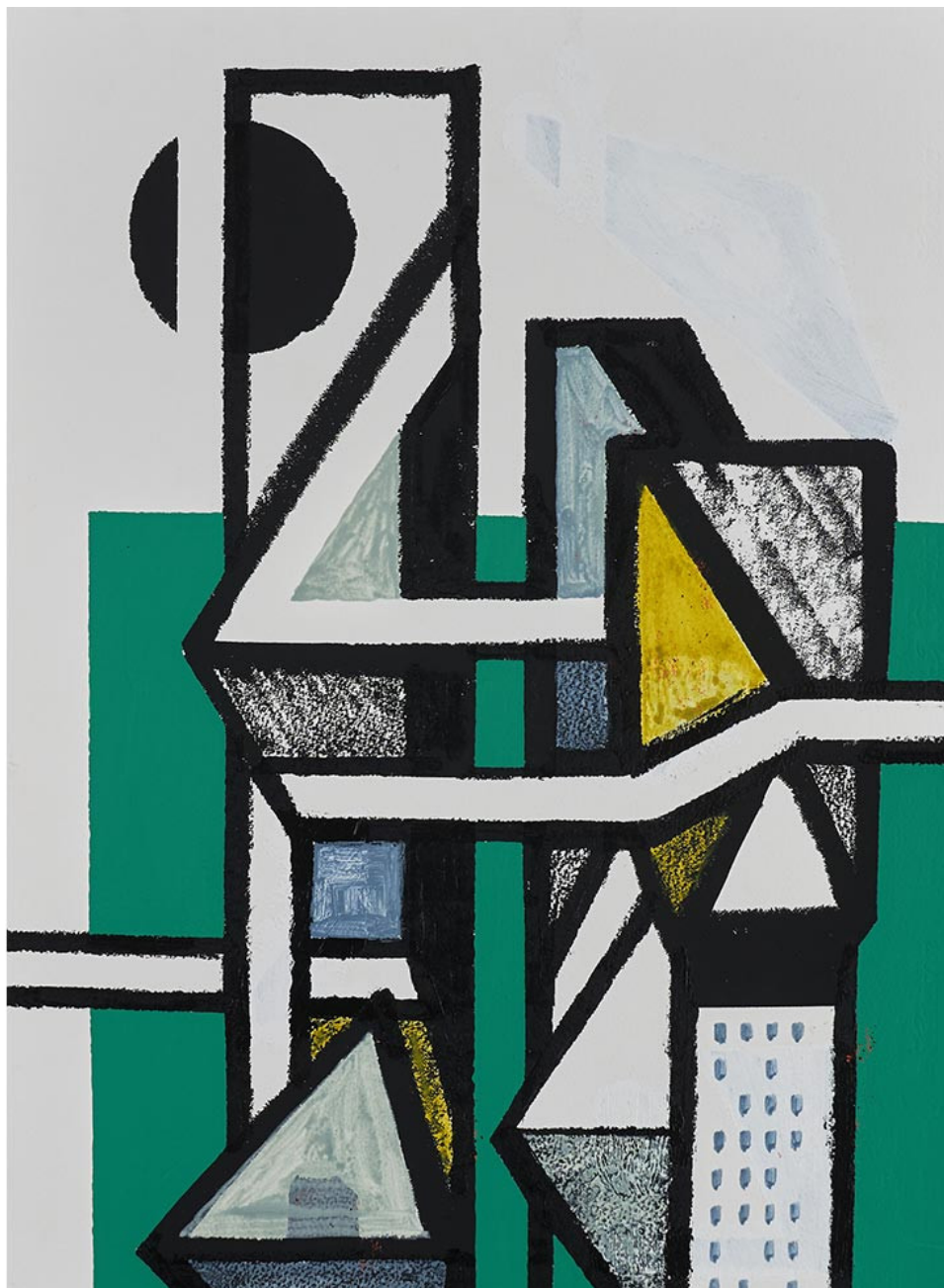

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THIS EXHIBITION EXPLORES THE EVER-EVOLVING NATURE OF CITYSCAPES

Sameer Kulavoor's solo exhibition at TARQ, 'Edifice Complex', is presented through six series

BY **AVNI RAUT** | JUN 8, 2023, 18:52 IST

“The built structures are like living organisms, evolving and adapting to the needs and aspirations of the people who inhabit them,” says artist Sameer Kulavoor, in reference to his solo show titled ‘Edifice Complex’, with which TARQ opened its new gallery space in April this year. Through this exhibition, he explores the temporal nature of built forms and the evolution that urban structures undergo due to various influences, tangible and intangible. “The central focus of the exhibition is once again architecture, with an unnamed, ubiquitous city serving as the backdrop,” says Sameer. “This city is a place where design and architecture emerge through ingenuity and adaptability, rather than careful planning.”



World of Possibilities -3 (detail), 2022

The term ‘Edifice Complex’ has been borrowed from a phrase by Behn Cervantes, a Filipino activist. “The phrase refers to the tendency for individuals, organizations, or governments to become fixated on constructing grandiose structures as a means of displaying power, status, or progress, even when more pressing needs are neglected,” explains Sameer, who delves further into theme to devise the narrative for this exhibition.

