



# Many Visions, Many Versions

Art from Indigenous Communities in India



Detail of Japani Shyam, *Jungle Scene*, 2011, acrylic on canvas, © 2015, Courtesy of BINDU modern Gallery, Photo credit: Sneha Ganguly

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COVER, Detail of Jamuna Devi, *Raja Salhesh with his two brothers and three flower maidens*, c. 2000, natural dyes on paper, © 2015, Courtesy of BINDU modern Gallery, Photo credit: Sneha Ganguly

# EXHIBITION OVERVIEW

***Many Visions, Many Versions: Art from Indigenous Communities in India*** is the first comprehensive exhibition in the United States to present contemporary artists from four major indigenous artistic traditions in India. The exhibition includes art from the Gond and Warli communities of central India, the Mithila region of Bihar, and the narrative scroll painters of West Bengal. Featuring 47 exceptional paintings by 24 celebrated artists, including **Jangarh Singh Shyam, Ram Singh Urveti, Bhajju Shyam, Jivya Soma Mashe, Baua Devi, Sita Devi, Montu Chitrakar,** and **Swarna Chitrakar,** among others, the exhibition reflects diverse aesthetics that remain deeply rooted in traditional culture, yet vitally responsive to the world at large.

The exhibition is divided into four broad categories: **Myth and Cosmology, Nature Real and Imagined, Village Life,** and **Contemporary Explorations.**

**Myth and Cosmology** illustrates the rich imagery and diverse pictorial languages used by artists in each group to express the continuing prominence and power of myths, symbols, icons, spiritual traditions, and religious beliefs that are often an amalgam of both Hindu and indigenous worldviews.

**Nature Real and Imagined** explores the many ways in which concepts of nature are manifested in the lives and minds of the artists and their communities.

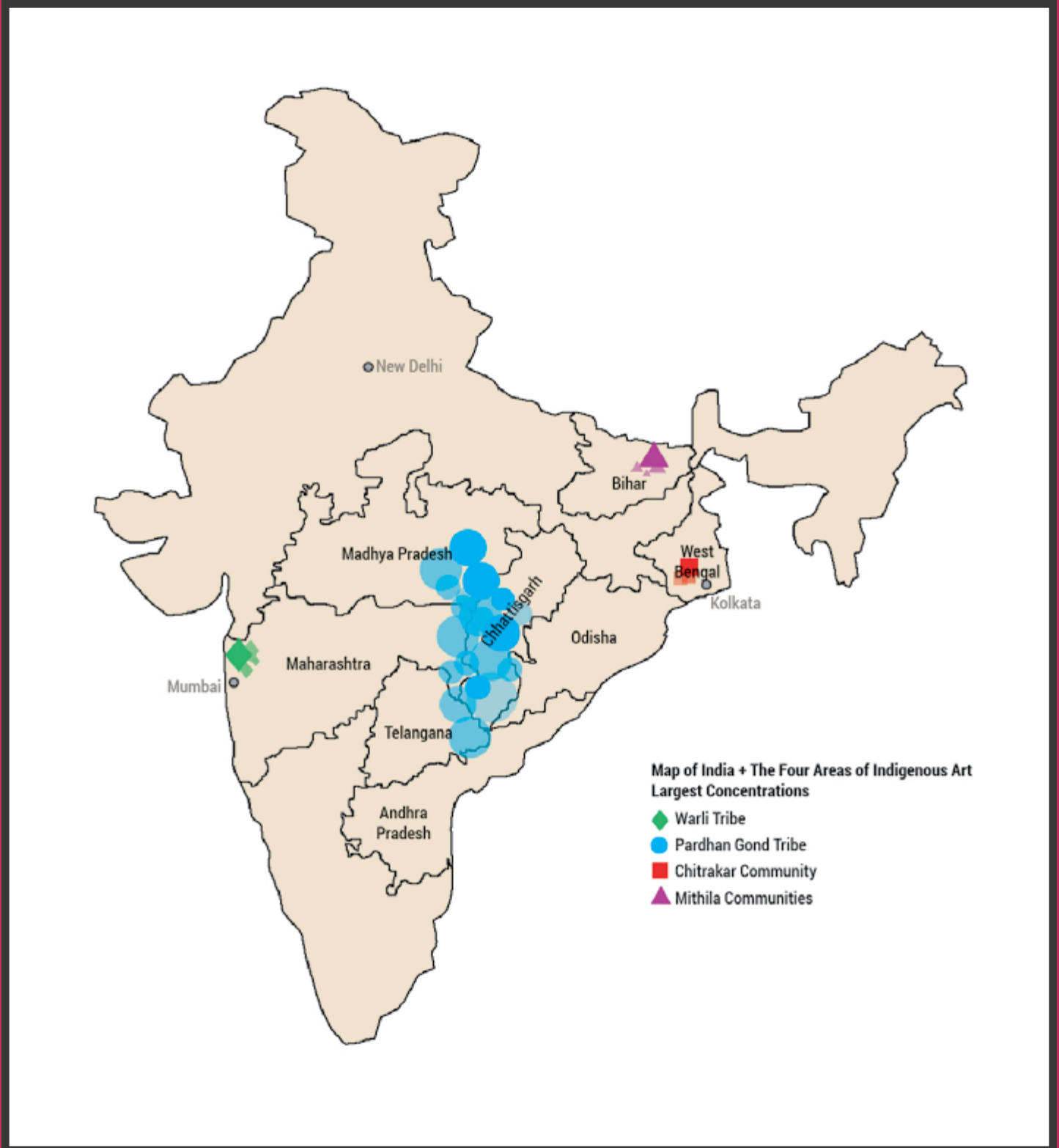
**Village Life** includes paintings that convey the intimate rhythms and realities of daily village life, and also reveal how the village retains its influence on the hearts and imagination of the artists who have made their homes in cities.

