

Shiva worship (2)



Rangoli is a traditional folk art practised all over India, where the geometric patterns were created on floors and walls inside homes, on the doorstep, or in courtyards, using materials that were locally available. Today *rangoli* are created in a variety of media, including projected digital patterns, painted patterns on paper, and more traditional materials like flower petals, coloured flour and rice, and coloured stones. The *rangoli* created at the National Gallery of Victoria, seen in these images, uses scrap materials like plastic bottle lids arranged in a traditional lotus flower pattern.



Rangoli can be used as decoration, to worship a deity, or to celebrate a particular religious festival. Different areas of India have different *rangoli* traditions, but throughout the country *rangoli* provide sacred welcoming areas for Hindu deities during worship and at festivals. A *rangoli* created for a Shiva festival such as Shiva Ratri, for example, may include symbols associated with Shiva such as the god's trident, as well as images of a *lingam*. The pattern thus echoes the central *puja* or worship of the *lingam* carried out during the festival, when it is anointed with milk, yogurt, honey, ghee, sandalwood paste and rose water.

