

Time Out

Mumbai

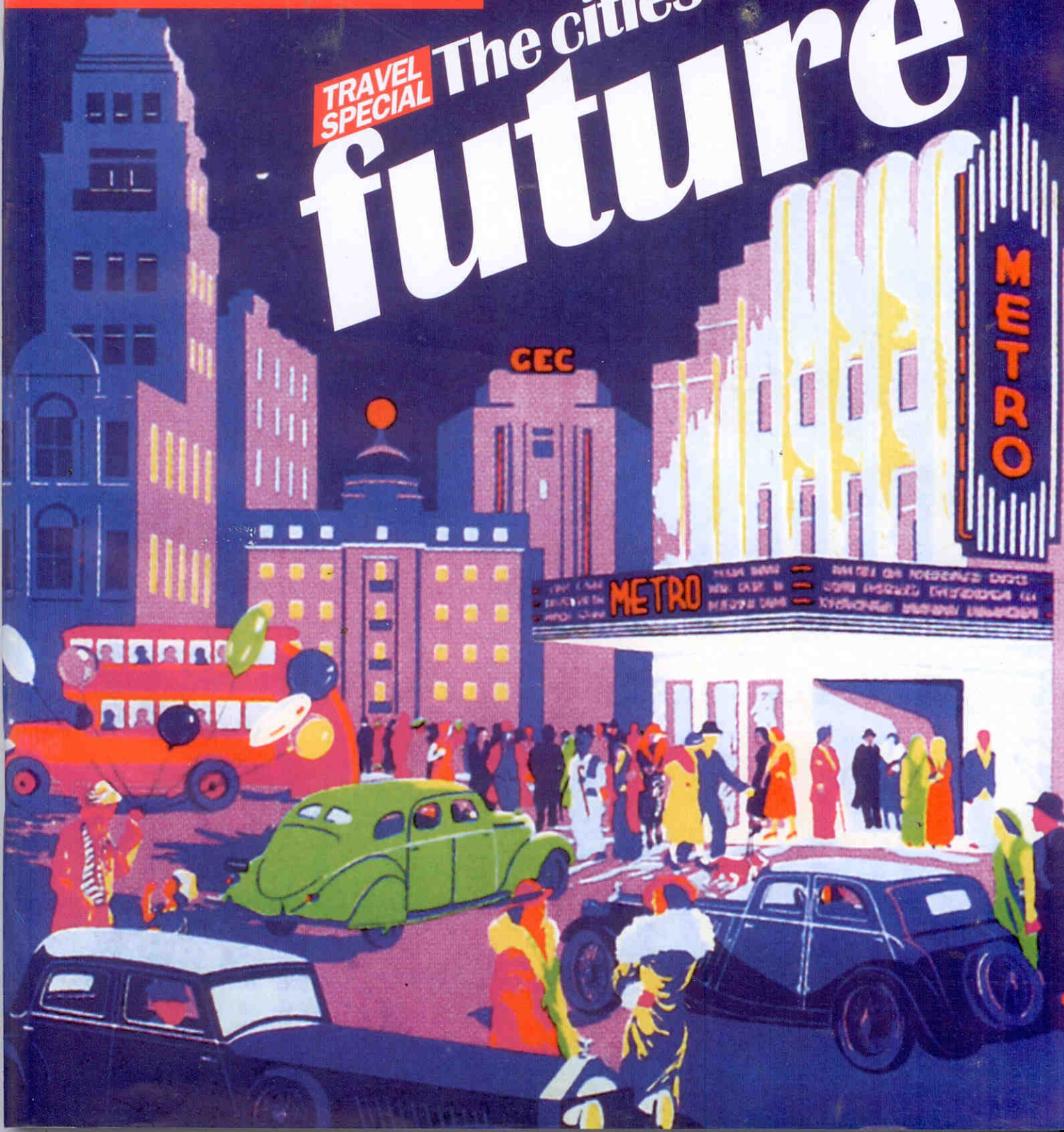
GET MORE OUT OF MUMBAI
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Waste to hip

Prashant Pandey finds inspiration at the bottom of the garbage pile.

Every artist puts a bit of himself in his art, but Prashant Pandey's contribution is more literal than most. For his graduation exhibition in May, Pandey collected his urine over eight months. The sculptor's studio at the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda was

crammed with plastic bottles filled with more than 370 litres of urine, water and formaldehyde. He assembled them in the shape of a human skull for his sculpture *Gift*, which will be showcased at Pandey's first solo show at Warehouse on 3rd Pasta.

Urine is just one of the many kinds of waste that inspire Pandey. His show features sculptures made

of bagasse from the sugarcane industry, cigarette butts and rotting chocolate. The artist said that he digs through garbage cans to "explore the fragments generated by human activity".

Gift is meant to spotlight the practice of female foeticide. "In most cases, the foetuses end up in drains," Pandey said. "Urine symbolises the general mess surrounding the jettisoning of these small lives."

The sculptor is fascinated with waste and believes that even though it may not be of use to others, the materials become political and social symbols in his work. In *Universe*, cigarette butts create a circle of delicate flowers and comment on drug abuse. *Crash Trash*, in which an airplane is carved out of a block of bagasse, is meant to recall the violence and destruction of the attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York.

Other works in the show include the sculpture of a headless boy created from 15 kgs of chocolate that has past its expiry date. Left at

room temperature in the gallery, the chocolate will melt to expose the iron frame of the construction. In undergoing this transformation, the sculpture is meant to draw attention to childhood, loss of innocence and the erosion of memories.

Pandey has been interested in refuse ever since he was a child. Originally from Jaipur, the artist belongs to a family of marble sculptors, who make idols of deities. As a child, he accompanied his father and uncles to the workshop but always toyed with cracked stones and chips that would normally be thrown away.

Pandey has already impressed his teachers of the master's programme of the MS University. He is the only student from his batch to be selected for an exchange programme in Paris. "I am looking forward to the residency since I love to explore new places," he said. "I want to keep working with different kinds of trash." *Zeenat Nagree*
See Warehouse on 3rd Pasta in Exhibitions.



Prashant Pandey makes sculptures from rotting chocolate and bagasse