

## **A panel discussion on poetry in the city with some of its most engaged and innovative poetic voices**

### **For Immediate Release**

Cities are built with language, says London-based poet Tom Chivers, and indeed we make sense of the city, celebrate it, cope with it and revel in its unspoken minutiae through words. How do poets grapple with urban space? Poetry, conventionally, is the domain of the nostalgic and the classical; it is reflective, measured and calm. How does urban poetry differ from this broad stereotype and what are the characteristics of poetry from our Maximum City?

Bombay is a lived city as well as an imagined one. Bombay poets are known to speak in a multiplicity of languages and vocations and their writings display a bold, gritty cosmopolitanism. Poets from the city display a creative multiplicity and they often collaborate or collide to create cross dialogues between literary divides, artistic genres and media.

**NGMA Mumbai, Ministry of Culture, Government of India** in association with **Avid Learning** present **Multipolis Mumbai: Poetry in the City**.

*The description of the discussion is as below:*

*Poet, Curator and Cultural Critic* **Ranjit Hoskote**, *Gujarati language Poet, Writer and Translator* **Udayan Thakkar**, *Poet, Novelist and Poetry Editor, The Indian Quarterly* **Sampurna Chattarji** and *Co-Founder + Chief Content Officer at Terribly Tiny Tales* **Chintan Ruparel** in conversation with *Author, Journalist and Columnist*, **Bachi Karkaria**.

What is the timbre of the voice of a Bombay poet and what are his or her particular urban preoccupations? What is the ever-elusive mythology of the city? Our panel of poets and experts will delve into influencing factors like trade, architecture, maritime activity, colonialism and commerce and how all of these have impacted our vision of the city and the way we portray it in poetic word. They will also discuss the role of translation, multilingualism and gender issues and trace the legacy of poetry in the city from historical, regional and cross-disciplinary perspectives and also address changing formats of poetry as directly influenced by contemporary, globalized urbanism.

The discussion will highlight Ranjit's latest book, *Jonahwhale*, which deals with maritime narratives and their influence on time, memory, and language, as an illustrative example and will also feature relevant readings by the other poets on the panel.

This discussion is part of our **Multipolis Mumbai** series, which decodes the past while looking to the future and finding novel ways of engaging, interacting with and reenergizing the city that we love! The series was begun and had a successful run in 2012 and we revived the series in June 2017. In the second iteration we seek to plumb new depths and unearth more fascinating nuggets about our ever-surprising Mumbai! We've already had panels on the rehaul of our historic precincts, the role of the

business families of Bombay, Art Deco in the City and looking at the city through a child's eyes. We've more recently had a discussion around how art institutions and practitioners in the city are harnessing the power of tech.

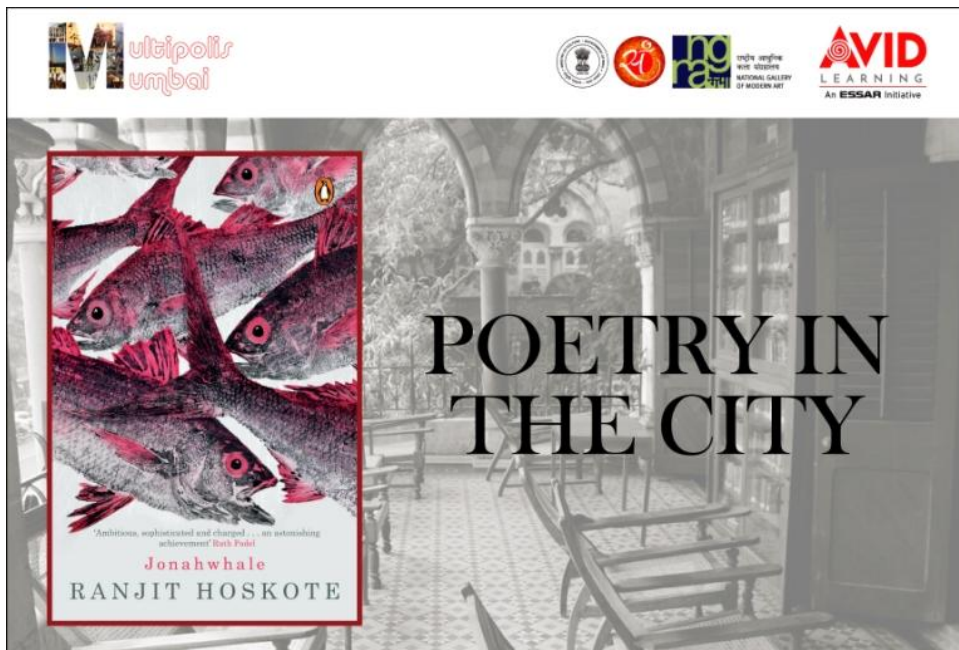
Come explore our city's poetry of place with some of its most engaged and innovative poetic voices.

