



Vernacular Branding

OPEN CALL FOR VISUAL ARTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Photography · Illustration · Typography · Posters · Branding
Street & Digital Art · Collage · Ephemera · Murals · Graffiti

DEADLINE: 10 OCTOBER 2025

Submissions here: www.vernacularbranding.in/submissions ↗

Email: contact@vernacularbranding.in ↗ **Website:** www.vernacularbranding.in ↗
Instagram: @vernacularbranding | @atelier_envisionar



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Nagpur / Münster – September 2025 – Vernacular branding in India borrows deeply from the country's languages, colours, and cultures to construct a distinct and authentic design identity. By weaving in local dialects, Hinglish idioms, and region-specific expressions, artists and designers speak in a tongue that feels familiar rather than imposed. Colour palettes often echo the vibrancy of Indian streets — from truck art neons and festival hues to the earthy tones of rural crafts — creating a visual language instantly tied to everyday life. Cultural motifs, whether drawn from Bollywood, cricket, folk art, or rituals, further root creative expression in lived experiences. Together, these elements transform visual work into more than just aesthetic appeal; they become cultural signifiers that make Indian identity feel native, relatable, and inseparable from the communities it serves.

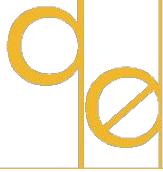
In *Vernacular Branding: Languages, Colours, and Cultures of Indian Identity*, **Prof. Bhuleshwar Mate**, in collaboration with **Kaushambi Mate**, maps this landscape with nuance and depth. Drawing from Mate's decades of design practice, teaching, and public engagement, the book interweaves archival research, field documentation, and creative interpretation to show how everyday palettes, idiomatic scripts, and cultural motifs are re-worked by designers to evoke authenticity and belonging. While acknowledging that the very word *vernacular* carries a colonial legacy of "othering" local practices, the authors challenge this framing by repositioning it as a site of cultural power rather than inferiority. In the Indian context, they argue, reclaiming *vernacular* means asserting the legitimacy of indigenous languages, colours, and visual traditions in shaping contemporary identity.

It is in this spirit that we announce an open call for visual arts — inviting contributions in photography, illustration, typography, posters, branding, street art, digital art, collage, ephemera, murals, graffiti, and other experimental formats. We seek works that engage with the textures of Indian life, whether through playful memory, critical reflection, or radical reinterpretation, to expand the conversation around vernacular identity in visual culture today.

Prof. Bhuleshwar Mate observes, "*To speak of vernacular branding is to speak of India's own visual democracy — where the hand-painted, the improvised, and the everyday stand shoulder to shoulder with global design systems.*"

Co-author Kaushambi Mate adds, "*By reclaiming the vernacular, we are not just looking back with nostalgia; we are shaping a future where Indian identity in design feels rooted, plural, and unapologetically authentic.*"





ABOUT THE PROJECT

PROJECT INTENT

Vernacular Branding explores how design reflects identity in India's everyday visual culture. The book launch and micro-exhibition aim to open up conversations around how Indian languages, colours, and cultural practices shape design identity. By bringing theory and practice together in a public format, the project intends to make the ideas of vernacular branding accessible beyond academic or professional circles.

PROJECT SCOPE

The scope of Vernacular Branding extends beyond a single publication. It is envisioned as an evolving platform: beginning with a book and micro-exhibitions, and growing into a collaborative archive of India's everyday design. It will serve both as a resource for artists and designers and as a reference for cultural research, education, and practice.

WHY IT MATTERS

In a global marketplace often dominated by homogenized aesthetics, this project highlights the value of India's diverse visual traditions in shaping contemporary branding. It matters because it reclaims the so-called "vernacular" as a vital, living design language — one that affirms cultural belonging while influencing how Indian brands present themselves to the world.

