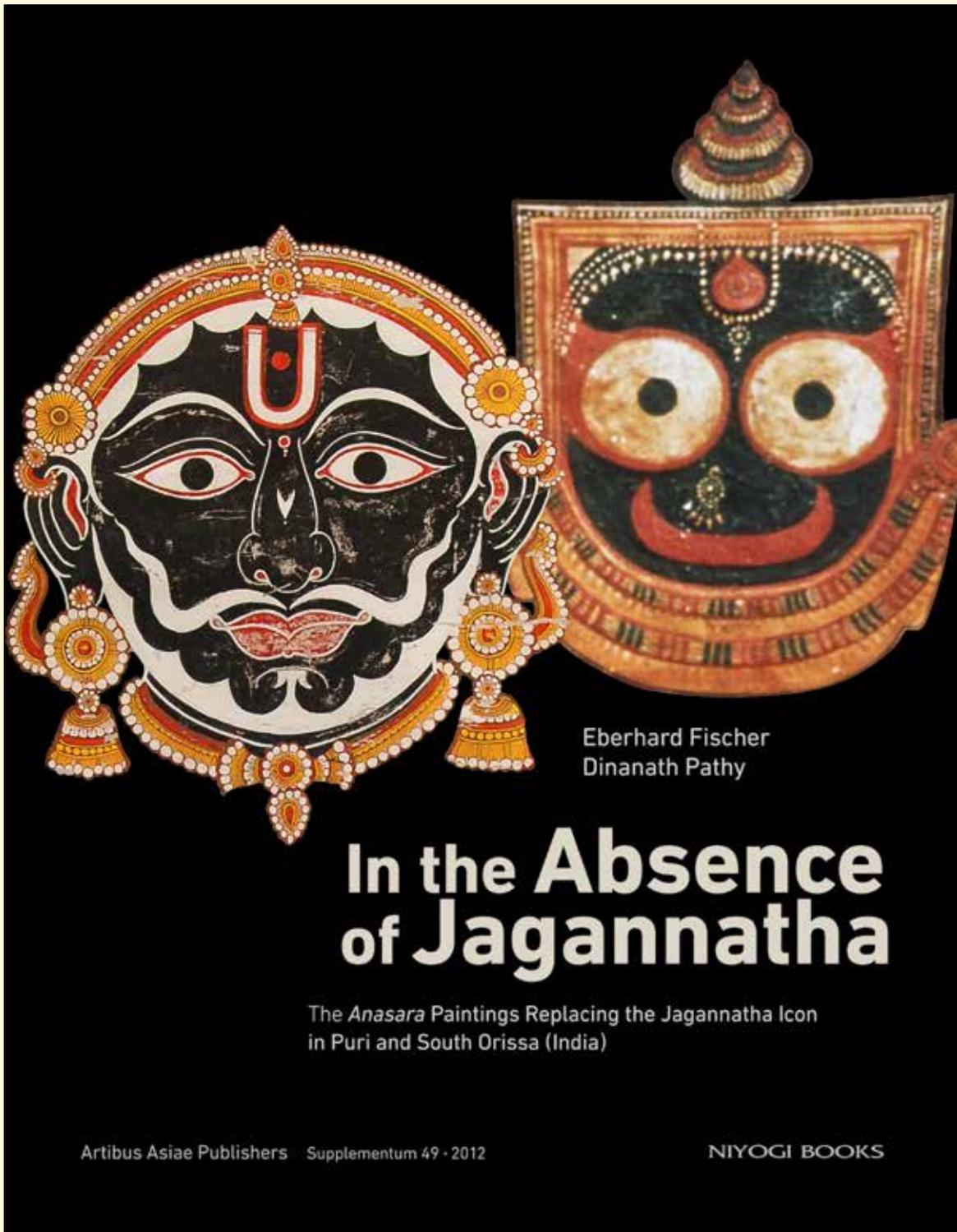


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Title:

In the Absence of Jagannatha

Author: Eberhard Fischer
Dinanath Pathy

This “micro art history study” documents in its first part all known samples of anasara pati-paintings, i.e. annually produced pictures on cloth which serve as temporary replacements for the then absent wooden icons in the temples of Lord Jagannatha in Puri and South Orissa. Since the iconography of this type of ritualistic paintings is defined by tradition and has to be strictly adhered to by the painters, changes in iconographic details and even stylistic features can only be minimal. Nevertheless, minor deviations occur. By carefully viewing these paintings, the exact range of variations, the scope for idiosyncrasies, personal liberties and preferences and the perpetuation of changes in the production of these religious pictures can be pointed out in the face of an ideology advocated and severely controlled by temple authorities that doesn't permit something like “change” but believes in the permanence of eternal values and forms.

In the second part of the book the authors reconstruct the history of anasara-pictures. Here the focus is on why two different iconographies for the Jagannatha triad co-exist and under what conditions these painted “classical” triptychs may have been invented and why they continue to flourish.

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About the Authors:

Eberhard Fischer is an art historian and cultural anthropologist. Till recently he was the Director of the Museum Rietberg Zurich. Shifting attention from his early interest in African art to the art and culture of India in 1965, he became deeply involved first in the craft traditions of India, especially textiles, and then the mainstream Indian art. Having worked in different regions of India, from Gujarat to Orissa, from Himachal Pradesh to Kerala, he has written extensively. He was awarded Padma Shri by the President of India in 2011.

Dinanath Pathy is a contemporary painter, art historian and creative writer. He has significantly researched into the pictorial art traditions of Orissa, its traditional and contemporary nuances and has published extensively on Orissan art history.

