



## GADIS-GADIS

LOCATION > IREDA STREET | ARTIST > CAROLYN CASTAÑO

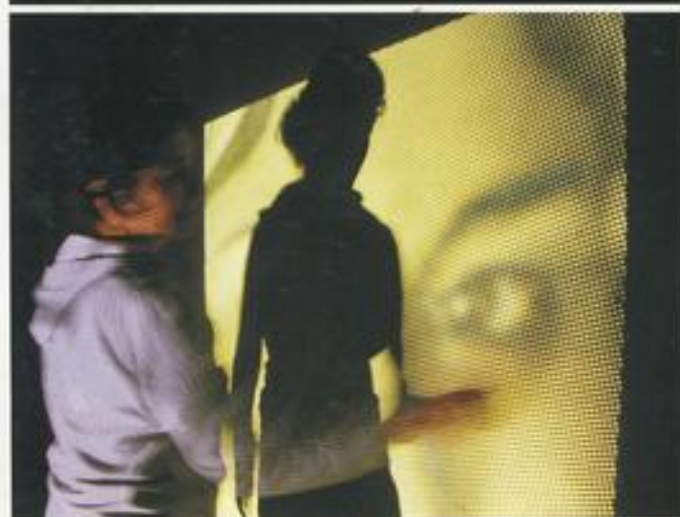


*Young virgins flying by on mopeds, plumes of diesel smoke blowing in their wake. They sport helmets for protection, while a hint of rosy fabric peaks out from underneath.*

*These lace and silk fabrics covered in dots, stripes, and paisleys are the materials of the Jilbab the head covering worn by Muslim women in Indonesia.*

*It surrounds beautiful brown eyes and brown skin, made not only to hide a woman's most powerful asset from unwelcoming eyes, but useful in offering respite from the treacherous sun of the tropics.*









*The Jilbab teases the passerby, making one wonder what lies underneath the head covering. Westerners tend to feel that this garb represents female oppression, but in Indonesia the women appeared not restricted by their head wrap, but empowered. Free from the sometimes unwanted attention that Western women have to deal with, the women I saw walked the streets confidently; laughing with friends, discussing ideas at the university, shopping for blue jeans and gossiping with abandon.*



*I began to see the Jilbab as veiled sensuality, with the power to lend a woman an air of aristocratic intelligence and sophistication. Imagine Audrey Hepburn in Jakarta.*

*In my work in Indonesia, titled "Gadis Gadis" (Girls- Girls), I wanted to make a tribute to these ladies I saw in the streets of Yogyakarta. It is a portrait of two Indonesian women taken from a postcard, their hair unraveling into a pattern of pink and black curls throughout the walls. My friends asked me why I painted Indonesian women with curly hair, if Asian women mostly have straight hair. I think of it as a kind of collaboration, a fusion of Latin sensibilities with Asian beauty and mystique. Besides, Can you really tell what their hair really looks like?*