“

When we place everyday idioms, colours, and forms at the centre of branding, we are not just telling stories — we are making identity itself more inclusive, layered, and truly Indian.” — Kaushambi Mate





ABOUT THE AUTHORS

PROF. BHULESHWAR "ARUN" MATE, AUTHOR

Prof. Mate is a designer, academic, and founder of Envisionar Design Atelier. With decades of practice in visual communication, brand identity, and cultural initiatives, his work bridges design education and practice, focusing on how visual culture informs identity.

Visit Profile at www.bhuleshwarmate.com ↗



KAUSHAMBI MATE, CO-AUTHOR

Kaushambi is an architectural designer and planning specialist based in Germany. Previously a licensed architect in India, she works across architecture, identity, and design. As co-author of Vernacular Branding, she brings a cross-cultural perspective to questions of heritage, modern design, and media.

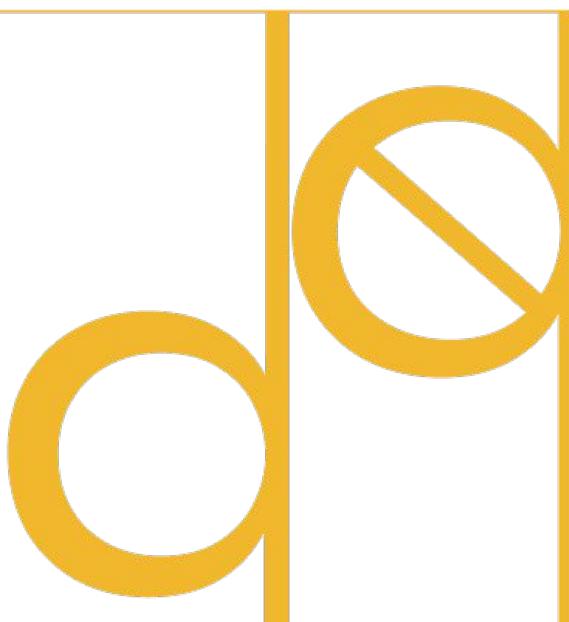
Visit Profile at www.kaushambimate.com ↗

“

"For me, vernacular branding is not about nostalgia but about recognising the living, breathing design languages of our streets and communities as valid cultural assets."

— Prof. Bhuleshwar Mate, Author, Vernacular Branding

www.vernacularbranding.in





CATEGORIES OPEN FOR SUBMISSION

DEADLINE: 10 OCTOBER 2025

Submit your work: www.vernacularbranding.in/submissions ↗

PHOTOGRAPHY

Street views, shopfronts, hand-painted vehicles, billboards, and everyday visuals that capture India's design identity. We also welcome photographs of cultural events, political posters, film graphics, textile or jewelry patterns, and shop displays — provided the focus is on visual culture, not individual portraits.

ILLUSTRATION & POSTERS

Hand-drawn or digital illustrations, poster designs, and graphic artworks that engage with India's cultural, social, and visual narratives. From festival posters to experimental reinterpretations, we're looking for works that reflect the spirit of communication in the public realm.

TYPOGRAPHY

Lettering, calligraphy, and type design rooted in Indian scripts and visual traditions. This includes street lettering, shop signs, multilingual compositions, experimental typography, and typefaces that bring vernacular voices into contemporary design.

BRANDING & IDENTITY

Logos, identity systems, packaging, and collateral that respond to Indian contexts — whether for local shops, small businesses, or cultural initiatives. We're seeking examples where branding connects with everyday life, tradition, and community.

STREET & DIGITAL ART

Graffiti, stencil, mural-inspired works, and digital experiments that reinterpret the street in virtual or hybrid space. This includes augmented/AI-based remixes and interactive design that borrows from the vernacular while engaging new media.

COLLAGE & ASSEMBLAGE

Mixed-media works that layer fragments of text, image, and material culture into new narratives. Collages and assemblages that echo India's visual density — from political posters to film graphics — are especially welcome.

