

- [Home](#)
- [About](#)
- [Projects](#)
- [Press](#)
- [Advertise](#)
- [Crochet Jobs](#)
- [2011 In Crochet](#)
- [Contact](#)
- [Subscribe](#)

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- [Crochet Art](#)
 - [Crochet Artists](#)
 - [swaddle](#)
- [Crochet Blog](#)
 - [Amazon Crochet](#)
 - [Crochet Concupiscence Info](#)
 - [Crochet Blog Sponsors](#)
 - [Crochet Giveaways](#)
 - [One Year Ago in Crochet](#)
 - [Crochet Discussion](#)
 - [crochet interview](#)
 - [Crochet Link Love](#)
 - [Blog Awards](#)
 - [Hooked Together](#)
 - [Crochet Quotes](#)
 - [Etsy Crochet](#)
 - [crochet accessories](#)
 - [crochet clothing](#)
 - [crochet dress](#)
 - [crochet earrings](#)
 - [crochet hat](#)
 - [crochet home decor](#)
 - [crochet patterns for sale](#)
 - [crochet scarves](#)
 - [crochet swimwear](#)
 - [crochet toys](#)
 - [Etsy Treasuries](#)
 - [My crochet work](#)
 - [Kathryn's Crochet Corner](#)
 - [My crochet books](#)
 - [Surmount the Stash 2012](#)
 - [Swaddle Crochet Art Project](#)
 - [year of projects](#)
 - [Twitter Crochet](#)
 - [Uncategorized](#)
- [Crochet Books](#)
- [Crochet Fashion](#)
 - [365 Ways to Wear Crochet](#)

- [Designer Crochet Project](#)
- [Crochet Jobs](#)
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 - [crochet around the world](#)
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 - [How to Crochet](#)
 - [Crochet Techniques](#)
 - [Crochet Technology](#)
 - [Crochet Tutorials](#)
 - [Men in crochet](#)
 - [Vintage Crochet](#)
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 - [Yarn Dyeing](#)
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Sri Lanka Crochet Artist Anoli Perera

by Kathryn on [September 5, 2011](#) · [0 comments](#)

in [Crochet Artists](#)

1



Sri Lanka's Anoli Perera uses doilies, [crochet](#) curtains and other items in her installation and sculptural

artwork.

More about crochet artist Anoli Perera

Anoli Perera is an artist who was born in Colombo, Sri Lanka. She has studied in the United States but currently lives and works in Colombo. She is considered an important player in the Sri Lanka art world, part of a wave of artists launched there in the last part of the twentieth century “who have professed a new ideological position in the art production in relation to the contemporary art knowledge and social context in Sri Lanka”.

In addition to educational degrees in art, she has undergraduate and graduate degrees in several smart topics including sociology and international affairs. She has also done significant [writing](#) about art and social topics. She was a founding member of the Theertha Association for Contemporary Sri Lankan Visual Artists, an organization whose objective it is “to explore the exchange of ideas across borders – ethnic, regional and artistic”. So Perera is an artist who is involved in international arts in many different ways and is certainly and active and prolific creator.

More about Perera’s crochet art

There is no way that I could describe Perera’s art work better than she describes it in her own words on the front page of her website:

“My work has everything to do with the social predicament. It is easy to live though one’s life being unconscious of one’s context of existence. The very moment this existence is revealed, once you go beyond the illusions and its anesthetizing and doping images of representations, you are confronted with the maze of contracts and contradictions of that existence. This becomes the very site where my psyche finds appropriate metaphors. My attention is drawn to narratives that are very much situated in a personal context. Therefore my art has an overwhelming tendency to be autobiographical, personal and intimate.”

She grew up with memories of crochet work and doilies and other [needlework](#) in the domestic setting and because her work has this autobiographical slant it has necessarily [been worked](#) into her pieces. Plus, she explores domestic life and relationships and social situations frequently and crochet is a great way to represent the feminine issues in these things.

What I adore about Perera’s artwork is the way that she uses different mediums (painting, sculpture, etc.) to explore the same topic within a series of pieces. She has had six solo exhibitions in Sri Lanka and has participated in group exhibitions around the world.

Favorite examples of crochet in Perera’s work

The work that I’ve seen around the web that interests me most is Perera’s series called *Memorizing an Era*, which she launched in 2008. It is all about the way that women make their homes and how they create comfort for their families. It reflects a battle between nostalgia for this time and yet knowing that historically this has been confining for the women. It is this series that includes doilies and other crochet.





The photo above is a part of the series that is paintings done on top of book pages from a doily or crochet lace book. It is based on “the concept of ‘bricolage’ where fragments from different written texts, raw materials, objects and painted surfaces are juxtaposed together giving a textured surface” ([source](#)).



Another series that I really like is her series called *Comfort Zone*, which she also used to explore issues of femininity and domesticity in the lives of the women who came before her in the family. It includes paintings and other pieces but the one I like is her installation, which looks like it has crochet curtains worked into the design although I don't have any details about the piece:



And I enjoy some of the images from Perera's *Measured, Stitched and Stretched Series*, which are paintings but reflect some elements of crochet:



Her piece *Dinner for Six: Inside Out* is currently part of a four-month contemporary art exhibit at the Devi Art Foundation, in which forty modern artists explore the “locational and emotional dimensions of home”. ([source](#)) Here’s an image of that:



Finally I really like this mixed media piece called *I am the Queen* that dates back to 2001:



A Favorite Perera Quote

“I weave my work like a spider [weaving](#) its web. I see the woman as that spider. She weaves her complex net of social, economic and cultural relationships around her. It becomes her safety net as well as the nurturing cocoon of the family to whom she is bound.” [source](#)

Artist Perera around the web

- [Anoli Perera’s website](#). This includes great descriptions of her work and a rich image gallery.
- [Anoli Perera’s blog](#). Not updated very often but it’s another little resource for her work.
- [Anoli Perera on Facebook](#).
- [ArtDesignCafe](#) article about Perera.
- [International Museum of Women](#) profile of Perera.

What do you think about the work and message of this crochet artist?



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3
3

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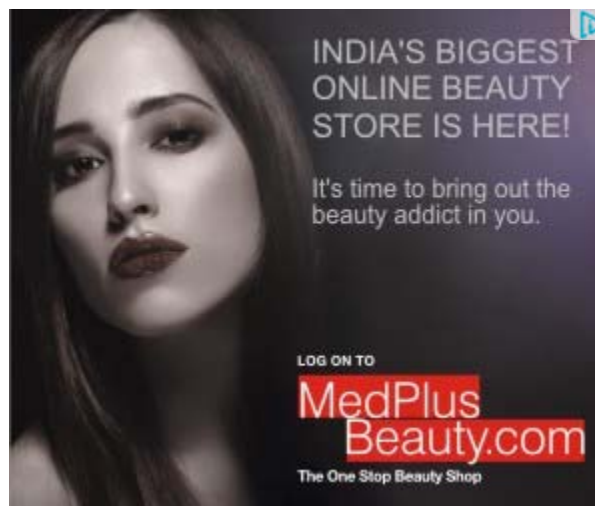
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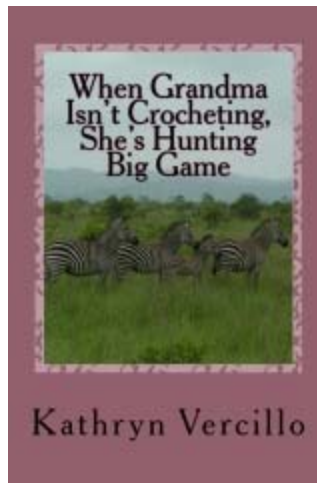
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