**Contemporary Explorations** demonstrates that no matter how rooted in rural villages most of the artists are, they are also keen observers and original commentators on contemporary urban life and modern realities. Current events, feminist issues, and sociopolitical concerns characterize the works in this section.

India's rise as an Asian power on the global scene has focused the world's attention on the country and its culture. For Americans of all ages eager to know more about Indian art, ***Many Visions, Many Versions*** offers an opportunity to learn about life and culture in India through these remarkable artworks. By focusing on the four most prolific indigenous art traditions in India, this exhibition is able to showcase the diversity and richness of Indian culture and offers a new vision of contemporary art in India.

The exhibition is curated by Dr. Aurogeeta Das, art historian and scholar of indigenous Indian art, London, UK; Dr. David Szanton, anthropologist and president of the Ethnic Arts Foundation; in consultation with Jeffrey Wechsler, former senior curator of the Rutgers University Zimmerli Art Museum.

# MAP OF INDIA





# FOUR INDIGENOUS ARTISTIC TRADITIONS IN INDIA

## Gond Art



## Warli Art



## Mithila Paintings



## Bengali Patua Scrolls



# Gond Art



Jangarh Singh Shyam, *Tree and Panther*, 1988, acrylic on paper, © 2015, Courtesy of BINDU modern Gallery, Photo credit: Sneha Ganguly

Gond art refers to paintings made by a subgroup of the Gond tribe, the Pardhans, who traditionally painted on mud walls and floors during weddings and festivals. Their wall and floor paintings are primarily geometric and composed of auspicious symbols for celebrating particular occasions.

**Jangarh Singh Shyam** was the first prominent Gond artist to paint on paper and canvas. As Jangarh's popularity grew, he invited his clan members to help him with his work so they could share in his success. In time, his apprentices, such as **Ram Singh Urveti** and **Bhajju Shyam**, became professional artists, and today about 40 Gond artists constitute what some refer to as the Jangarh Kalam School of Art. Some unifying themes of Gond art include the pervasive presence of nature in their storytelling, portrayals of fantastical animals and trees, and their pantheon of deities. The Gond people's rich repertoire of mythical and genealogical tales has readily transferred to their paintings.

# Warli Art



Jivya Soma Mashe, *Coal Mining Process*, 2011, acrylic on paper, © 2015, Courtesy of BINDU modern Gallery, Photo credit: Sneha Ganguly

The Warli tribe resides in the Thane district of Maharashtra, situated north of Mumbai. Similarities between Warli art and cave paintings in central India have led some historians to believe that Warli art dates back to traditions from the Neolithic period. Wall paintings in Warli homes represent ritual icons, religious beliefs, harvests, livelihoods, and human relationships, and show close links to their deities and to nature. The paintings inspired by their festivities and rituals include symbolic references to their religious beliefs and practices. Humans and animals are composed of triangular or hourglass-shaped figures and gain movement and life by subtle alterations to their alignments, angles, and shapes. Warli artists still use only red, brown, and white pigments. **Jivya Soma Mashe** has emerged as an internationally recognized Warli artist, thanks to his elegant and ethnographically rich images of Warli daily life.

# Mithila Paintings



Jamuna Devi, *Raja Salhesh with his two brothers and three flower maidens*, c. 2000, natural dyes on paper, © 2015, Courtesy of BINDU modern Gallery, Photo credit: Sneha Ganguly

The Mithila region covers a large part of northern Bihar. Literary references reveal that women in Mithila have been painting gods and goddesses on interior walls of their homes since the fourteenth century. The images are intended to create auspicious spaces for domestic rituals and to promote fertility, marital felicity, and general family well-being. Using vivid colors made from local, organic, and mineral pigments applied to their cow-dung and mud-plastered walls with simple bamboo and raw cotton brushes, women created a vigorous and distinctive wall painting tradition. In the late 1960s, in the midst of a severe drought and encouraged by the government, a few women, including **Baua Devi**, began transferring their wall paintings to paper in order to supplement family income through sales. With this transformation, the thematic repertoire expanded from focusing only on Hindu deities to also encompassing episodes from the epic poem *Ramayana*, in addition to local tales, rituals, autobiographies, and, since the late 1990s, powerful feminist critiques of patriarchy and gender inequality, as well as major global events.

# Bengali Patua Scrolls



Swarna Chitrakar (Patua), *Tsunami*, 2005, Fabric paint on canvas, © 2015, Courtesy of BINDU modern Gallery, Photo credit: Sneha Ganguly

The painter-singer communities in eastern India are called *Chitrakar*, meaning “one who makes images.” Their tradition of singing and painting stories on *patuas* (long vertical scrolls) goes back several centuries. Currently, most of the Chitrakars live in Naya, a village near Kolkata. Traveling from village to village, itinerant Chitrakar painter-singers recount stories and legends in song, while unrolling scrolls one frame at a time, and pointing to the corresponding depiction of the events. *Patua* scrolls reference mythological and religious themes, socio-political topics, as well as local, national, and world events. In **Swarna Chitrakar’s** 2005 work *Tsunami*, the artist depicts the 2004 Asian tsunami by reworking traditional *patua* mythological icons to describe a contemporary event with global implications.

