



Leicestershire Museums, Art Galleries and Records Service

Press Information

96 New Walk Leicester tel. 554100

INDIA COMES ALIVE AT LEICESTERSHIRE MUSEUMS

If you thought museums were full of dusty antiquities, a visit to the forthcoming exhibition of Indian Arts of Gujarat will certainly change your mind. Ranging from finely woven silk patola saris and exquisite embroideries to handmade clay toys, the items on display present the vibrant art and craft traditions still practiced today in the north-west Indian state of Gujarat.

This new collection was assembled in India by Miss Julia Nicholson, curator of Indian Arts at Leicestershire Museums in 1985. Supported by the Museum Service, Miss Nicholson spent ten weeks in India collecting 20th century art and craft items to add to the museum's permanent collections.

The focus for this collecting was the Indian state of Gujarat - an area known as 'the colour elt' for its vibrant costumes. Gujarat is also the region in which some 50,000 Indians now living in Leicester have their cultural roots and an area rich in art and craft traditions. The collection therefore has a particular importance for local communities in Leicestershire. However it also has national significance, as the largest museum collection in Britain of contemporary crafts from Gujarat.

The exhibition 'Arts of Gujarat' is an opportunity not only to learn about crafts and craft techniques but also everyday life in Gujarat. In a series of illustrated panels and displays visitors can learn about a variety of aspects of life including wedding customs in Gujarat, what happens at the festival of Shivratri held in honour of the Hindu god Shiva or the significance of the colourful motifs embroidered on women's costume. 'Arts of Gujarat' will therefore be of great interest to Indian communities and people wishing to understand more about the cultural heritage of the Indian communities they live alongside.

Arts of Gujarat runs from 25th June to 11th December, 1988 at Leicestershire Museum and Art Gallery, New Walk, Leicester. Admission free.

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, please contact:

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