

[Kali Ma](#)

Category : [September 1994](#)

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Kali Ma

By looks she is hands-down the fiercest, most riveting Goddess of the Hindu heavens. Dark blue and sky-clad, She dances on her beloved husband Shiva, furiously animating the physical universe out of His quiescent Absoluteness. But as the gentle, soft-spoken, children of the Toronto Kalibari temple in Canada, will quickly reassure, nobody needs fear "Mother" Kali, (a form of Durga) except mean asuras, demons. Worship at Toronto's most active Kali shrine (there are two others) would make fantasy filmmaker Steven Spielberg beg forgiveness for his unforgivably bizarre and blood-chilling subterranean image of Kali worship in his movie Temple of Doom.

For ten years, this religious 150-family community of vegetarian Bengalis has gathered weekly to continue the worship they grew up with in India. Though animal sacrifice at some Kali shrines in Bengal does still persist, nothing could be farther from these Toronto devotees' minds. Instead, Sanskrit chants for peace, flowers, incense and melodious bhajans echo inside their secluded, 10-acre, woodsy bungalow/shrine. Though this site is loved by all-especially the children who after puja, race down to a pond nearby and play with ducks, frogs and goldfish-they have decide to build a new, larger temple for Mother Kali. The new temple design (left) is quite extraordinary, modeled to replicate Kali's yantra-a circle (the inner structure) inside a square (a water pool) with a central triangular worship area. The stone murthi of Kali, already received, will be at the apex. Kalibari spokesperson and priest, Prasad Banerjee, said the customary fierce facial expression has been softened. The new temple will also include an auditorium, stage, library, banquet hall, even a day care center, game room and gymnasium.

Fierce, But Gentle Too

Ma Kali represents the ultimate energy source for all the destruction of evil in our society. Her grand, challenging posture reveals what exists in the peacefulness of the night." - Lali Rakhit,15

When I see Her I am not frightened. Kali is a mother to all, and should be treated with utmost care and love." -Jay Banerjee, 15

Ma Kali looks so terrible on the outside, but has a motherly heart on the inside." -Prosenjeet Chatterjee, age 12

"Kali entered my body. It is She who takes me here and there and makes me work... When I reached the temple, as I cast my eyes upon Kali, I actually found that the Divine Mother was living and conscious, the perennial fountain of divine love and beauty...I believe there is somewhere a great Power that thinks of Herself as feminine, and called Kali and Mother." -Swami Vivekananda

"I put the palm of my hand near Her nostrils and felt Mother Kali actually breathing... That which is called Brahman is really Kali. She is the Primal Energy."

-Sri Ramakrishna