

## WOMEN PAINTERS OF HAZARIBAGH

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Hazaribagh, India



Tribal village mural painting of Hazaribagh are now world famous. The simple subject matter involves common design patterns which are both natural and symbolic and linked with the rock art. The village mural painting tradition is a matriarchal one, and for this reason it is a sacred tradition in an essentially original matriarchal indigenous order. The art is made by married women (Devi) during the marriage and harvest seasons. Young girls learn the art from their mothers and aunts. The marriage art is called *Khovar* after the Bridal room and bridegroom, and *Sohrai* is the other kind of village painting done during the winter harvest in which the paintings are painted using cloth swabs or chewed twigs of the local *Saal* forest tree used for brushing their teeth by the villagers. The mural painting tradition is done throughout Hazaribagh district. However, the *Khovar* art is done exclusively in Jorakath, and Kharati village in Barkagaon block in south-west Hazaribagh, While *Sohrai* art is done in Bhelwara village in Bishungarh block in east Hazaribagh. Stylistically, the women artists in the hills paint animals and birds, while those in the valley paint plants, aquatic life and birds.