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NAME	PLACE	DATE	PAGE
Deccan Herald	New Delhi	November 19, 2016	2

Artist dedicates solo show to mother

NEW DELHI, PTI: Master Gond artist Bhajju Shyam would have become a watchman if not for his uncle who convinced him to follow the traditional art form of the tribe.

"I never set out to be an artist and would help my mother paint on the walls, as per the Gond traditions. I almost became a watchman, but my uncle Jangarh Singh Shyamji convinced me to become an artist," Shyam told *PTI*.

Shyam, who has shown his art in national and international museums and has illustrated many books, has now come up with his first solo exhibition.

Titled "Maa Matre", the exhibition is dedicated to Shyam's mother, who was also his first teacher.

"I wanted to dedicate my first solo show to my mother. Thus, the title of the show is her name - Matre. My works have been shown in museums and institutions in India and



abroad, but the first solo show in India is special," he said.

Fusing storytelling with his tribe's visual language to create paintings close to nature, Shyam uses inherited forms in fresh and expressive ways while experimenting with innovative subjects and new ideas.

He has illustrated more than ten books, which have

been translated into four languages.

His widely acclaimed book, "London Jungle Book", in which he creates a delightful visual narrative of London city in terms of metaphors of Gond life and culture, is considered a visual treat and is a hit with art critics. In his 40 artworks, displayed at current exhibition, Shyam portrays perceptions of

the modern world with his tribe's unique visual language.

"The show is part of our commitment to the tribal and traditional arts. We hope to organise more such solo shows in the future," says Anubhav Nath, Curatorial Director of Ojas Art.

The exhibition will be on till 11th December at Ojas Art gallery here.