**Where** - The National Gallery of Modern Art, Sir Cowasji Jahangir Public Hall, M. G. Road, Fort, Mumbai, 400032

**When** - Wednesday, 13th June 2018 | 6:00 PM – 6:30 PM - Registrations and Refreshments | 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM – Discussion

**RSVP:** [www.avidlearning.in](http://www.avidlearning.in); [avidlearning@essarservices.co.in](mailto:avidlearning@essarservices.co.in) / +919769937710; prior registration required

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**Multipolis Mumbai**

**AVID LEARNING**  
An ESSAR Initiative

# POETRY IN THE CITY

*'Ambitious, sophisticated and charged... an astounding achievement'* *Book Pulse*

**JONAHWHALE**  
RANJIT HOSKOTE

We make sense of the city, celebrate it, cope with it and revel in its unspoken minutiae through words. How do poets grapple with urban space and what are the characteristics of poetry from our Maximum City? Bombay is a lived city as well as an imagined one. Bombay poets are known to speak in a multiplicity of languages and vocations and their writings display a bold, gritty cosmopolitanism. Poets from the city display a creative multiplicity and they often collaborate or collide to create cross dialogues between literary divides, artistic genres and media. Our panel of poets and experts will delve into influencing factors like trade, architecture, maritime activity, colonialism and commerce and how all of these have impacted our vision of the city and the way we portray it in poetic word. *Poet, Curator and Cultural Critic* **Ranjit Hoskote**, *Gujarati language Poet, Writer and Translator* **Udayan Thakkar**, *Poet, Novelist and Poetry Editor, The Indian Quarterly* **Sampurna Chattarji** and *Co-Founder + Chief Content Officer at Terribly Tiny Tales* **Chintan Ruparel** will be in conversation with *Author, Journalist and Columnist*, **Bachi Karkaria**. The discussion will highlight Ranjit's latest book, *Jonahwhale*, as an illustrative example and will also feature relevant readings by the other poets on the panel. Come explore our city's poetry of place with some of its most engaged and innovative poetic voices.

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## About the Speakers

**Ranjit Hoskote** is a cultural theorist, curator and poet. He is the author of more than 25 books, including *Vanishing Acts: New & Selected Poems 1985-2005* (Penguin, 2006) and *Central Time* (Penguin/ Viking, 2014), and the monographs *Zinny & Maidagan: Compartment/ Das Abteil* (Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt/ Walther König, 2010) and *Atul Dodiya* (Prestel, 2014). Hoskote has translated the poetry of the 14th-century Kashmiri mystic Lal Ded as *I, Lalla: The Poems of Lal Ded* (Penguin Classics, 2011). With Ilija Trojanow, he has co-authored *Kampfabgabe* (Blessing, 2007; in English as *Confluences: Forgotten Histories from East and West*, Yoda, 2012). With Nancy Adajania, he is co-author of *The Dialogues Series* (Popular, 2011), an unfolding programme of conversations with artists. With Maria Hlavajova, he is editor of *Future Publics: A Critical Reader in Contemporary Art* (BAK, 2015). Since 1993, Hoskote has curated 30 exhibitions of contemporary art, including two monographic surveys of Atul Dodiya (Bombay: Labyrinth/ Laboratory, Japan Foundation, Tokyo, 2001; and *Experiments with Truth: Atul Dodiya, Works 1981-2013*, National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, 2013), a lifetime retrospective of Jehangir Sabavala (National Gallery of Modern Art, Bombay and New Delhi, 2005-2006), a historical survey of Indian abstraction, *Nothing is Absolute* (with Mehlii Gobhai; CSMVS/ The Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, 2013), a survey of 150 years of art by Parsi artists within the narrative of an emergent Indian modernism, *No Parsi is an Island* (with Nancy Adajania; NGMA Bombay, 2013-2014 and NGMA Delhi, 2016), and *Unpacking the Studio: Celebrating the Jehangir Sabavala Bequest* (CSMVS, Bombay, 2015). Over 2000-2002, Hoskote co-curated the trans-Asian collaborative project, 'Under Construction' (Japan Foundation: Tokyo and other Asian centres). Hoskote co-curated the 7th Gwangju Biennale (2008) and was curator of India's first-ever national pavilion at the Venice Biennale (2011). He served on the jury of the 56th Venice Biennale.

