

The Lyricism and Audacity of the Adivasi Imagination

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The Lyricism and Audacity of the Adivasi Imagination

Durgabai Vyam

Durgabai Vyam is perhaps the youngest and the most talented of the Gond artists.

Born in Dindouri district of Madhya Pradesh into an Adivasi Gond family, she received a traditional training in Gond art at home. Gifted and precocious, she soon obtained mastery over painting scenes from the collective memory of the Gonds. Being most interested in recreating archetypal scenes from the Gond mythology each of her paintings is inspired by its metaphorical treasure creating the unbridled lyricism and audacious imagination of her signature style. The harmonious play of colours and lines is another unique aspect of her art. But that her paintings stay in the eye even after being seen only once is the greatest strength of Durgabai's creativity.

Durgabai Vyam began her creative journey in 1996 at an artist's camp organized by Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya, Bhopal. She followed this with exhibitions in New Delhi, Dehradun, Mumbai, Khajuraho, Indore, Raipur, Chennai and many other cultural centres in the country attracting the attention of art critics and art experts. Durgabai's paintings are today part of many prestigious art museums and art collections.



This is the picture of Bada Dev (Big God). Country liquor and a red rooster is offered to him in sacrifice. This makes Bada Dev happy.



This picture depicts the friendship of a cow and two crows. The crows come and sit on the tail of the cow and thinking that the cow's tail is a tree they talk to each other.



This unique species of fish is called Kaajal (mascara) fish. In this picture they are husband and wife and live lovingly with each other.



This is Mother Earth who gives us water. The same water goes to heaven and pours down on earth nurturing the life of man, bird and beast.



There are three different seasons, Chaar Laram (four months of winter), Chaar Garam (four months of summer) and Chaar Jhadhaphadi (four months of rain), and they graze separately.



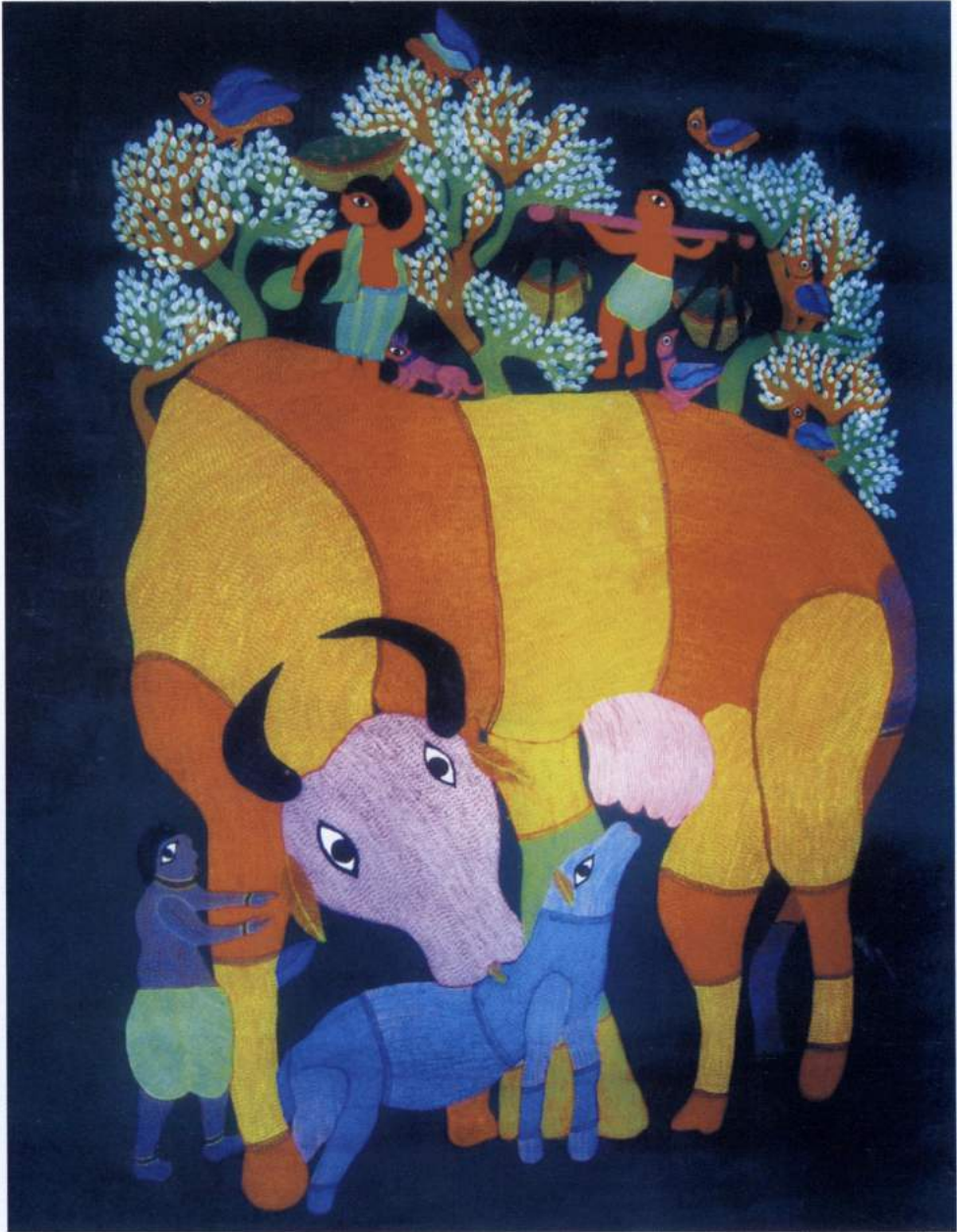
This is a special song that goes by the name of 'Sua.' This song is sung on Deepavali by the womenfolk. 'Sua' means parrot; people make a statue of it and sing for it.



