



illustration: **VARIOUS ARTISTS**

The sun and moon have been the first markers of time in all civilisations. Ancient as well as modern calendars are based on the revolutions of the sun and moon. The relationship between the two is however not the same in all cultures. In the Indian context, across traditions and cultures, the sun and moon represent discrete elements, which exist at a distance from each other, meeting only briefly. This book comprises images of the sun and moon from diverse Indian art traditions – and each representation comes with its own explanation or tale.

Printing and Production

To do justice to the richness of the art, we decided to silkscreen-print this book on handmade paper. Each page of the book has been individually printed by hand and hand-bound in our bookmaking workshop, which is run on fair trade practices. Each numbered copy has been printed with 74 'pulls' or number of impressions. The cover is die cut in the centre, adding a layer of depth with sun playfully peeking behind the moon quite literally. We have used eight different colours in this book, which involved working with 8 screens. The first print run was 3,000 copies, and it took about two months to complete.

The Book as a Gallery Space

We have rethought the book form as a new space for the representation and reception of folk art. The book form is unique in that it brings a sense of context and a narrative to the inherent richness of the image, connecting it to a sense of lived life. In this sense, our books house both image and idea, art and a distinctive world view. In a handmade book, there is another layer of craftsmanship that then goes behind putting the artwork to paper.

Each of our books is thus a portable gallery, more accessible and with a wider reach than the exclusive spaces of physical galleries.

(Our previous books, *The Night Life of Trees*, *Waterlife* and *Creation* are some notable examples of this kind of book. Find these on www.tarabooks.com)

Below are short descriptions of the traditions featured in this volume. Knowing more about the culture and art process through which these traditions come from helps create a more sensitive reading experience.

Gond

The art of the Gond tribal community in central India is dense yet intricate and rich with meaning. The Gonds are one of India's largest indigenous communities, and art is central to their lives. Originally painted on walls and floors, Gond art has since found its way to paper and canvas.

Mata-Ni-Pachedi

Created by the nomadic Vaghari community in Gujarat, this textile art explores myths and stories around their Mother Goddess and local legends. The art is block-printed, painted, and dyed with natural pigments. The colours are always blood red, black and white.

Madhubani

Colourful, vibrant, yet extremely delicate, Madhubani art is primarily done by women living in small rural communities in the northern state of Bihar. Also known as Mithila painting, this art form originated from the decorative patterns traced by women on the walls and floors of their homes and community spaces.

Meena

Passed on from mother to daughter through generations, Meena art is a centuries-old tribal art form from Rajasthan. The women paint on the mud walls and floors of the village. There are no brushes — a piece of cloth soaked in chalk and lime paste is squeezed through the artist's fingers in a flowing line.

Patachitra

Patachitra means painting on canvas—Pata is a special canvas made from cloth, and Chitra means painting. The art started around the ancient temple of Puri in Orissa, where artists used to paint the walls with images and stories of the local gods.

Pithora

Pithora painting are a highly ritualistic form of painting originating in Gujarat. They feature on the walls of houses and are painted in rituals mainly performed either to thank God or for a wish or a boon to be granted.