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

## B

**BADA DEV:** principal deity of the Gond tribes

**BRAHMIN:** a high caste in Hinduism composed of priests, teachers, and people responsible for teaching sacred knowledge

## C

**CANVAS:** fabric stretched on a wooden frame for the creation of oil or acrylic paintings

**CHITRAKAR:** translates literally as image-maker and refers to scroll painters, mostly from the state of West Bengal in India

**COSMOLOGY:** an account of the theory of the origin of the universe

## D

**DEITY:** a god or goddess

**DHOTI:** traditional garment worn by Hindu men consisting of a piece of cloth wrapped around the waist and legs and knotted at the waist

**DIGNA:** domestic floor paintings commonly made by Gond women

**DUSADH:** a Hindu community that resides in the state of Northern India

## E

**EPHEMERAL:** objects that last only a short period of time due to their perishable nature

## F

**FOLK ART:** traditions with roots from local/rural communities that are primarily utilitarian and decorative rather than purely aesthetic

## G

**GOBAR:** cow dung

**GODANA:** tattoo

## H

**HINDUISM:** religion of the majority of people in India and Nepal, with over 900 million adherents worldwide

## I

**ICON:** sacred image of a saint, prophet, or other hallowed figure

**INDIGENOUS PEOPLE:** people native to a particular region or environment with their own linguistic and historic ties

## K

**KAYASTHA:** a high Hindu caste largely composed of traditional record keepers, writers, and state administrators

**KOHBAR GHAR:** a wedding chamber adorned with elaborate and symbolic wall paintings where the bride and groom spend the first few days of their marriage

**KUMKUM:** red powder used by Hindu women in India for social and religious purposes

## L

**LIKHIYA:** term for both writing and painting in Mithila and other Indian languages. Also a professional who traditionally made copies of manuscripts before the invention of printing

## M

**MAHUA:** alcoholic drink produced by Gonds from the nectar-rich flower of the Mahua tree

**MALI:** gardener

**MYTHOLOGY:** a collection of myths, stories, or legends, especially expressing the worldview of a particular sacred, religious, cultural tradition, or cultural community group

## N

**NAU:** hand-carved boat

## P

**PATUA:** artisan community in the state of West Bengal in India, also known as Chitrakars

**PARTICLE BOARD:** composition board made of small pieces of wood bonded together

## R

**RAKSHASA:** demon from Hindu mythology

**RITUAL:** a religious ceremony consisting of a series of actions performed in a prescribed manner

## S

**SCROLL PAINTING:** a painting on a rolled surface, commonly made of paper, parchment, or other material

**SHESHA:** multi-headed serpent that holds all the planets of the universe on his hoods and constantly sings the glories of the god Vishnu from his many mouths

**SINDOOR:** traditional red- or orange-red-colored cosmetic powder usually worn by married women in India along the parting of their hair

## T

**THEMATIC:** having or relating to a particular subject

**TRADITION:** customs or beliefs passed on from one generation to the next

**TRIBE:** a social division in a traditional society consisting of families or communities linked by social, economic, religious, or blood ties, with a common culture and dialect, typically having a recognized leader

## Y

**YAMADEVA:** God of death in Hinduism

**YAMADOOT:** messenger of the God of death in Hinduism

# MEDIUMS

## Acrylic

fast-drying synthetic paint that can produce the transparent and soft effects of watercolor as well as the density of oil paint

## Cow Dung

natural material used often by artists in rural areas

## Fabric Paint

mixture of pigment and a glue-like binder that is used on textiles

## Gouache

opaque watercolor paint that can be applied in solid colors to allow an artist to paint in layers from dark to light



## Ink

liquid or paste writing and drawing medium, usually black or dark blue

## Natural Dyes

dyes or colorants derived from plants, invertebrates, or minerals

## Oxide Colors

relatively opaque man-made pigments that can be used in smaller quantities than natural pigments

## Watercolor

water-based paint usually used on paper



Ram Singh Urveti, *Woodpecker and the Ironsmith*, 2011, acrylic on canvas, © 2015, Courtesy of BINDU modern Gallery, Photo credit: Sneha Ganguly

A large, stylized, dark green letter 'A' is centered on the page. The letter has a thick, rounded stroke and a pointed top. A horizontal green band with a black shadow effect passes through the middle of the letter, containing the text 'SELECTED ARTISTS'.

# SELECTED ARTISTS

# Gond Art



Mayank Shyam, *Origin of Life*, 2011, acrylic on canvas, © 2015, Courtesy of BINDU modern Gallery, Photo credit: Sneha Ganguly

## Bhajju Shyam (b. 1971)

Bhajju Shyam became an apprentice to his uncle, the artist Jangarh Singh Shyam, at the age of 16. Jangarh noticed his nephew's talent and encouraged him to work as an artist. Within a few years, Bhajju's works were being shown internationally and in 2001 he received the *Madhya Pradesh State Award for Best Indigenous Artist*. Drawing upon his experiences of visiting London in 2002, Bhajju created a stunning visual travelogue, rendering London as an exotic bestiary in which the Underground appears as a giant earthworm, Big Ben merges with a giant rooster, and English people are depicted as bats that come out to play at night. These drawings were published in a book, *The London Jungle Book*, and became the subject of a special exhibition at the Museum of London in 2004. Bhajju lives and works in Bhopal.

