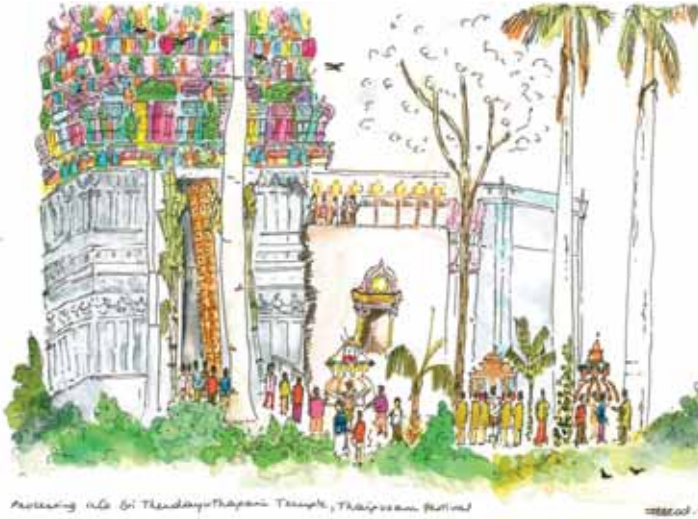


# Singapore Sketchbook

## Little India

By Siobhan Cool



### Thaipusam

During the Thaipusam Festival, I sat under a nearby tree and watched the seemingly never-ending line of kavadi-bearing devotees wait without complaint at the entrance to the Sri Thandayuthapani Temple. The queue stretched well down Tank Road as Singapore's Hindus stood in line to fulfill their vows at the end of the four-mile procession from the Sri Srinivasa Perumal Temple. I wondered not only at their stamina after their month-long fast, painful piercing and gruelling march, but also at the devotees' good cheer, no doubt buoyed by the boisterous and happy music from their supporters.

### Street Scene

After buying some nankhatai and other Indian biscuits at my favourite bakery in Serangoon Road, I found a table in Dunlop Street where I could sit and savour them. I sat outside a café, next to a provisions shop that was filled with floral garlands, boxes of diya, huge cooking pots and 'Welcome' banners, in readiness for the Deepawali shoppers.



### Inside an Indian Temple

At the back of the main hall of the Sri Veeramakaliamman Temple, full of chanting devotees this day, I passed by a cool, dark antechamber where a few sat in quiet contemplation – a peaceful, timeless niche (although the mandatory fire extinguisher tucked on the wall was a subtle reminder of the modern Singapore that lay beyond the temple walls).

Siobhan Cool is an STPI docent, avid artist and print-maker and works by day as general counsel for an airline.