

## THE ART OF TARAKASI: SILVER FILIGREE OF CUTTACK, ODISHA

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### Abstract

Cuttack, the 'Silver City of India', is renowned for its extremely old Chandi Tarakasi, the art of silver filigree. The specialty is accepted to have been presented in Odisha when the Mughals set up their standard in India. Named the 'Social Capital of Odisha', Cuttack is prestigious for its silver filigree work, also called tarakasi. This sensitive fancy fine art is supposed to be over 500 years of age that was belittled the most during the time of the Mughals. Today, there are almost 1,500 neighbourhood craftsmen who practice this specialty and have refined it to phenomenal guidelines. Despite the fact that in a few places the nation over, craftsmen have begun utilizing machines to make filigree, in Cuttack conventional techniques are as yet utilized – the silver is liquefied, changed over into flimsy strands and afterward meshed into mind boggling plans by hand. The filigree craftsmen work of Cuttack with a combination of 90% or more unadulterated silver. In the first place, the piece of silver is set into a little dirt pot and the two are placed into a pail loaded with hot coals. The temperature is controlled through a howls that is hand worked by a wrench. The liquefying cycle requires around ten minutes and afterward the silver is filled a little, bar like form and cooled by lowering the bar in water. It is then positioned into a machine that will press the pole into a long, slight wire. This drawn-out and truly requesting measure had been done customarily by hand and took two men to turn the wrench. A lot of filigree craftsmen also have workshop spaces in their homes. Here, a team of silversmiths in their home workshop are seen crafting filigree for different sections of the tableau for the Durga Puja. Making 'Chandi Medha', the silver tableau for the Durga idol during Puja season, is becoming increasing popular in Odisha, India.

**Key words:** Silver City of India, silver filigree, Chandi Tarakasi, Cuttack Tarakasi, Odisha Crafts, Odisha Tarakasi, Chandi Medha

### INTRODUCTION

In India the art is accepted to have been presented in Odisha when the Mughals set up their standard in India. Liquefied silver is gone through the weighty part of the machine, changing over into level wires. For make sweethearts, Odisha is a mother lode like no other, with a few craftsman towns, each with their own interesting claim to fame. From stone models and metal projecting to palm-leaf canvases and silver filigree gems, craftsmanship custom in this Spirit of Unimaginable India is different, and mirrors the state's rich social legacy. Here we have distinguished the best craftsman towns in Odisha, where the conventional types of workmanship and handiworks are protected in the midst of the evolving scene.

Karimnagar region in Telangana is additionally popular for the profoundly gifted specialists who practice this fragile craftsmanship of filigree. It was famous too in Italian, French and Portuguese metalwork from 1660 to the late nineteenth century. It ought not be mistaken for ajoure gems work, the ajoure procedure comprising of boring openings in objects made of sheet metal.

In adornments, it is normally of gold and silver, made with minuscule globules or curved strings, or both in blend, fastened together or to the outside of an object of similar metal and masterminded in imaginative themes. It regularly proposes trim and stays well known in Indian and other Asian metalwork. It was famous too in Italian, French and Portuguese metalwork from 1660 to the late nineteenth century. It ought not to be mistaken for ajoure gems work, the ajoure procedure comprising of boring openings in objects made of sheet metal.

Otherwise called Cuttack (Kataka) Tarakasi works, is being the most noteworthy traded Workmanship of Odisha. This fine silver filigree is celebrated globally for its fragile imaginativeness and splendid craftsmanship No place else in India would you be able to see this hand-worked tarakasi workmanship made by such simple procedures, it's not to be missed.

### **CUTTACK: SILVER FILIGREE**

Cuttack, the 'Silver City of India', is renowned for its extremely old Chandi Tarakasi, the art of silver filigree. The specialty is accepted to have been presented in Odisha when the Mughals set up their standard in India. Named the 'Social Capital of Odisha', Cuttack is prestigious for its silver filigree work, also called tarakasi. This sensitive fancy fine art is supposed to be over 500 years of age that was belittled the most during the time of the Mughals. Today, there are almost 1,500 neighborhood craftsmans who practice this specialty and have refined it to phenomenal guidelines. Despite the fact that in a few places the nation over, craftsmans have begun utilizing machines to make filigree, in Cuttack conventional techniques are as yet utilized – the silver is liquefied, changed over into flimsy strands and afterward meshed into mind boggling plans by hand.



