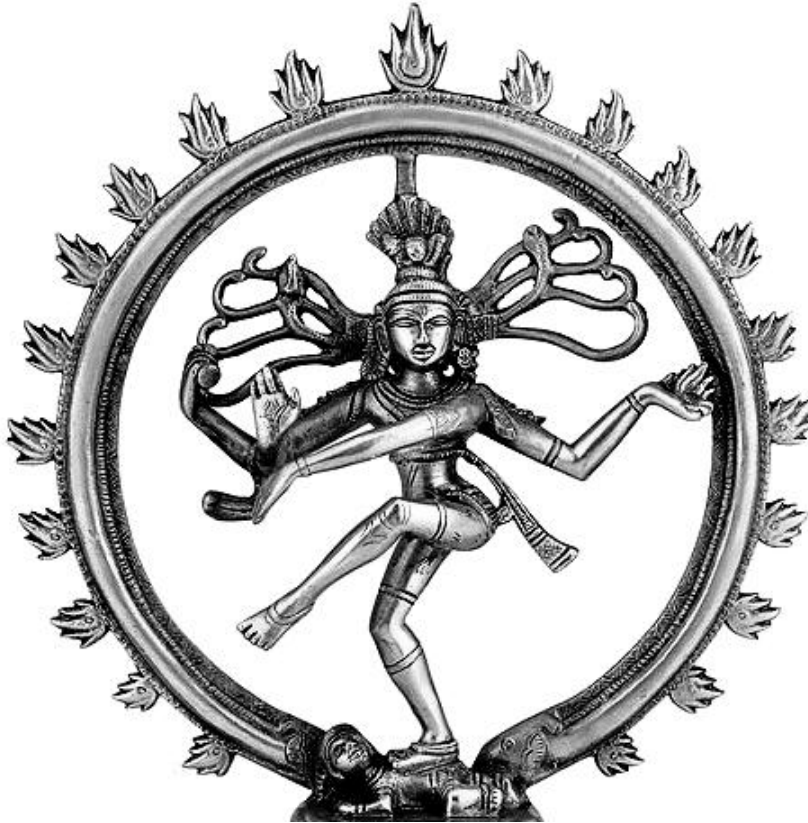


Shiva



Shiva is Kala, 'The Black One' 'Time', but he is also Maha Kala, 'Great Time', 'Eternity'. As Nataraja, King of Dancers, his gestures, wild and full of grace, precipitate the cosmic illusion. His flying arms and legs and the swaying of his torso produce— indeed, they are—the continuous creation-destruction of the universe, death exactly balancing birth, annihilation the end of every coming-forth. The choreography is the whirligig of time. History and its ruins, the explosion of suns, are flashes from the tireless swinging sequence of the gestures. In the medieval bronze figurines, not merely a single phase or movement but cyclic rhythm, flowing on and on in the un-stayable, irreversible round of the Mahayugas or Great Eons, is marked by the beating and stamping of the Master's heel. But the face remains meanwhile, in sovereign calm.

(Heinrich Zimmer from his book "Philosophies of India.")

Shiva's dance is the universe. In one hand he has a little drum that goes tick-tick tick. That is the drum of time, the tick of time which shuts out the knowledge of eternity. We are enclosed in time. But in Shiva's opposite hand there is a flame which burns away the veil of time and opens our minds to eternity. In his hair is a skull and a new moon, death and rebirth at the same moment, the moment of becoming.

(Joseph Campbell)