## Jangarh Singh Shyam (1960–2001)

Jangarh Singh Shyam is considered the leading Gond artist and the creator of a new school of Indian art, which some call "Jangarh Kalam" in his honor. Born in the village of Patangarh in eastern Madhya Pradesh, he attracted the attention of talent scouts from Bhopal's multi-arts complex, the Bharat Bhavan, and its first director, the modern artist Jagdish Swaminathan, who showcased Jangarh's first paintings at Bharat Bhavan's inaugural exhibition in February 1982. Just five years later, Jangarh was awarded the *Shikhar Samman*, the highest civilian award given by the government of Madhya Pradesh. In 2001, during his residency at the Mithila Museum in Niigata, Japan, Jangarh committed suicide. His work was included in the exhibitions *100 Magiciens de la Terre (100 Magicians of the Earth)*, Centre Pompidou, Paris (1989); and *Sakahàn: International Indigenous Art*, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (2013).

## Japani Shyam (b. 1988)

Japani Shyam is the daughter of Jangarh Singh Shyam. Encouraged by her father, Japani started painting while still very young. At the age of 11, she was awarded the *Kamala Devi Award*. Japani's primary subjects are the lives of animals and birds. She lives and works in Bhopal.

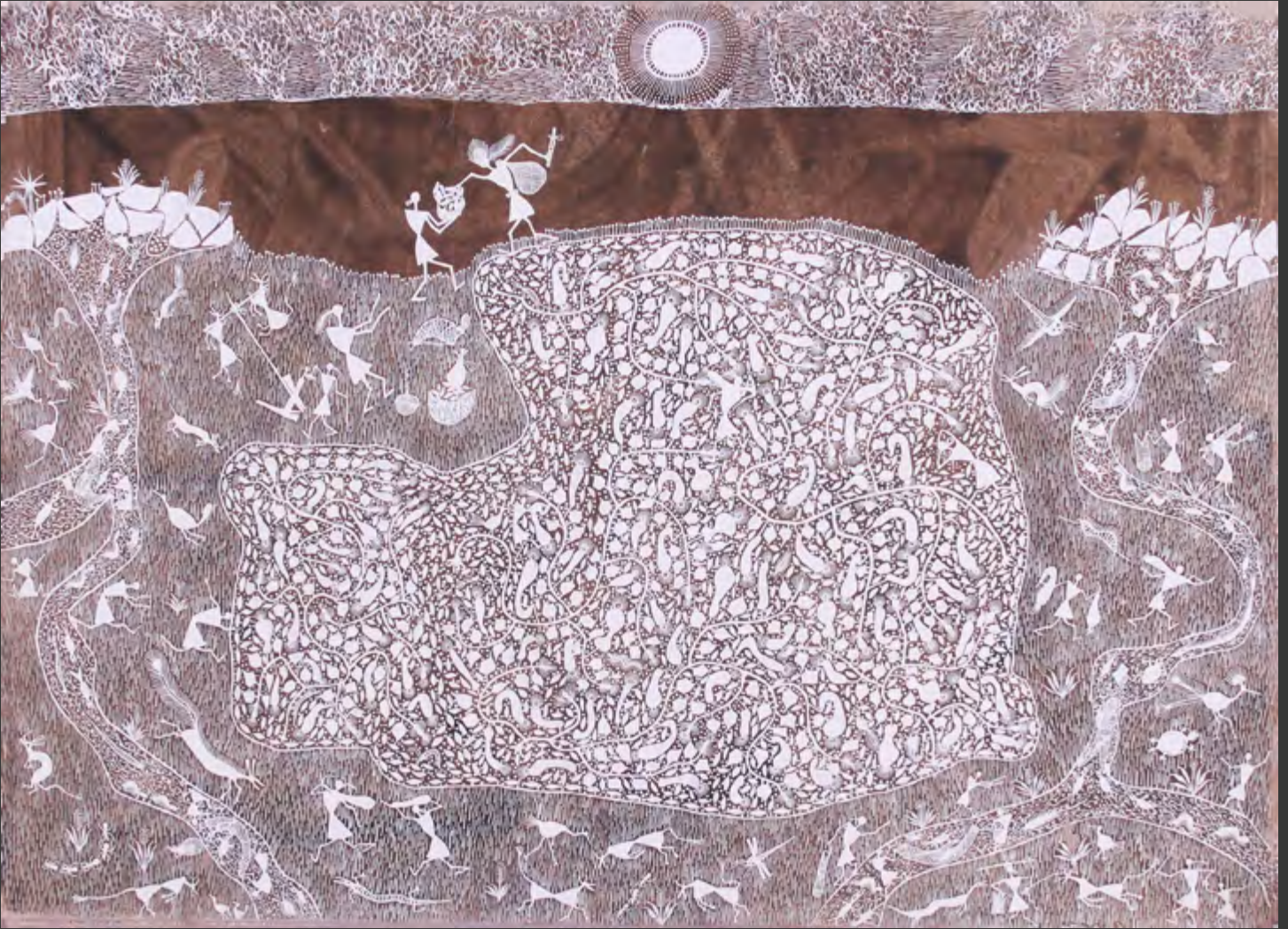
## Mayank Shyam (b. 1987)

Mayank Shyam was initiated into painting by his late father, Jangarh Singh Shyam. He is one of the youngest members of the Jangarh Kalam School and one of the first Gond artists to develop a distinctive contemporary style, infusing urban themes with a Gond ethos. His subjects vary from cityscapes to nature to folklore. In 2006, Mayank received the *Madhya Pradesh State Award for rural arts*. Mayank lives and works in Bhopal. His work was included in the exhibition *Sakahàn: International Indigenous Art*, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (2013).

