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Gallery Hours: Wednesday to Friday, 11am-5pm, Saturday, 11am-3pm, and by appointment

## *Be/Longing - Art from the South Asian Women's Creative Collective*

*Curated by Brooke Seidemann & Monica Jahan Bose*

**Exhibition Dates: March 1st - April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

**Opening Reception: March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013 from 7-9 pm**, featuring *Unraveling*, a performance by Marcy Chevali

**Artist's Talk & Performance: April 13th, 2013 from 3.30 - 5.30pm**, with closing reception from 5:30 – 7pm



Washington, DC – The *Joan Hisaoka Healing Arts Gallery* is honored to present *Be/Longing*, debuting the work of the **South Asian Women's Creative Collective (SAWCC)** in Washington, DC. The artists in the exhibition are Samira Abbassy, Jaishri Abichandani, Nida Abidi, Amina Ahmed, Shelly Bahl, Marcy Chevali, Ruby Chishti, Chitra Ganesh, Monica Jahan Bose, & Sa'dia Rehman.

*Be/Longing* is a story of rapture and struggle and fierce female identity, saturated with history, religion, and an explosive mix of ideas and materials. The artists are part of SAWCC (pronounced “Saucy”), a collective of women artists of the South Asian diaspora, each tackling the politics of gender, hierarchy, and sexuality within the framework of a post-

colonial, globalized world. *Be/Longing* also addresses how diasporic women – each with her own ambiguous identity and multiple allegiances – navigate “belonging” to a country, a place, and a collective.

Artists in *Be/Longing* reference the body, directly or metaphorically, whole or dismembered, to address the duality of female experience. Abichandani (India/USA) uses whips and crystals to make “drawings,” alluding to both ecstasy and domination. Chishti's (Pakistan/USA) poetic soft figures made of nylon stockings are headless females with just breasts and genitalia. Bose (Bangladesh/USA) uses saris and other garments in her work to represent the female body and sexuality. In her video, Abidi (USA/India) interchanges a veiled woman with paparazzi taking photos of pop idols, addressing the global fetishization of women's bodies. Ganesh (USA/India) draws on mythology and pop culture to create images with alternate narratives of sexuality and power in a world where untold stories keep rising to the surface. Emboldened by collective action, these marginalized voices defy regional and sexual boundaries to connect with the greater question of what it is to “belong.”

SAWCC has hosted annual exhibitions at Exit Art, the Henry Street Settlement and Chuchifritos Gallery in New York. Its critically acclaimed fifteenth anniversary exhibition, *Her Stories*, was held at the Queens Museum of Art in 2012 and will travel in June 2013 to the Taubman Museum in Roanoke, Virginia. More information - <http://www.sawcc.org>



Please join us on **Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup>** for a closing featuring the performance/installation, *Indelible Scent*, by **Monica Jahan Bose** from 3:30pm to 4:30pm, followed by the Artists' Talk from 4:30pm to 5:30pm, and a closing reception from 5:30 to 7pm.

For more images of works visit [www.smithcenter.org/gallery](http://www.smithcenter.org/gallery) or email [alaina@smithcenter.org](mailto:alaina@smithcenter.org).

Artwork Captions: Jaishri Abichandani's *The Return of Devastasia*, Ruby Chishti's *Soft Restraints* & Monica Jahan Bose's *Indelible Scent*

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*Wines:*

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**About:** The *Joan Hisaoka Healing Arts Gallery* is a nonprofit arts space dedicated to exhibiting fine art exploring the innate connection between healing and creativity. Exhibitions feature contemporary artists addressing significant issues, such as spirituality, multiculturalism, and health. The gallery is a part of *Smith Center for Healing and the Arts*, a health, education, and arts organization that provides deep healing resources to people living with cancer, their families, and caregivers.

<http://www.smithcenter.org/gallery>