Expressing life as it is: Kiran Sainani

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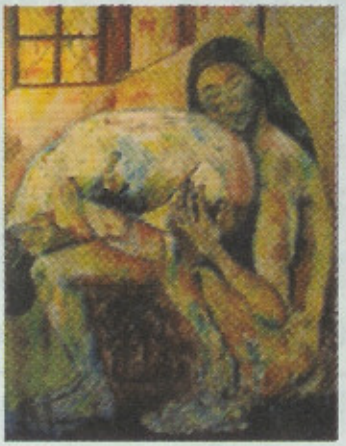
KIRAN Sainani has been painting for over thirty years and calls herself a South Asian artist. A figurative artist, whose paintings express strong emotions and subjects such as poverty and abuse, Sainani's works have been exhibited along with those of Sadequain, Ali Imam and Bashir Mirza.

Having spent her formative years in Karachi, Pakistan where she also worked as an art critique for the *Karachi Sun*, Kiran moved to Canada in 1977 when she got married to Ashok Sainani.

She comes from a well known family in Karachi—Motandas—that once owned the country's liquor business. They also owned one of the most significant landmark of Karachi—a building called Motan.

"The Pakistan I grew up in was not the Pakistan I left," says Kiran. "Pakistan was always in dictatorship and especially when you came from a well to do family, one was under scrutiny. My parents always informed us that we could not live in Pakistan. They have seen martial law in Pakistan and been through two wars in the Islamic state. As a minority, one was insecure in Pakistan."



One of the paintings from the Abu Ghraib series.

Around 18 years ago, during a visit to Pakistan with her two sisters, when her father asked if they were ready to leave, the spontaneous decision was "absolutely". "My father has now passed away, and my mother lives in Mumbai."

She has a degree in Fine Arts from the University of Karachi that she followed up with a four-year diploma in Fine Arts from the Arts Council of Karachi.

Having worked and exhibited in Toronto, Paris, and Karachi, Sainani believes art is something you find within yourself. "I like to make paintings that express my feelings about the world in the most direct way. An example is a series I have done on Abu Ghraib with figurative drawings. The prime mover of creativity of all my art is in the soul of the figure. The soul guides in creating timeless form."

"Kiran's works have life, not only through what they represent but through her effects and colour vibrations which attempt to make visible her sensitivity and mature handling," says artist Ali Imam.

In Canada, Kiran has exhibited at the Design Exchange in downtown Toronto and also at the Canadian Museum of Hindu Civilization that is housed in the Vishnu Temple in Richmond Hill. She devotes her time to making drawings and oil paintings and her works are priced between $3000 and $7000.

One of her clients, Sheena Singh, who owns a $5000 painting of Sainani's says: "Kiran's paintings have that intensity as if they come from the soul. It's a beautiful painting".

Kiran also does sketching, drawing and sculpting and some of her works can be seen on her website: *www.kiransgallery.com*.

Sainani has two children, Sanjay and Sana, and lives in Etobicoke with husband Ashok.