

Line of enquiry:

The project explores the idea of joy and in all possible ways - literal joy, metaphorical, typographically and captured in humans and moments. As a person who just moved to a strange place I found a unique perspective to observe people and everyday things in London that often go unnoticed that evoke a sense of wonder. Through my work as an illustrator I further explored the definition of a "subject" when drawing and tried to develop a new style that also informed the subject of joy. I realised that an illustration of a human can reveal many things about that particular human depending on the context - like the man in brick lane playing free chess every sunday says a lot about him and the place. On the other hand when we view the whole set of people and moments we find new relationships of people in London and how they find joy. The use of childlike, colourful crayon sketches set against a muted grey background was a deliberate choice to evoke the feeling of encountering something joyful. This contrast aimed to visually represent the act of noticing—highlighting how moments of delight can stand out amidst the ordinary.

Annotated Bibliography:

1.

Perec, G., 1999. *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*. London: Penguin. [Originally published 1974] Excerpt pp. 46–56.

The project shares the same principles with Perec's (1974, pp - 46-56) "Species of Spaces" as in this quote : "Make an effort to exhaust the subject, even if that seems grotesque, or pointless, or stupid." The idea of the publication was the theme of joy in overlooked places, often ignored but are rich with quirks and tiny moments filled with joy. A lot of the everyday life moments feel repetitive, mundane, monotonous and one does not stop to appreciate these moments. Through 150 illustrations that try to represent a moment of joy in some way attempt to exhaust the subject and show how simple acts of everyday life represent joy. The drawings represent a stubborn, obsessive way of looking for moments of joy in the smallest of things, this was achieved through meticulous observation like Perec prompts his readers to think, see, feel.

2.

Miller, J.A., 1994. Pictures for rent. *Eye Magazine*, 14, pp.68–77.

The author talks about stock images that help represent visual culture and the choice of these images by a designer then will represent his own view on an idealistic popular reality. As quoted by Miller (1994, pp.68–77) : "In some designers' work, these images become discursive, reflective of their own status as a form of "popular reality".

The project represents people, objects, concepts to represent an idealistic mundane life. It tried to explore my role as a designer and my imagination to represent a certain lifestyle surrounded by certain people and things. Realistic illustrations are often drawn to be flexible, commonly easily understandable just like stock images. The reading also helped me think about

illustrations, a new currency in graphic design where sets of illustrations are available like stock. How do these stock images represent an idealistic picture for advertising and branding?

3.

Walker, R. (2019). *The Art of Noticing*. New York: Knopf.

In *The Art of Noticing*, Rob Walker argues for the value of heightened awareness and intentional observation in everyday life—a perspective that deeply informs my approach to illustration. Referencing Herbert Simon’s insight that “a wealth of information creates a poverty of attention,” Walker explores how distraction often obscures moments of quiet beauty or emotional significance. This aligns directly with my illustrations, which seek to capture fleeting, often unnoticed moments in my surroundings—a glance, a shadow, a small act of joy. Walker’s (2019) assertion that “a significant moment deserves a considered prelude” reinforces the value of these visual narratives. Through my work, I aim to prompt viewers to pause and engage more fully with their environments, echoing the book’s central message that noticing is a creative and political act.

4.

Miranda, M., n.d. About Mario. [online] Available at: <https://mariodemiranda.com/about-mario>
Vogue India, 2023. Street art in Margao. [image] Available at: https://assets.vogue.in/photos/651834374c7ef8be2495d172/master/w_1600%2Cc_limit/Street%2520art%2520in%2520Margao.jpeg



Mario de Miranda’s humorous yet deeply observational illustrations of everyday Indian life are a key reference for my project, which attempts to depict small, joyful human moments in London. His work captures the quirks, gestures, and relationships of people in crowded urban spaces

with a sense of detail and personality. Like Miranda, I aim to translate lived experiences into expressive visual narratives, allowing character and place to emerge from observation. His choice of subjects being the local people in local settings like markets, bars, etc also relate to how I found my subjects, in local flower markets, brick lane, tesco shops, etc. Miranda's work, like my project, reinforces the idea that joy can be found in ordinary public life, simply by choosing to see it and his illustrations helped me see how different artists can perceive people in a unique personal way and illustrate them.

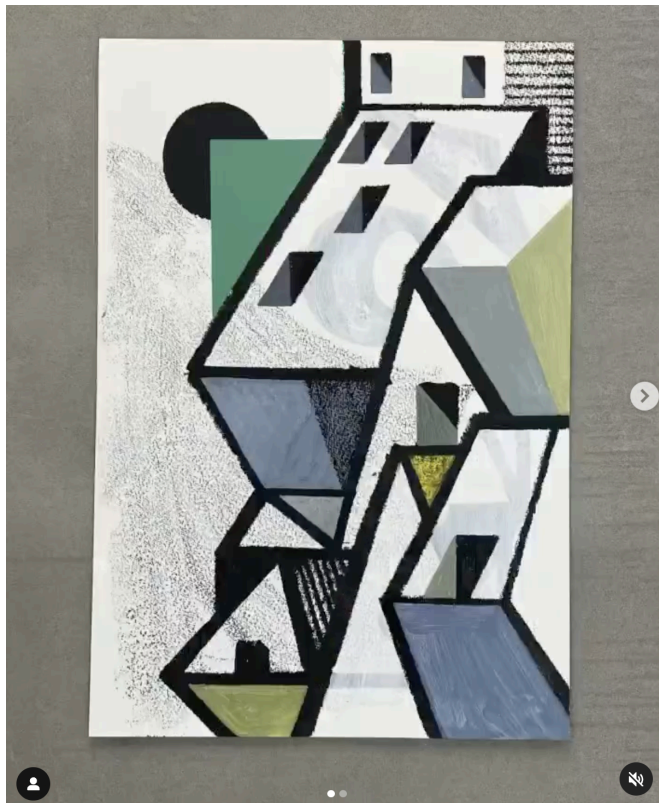
5.

Kulavoor, S., 2023. Edifice Complex. [online] Available at:

<https://sameerkulavoor.com/portfolio/edifice-complex/>

Kulavoor, S., n.d. Sam Kulavoor (@sam_kulavoor). Instagram. Available at:

https://www.instagram.com/sam_kulavoor/



Sameer's project "Edifice Complex" holds a similar critical position in the context of my topic and medium. My project aims to capture a present day reality of the people in London. London is home to all kinds of people from various cultures, from polarising economic backgrounds all searching for one common thing; happiness. The social hierarchy is questioned as all of the people are represented under one umbrella. Using the medium of playful simple crayon illustrations and the method of using illustrations as research to represent the topic connects the two projects. I use the method of quick sketches of many people around me as a way to

document the present day reality of London, revealing the good, bad and the ugly- like the homeless man outside Tesco with a dog- depicts reality.

6.

Embury, G. and Minichiello, M., 2018. Reportage Illustration: Visual Journalism. London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts.

The book Reportage Illustration: Visual Journalism by Embury and Minichiello provides a critical foundation for my inquiry into capturing fleeting, joyful human moments in London through drawing. As a newcomer, my perspective is fresh, and the book supports the idea that illustration can function as a journalistic and observational tool. It emphasizes drawing from life, emotional immediacy, and visual storytelling — all central to my project of documenting the joyful moments. This reference validates my approach of using illustration to record lived experiences, positioning my work within a wider context of contemporary reportage and visual ethnography in modern cities.