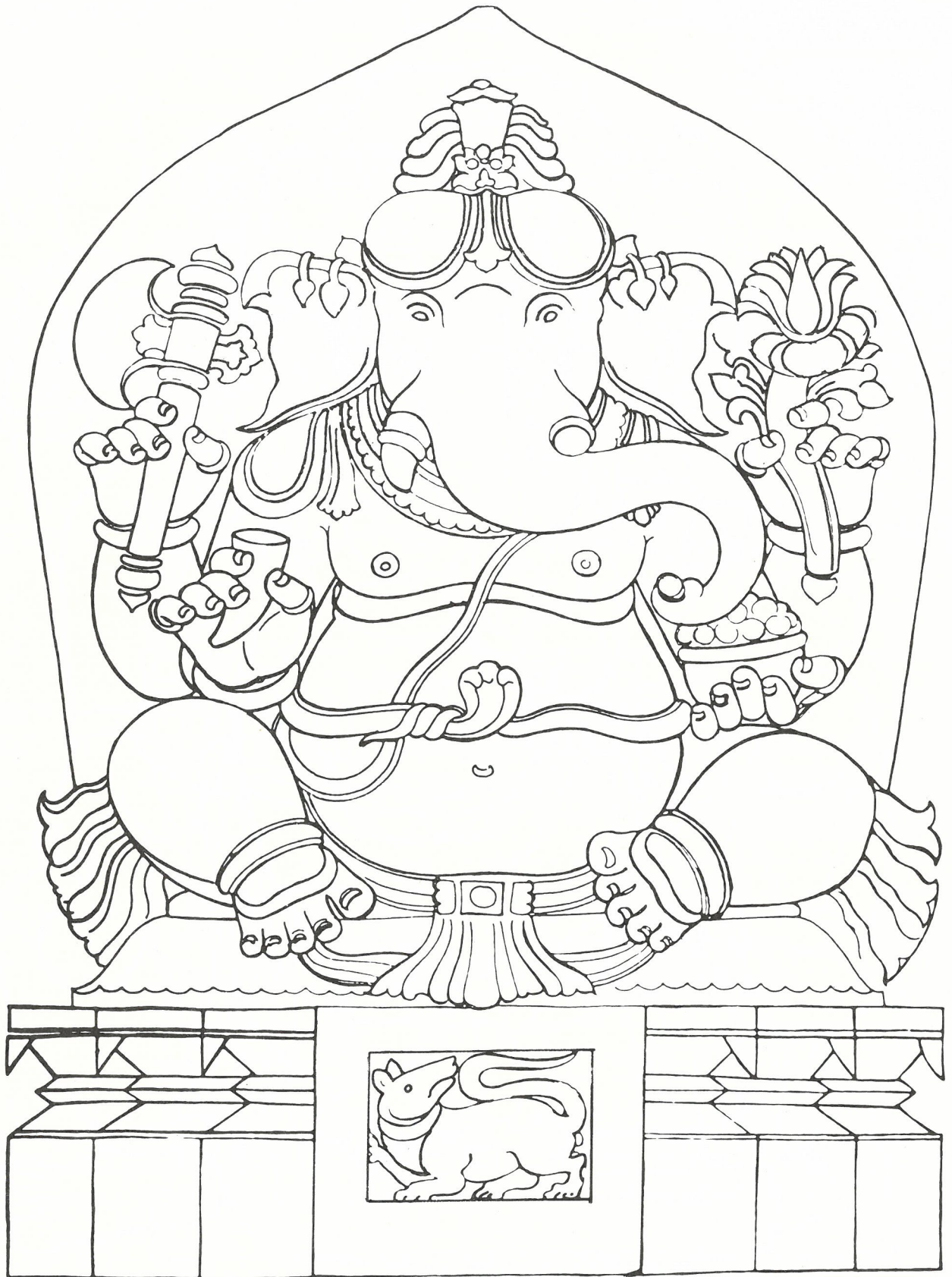


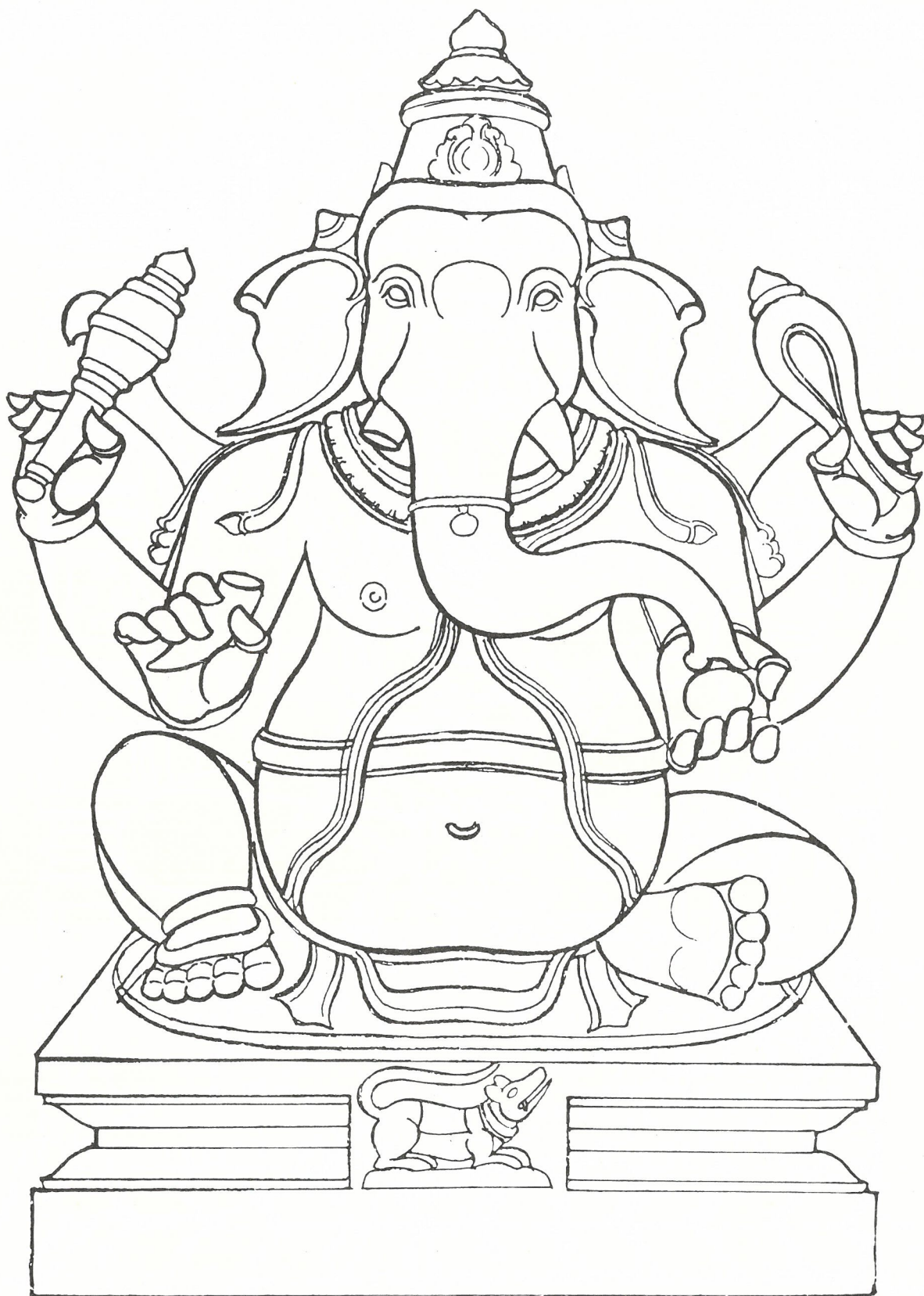










