

## **Hemis Festival (7/12/2008-7/13/2008)**

Shortly after I arrived in Ladakh, the festival at the Monastery of Hemis was scheduled to take place. Probably among the most touristy of the monastic Cham dance (traditional Tibetan masked dances) festivals in Ladakh, due to its proximity to Leh and the fact that it takes place in the summer during the height of the tourist season. Other monastic celebrations typically take place during the winter months when there are few tourists around braving the bitter Ladakhi winter. Nevertheless, the Hemis festival is a great opportunity for photography with locals dressed in their finest traditional garb as well as the spectacularly ornate masks of the Cham dancers as subjects. I enjoyed wondering through the crowds taking pictures even if I did feel a bit like a paparazzi amidst the crowd of camera-touting foreign tourists.



**Monks preparing for Cham dance, Hemis Festival.**



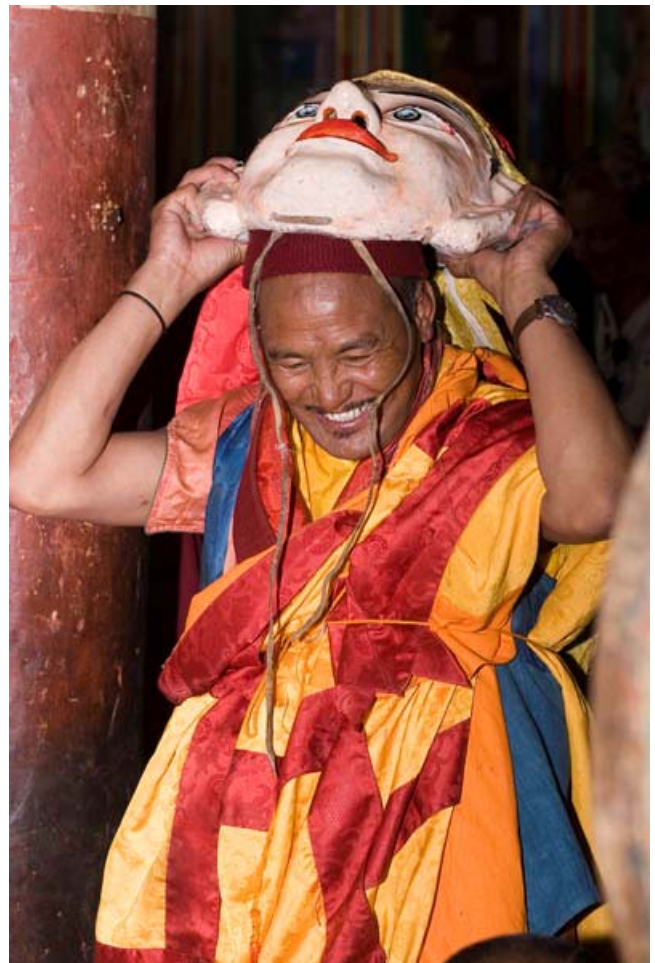
**Monks preparing for Cham dance, Hemis Festival.**