## Ram Singh Urveti (b. 1970)

Ram Singh Urveti is one of the first Gond artists to transition from ephemeral art to painting on canvas in the early 1980s. His paintings celebrate the spirits of his tribe and, as with many tribal artists, the tree is omnipresent in his paintings. In 2001, he received the prestigious *Kalidas Award for the arts*, and in 2008, his illustrated book, *The Night Life of Trees*, received the *Bologna Ragazzi Award for children's books in Italy*. Urveti lives and works in Bhopal.

# Warli Art



Balu Jivya Mashe, *The Field*, 2013, cow dung and acrylic on canvas, © 2015, Courtesy of BINDU modern Gallery, Photo credit: Sneha Ganguly

## Balu Jivya Mashe (b. 1963)

Balu Jivya Mashe is the son of the renowned Warli artist Jivya Soma Mashe. His pictorial style is rooted in the tradition of the Warli, with rhythmic, simplified forms representing the complexities of the world around him. Balu lives and works in Kalambipada.

## Jivya Soma Mashe (b. 1934)

Jivya Soma Mashe is the most prominent Warli artist. Born in the village of Dhamangaon in Maharashtra, the shock of losing his mother at the early age of seven rendered him mute for several years, during which time he communicated only by drawing pictures on the floor. His talents were discovered by government officials in charge of preserving and documenting rural arts. Jivya demonstrates a heightened sensitivity and an unusually powerful imagination, perhaps the legacy of his early introspective period. He is the first Warli artist to step beyond ritualistic paintings, not only by painting everyday village life, but also by painting on canvas. He received the *National Award for Tribal Arts* in 1976 and in 2011 he was awarded the *Padma Shri*, one of India's highest civilian honors. Jivya lives and works in Kalambipada. His work was included in the exhibition *100 Magiciens de la Terre (100 Magicians of the Earth)*, Centre Pompidou, Paris (1989).

# Mithila Art



Bua Devi, *Nagas in the primordial sea*, 2006, acrylic on paper, © 2015, Courtesy of BINDU modern Gallery, Photo credit: Sneha Ganguly

## Baua Devi (b. 1944)

Baua Devi belongs to the earliest generation of women who began transferring their wall paintings to paper in the late 1960s. She gained immediate recognition, appreciation, and many followers through her distinctive paintings of Hindu deities, the sun, the moon, and snakes. These are rendered with a bright palette, clear and elegant figures, and are usually surrounded by a wavelike border. She was one of the first Mithila artists to receive international recognition after her paintings were selected to be shown at Centre Pompidou in 1989. She received the *National Award* in 1984. She lives and works in New Delhi. Her work was included in the exhibition *100 Magiciens de la Terre (100 Magicians of the Earth)*, Centre Pompidou, Paris (1989).

## Jamuna Devi (1915–2011)

Jamuna Devi was born in Jitwarpur to a family of “untouchables” (members of a low-caste Hindu group). In the late 1960s, she was part of the first group of women to transfer their wall paintings to paper. Working in the brightly colored painting style of Sita Devi, Jamuna began painting deities and daily life, and quickly developed her own unique style. In the 1970s, she innovated again by preparing the paper with a light brown gobar (cow dung) wash so that the images would appear closer to those on traditional mud walls. She was the first “untouchable” to receive a *National Award* for her paintings.

## Manisha Jha (b. 1970)

Manisha Jha is perhaps the first Mithila artist who may be considered a mainstream contemporary artist. Trained as an architect, Manisha incorporates elements of so-called “outside” influences but identifies herself as a Mithila artist who straddles both worlds. The artist currently runs the Madhubani Art Centre, which she established to teach other artists and to promote their work nationally and internationally. In 2015, she was selected to represent India at ART Santa Fe and she also received the *National Award for Excellence* in Mithila paintings. She lives and works in New Delhi.

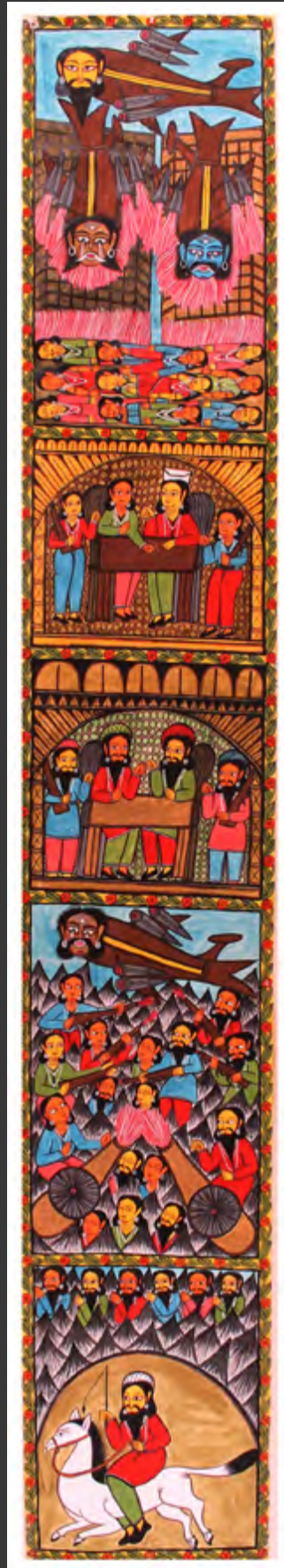
## Rani Jha (b. 1964)