Image-1- Old Photographs of Cuttack Silver Filigree workers & Image 2-The 'Bela Kanta' or 'Juda Phula' is one of the important ornaments in Odia Tradition. It is meant to be put in the chignon of a lady. This silver flower was given to my mother by my grandmother.

In the maze of flimsy paths, you'll discover lines and lines of shops having diverse silver filigree work put in plain view. Throughout the long term, this craftwork went from being utilized on knickknack boxes and gems to decorating the pandals (impermanant tents conveying icons of the goddess). One of the engaging highlights of this art is its fine cobweb work that can be found in a wide scope of items, including show-stoppers, keepsakes and that's just the beginning.



3-Traditional Ornament Flower- Silver Filigree    4- Chaudhury Bazar Chandi Medha

With an absence of help, notwithstanding, the craftsmanship is gradually biting the dust, yet endeavours by the state government are being made to resuscitate this exceptionally old art. Guests from across the world come here to take exercises at one of the numerous workshops spread across the area, just as purchase quality filigree items as trinkets. Probably the best where silver filigree work is on offer incorporate Mansinghpata, Dolomundai, Shaikh Marketplace, and Naya Sadak.

## **STRATEGY OF SILVER FILIGREE**

The filigree craftsmen work of Cuttack with a combination of 90% or more unadulterated silver. In the first place, the piece of silver is set into a little dirt pot and the two are placed into a pail loaded with hot coals. The temperature is controlled through a howls that is hand worked by a wrench.

The liquefying cycle requires around ten minutes and afterward the silver is filled a little, bar like form and cooled by lowering the bar in water. It is then positioned into a machine that will press the pole into a long, slight wire. This drawn-out and truly requesting measure had been done customarily by hand and took two men to turn the wrench.

When the silver is squeezed into a level, functional wire, and the actual wire would first be able to be hand cut with mind boggling plans or promptly shaped by a little lamp oil fire with one craftsman coordinating the little fire with a cylinder held in his mouth into which he can blow. This interaction makes it simpler for the craftsman to form the wire into the ideal casing for the piece before it is cooled. Next the wires are hung together and wound and formed into a plan by the craftsman's exact fingers. Welding is finished by setting the piece into a combination of borax powder and water, sprinkling binding powder on it, and afterward putting it indeed under the little fire. This protects that the detail of the plan will remain unblemished.

Types of creatures, birds, blossoms and surprisingly smaller than expected satchels and different gifts are made in Tarakasi work. The Konark Chakra and sanctuary are extraordinary top choices as tokens. Scenes from the Mahabharata, specifically the still from the Bhagavad Gita portraying the chariot of Arjuna driven by Master Krishna are very famous. Throughout the long term different renowned landmarks like the TajMahal, Eiffel Pinnacle and so forth has been made, collecting awards from admirers of expressive arts

The filigree adornments are especially wealthy in designs. In Odisha, the pressure is on arm adornments, accessories, toe rings and particularly anklets, which are an incredible top pick. They are viewed as promising too. Multifaceted anklets, consolidating utilization of semi-valuable stones are extraordinarily liked.

