

CAMERA : V.PARKASH NEWDELHI INDIA
 STORY : JAGANNATH CAR FESTIVAL AT PURI
 LOCATION : JAGANNATH-PURI(SOUTH EAST INDIA)
 DATE : 14TH 15TH JULY ,1961
 RAWSTOCK : EASTMAN COLOR (Emulsion numbers marked on each can.)

At PURI in south east India (350 miles south of Calcutta) stands a gigantic temple which for centuries has attracted millions of pilgrims from all over India. The precise date of the construction of the temple is uncertain but it was built not later than the first half of the twelfth century and possibly little earlier. The temple is dedicated to Lord Jagannath, a manifestation of Krishna. And together with Jagannath are worshipped his elder brother BALARAMA and his sister SUBHADRA. The images are carved out of wood but they are without arms and legs. These perhaps are the only religious idols without limbs for which there is a legendary explanation. While the temple was being built King INDRADYUMNA had a divine revelation: he found a log of sandal wood which came drifting across the sea , from which the images for the temple were to be carved. The best carpenters of his kingdom failed to chisel the wood. Then an old man went to the king and promised to complete the temple and the images within 21 days. But, on no account was he to be disturbed at his task. After two weeks had passed, the King and his Queen went to the temple gate, but heard no sound to assure that the carpenter was working within. They wondered what had happened to the old man and so the King unlocked the door . They found that the interior of the temple had been completed but the images were left unfinished. The

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old man who was believed to be Lord Jagannath himself, had disappeared leaving the task unfinished, because the promise made to him had been broken.

Several festivals are held every year in the honour of the three gods, but the most important is the RATH YATRA or the CAR FESTIVAL which takes place during the rainy season (monsoon) in July. Several hundred thousand pilgrims flock to Puri for the Rath Yatra and a large proportion are widows, religious mendicants and needy peasants.

Three huge wooden carts (about 45 feet high and about 35 feet square) with their wooden domes draped under coloured fabric are lined up outside the main temple. Even before the idols are placed on the carts, thousands go up on the carts and they consider it a holy bliss.

On the main day of the festival and at the appointed hour the lion gate of the temple opens and with the striking of Hindu gongs priests come out of the temple. They keep on striking the gongs with rhythmic movements and after quite some time, the priests bring out a wooden log ' SUDARSHAN CHAKAR '. The Sudarshan Chakar was Lord Krishna's weapon for the destruction. It was carried on his finger in the form of a wheel and on the commands of the Lord, the Sudarshan Chakar would strike the head of any one.

A sea of humanity awaits outside the temple to watch the arrival of gods.

The order of 'ladies first' is observed at the temple as well and the idol of 'SUBHADRA' the sister of Lord Jagannath is brought out first . (this is after the arrival of Sudarshan Chakar) Large number of temple priests carry the huge wooden idol. The striking of the gongs in the highest pitch and with the rhythmic movements of the priests, the idol is carried to the waiting cart. It certainly requires a big pull to carry the

the idols on the top of the cart ~~into~~ and the same is achieved with great effort. Only the priests of the temple can handle idols.

The idol of BALARAMA is brought next and finally comes out Lord JAGANNATH. Thousands of anxious devotees wait for this opportunity and it is a holy bliss for them to have glimpse of the Lord. With striking of gongs the priests move the idol to the chariot.

The whole process takes several hours. A sea of humanity surrounds the three carts. With the approach of the evening, the carts are moved for a journey of 1½ miles. Fixed to the chariots are ropes, nearly a foot thick, with which the cars are pulled by the devotees. Thronging crowds rush to the ropes to give a hand in drawing the chariots. Thus begins the car festival of Lord Jagannath. For 8 days Lord Jagannath, ~~and~~ Balarama and Subdhara remain at the garden of pleasure after which they are brought back to the temple. The Yatra (journey) is considered to be symbolic of the diety's journey around the world. It is believed that whoever catches a glimpse of Jagannath during the journey, will not be inflicted with rebirth. With priests striking the gongs on the platform of the carts, the images move along through the crowded street which is the widest street in the whole of India.