**Udayan Thakker** is a postmodern Indian poet writing in Gujarati. English translations of his poems have appeared in: 'Poetry' magazine (Chicago) 'Young Indian Poets' (Editor: K Satchidanandan) 'Digest of West Indian Languages' (Sahitya Akademi), 'Indian Literature', 'Modern Gujarati Poetry' 'Modern Indian Poetry' (Editor: E V Ramakrishna) 'Breath Becoming Word' (Government of Gujarat) 'Beyond the Beaten Track' (Gujarati Sahitya Parishad) and 'Stand' (Leeds). A volume of English translations of his poems has been published by Onslaught Press, England. A book of Japanese translations of his poems has been published by JUNPA. Udayan has recited poetry at about 25 places in U.S.A. (including at Harvard College, MA), Antwerp, London, Kenya, Dubai, Muscat, and Lisbon. His first book of poems was prescribed as a textbook at SNDT University, Mumbai. Two of his books have received the award of 'Best Poetry Collection of the Year' (by Gujarat State Sahitya Academy, & Gujarati Sahitya Parishad.) He writes a weekly column on world poetry in the newspaper 'Janmabhumi'. Udayan is Editor of [poetryindia.com](http://poetryindia.com).

**Sampurna Chattarji** is a poet, fiction-writer and translator. Her fifteen books include the poetry titles *Absent Muses* (Poetrywala, 2010); *The Scorpion* (HarperXXI, 2013) and *Space Gulliver: Chronicle of an Alien* (HarperCollins, 2015); the novels *Rupture* and *Land of the Well* (both from HarperCollins); a short-story collection about Bombay/Mumbai, *Dirty Love* (Penguin, 2013); and a translation of Joy Goswami's *Selected Poems* (Harper Perennial, 2014, 2018). She has co-

authored *Elsewhere Where Else / Lle Arall Ble Arall* with Eurig Salisbury and is currently Poetry Editor of *The Indian Quarterly*.

**Chintan Ruparel** spent 7 years in mainline advertising at India's top agencies, having won 30+ local and international awards like Cannes, D&AD, One Show, Clio, Adfest, Spikes Asia and several more. He also bagged Gold at the first edition of Longhand Awards - a popular online writing initiative judged by ad legends Neil French, Indra Sinha and Prasoon Joshi among others. He then took a break from advertising and travelled the length and breadth of India for the next few months, figuring out his next venture. Four years on, he is now the Co-Founder & Chief Creative Officer at Terribly Tiny Tales - the most loved storytelling platform with 75,000+ writers from around the world, and a weekly organic reach of 12 million. He also looks after Terribly Tiny Talkies, which has creatively produced some of the best short films to come out of India in the last two years. He has also been on the first ever short film panel at NFDC's Knowledge Series at Film Bazaar in 2016; and debuted with a memorable session at the Jaipur Literature Festival 2017.

**Bachi Karkaria** is a veteran journalist and columnist with the *Times of India*. She also curates the Times of India Litfest.

## About Partners

**The National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA) Mumbai, Ministry of Culture, Government of India** is a repository of the cultural ethos of the country and showcases the changing art forms through the passage of the last 160 years starting from about 1857 in the field of Visual and Plastic arts. The first NGMA was opened in New Delhi at the historic Jaipur House, in the presence of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and artists and art lovers on March 29, 1954. The National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai was opened to the public in 1996. It hosts various exhibitions and also has its own art collections comprising paintings, sculptures and graphics with a focus on Indian and International artists. It is located in the precinct of the former auditorium the Sir Cowasji Jehangir Public Hall and the Institute of Science. This architecturally marvellous building was designed and built by the famous British architect George Wittet which has been completely redesigned keeping only the facade edifice that was Public Hall. It has hosted eminent artists like, K.H. Ara, F. N. Souza, Gaitonde, S.H. Raza and M.F. Hussain and contemporary artists like, K.G. Subramanyam, Sudhir Patwardhan, Nalini Malini, Atul Dodiya and Sudarshan Shetty. The NGMA in Mumbai is run and administered as a subordinate office to the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, which has two branches one at Mumbai and the other at Bengaluru.

**Avid Learning**, a public programming platform and cultural arm of the Essar Group, has conducted over 900 programs and connected with more than 100,000 individuals since its inception in 2009. Driven by the belief that Learning Never Stops, AVID's multiple formats like Workshops, Panel Discussions, Gallery Walkthroughs, and Festival Platforms create a dynamic and interactive atmosphere that stimulates intellectual and creative growth across the fields of Culture & Heritage, Literature, Art and Innovation.

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