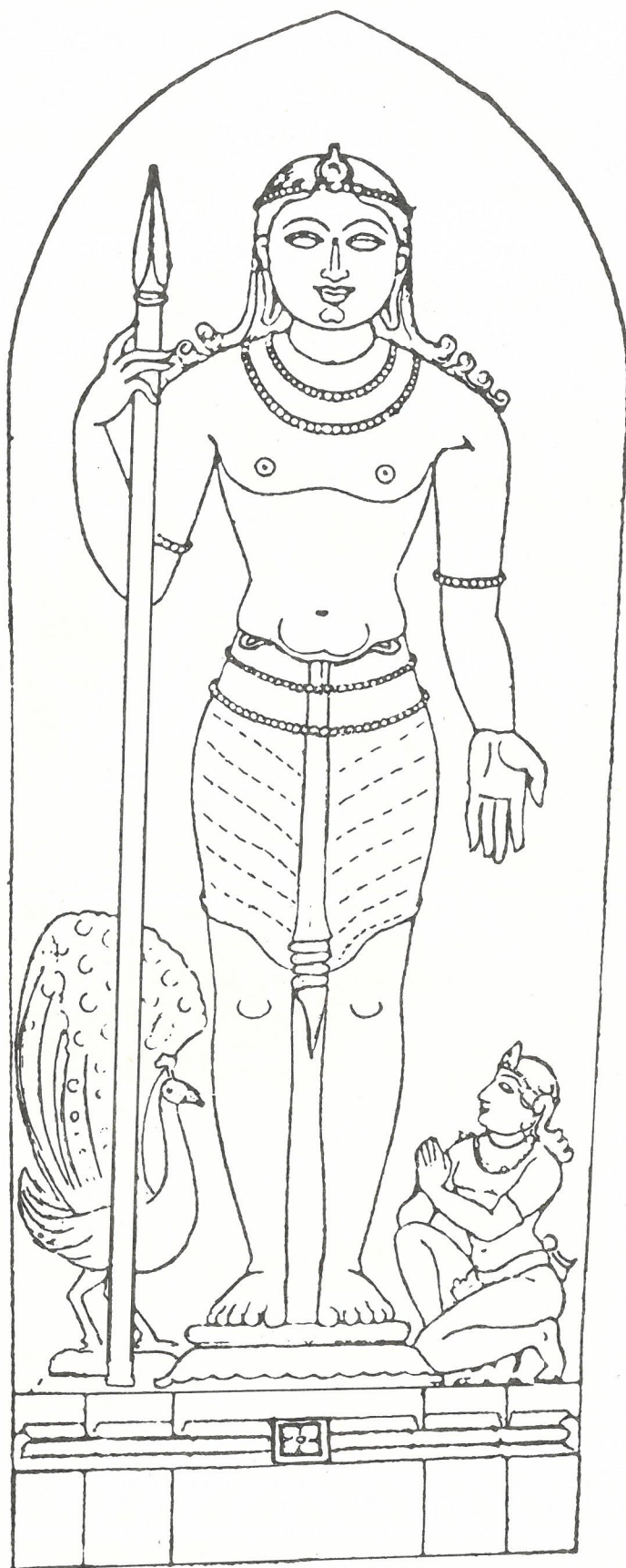




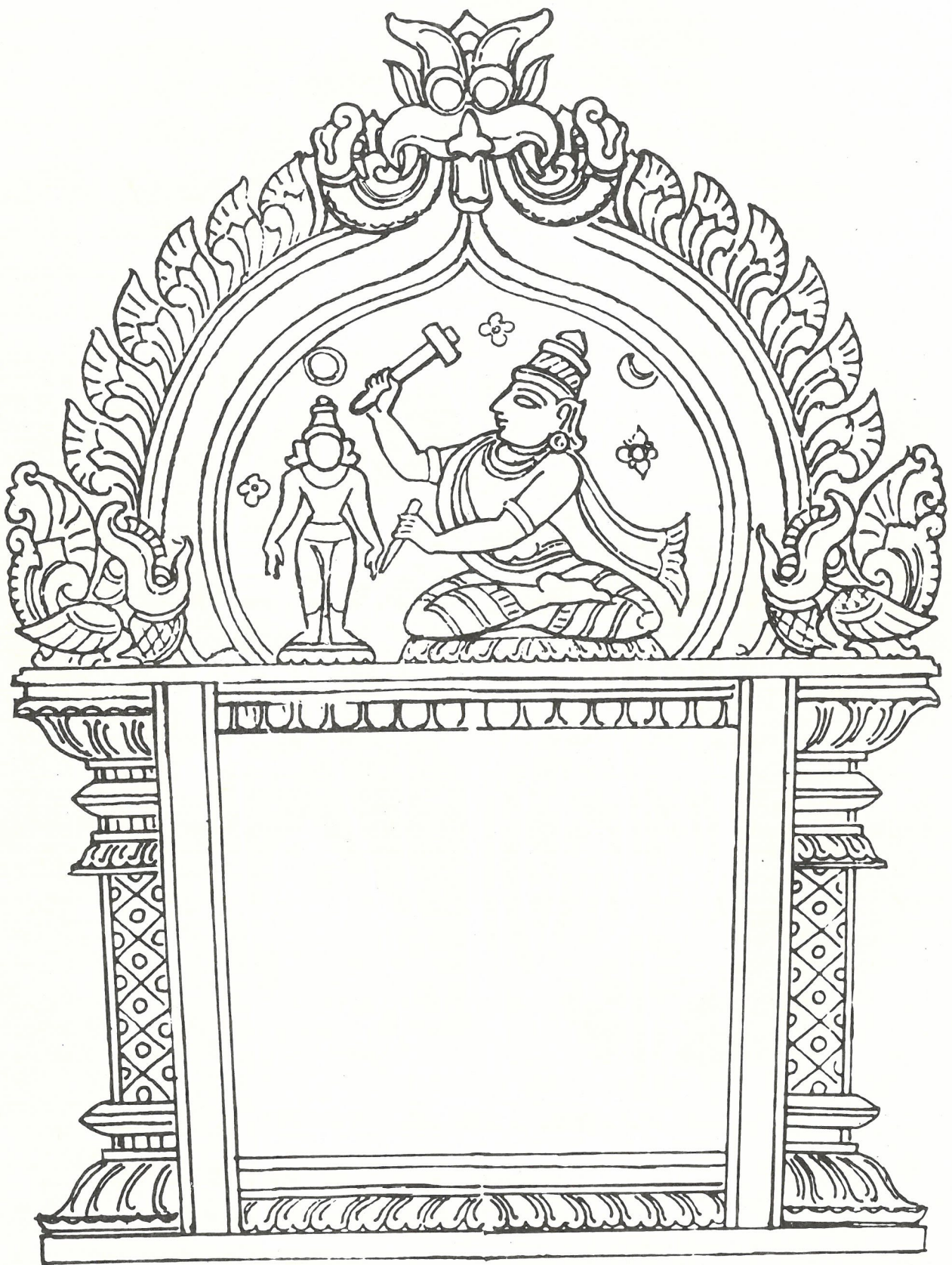
