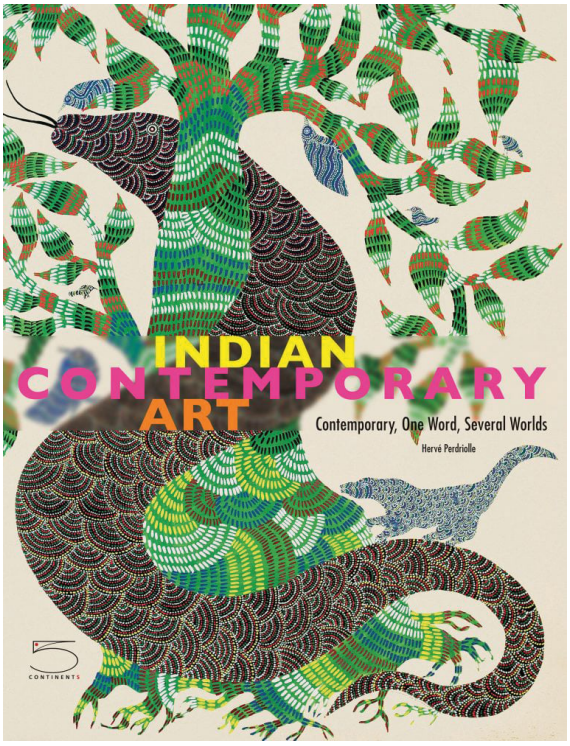
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Indian Contemporary Art

Contemporary, One Word, Several Worlds

Herv Perdriolle

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- This book completes the survey of the Indian scene, begun by the various exhibitions held in Paris, London, New York and Tokyo, which were devoted to contemporary urban art and its world renowned stars, such as Subodh Gupta and Bharti Kher

'The Indian tribal art, a new field of exploration of contemporary art' – Le Monde.

India's cultural richness makes it an endlessly fascinating country. India is known for its profusion of sacred art reaching back several thousand years, but we are less aware of the fact that over 60 million Indians come from the several hundred miscellaneous tribes with which the country is studded. The Indian government has done more than any other to preserve and give visibility to its tribal and popular art and since 1976 the Indian authorities have regularly accorded the great names in tribal art the same status as those in the modern art that has followed independence. These are India's 'other Masters', as the title of an exhibition held in New Delhi in 1998 put it. At the instigation of the great modern painter and guru Jagdish Swaminathan, the year 1982 saw the inauguration in the very heart of India of the Bharat Bhavan, the first museum to give an equal standing to contemporary artists from both dominant and minority cultures. The groundbreaking historical figures among these other masters, such as Jangarh Singh Shyam and Jivya Soma Mashe, who were present in the historic exhibition *Magicians of the Earth* (Centre Pompidou, 1989), are enjoying a burgeoning international reputation. Their works are now on display in the great private collections, from the Devi Art Foundation to the Fondation Cartier, and the international press, ranging from the *New York Times* to *Le Monde* and including *The Hindu*, have celebrated these artists' imaginative range. India astonishes once again through its extraordinary capacity simultaneously to provide a stage for all the best examples of contemporary art generated by its diverse cultures, whether they be dominant, minority, global, local, urban or rural. Like contemporary art, India is itself multi-faceted. One word, manifold cultures.

Hervé Perdriolle is a collector, art critic and exhibition curator. He was the promoter of Figuration Libre and was associated with the first exhibitions of Jean-Michel Basquiat and Ravinder Reddy in France. Since 1996 he has been mainly involved in raising the profile of the 'other Indian Masters' through the works of the leading contemporary artists in the tribal and popular art of India. He was in charge of the Indian contribution to the Lyon Biennale in 2000 and organised a meeting in India between Richard Long and Jivya Soma Mashe, the legendary artist from the Warli tribe. This meeting gave rise to two exhibitions, one at the Kunst Palast Museum in Düsseldorf in 2003, the other at PaC in Milan in 2004. **Jean-Hubert Martin** is a curator and art historian. He organised the famous exhibition *Magicians of the Earth* in 1989 and is still one of the major figures in the contemporary art world. He has been the director of Kunsthalle Berne, Musée national d'art moderne - Centre Pompidou, Musée national des arts d'afrique et d'océanie and Museum Kunst Palast Düsseldorf. He has been curator of Lyon (2000) and Moscow (2009) Biennials.

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