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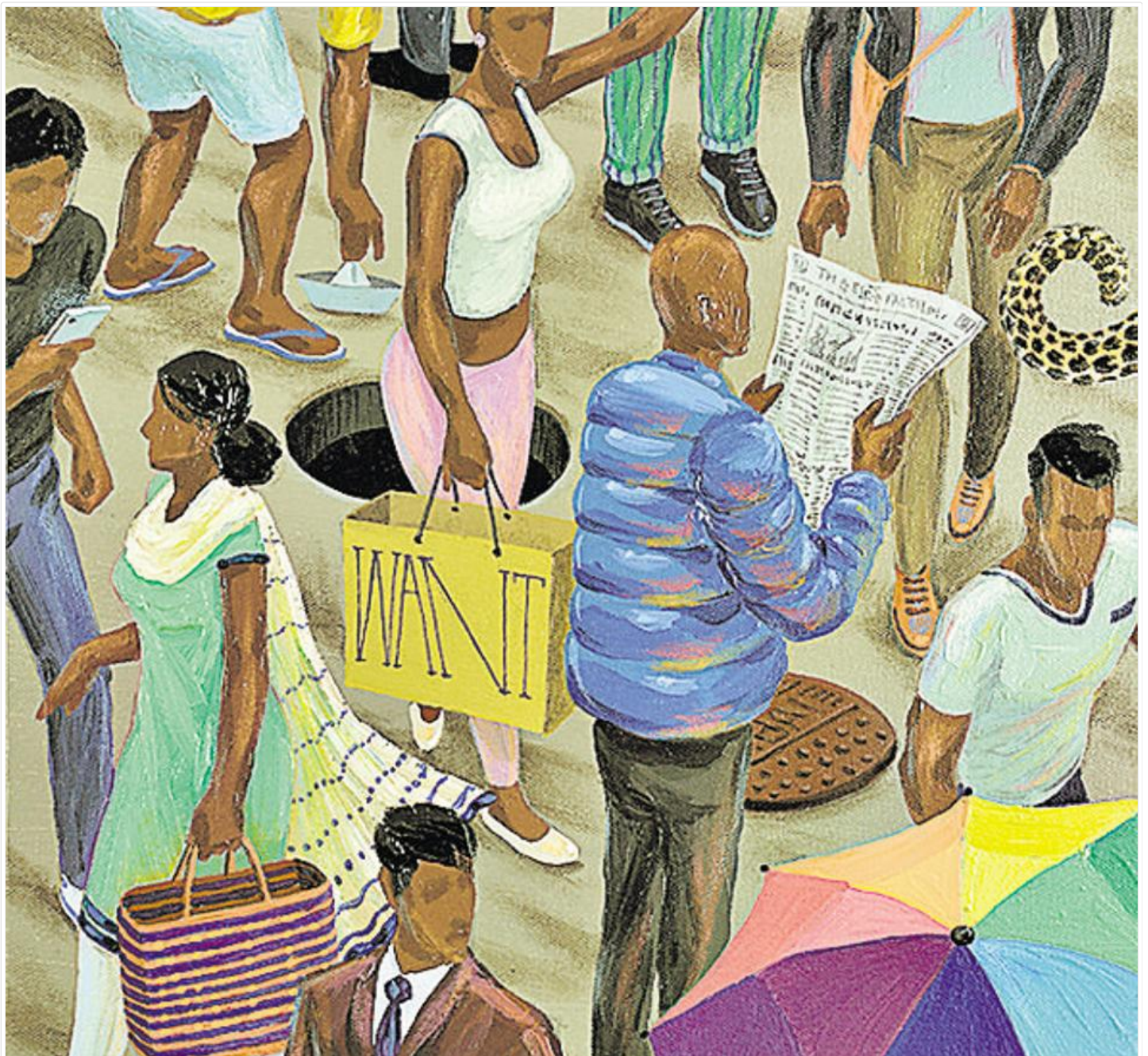


## Minimalist, whimsical: Meet Sameer Kulavoor, the artist

At the graphic designer's first exhibition, expect vibrant acrylics-on-canvas that capture elements of the urban everyday.

**MUMBAI** ([HTTPS://WWW.HINDUSTANTIMES.COM/MUMBAI-NEWS/](https://www.hindustantimes.com/mumbai-news/)) Updated: Mar 19, 2018 13:26 IST

**ht** Jayati Bhola  
Hindustan Times



The paintings, inspired by Kulavoor's travels to New York, Berlin, Copenhagen, Hanoi and Bangkok, manifest as landscapes of human figurines with swatches of colours painted over flat grey canvases.

#### A MAN OF THE CROWD

- When: March 16 to April 26, 11 am to 6.30 pm. Closed on Sundays
- Where: Tarq Gallery, Colaba
- Entry is free

Sameer Kulavoor, Mumbai-based graphic designer, illustrator and founder of Bombay Duck Designs, is known for his minimalist style and whimsical illustrations.

In 2012, he created a line of T-shirts for the UK design house Paul Smith showcasing Indian bicycle culture. There was a dabbawala, an old man with a cycle-rickshaw and a pedalling ice-cream man.

In 2017, at the Street Art India exhibition, he created Parfum Sassoon, an installation representing an imaginary larger-than-life premium perfume brand.



An old man carrying bananas in a basket, a worker in a man-hole; Urban Dwellers in their Natural Setting is part of the collection on display.

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This week, Kulavoor's work gets a gallery display. Tarq hosts A Man of the Crowd, his first show of paintings. Much of the work stems from his extensive visits to New York, Berlin, Copenhagen, Hanoi, and Bangkok. They manifest as landscapes of human figurines with swatches of colours painted over flat grey canvases.

Kulavoor works with acrylic, capturing day-to-day city life. One painting shows an old man carrying bananas in a basket, a kid being whisked away by a parent in a corner and a worker in a man-hole. Another work has a bizarre cluster of people in a close-up: a woman with a big shopping bag, a suited man reading a newspaper and the tail of a leopard.

“I’m familiar with urban spaces, having grown up in Mumbai,” Kulavoor says. “But what we see here is also how global cities work: the cabs, the flow of people. That’s served as basis for my work. Closer home, the stampede at Elphinstone was disturbing. That informed my piece too.”

He uses canvases of different sizes to reflect how every city is different in density and scale. “I dislike stagnation and painting seemed like a natural evolution,” he says. It’s also a break away from Kulavoor’s solo exhibition in 2016 titled, Please Have a Seat. The series were a set of drawings that acted part travelogue and part a reflective work encouraging people to pause, breathe and take a break from everyday hustle.

Kulavoor has also sculpted miniature figurines out of terracotta and concrete, which will serve as an extension to these paintings, placed on a separate platform at the exhibition.



‘I’m familiar with urban spaces, having grown up in Mumbai,’ says Kulavoor, of the inspiration behind his paintings.