EPHEMERA

Tickets, wrappers, matchboxes, labels, flyers, handbills, calendars, and other disposable prints that form the everyday visual archive of India. Contributions may include both original designs and documented collections.

MURALS & GRAFFITI

Large-scale wall works — religious, political, commercial, or purely aesthetic — that turn public surfaces into visual culture. From painted gully walls to protest art, we are looking for submissions that reflect the energy and contradictions of Indian streets.

OTHER: Not sure where your work belongs? Choose "Other." We're curious about boundary-pushing, experimental, or cross-disciplinary projects that still speak to India's visual identity.

All submissions are subject to our Legal Policy and Contributors' Rights: www.vernacularbranding/legal. ↗





PRESS KIT CONTENTS

VERSION 1

September 2025

PRESS KIT DOWNLOAD LINK:

www.vernacularbranding.in/press-kit ↗

1. **Vernacular Branding – Press Kit.pdf**
 - The main document with introduction, about, categories, submission info, disclaimers, credits.
2. **Campaign Posters (With Text)**
 - 8–10 images, finished campaign visuals
 - Formats: JPG (1080x1920 px for social)
3. **Visual Assets (Without Text)**
 - These show the “mood” of the project.
4. **Logos & Identity**
 - Project logo (both full “Vernacular Branding” and icon “କ-ବ” mark).
 - In PNG (transparent), SVG (vector), and JPG.
5. **Read Me (Credits + Usage).txt**



SAMPLE CAMPAIGN VISUALS

FROM THE OPEN CALL

September 2025

IDENTITY DESIGN

*Book Title &
Project Wordmark*

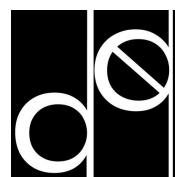
Vernacular
Branding

Typography Bemine (wordmark),
Afacad (titles & captions)

Secondary Colors



Favicon



Icons & Symbols





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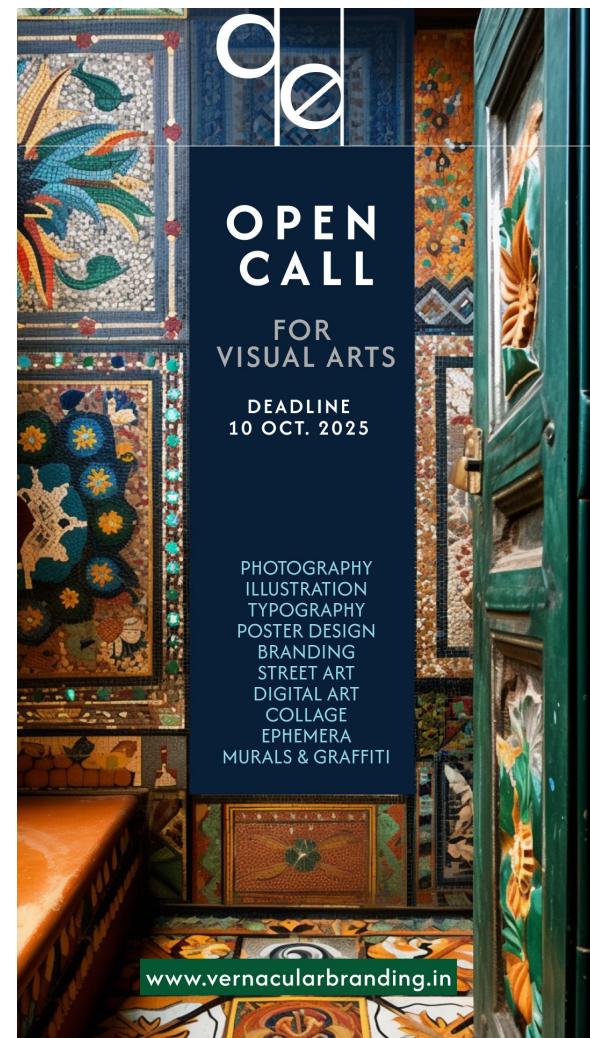
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