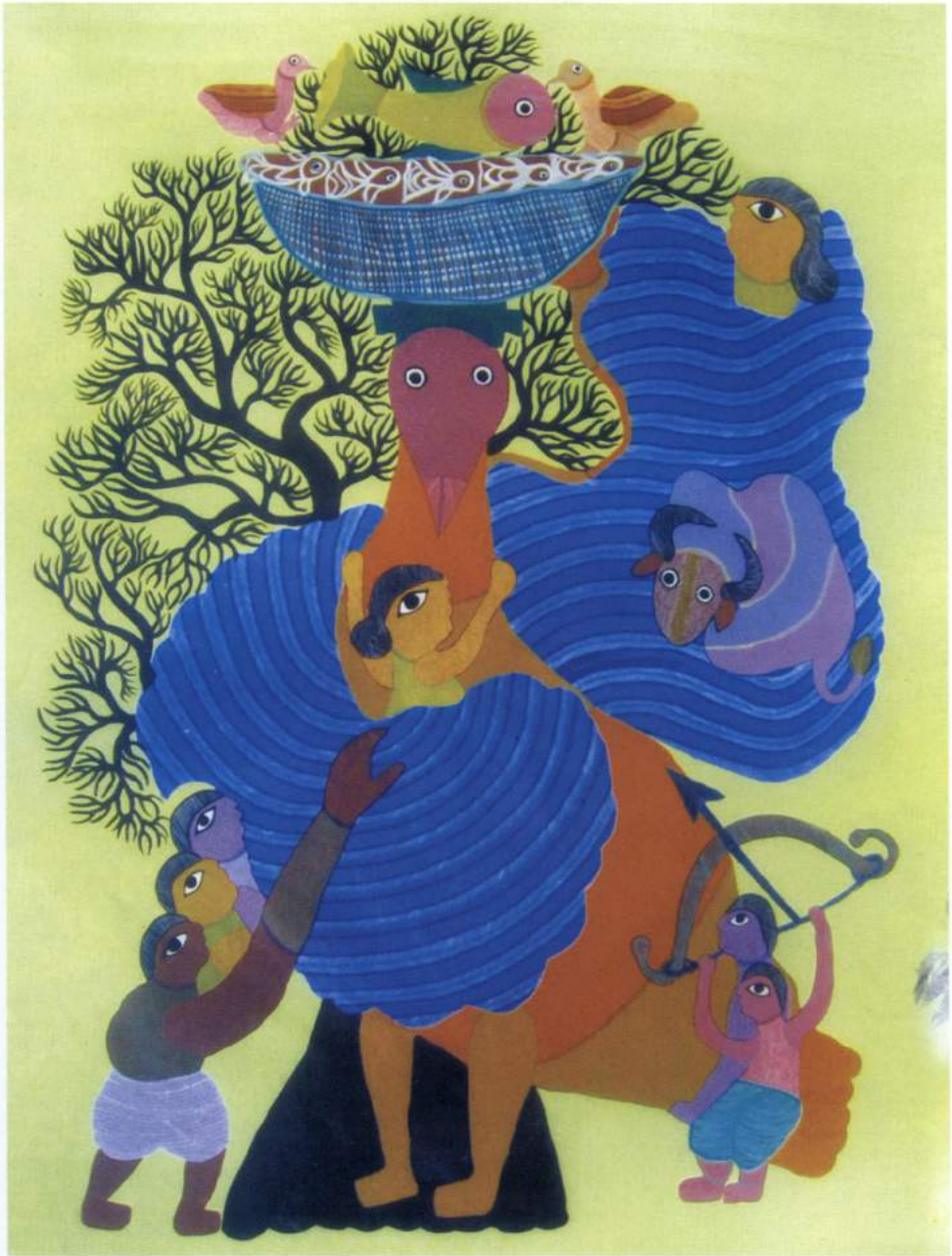
There is a village in the jungle in which people belonging to the Baig tribe live. They bathe in the river, catch fish, bathe their animals and make a living.



