

Climate Change Activists Using Art and Technology to Connect Communities during Covid-19 Pandemic

Storytelling With Saris presents Warming Waters! Warming Waters marries fiber art with new media to address climate change.

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Climate Change Activists Using Art and Technology to Connect Communities during Covid-19 Pandemic: Social Responsibility beyond Social Distancing



Warming Waters Public Art Installation Virtual Event

Monica Jahan Bose, in partnership with Robin Bell, presents WARMING WATERS, a [public art](#) project that links communities in Washington D.C. and Katakali Village, Bangladesh to create climate-themed saris and video projections celebrating the 50th Anniversary of [Earth Day](#) in Georgetown, Washington D.C. Monica Jahan Bose is an artist, environmental activist, and the creator of Storytelling with Saris. For several years, she has used art and experiential workshops to draw attention to the damning impact of climate change, with a particular focus on its greater devastation to women and communities of color across the globe.

“Through WARMING WATERS, Robin Bell and I highlight the climate crisis and the warming and rising waters with an installation of 22 blue and white saris and projections of the community coming together to build this project. Sitting in isolation on #EarthDay50 I am aware that both climate change and COVID-19 more negatively impact people of color and those in lower-income communities. In the midst of these challenges, art is especially important to give us hope, empowerment, and healing.” – Monica Jahan Bose.

Part of Bose’s long term project Storytelling with Saris, these 18-foot-long colorful cotton handloom saris are covered with customized woodblock printing, hand-painted images, and writings about climate change by participants residing throughout the District of Columbia. Bose has led over 30 live and online workshops with nearly 300 people of all ages, including low-income residents, senior citizens, and people of color, groups that tend to have less information about the impact of climate change and less access to the [arts](#).

Now more than ever, people are turning to the arts, culture, and entertainment for social, emotional, and educational purposes during this isolation. “We will not let isolation prevent us from creating art that builds community and tackles the climate crisis.” When the pandemic is over, we have much work to do, and the climate crisis needs to be addressed. This work directly speaks to challenges ahead.” – Robin Bell.

In lieu of the public outdoor installation, Bose and Bell will use technology to amplify their work and mission beyond the nation's capital. A livestream showcase will be held on April 22, 2020 recognizing Earth Day 50. This project is supported by the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities Public Art Building Communities Grant Program, along with community and media partners Mayor's Office of Asian & Pacific Islander Affairs, WPFW 89.3FM and We Act Radio.

"As the District's arts agency, the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities is proud to support WARMING WATERS, as it directly engages DC residents in creating the art project along with the people of Bangladesh," said Dr. Heran Sereke-Brhan, Executive Director of DCCA. "Through the arts, this project connects communities on different continents to learn about climate change and become empowered."

VIRTUAL EARTH DAY 50 CLIMATE ART CELEBRATION:

April 22, 2020 12 pm - 1 pm - Facebook Live and Periscope from the studios of Monica Jahan Bose and Robin Bell.

Event Link - <https://www.facebook.com/StorytellingWithSaris/live/>

- Installation showcase, videos, and images of the workshops plus Video Messages from Heran Sereke-Brhan, Executive Director, DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, Ben De Guzman, Director, DC Mayor's Office On Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs, Elizabeth Brandt, DC Field Consultant, Mom's Clean Air Force, and A.Tianna Scozzaro, Director, Gender Equity & Environment, Sierra Club

RESCHEDULED PUBLIC ART INSTALLATION DATE [Tentative]:

- July 22-25, 2020 - C&O Canal wall in Georgetown - Open All Day with Projections from 8 pm - 10 pm | 1000 Potomac St, NW, Washington, DC.

About Monica Jahan Bose

A Bangladeshi-American artist and climate activist, Bose has won numerous grants and commissions and exhibited her work extensively in the US and internationally (20 solo shows, many group exhibitions). With her participatory performances, large scale installations, and public art projects, Bose has engaged thousands of people. Her ongoing collaborative project Storytelling with Saris has traveled to ten states and six countries and been featured in numerous publications and TV and radio programs. Her work has appeared in the Miami Herald, ABC's Good Morning Washington, the Washington Post, Art Asia Pacific, the Milwaukee Sentinel, the Honolulu Star-Advertiser, the Japan Times, and all major newspapers in Bangladesh.

In 2017-2019, she had multiple art events in Paris, France, Athens, Greece and Rome, Italy and created a large-scale installation and performance for the Smithsonian in Honolulu. She has a BA in the Practice of Art (Painting) from Wesleyan University, a post-graduate Diploma in Art from Santiniketan, India, and a JD from Columbia Law School.

About Robin Bell

Founder of Bell Visuals, Bell is an award-winning editor, video journalist, and multimedia artist based in Washington DC. Bell works on a range of creative, political and public interest projects. Building upon his formal training as a classical printmaker, Bell developed a unique style of live video collage which he has performed at well-known venues, including The Kennedy Center, 9:30 Club, The Phillips Collection in Washington DC, Central Park Summer Stage in NYC, and The Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles California.

Bell was the lead video editor for PBS television show Foreign Exchange with Fareed Zakaria. He also taught video classes at the Corcoran College of Art and Design. Bell's commitment to social change through the dissemination of information via video, sound and image is present throughout his artistic career. In 2005, Bell co-produced Operation Ceasefire, a seminal anti-war concert on the national mall. His feature-length documentary, Positive Force: More Than a Witness: 30 Years of Punk Politics In Action, premiered in 2014. His incisive 2017 projection, Emoluments Welcome, garnered media attention from the BBC, CNN, New York Times, L.A. Times, Huffington Post and Hyperallergic, among others.

For high-resolution images © 2020 Monica Jahan Bose:

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1loc0itV2BsuWGm4L8U48jDraghLL_dUu

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