Simhanada Avalokiteshvara - a portion of half done sculpture

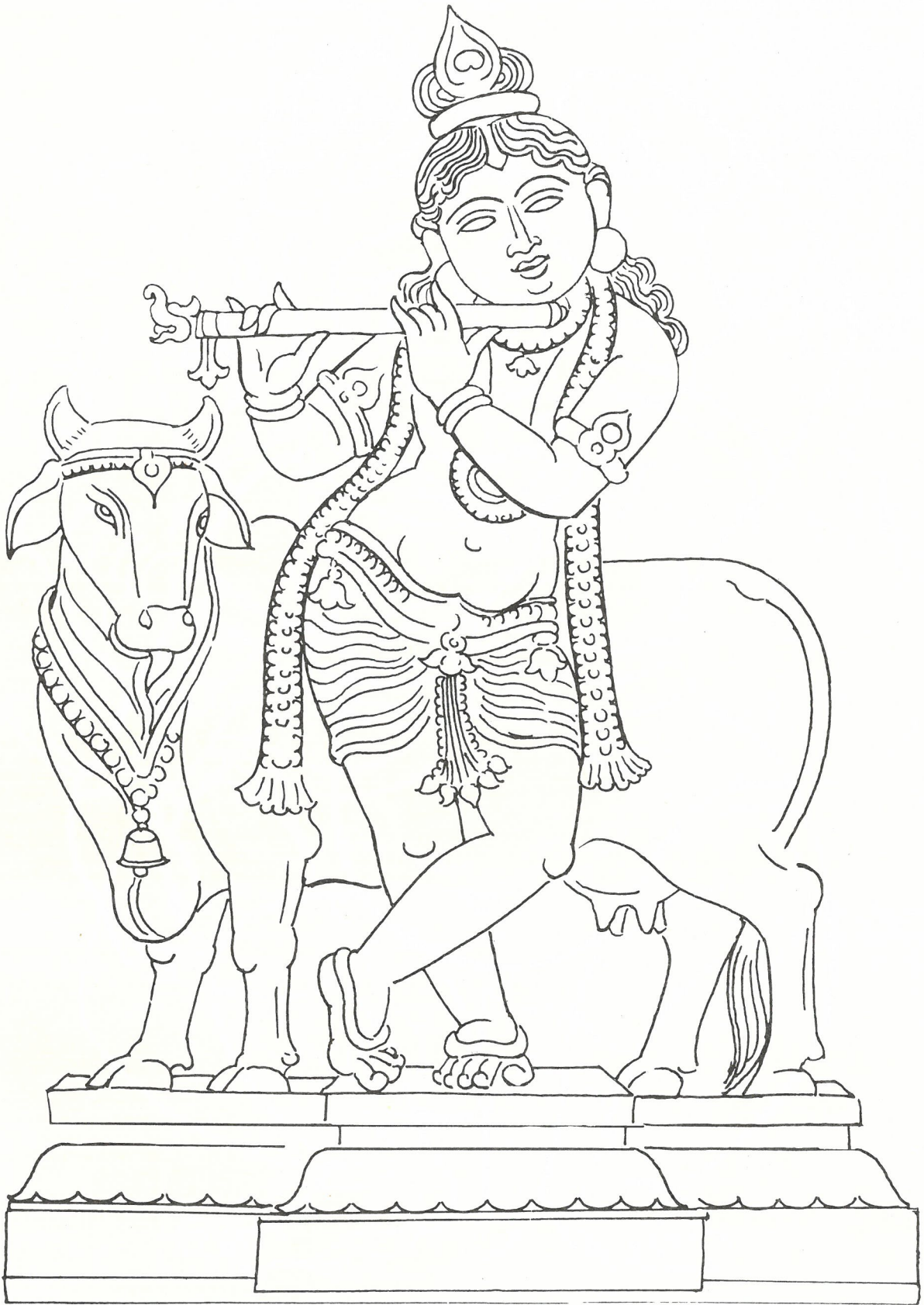




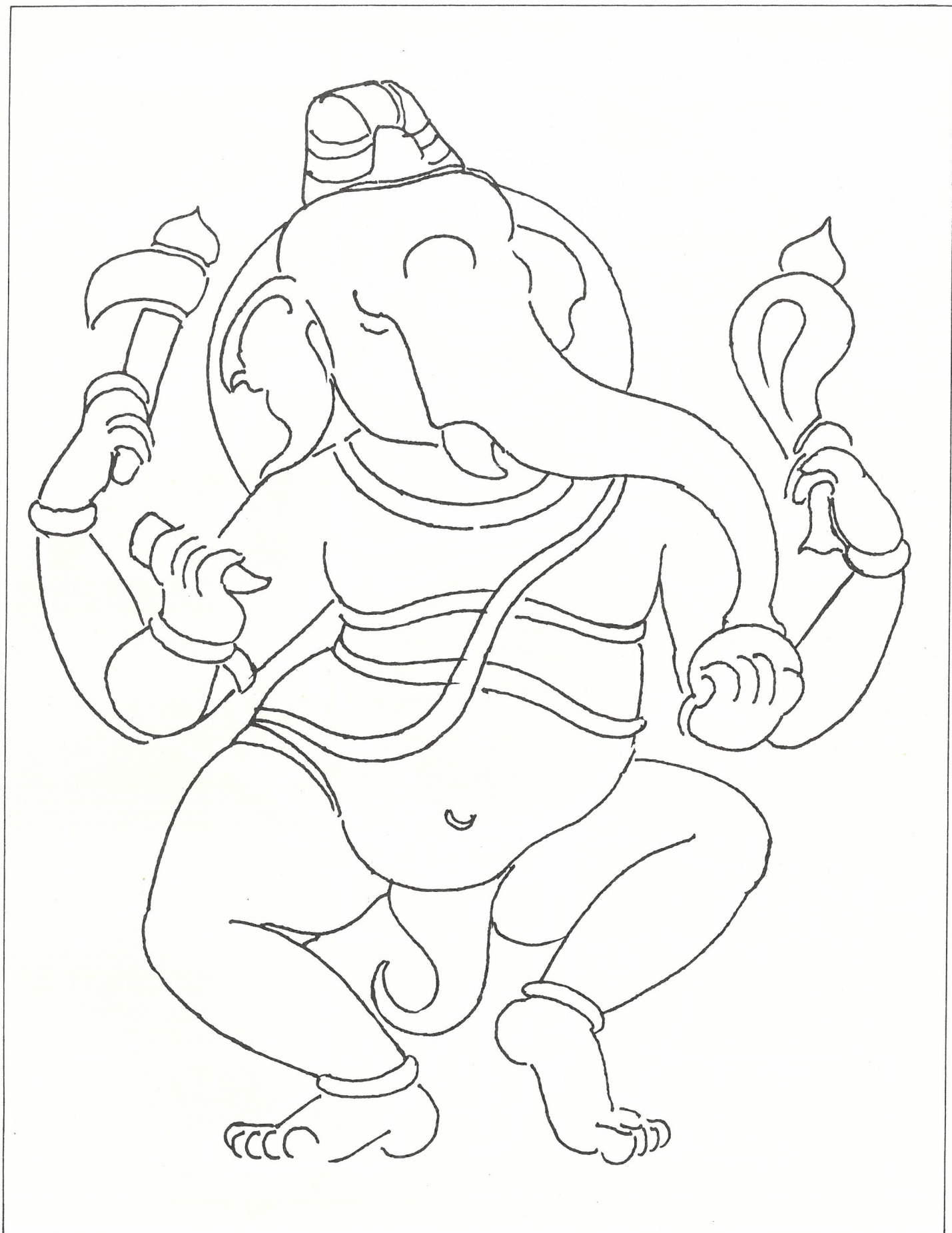