**Monks preparing for Cham dance, Hemis Festival.**



**Monk rehearses for Cham dance, Hemis Festival.**



**Monk preparing for Cham dance, Hemis Festival.**



**Monks watching Cham dance,  
Hemis Festival.**



**Local resting at the Hemis Festival.**



**Traditionally dressed Ladakhi woman,  
Hemis Festival.**



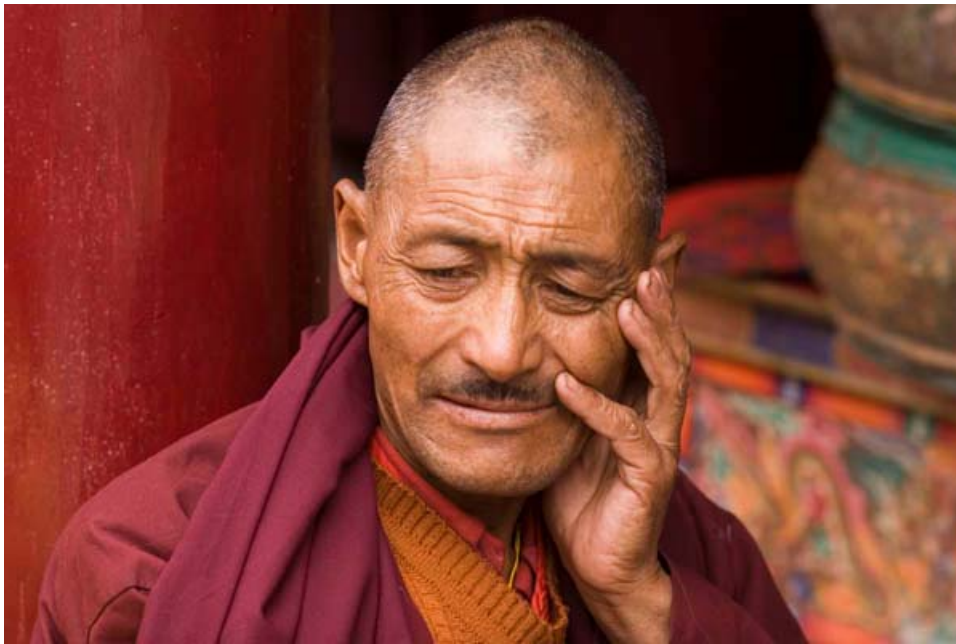
**Monk watching Cham dance,  
Hemis Festival.**



**Ladakhi woman watching Cham dance,  
Hemis Festival.**



**Padmasambhava depicted in Cham dance,  
Hemis Festival.**



**Monk watching Cham dance,  
Hemis Festival.**



**Traditionally dressed Ladakhi man,  
Hemis Festival.**



**Ladakhi man watching Cham dance,  
Hemis Festival.**



**Cham dance, Hemis Festival.**



**Ladakhi girl watching Cham dance,  
Hemis Festival.**



**Young monks, Hemis Festival.**



**Cham dance, Hemis Festival.**



**Monk watching Cham dance,  
Hemis Festival.**



**Ladakhi woman, Hemis Festival.**



**Cham dance, Hemis Festival.**



**Ladakhi woman, Hemis Festival.**



**Traditionally dressed Ladakhi woman,  
Hemis Festival.**



**Cham dance, Hemis Festival.**



**Cham dance, Hemis Festival.**



**Monk watching Cham dance from a window next to a large thangka, Hemis Festival.**



**Cham dance, Hemis Festival.**



**Cham dance, Hemis Festival.**



**Ladakhi woman holding prayer beads, Hemis Festival.**



**Ladakhi man, Hemis Festival.**



**Ladakhi woman, Hemis Festival.**



**Cham dance, Hemis Festival.**



**Traditionally dressed Ladakhi woman,  
Hemis Festival.**



**Traditionally dressed Ladakhi woman praying,  
Hemis Festival.**



**Monks playing cymbals,  
Hemis Festival.**



**Ladakhi woman prostrating,  
Hemis Festival.**



**Ladakhi man with a prayer wheel,  
Hemis Festival.**



**Young monks,  
Hemis Festival.**



**Monks blowing trumpets,  
Hemis Festival.**



**Monks preparing courtyard for Cham dance,  
Hemis Festival.**



**Monk and dog in the courtyard, Hemis Festival.**



**Cham dance, Hemis Festival.**



**Cham dance, Hemis Festival.**



**Monks blowing trumpets,  
Hemis Festival.**



**Cham dance, Hemis Festival.**



**Ladakhi woman watching the Cham  
dance from the roof of the monastery,  
Hemis Festival.**



**Monk playing horn, Hemis Festival.**



**Monk holding ceremonial horn, Hemis Festival.**



**Ladakhi man with a prayer wheel, Hemis Festival.**