At the time of the festival, the ~~sadhans~~ Sadhus (religious mendicants) sing and dance in the honour of Lord Jagannath.

List of shots:

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List of shots:

Roll. 1.

CU. Shot of a Sadhu (Religious mandicants)

Shot of a squatted group of Sadhus singing to the praise of Lord Jagan Nath. (Sound available)

Few more shots of Sadhus while singing and dancing.

Shot of a group of woman buying coloured rosaries.

Shot of people going up the wooden platform to reach the cart.

Top angle shot of the three carts standing in the middle of the widest road in Puri. This is probably the widest street in the whole of India.

Shot of the 800 ~~xxx~~ years old temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri.

Top angle shot (reverse side) of the two carts with the street in the background. Shot of two other carts.

Shot of a woman praying with folded hands.

Shots of devotees stand ing waiting for the arrival of the images

Shot of the temple gate being opened and the temple priests striking gongs coming out. The image of Sudershan Chakra is in the background. (Photography inside the temple is prohibited and there were several other restrictions about the standing position while filming - one should not be higher than the idol- the carriage of leather articles is ~~strictly~~ borbidden and it caused a problem as far the camera batteries and other straps etc were concerned. I was asked to remove my trouser belts on account of leather .)

Several shots of the priests striking the hindu gongs in rythmic movements. Close ups and medium shots.

Shot of the priests carryin g the wooden log (Sudershan Chakra) coming out of the temple gate (lion gate of the temple) and going towards the car.

Shot of the devotees.

Tilt down from the top of the lion gate of the Jagannath temple- shot of the image of SUBHADARA being brought out by the priests.

Shot of the image as it was being carried away. The image is made out of a thick long of sandle wood.

Roll. 2.

Shot of the image of BALARAM the elder brother of Lord Jagannath as it was being carried towards the car.

Several shots of the thick crowd. Sh

Shot of priests pulling up the image of Subhadara on to the car.

It required great force. Several shots as the image is pulled up.

Shot of the priests pulling away the dec orative flowers. These flowers they consider very auspicious.

Few more shots of the striking of the gongs and drums. The biggest attraction is for the image of Lord Jagannath. Shot of image arriving and passing away in front of the camera. The image is made of thick log of wood .

List of shots continued...

Roll. 2.

Several shots of the thick crowd which appeared like the sea of humanity.

Shot of the crowded dome of the temple where too people had found the opportunity to have a glimpse of Lord Jagannath.

Top angle shot of the priests followed by the image of Lord Jagannath arriving.

Several close up shots of the devotees.

Rush of pilgrims towards the car. ~~Excite~~ Their greatest ambition is to have a glimpse of Lord Jagan Nath which saves from the process of rebirth. (The Hindus believe in the rebirth.)

Top angle shot of the three cars with thick crowds in the fore ground.

(on the second piece which of course has the same emulsion number)

~~Subdhar~~
Shot of the elephants as they move along in the procession.

(In an earlier shot I had covered a shot of elephant in the street.)

Shot of devotees pulling the thick (1 foot thick) rope which moves the chariots)

Roll. 3.

Shot of the moving of the car. People in the foreground ~~pulling~~ pulling the rope which moves the wooden cars carrying the images. The car of Subdhara leading the procession.

Rear Angle shot showing the movement of the car and the thick crowd. ~~fast~~

As the cars move along the priests standing on the platform of the cars strike the hindu gongs which produces incentive for pulling.

Another shot showing the main car (middle) with image on the move. Shot of the pullers. Shot of the car coming in the frame of the camera and moving away. The wooden horses (small in size) affixed on the front indicate the moving force of the chariot but it is the devotees who really make it move and consider it their greatest bliss to give a hand in this pulling.

Shot of the crowded street. There were human heads all round. Shot of the car moving away. To avoid the ~~accidents~~ accidents and suicide (death under the cart is thought to be a direct entry to heavens) the authorities cordon off the area of the cart. In this shots it indicates the distance between the following crowd and the car.

Title shots - image of Blarasa, Subdhara and Lord Jagannath.

The END.