**This is a tree which is in the form of husband and wife.
Everyone in this world has a partner, be it man, bird or beast.**



The hill in the form of cow and calf. People live on it.



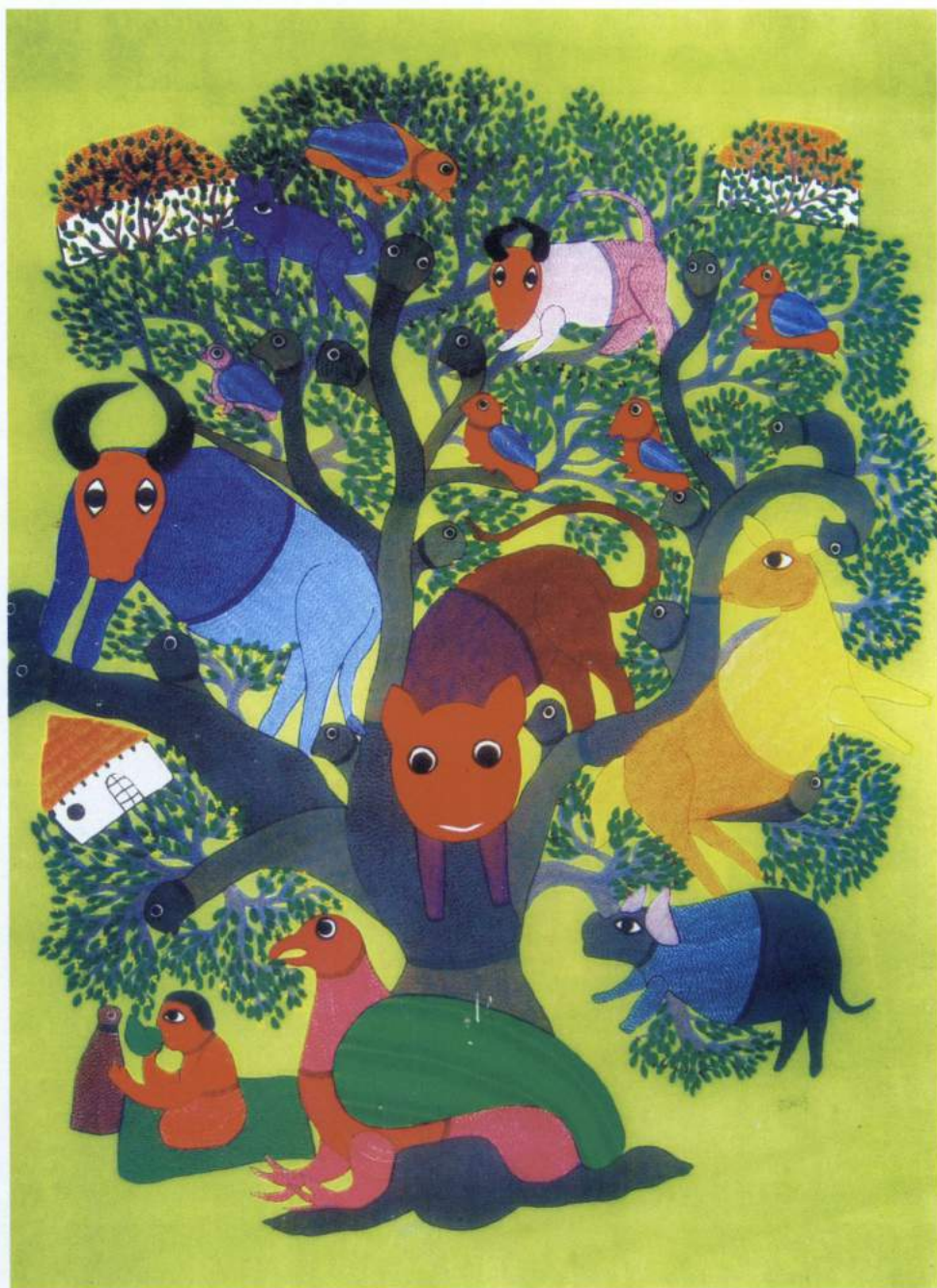
This is the story of a **unique** bird called Rai Gidhania.



The story of the birth of bamboo.



The story of the firefly.



This is a Mahua tree from the flowers of which country liquor is produced. A little liquor makes a person to speak sweet, like a parrot. A little more makes him roar like a tiger. And too much liquor makes him lose control and run about, falling here and there, like a pig. So liquor-drinking brings out the three natures in man.



This is a Peepul tree. In this tree Thakur Dev (the village headman) and Thakurain Devi (the wife of the village headman) live. They protect the people, animals and birds living in the village.



The lion, lioness and their many cubs in the jungle.