## TRADITION

Vermillion boxes, clasps, pendants, studs and hair clips are in extraordinary interest. Vermillion box is must in any Oriya marriage, however this custom ceasing to exist. Midsection band produced using Tarakasi works were utilized customarily in the marriage. Oriya relationships are inadequate without Tarakasi anklets and toe rings. Consistently, during Durga Puja in [Cuttack], Tarakasi adornments are utilized at numerous pandals to decorate the symbols of Durga. Quite possibly the most acclaimed icons is the one at Chandni Chowk, where the whole crown and adornments of Durga are made of silver, prevalently known as Chaandi Medha. Other pandals utilizing Tarakasi are Chauliaganj, Choudhury Bazar, Khan Nagar, Banka Bazar, Balu Bazar and so forth Consistently in excess of 150 filigree craftsmans are occupied with making scenery and adornment design. The style was presented at the Choudhury Market puja pandal with a 250 kg chandi medha in 1956. Taking action accordingly, Sheik Marketplace puja mandap introduced a 350 kg chandi medha in 1991. In 2004, Ranihat puja panel got the tip top assemble with a 483 kg of silver filigree background, gems and weaponry. In the next year, Haripur-Dolamundai puja advisory group supplanted Ranihat when it introduced 500 kg silver filigree. In 2006, the Sheik Market council rebuilt another scenery utilizing 450 kg of silver.

Chandini Chowk, Sheik Market, Alisha Marketplace, Chauliaganj, Badambadi, Ranihat, Haripur-Dolamundai and Balu Market Binod Behari puja boards of trustees are vouching for the filigree work. There is an opposition to score the best show each year among all puja advisory groups in Cuttack.

Preparing silver wires from the silver block, in the first place, crude silver as silver blocks is acquired from the shops. In Odisha, for the most part brokers get their silver from Kolkata and Mumbai.



The silver bricks are then melted and drawn into wires of different gauges using this wire drawing machine.



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Melted silver is passed through the heavy portion of the machine, converting into flat wires.

Silversmiths burn the thicker silver wires to convert them into finer wires.

The thickness of the wires is determined by the design. Silver wires of various thicknesses are used in the production of any one piece.



Tools used for silver filigree work, the filigree craftsmen use basic hand tools to transform the silver wires into works of art.

### **TOOL USED FOR SILVER FILIGREE WORK**

The thin silver wire is carefully twisted using the tool



The needle used for twisting the silver wires

Die used to convert flat silver pieces into various circular shapes.



Die used to convert silver into small dotted shapes for finer designs.

Various die cuts are used by the silversmiths to give shape to the silver wires.



The first step of the process involves drawing a sketch of the design by hand. Here, a filigree craftsman is holding the sketch of a Chandi Medha, the silver filigree backdrop of the Durga idol built during Durga Puja.

Workshops and workers for the wire-making process are different from the ones where the filigree work is done. For smaller filigree items like jewellery and show pieces, the workshops where all the silversmiths sit are generally located behind the showrooms.

They sit in groups of four or five, facilitating the complete process from twisting the silver wires to fashioning the product to cleaning the finished piece.



A lot of filigree craftsmen also have workshop spaces in their homes. Here, a team of silversmiths in their home workshop are seen crafting filigree for different sections of the tableau for the Durga Puja. Making 'Chandi Medha', the



silver tableau for the Durga idol during Puja season, is becoming increasingly popular in Odisha.



Finally, heat is used to attach all the parts assembled together. In the image, notice how the intricate wire work is filled in places with flat shapes.

Filigree work requires quite a lot of fire and heat, and more often than not, the craftsmen in Cuttack work out of small and cramped workshop spaces. For this reason, many artisans prefer to do most of their production in the winter months.

### **CARE AND MAINTAIN**

- For Silver filigree Adornments and Silver Antiques first, take a gems pieces and delicately wipe them with a delicate material.
- Thereafter, simply drench the gems pieces in an answer of gentle cleanser (like surf) and tepid water.
- Leave the adornments to splash for 15-20 minutes.

### **CONCLUSION**

Whenever this is done, the craftsman will take the warm piece and shape it into a trimming. Methods like granulation, snow coating and projecting are utilized imaginatively to uplift the impact. Craftsman, discussing the procedures utilized says, "The inclinations of the clients continue to change and specialists should be in the know regarding to stay aware of arising patterns". Such new techniques and experimentation are progressively being utilized to deliver profoundly cleaned and refined antiques with regards to the requests of clients. Platinum cleaning is done to give a really enduring sparkle though combination of silver and metal or different materials is done to make intriguing impacts

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