

# WHO'S THAT GIRL?

## RANJINI CHANGES THE FACE OF R&B AND HIP-HOP

The music video for the new single titled "This Guy" may not seem out of the ordinary. Of course, the beautiful, gyrating bodies and pitch-perfect voices require extraordinary effort, but a decade after the Latin explosion, the sight of brown skin no longer stops admirers in their tracks. But take a closer look. The midriff-baring top paired with jeans is none other than a traditional sari blouse. A hip-hop dance sequence shows flashes of classical Indian steps. And the large, almond-shaped eyes dominant on the singer's face are undeniably Indian.

Singer Ranjini Ettigi is poised to make her mark on the R&B and pop-music scene in a way no other South Asian has before. A native of Richmond, Virginia, she started vocal training with her mother at the tender age of five. "My mother trained me in the Carnatic music tradition from a young age," Ranjini says. However, her training in traditional Indian arts did not end there. Ranjini also mastered the veena, a classical Indian instrument similar to the sitar, and learned to dance bharatnatyam, an ancient dance tradition hailing from Ranjini's native South India. And her love of music inspired her to learn the piano on her own before her parents decided to invest in formal training.