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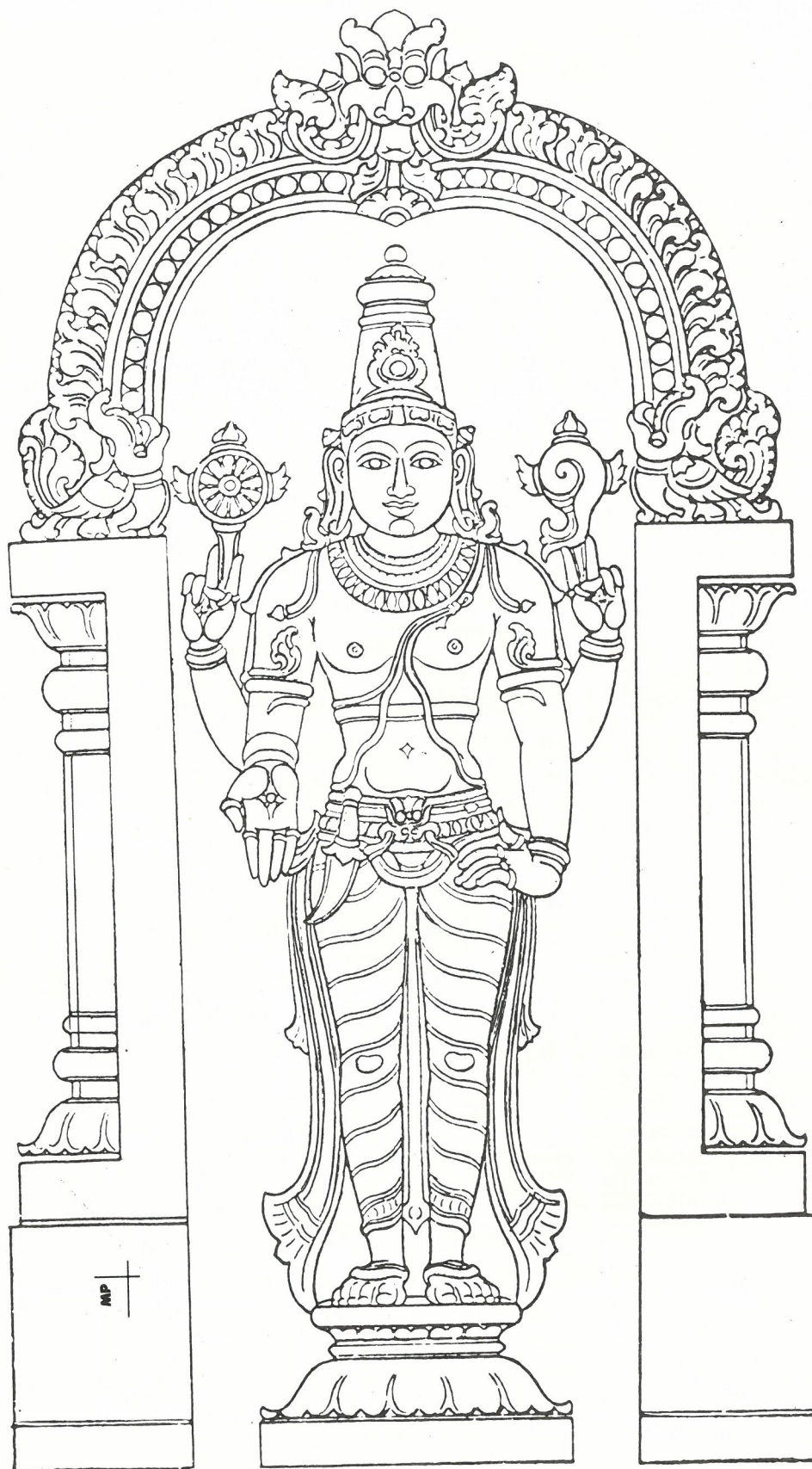












Drawing for Venkateshwara - Stone - Chola style.

