

enjoy the very best in travel

CHANGI CLASS

Feb/09 changiairport.com

ARTISTICALLY INCLINED

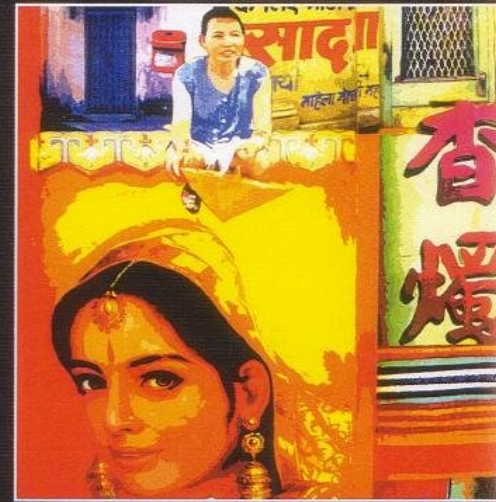
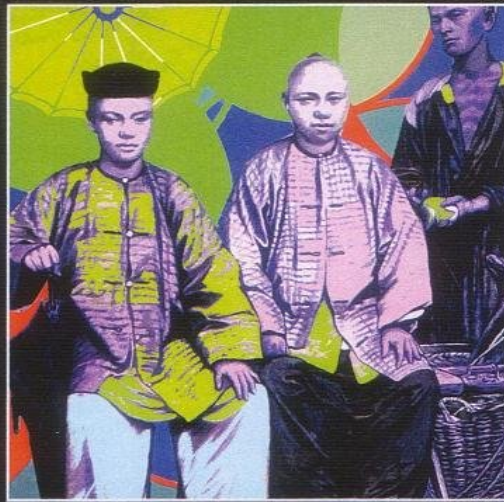
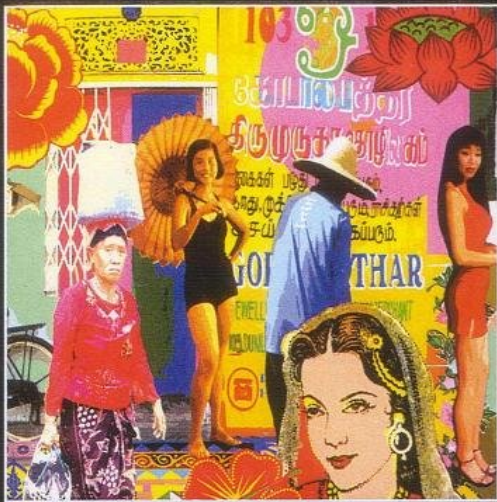
Art Deco in Singapore

How the country's architectural past is surviving in the present

Istanbul's Artistic Riches

Turkey's capital has art, culture and history aplenty





Art Attack!

Architect-turned-artist Ketna Patel likes to describe herself as “happily culturally schizophrenic,” and it shows in *Asia Pop*, her exuberant, multi-hued project that celebrates Asian street culture and the mundane. We caught up with her as she was on her way to the airport and asked her to sound off on:

Whether she had always known she was going to be an artist

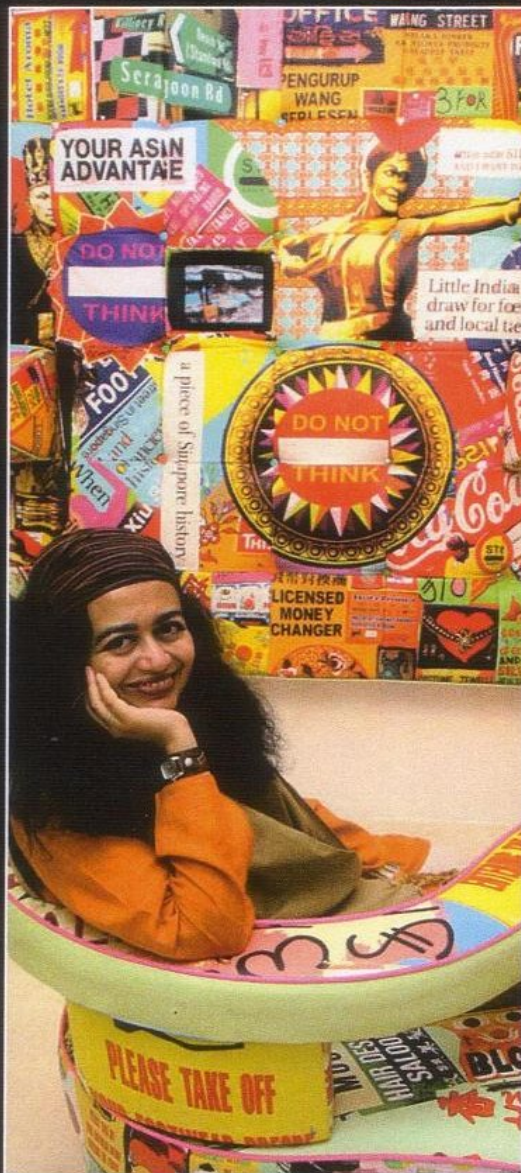
No, I wanted to be an archeologist when I was younger. I wanted to travel to the past and see how people lived and dressed 500 years ago. But that didn't work out.

What keeps her awake at night

I get into a panic about the world spinning too fast, that we don't see a more equitable representation of the world in the mass media. A lot of the information available is focused on the more developed parts of the world. Switch on HBO or Cinemax and you get a very one-sided view that's dominated by Western pop culture. That's why I try to give the ordinary people on the street their 15 minutes of fame.

Who she'd invite if she were throwing a dinner party

Chairman Mao Zedong (I'd ask him what planet he was on when he did all the things he did), Germaine Greer, Albert Einstein (he's quite a wacky guy with plenty of metaphysical ideas), Clarissa Pinkola Estes, Rabindranath Tagore and Jesus.



The last time she fell in love with a piece of art
When I was in Kashmir last July, I saw a lot of trucks from Punjab and they had the most amazing, over-the-top art painted on them. They were like embroidered saris, except they were trucks carrying ordinary things like rubber. The truck drivers spend so much time in them that they turn them into little temples. It's a precious art form on an ordinary canvas.

Her favorite travel destination

India. It's a place where you can travel back in time—and I don't mean the temples and stuff. It's so chaotic you have to leave your rationality behind, and it forces you to be in an uncomfortable position—I get a kick out of this! My favorite place in India is Varanasi. It's the wedding present Lord Shiva gave to his wife and it's the oldest city in the world. It's like being in history without having to dig for it.

What airports can do to enhance the traveler's experience

Make people feel more human. Modern airports these days are created to impress in a sterile manner and they concentrate too much on shopping. Most of them [come across] as commercial places where shops are set up to get the traveler's last dollar. I think airports should be personal and intimate—they should be ambassadors of a country's culture, and not just of Chanel.