



WHERE ART THOU?

A survey of the desi art and artists in the region reveals a scant but unique and growing scene.

Dr Ashish Goyal:
From a Plush
Atlanta Home to
the Slums of Mumbai

Suburban Memsahib:
The Stories of an
Indian-American Mother

The Young Turks of
Indian Politics

his canvases. A magical palette complements his wand like brush to illustrate his multicultural experiences. Goreja's paintings—landscapes and portraits—are a dynamic nexus between skill and introspection. Poignant and evocative, like well-written memoirs, his oeuvres have been showcased in London, Frankfurt, Vienna, Toronto, New York, Washington and Atlanta. His art and poetry have been published in over 3500 web sites.

Talking about his encounters with fellow *desi* artists he says, "I have seen some really talented artists and some not so great. But one does not come by many artists as people don't give much importance to art. If art is not just a hobby for you then you need concentration. You need to put your full attention—you have to spend time on it."

MALIKA GARRETT

Malika, soccer mom, lives the American dream—and conjures rustic images of India. A vortex



Malika Garret

of color, her larger than life artwork is testimony to her Indian lineage. Great grandniece of scientist Jadhish Chandra Bose, this Kolkata native was nestled amidst art and music. Almost two decades ago she came to Wesleyan College in Macon to study art. Hired by the advertis-



Malika's engaging portraiture of a village prostitute: "Faceless, as she has no real identity in society."

ing department of the New York Times she inadvertently found herself on the sales team. Attractive, vivacious and aesthetically fine-tuned, Malika went on to work with large corporations like Coca-Cola and Kodak.

All along Malika painted—a nocturnal pleasure—with a flask of *chai* at hand. Too busy to approach galleries she created her web site: www.mayonarts.com. South Asians and Americans alike are fascinated by her work, with the latter willing to pay for it. Her paintings retail from \$300 to \$8,000 depending on the size.

empirical value system of the West." Malika's fascination for Rajasthan is visible in compositions like "Gossip2". "Hookah", oil on canvas, is an engaging portraiture of a village prostitute, "faceless, as she has no real identity in society."

Ask Malika to name another South Asian artist in the area and she draws a blank. "We are doing well in every other field but where is our art?" questions the passionate painter. "Look at the African-American community or the Native American community -- they promote their artists." Malika seems genuinely despondent by the lack of support. Nonetheless, this versatile mother of two recently quit a lucrative corporate job to become a full time artist. Malika has fashioned a gallery in a portion her house in Woodstock, Georgia.

MONIKA NIKORE

Monika is eagerly waiting for her toddler to begin art class where finger painting is greeted with wows worthy of a Monet. A photographer, a digital artist—she does not "do weddings" like many South Asian folk incorrect-



Monika, recently finished work on Atlanta, a coffee table book on the city with an introduction by Jimmy Carter.

Malika participated in the Festival of India a few times but did not get the desired response.

During her sojourns to India she often gets commissions and is pleasantly surprised by the money it brings. "I paint very fast. A 3 ft x 4 ft would take me about two weeks. I paint only with a palette knife." She vivifies her canvas with thick layers of oil paint in spirited colors. Malika describes her work as "The National Geographic in art—it is India. My work is realistic but abstract." It is a marriage between my Indianness and the