Although born into a conservative family where girls traditionally received little education, Rani Jha went to school and completed her PhD at Darbhanga University with a thesis on *Women and Art in Mithila History*. She is also the first woman in her family to work outside the home. She worked previously with a non-government organization (NGO) shelter for abandoned women and is now a master painter and teacher at the Mithila Art Institute. As a feminist painter, her work draws inspiration from her experiences at the shelter, where she documented incidents of abuse against women. Through her paintings she seeks not only to tell their stories but also to have some small effect in changing social conditions for all Indian women. She lives and works in Madhubani.

## Sita Devi (1914–2005)

Sita Devi was one of the early pioneers of Mithila painting on paper. She developed a distinctive style of painting that emphasized tall elegant figures and strong vibrant colors. She also pressed visiting dignitaries for the infrastructural development of her native village of Jitwarpur. During her long life, Sita Devi brought national and international attention to Mithila. In 1981 she was awarded the *Padma Shri*, the fourth highest civil award by the government of India. Her work is in the permanent collections of the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

# The Patua



Montu Chitrakar, *Osama*, 2010, natural dyes on paper glued to fabric, © 2015, Courtesy of BINDU modern Gallery, Photo credit: Sneha Ganguly

## Montu Chitrakar (b. 1984)

Montu Chitrakar was born in the village of Naya in Bengal to a family of *Patuas*. His repertoire includes narratives of traditional religions and folktales, as well as works dealing with such issues as the earthquake in Gujarat, religious riots, women's rights, AIDS, and the environment. Montu lives and works in Naya.

## Swarna Chitrakar (b. 1974)

Swarna Chitrakar was born to a family of *Patuas* residing in the village of Naya. Swarna is the most well-known Chitrakar and has participated in major festivals in Australia, China, England, France, Germany, India, Sweden, and the United States. Her body of work depicts incidents like the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami and the 9/11 terrorist attacks; social themes like AIDS and child trafficking; as well as issues related to women's empowerment. Over the years, Swarna has also emerged as a role model for the women of Naya. Swarna now paints on a diverse range of media, including cloth, clay, and ceramic. She lives and works in Naya.

# SUGGESTED PROGRAMMING

## Films:

### *Mithila Painters: Five Village Artists from Madhubani, India (1983, 40 min.)*

This documentary is based on five village painters living in the Mithila-speaking region of northern Bihar and eastern Nepal. The artists display their works and explain their painting techniques and the folklore stories which inspire their art. They also discuss how selling their paintings has affected the lives of the villagers, especially women, in Mithila.

Produced by Ray Owens, Center for South Asia at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

### Tula Goenka's Videos about Mithila Artists

Goenka is a filmmaker, author, human rights activist, and an associate professor specializing in television, radio, and film at Syracuse University, where she also served as co-director of the South Asia Center at Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs from 2012 to 2014.

*"Likhiya: Writing Stories With Mithila Art"*: a series of short films on artists from Madhubani, Bihar, in India.



Rani Jha (w/ English Subtitles) 2013



Amrita Jha (w/ English Subtitles) 2012



Rambharos Jha (w/ English Subtitles) 2012



Shalinee Kumari (w/ English Subtitles) 2012

The screenings of these videos could be followed by discussions with David Szanton (exhibition co-curator) or by film director Tula Goenka.

*Kathryn Myers, "Regarding India" Videos:*

*Regarding India* is a series of video interviews with contemporary artists living and working in India. Reflective of a dynamic and diverse contemporary art scene during a decade of unprecedented and often volatile change, the interviews engage with aspects of Indian history, society, culture, and current events through the creative work, experiences, and insights of artists. *Regarding India* was produced, directed, and edited by Kathryn Myers. Kathryn Myers is a painter and professor of art at the University of Connecticut.



Santosh Kumar Das 2015

*Singing Pictures -*

by Lina Fruzzetti, Ákos Östör, Aditi Nath Sarkar  
(Brown University)  
color, 40 min, 2005  
Bengali w/ English subtitles

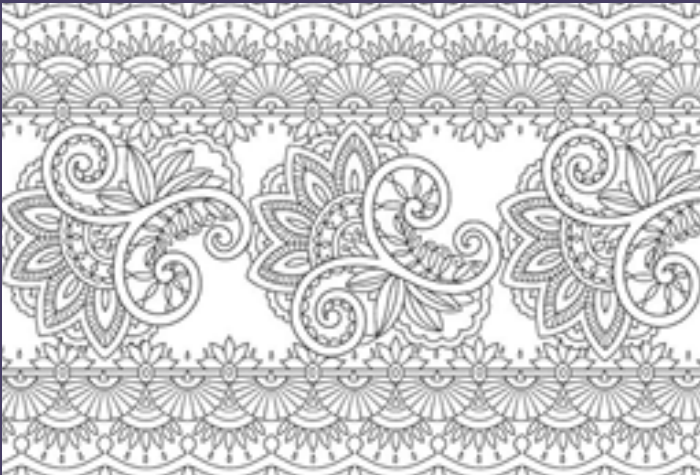
For generations, Patua (Chitrakar) communities of West Bengal, India, have been painters and singers of stories depicted in scrolls. The Patuas tell the stories of Muslim saints (pirs and fakirs) as well as of Hindu gods and goddesses, and offer devotion to saints at Muslim shrines. In the past they used to wander from village to village, receiving rice, vegetables, and coins for their recital. They would unroll a scroll, one frame at a time, to illustrate their stories, while singing their own compositions. But competition from other media has eroded this way of life and the *Patuas* are now trying to adapt to changing conditions.



