



# DRAWING FROM THE CITY: TARA BOOKS IN LONDON

Article Author:

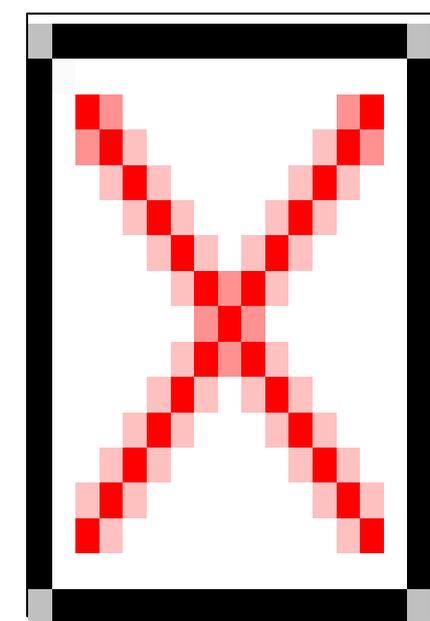
[Gita Wolf](#) [1]

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Byline:

Gita Wolf on the launch of **Drawing from the City** at the **Illustration Cupboard**.

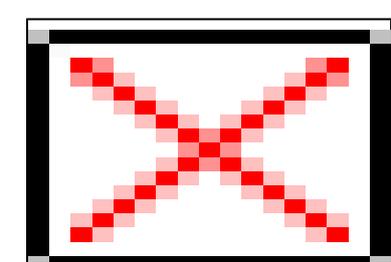
Tara Books is an international collective of writers, artists, designers and other creative professionals based in Chennai, South India. Founded in 1994 by Gita Wolf, Tara strive to experiment with the form of the book and to bring India's rich visualstorytelling traditions into the mainstream.



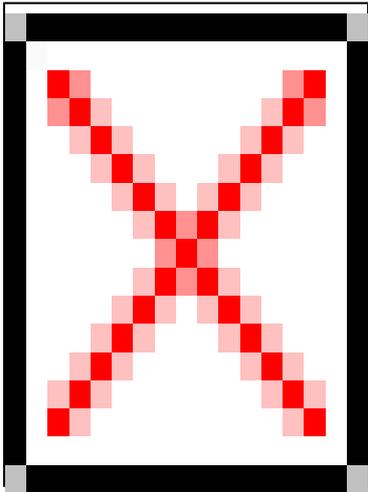
This month, some of the Tara Books team were in London to launch an exhibition of original work from their book [Drawing from the City](#) [3], a visual autobiography by self-taught folk artist TejuBehan. Gita Wolf explains

We first encountered TejuBehan along with her husband Ganesh Jogi at a craft fair in our city, Chennai, South India. Taken aback by the strength of the pieces of art that they had arranged on the floor around them, we invited the pair to our office, in the hope of working together. There we discovered Teju's incredible creative journey, and her love for drawing ? as she says ? ?women on the move?. From this encounter came our book **Drawing from the City**.

Seeing Teju's work on the walls of **The Illustration Cupboard** in London is another step in this remarkable journey; a lifetime away from her early life in rural Rajasthan.

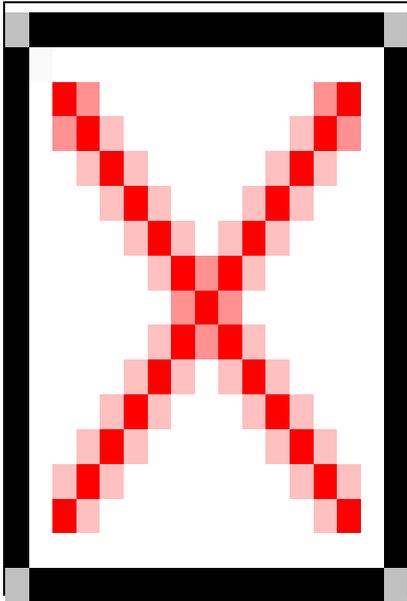


Born to an itinerant community that made their living by singing devotional songs, Ganesh and Teju's families began to find the traditional ways of making a living no longer viable. After a time, both made the journey to the city of Ahmedabad in the hope of work, and a better life.



There Teju and Ganesh met the remarkable artist Haku Shah. It was Haku who encouraged Ganesh to draw, and Ganesh in turn to encourage his wife to draw.

In **Drawing from the City** Teju tells this story visually in her own way, reflecting on her childhood, the impetus for travel, and of course her journey as an artist.



We hope that as we bring Teju's work to another city, and a different context, we can share her story with a new audience. For Teju this exhibition is another milestone, and a reminder of what she may yet do, as she adjusts to life without her beloved husband, who passed away just as the book was going to press.

[http://www.illustrationcupboard.com/exhibition\\_illustrations.aspx?ePage=0&eid=215](http://www.illustrationcupboard.com/exhibition_illustrations.aspx?ePage=0&eid=215) [4]

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**Source URL (retrieved on Nov '19):** <http://www.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/202/childrens-books/articles/drawing-from-the-city-tara-books-in-london>

**Links:**

[1] <http://www.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/gita-wolf>

[2] <http://www.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/202>

[3] <http://www.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/drawing-from-the-city>

[4] [http://www.illustrationcupboard.com/exhibition\\_illustrations.aspx?ePage=0&eid=215](http://www.illustrationcupboard.com/exhibition_illustrations.aspx?ePage=0&eid=215)