

**Anjum Singh**

Talwar Gallery

108 East 16th Street, Manhattan

Through Wednesday

With their lucid forms and appetizing colors, the six paintings in Anjum Singh's New York solo debut make an instantly welcoming first impression, though they tend to keep their meanings in reserve.

In one picture, two Coca-Cola glasses stand side by side; one has a crumpled-up pink straw floating inside, the other has a spigot hovering near its center. In another piece the same spigot emerges from a cloudlike mass in the shape of the Indian subcontinent and the straw has turned into an intestinal system. In a third painting, colored lines radiate like air tubes or arteries from a manhole cover. In a fourth, bees trapped in jars float against a honey-gold background of honeycomb patterns.

Ms. Singh, who lives in New Delhi, has said that her paintings reflect the world immediately around her. This may account for her images of entangling systems — honeycombs, tubes — that are half-organic, half-mechanized. It may also explain her repeated images of compromised purity, in a country where clean water can be hard to find, where blood can be tainted with the H.I.V. virus and where the traditional and the modern meet in an adulterated cultural blend. Like many young artists, Ms. Singh thrives on precisely this blend, and she is forging from it an art of visual panache and enigmatic wit.

HOLLAND COTTER