# Family Programs:

**Adult coloring book pages** - Adult coloring pages are a new and trendy way for adults to take a more interactive approach with art. With the many intricate designs throughout Gond, Warli, Mithila, and Scroll art, adults can transform a traditional Indian piece into their own artistic masterpiece.

**Bollywood Night** - Dance the night away with a DJ who transforms gallery/museum spaces into a nightclub with the latest Indian dance fusion set to upbeat Bollywood rhythms. Intoxicating mix of Bollywood, Bhangra, and Western remixed music.



1.

1. Baua Devi, *Untitled (Village Scene)*, 2008, Acrylic on canvas, © 2015, Courtesy of BINDU modern Gallery, Photo credit: Sneha Ganguly.



2.

2. Shivan Paswan, *Tree of Life*, 2010, acrylic and ink on canvas, © 2015, Courtesy of BINDU modern Gallery, Photo credit: Sneha Ganguly



### Learn and share Indian dances - Dance

Performances by students from local classical Indian or Bollywood dance schools. There is a numerous amount of dances that are generally characterized as folk or classic. Some dances include Bharatanatyam (Tamil Nadu), Kathak (North, West and Central India), Kathakali (Kerala), Kuchipudi (Andhra Pradesh), Odissi (Odissa), Manipuri (Manipur), Mohiniyattam (Kerala), and Sattriya (Assam).

**Henna painting** - A tattoo-like form of body art (Mehndi) in which the skin—especially on the palms and feet—is painted using a paste made from leaves of *Lawsonia inermis*, a shrub that is popularly known as henna. It is applied to women as a temporary skin decoration, often for weddings and festivals on the Indian subcontinent. It takes only few minutes to apply and the tattoo impression lasts 2-3 weeks.



3.



4.



3. Manisha Jha, *The Jackfruit Tree (Tree of Life series)*, 2012, acrylic and ink on canvas, © 2015, Courtesy of BINDU modern Gallery, Photo credit: Sneha Ganguly

4. Baua Devi, *Shiva*, 2008, acrylic on canvas, © 2015, Courtesy of BINDU modern Gallery, Photo credit: Sneha Ganguly

A large, stylized number '10' is centered on the page. The '1' is a solid dark blue vertical bar. The '0' is a light blue shape with a dark blue outline, resembling a speech bubble or a rounded rectangle with a tail. The background is a gradient of blue, with a horizontal band of medium blue across the middle.

# EDUCATIONAL REFERENCE MATERIALS

# Publications:

## Literature

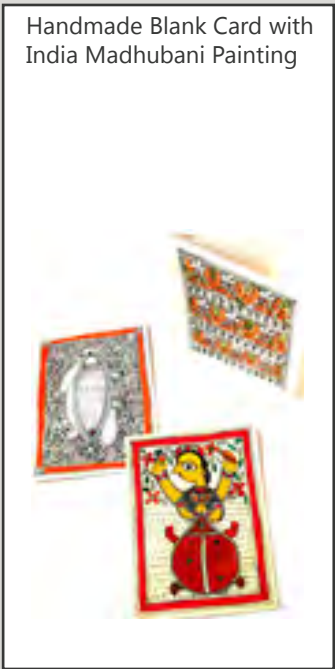
- Bowles, John H. (2009) *Painted Songs & Stories: The Hybrid Flowerings of Contemporary Pardhan Gond Art*, Bhopal: Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage
- Chaterji, Roma (2015) *Speaking with Pictures: Folk Art and the Narrative Tradition in India*, New Delhi: Routledge India
- Dallapiccola, Anna L. (Ed.) (2011) *Indian Painting: The Lesser-Known Traditions*, New Delhi: Niyogi Books
- Das, Aurogeeta (2010) "Metropolitan and Traditional: An Exploration of Semantics in Contemporary Indian Arts Discourse" in *Etnofoor: Imitation*, 22(1), pp.118-135
- Gaur, Umesh and Aurogeeta Das (2013) "Recent Indigenous Art of India" in *Arts of Asia*, 43(6), pp.118-130
- Hill, Gregory A., Christine Lalonde and Candice Hopkins (Eds.) (2013) *Sakahàn: International Indigenous Art*, Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada
- Korom, Frank J. (2006) *Village of Painters: Narrative Scrolls from West Bengal*, Sante Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press
- Perdriolle, Hervé (2012) *Contemporary Indian Art: Contemporary, One Word, Several Cultures*, Milan: 5 Continents
- Szanton, David and Malini Bakshi (2007) *Mithila Painting - The Evolution of an Art Form*, Berkeley: Ethnic Arts Foundation
- Wolf, Gita and Arun Wolf (2015) *Between Memory and Museum: A Dialogue with Folk and Tribal Artists*, Chennai: Tara Books Limited