The physicality of built forms, over time, begins to reflect changes induced by social and environmental factors, while also evincing the lifestyles and lived-in experiences of its inhabitants in subtle, and

sometimes very distinct, ways. Sameer captures these nuances in his creations through strong brushstrokes, confident compositions and evocative illustration styles.

Drawn Timelapses comprises a series of drawings, accompanied by a video in which he highlights elements that come together to form these complex structures, and presents their temporal progression through sequential drawings. “Each drawing is created in relation to the one that came before it, resulting in a moving image that captures the fluidity of urban development,” he says.



TIMELAPSE: Of coastal roads and postal codes, 2022

In the second series titled ‘Discomfort’, Sameer takes the basic shape of a home and shows its transformation, often exaggerating the forms. He takes into account here, not just physical factors but also intangible notions of a ‘lived experience’. “The series examines both the physical and emotional aspects of this transformation that looks at the impact of social and environmental changes on our homes and personal spaces,” he adds.



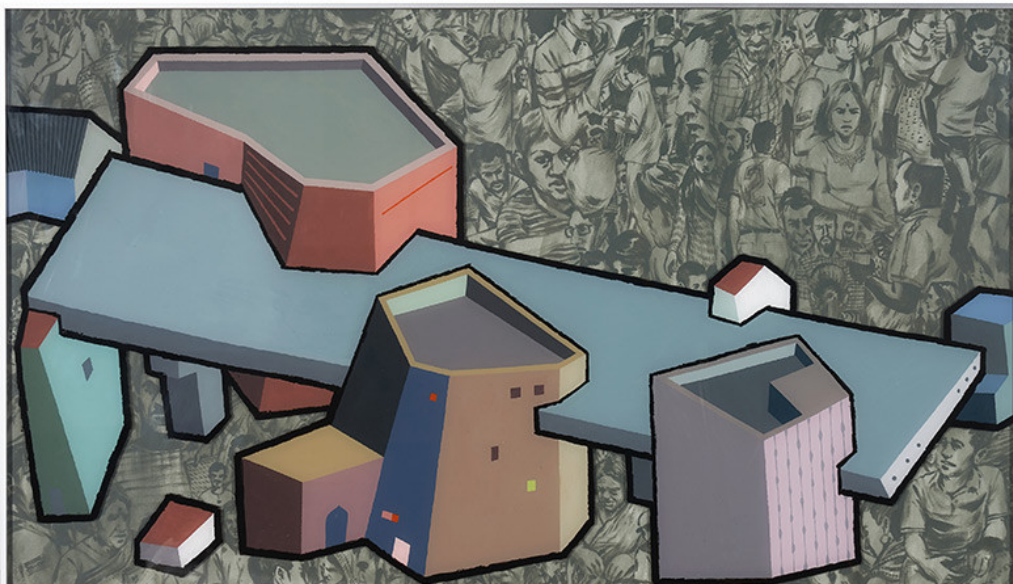
TIMELAPSE DISCOMFORT: Exposed to elements, 2022



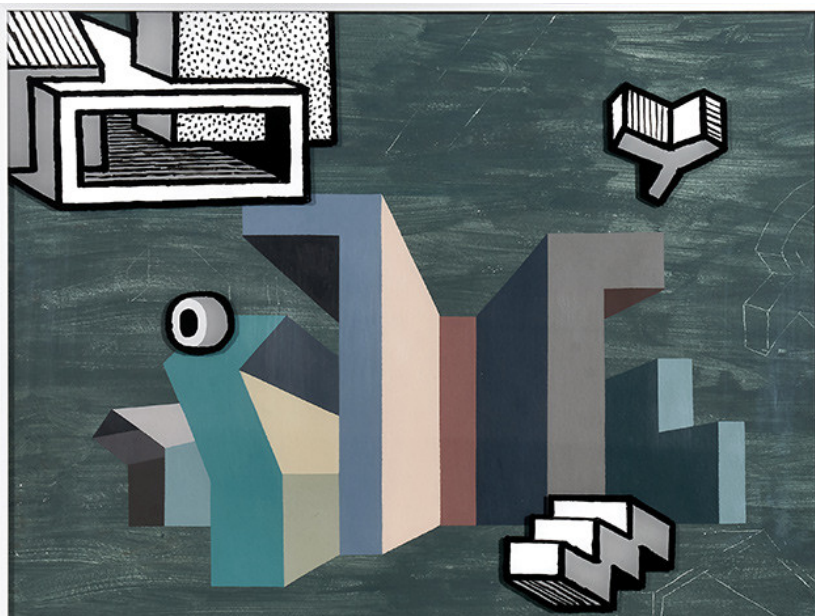
TIMELAPSE DISCOMFORT: Exposed to elements (detail), 2022

For the other four series, ‘Dense City’, ‘Tech Park’, ‘Retrofits and ‘Outside the Gated Community’, the artist employs the technique of

reverse painting with acrylic and oil markers on glass sheets, alluding to the glass cladding that is visible on structures extensively across cities today. “The works point to the transformation of these structures from opaque mirrors of their surroundings during the day to transparent windows at night,” says Sameer.



Dense City: Elevated Corridor, 2022



Tech Park - 05, 2021



Outside the gated community 1, 2021

Images Courtesy Sameer Kulavoor and TARQ

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