

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**Augusta Savage Gallery**

**Fine Arts Center**

**University of Massachusetts Amherst**

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**Augusta Savage Gallery** at the University of Massachusetts Amherst presents a **group exhibition** entitled **Katha: stories of lesser-known art**, featuring work by Indian artists curated by Manvee Vaid. The exhibit will run from **October 7 through 28, 2014** with an **Opening Reception on October 7, 5-7pm.**

This exhibition features art from many different areas of India, including Madhubani, Bhil, Gond, Warli and Bengal Scroll. Although different in style and subject matter, the artists' works are united by rootedness in their respective communities, histories and religious beliefs. Curator Manvee Vaid is an avid proponent of South Asian arts, particularly tribal and folk arts of India, evidenced through her online gallery **DeccanFootprints.com**. Speaking about her own interests and commitment, Vaid says, *"I am drawn to the simplicity of the colors, shapes, textures, and hues of these works. Even as a young art student I became aware that our heritage, cultural and traditional arts were in danger of losing out to modernity. These arts, these stories were in dire need of preservation and patronage. I have dedicated myself to their cause by collecting and exhibiting not only traditional folk art, but the art created by my contemporaries that reflect the same values."*

**The following list introduces some of the artists who will be featured:**

### **ANIL VANGAD**

Anil Chaitya Vangad is a Warli artist who has been painting for the last 17 years under the tutelage of his mother. Since there is no written script of their language, all their folktales and legends are depicted in a pictorial manner that have passed down from one generation to the next. Preferring the use of traditional mediums of gerue, rice paste, charcoal and cow dung instead of synthetic paints, Anil Vangad's desire is to retain rich traditions while working with modern approaches.

### **LADOO BAI**

Ladoo Bai, a Bhil woman in her late 50's with tattoos adorning her face and arms is from a village in Jhabua, Madhya Pradesh. She draws nature, flora and fauna, rituals and festivals, as well as Bhil gods and goddesses in the centuries-old Bhil style which is steeped in ethnic animism and spirituality. Like many other ethnic fresco painters of her generation, Ladoo Bai is making new statements through her art within the ambit of traditions. She switched to paper from the mud walls of her tribal home under the tutelage of Jagdish Swaminathan, who set up the art center Roopanker in Bharat Bhavan in 1981. Ladoo Bai works as an artist at the Adivasi Lok Kala Academy and her works are held in private collection of both national and international patrons.

### **GURUPADA CHITRAKAR**

Scroll painter Gurupada hails from Midnapore, which is a well-known settlement of Patuas in West Bengal, India. He lost his father, at the age of eight and had to give up his studies. In order to earn a living for himself and his family he began painting and singing in the nearby villages and then further trained with Dushashaan Chitrakar, an elderly reputable Patua painter from his village. His talent for composing songs for his paintings was recognized early as he took part in numerous workshops and exhibitions in the metropolitan areas of India, providing opportunities to showcase his work. In 1987 he participated in the Bangla Festival under the auspices of Crafts Council of West Bengal in the US for the first time. He has been featured in the exhibit Village of Painters: Narrative Scrolls from West Bengal at the Museum of International Folk Art in Santa Fe and the accompanying catalog by Frank Korom in 2006. His works are exhibited at the British Museum, London.

### **MANTU CHITRAKAR**

Mantu Chitrakar is a traditional painter of Bengal. His family, including his wife, two daughters, and his son all help him in making *gorana patas* or rolled paintings.

Mantu is also a composer, creating scrolls and songs based on his travels around the world and narratives based on themes inspired by the sacred Hindu or Muslim texts from history and myth. Having developed scrolls based on themes of HIV-AIDS and women's rights, Mantu Chitrakar is one of the few painters in Naya who has traveled outside of India. He went from West Bengal to Australia with a number of other Indian folk artists through the assistance of a grant and the help of Minhazz Majumdar.

### **BAUA DEVI**

Baua Devi is not only one of the most respected and successful artists in the Mithila community, but also the most internationally recognized Madhubani folk artist. His art is noted for its spirited composition and brilliant colors. However, currently working closely with her husband Jagannath, much of this now done by him, while she executes the drawings beforehand. Baua Devi's composition includes scenes from folk tales and Hindu mythology, images of gods and goddesses, and religious symbols such as the Shiva lingam. She has received several awards from India, Japan and Germany, and has been exhibited throughout India as well as the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, at the Mithila Museum in Japan and in the USA.

### **SURESH DURVE**

Suresh Durve is from the state of Madhya Pradesh. His early works demonstrated the original Gond style of painting with dots and lines and the use of bright colors. That style differs from his present work where black and white forms predominate and color is applied sparingly. This new work features birds, patterns of fish scales and drops of water. He has been showcasing his paintings along with other *Gond* artists nationally as well internationally.

*This exhibit is free and open to the general public  
For more information: 413-545-5177*