## Children's Books

- Collodi, Carlo. *The Patua Pinocchio*. Illustrated by Swarna Chitrakar and translated by Carol Della Chiesa. Chennai: Tara Books; Illustrated edition, May 12, 2015.
- Jha, Rambharos. *Waterlife*. Chennai: Tara Books; Limited edition, April 10, 2012.
- Le Coz, Martine. *Mithila Reverie: Meditations on the Devanagari Script*. Ethnic Arts Foundation Press, October 30, 2014.
- Shyam, Bhajju. *The London Jungle Book*. Chennai: Tara Books, October 1, 2005.
- Shyam, Bhajju; Bai, Durga; and Ram Singh Urveti. *The Night Life of Trees*. Chennai: Tara Books, June 1, 2006.
- Shyam, Bhajju. *Creation*. Translated by Gita Wolf. Chennai: Tara Books, April 14, 2015.
- Urveti, Ram Singh. *I Saw a Peacock with a Fiery Tail*. Chennai: Tara Books, May 15, 2012.
- Viswanath, Shobha. Illustrated by Joshi, Dileep. *The Blue Jackal*. Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, April 2, 2016.



MERCHANDISING LIST



# ARTIST WORKSHOPS

Several indigenous artists who are based in India have conducted educational workshops, given lectures, created on-site installations, and demonstrated the use of traditional organic materials to create artworks.

## Venkat Raman Shyam (Gond Artist):

Venkat is well known for his body of artworks on terrorism. He was one of the keynote speakers at National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (2013). Venkat and his wife also created an on-site installation at Radford University VA (2015).



**Email:** [venkat28\\_shyam@yahoo.com](mailto:venkat28_shyam@yahoo.com)

## Swarna Chitrakar (Bengali scroll painter and singer):

Swarna has become the face of the chitrakars painter-singers community who travel from village to village recounting stories painted on scrolls while unrolling them one frame at a time. Swarna's work deals mostly with current socio-political events. She has done workshops/demonstrations at Brown University and the Museum of International Folk Art.



**Contact:** Moumita Kundu at Bangla Natak in Kolkata ([moumita@banglanatak.com](mailto:moumita@banglanatak.com))

## Manisha Jha (Contemporary/Mithila artist):

Based in Delhi and trained as an architect, Manisha is a very eloquent artist who combines traditional Mithila techniques with contemporary themes and concepts. She currently runs the Madhubani Art Centre, which she established to teach other artists and to promote their work nationally and internationally. In 2015 and 2016, she represented India at the ART Santa Fe.



Email: [mithdil@gmail.com](mailto:mithdil@gmail.com)

A large, stylized red letter 'S' is centered on the page, serving as a background for the text. The 'S' is composed of two overlapping, slightly offset shapes, creating a sense of depth and movement. The color is a rich, dark red.

## SPEAKER LIST

**David Szanton** (Co-curator) is a social anthropologist based in Berkeley, California, with a long-standing interest in the dialectics of art and social change. He has been following the evolution of Mithila artists and Mithila painting since 1977. He co-founded the Ethnic Arts Foundation in 1980 and in 2003 also led the formation of Mithila Art Institute in Madhubani, Bihar—still thriving today—to encourage and train a new generation of Mithila painters.

**Email:** szanton@berkeley.edu

**Aurogeeta Das** (Co-curator) is a lecturer on Indian art at Sotheby's Institute of Art, London, and curator of indigenous art for the Crites Collection, New Delhi. She has a PhD in Indian art from the University of Westminster, London, and is now completing research towards a biography of the late Gond artist Jangarh Singh Shyam.

**Email:** southasiansymposia@gmail.com

**Frank Korom** is a professor of religion and anthropology at Boston University. He has published several books, and his work has appeared in such journals as *Asian Folklore Studies* and *Journal of South Asian Literature*. In 2004 he was a Fulbright Senior Research Scholar in India, where he conducted fieldwork on the *Patuas*, itinerant scroll painters residing in rural West Bengal. This project culminated in a major museum exhibition and an accompanying book, both entitled *Village of Painters* (2006).

**Email:** korom@bu.edu

**Stephen Hirshon** is a retired professor of art history, having taught at Shippensburg University PA and Pennsylvania State University. Professor Hirshon is a noted scholar of Warli art and has curated several exhibitions on this material, including *Birth of the Painted World: Jivya Mashe and the Warli Tradition of India* at Pennsylvania State University (2016).

**Email:** stephen.hirshon@gmail.com

**John Bowles** is an independent art historian specializing in Gond art. He has one of the foremost collections of this material, which has been exhibited at Wellesley College, Wellesley MA (2010), and Radford University VA (2015). John has traveled extensively in this region and has nurtured relationships with most of the important Gond artists.

**Email:** johnhbowles@cs.com

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1. Mayank Shyam, *Origin of Life*, 2011, acrylic on canvas, © 2015, Courtesy of BINDU modern Gallery
2. Bhajju Shyam, *Jalhaarin Mata*, 2012, Acrylic on canvas, © 2015, Courtesy of BINDU modern Gallery
3. Japani Shyam, *Jungle Scene*, 2011, Acrylic on canvas, © 2015, Courtesy of BINDU modern Gallery



3.

