



FILMS

US actor Johnny Depp speaks to Spanish actress Penelope Cruz during the press conference of 'Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides' presented out of competition at the 64th Cannes Film Festival on May 14, 2011 in Cannes. AFP PHOTO



FESTIVAL

A Sri Lankan shop owner waits for customers with his Buddha images for sale at a roadside stall in Colombo, Sri Lanka on May 15, 2011 as the predominantly Buddhist country awaits the celebration of Vesak on the full moon of May, expected tonight for this year (May 17). Vesak is a thrice-blessed day for Buddhists as it commemorates the birth, enlightenment and the passing away of the Buddha. On Vesak Day, lanterns made from bamboo frames and covered in coloured paper are hung inside every home and illuminated displays decorate the streets. AFP PHOTO

Monica Jahan Bose's 'Who Have You Left Behind?'

ART

May 12, the Embassy of Bangladesh in Washington hosted a solo exhibition of artist Monica Jahan Bose, inaugurated by Bangladesh's ambassador to the USA, Akramul Qader.

The exhibition includes bold images of mixed-media and installations using cut and burnt saris. The 31 paintings are fragmented narratives, often autobiographical, telling stories with underlying nuances about the rights of women, religious fundamentalism, and global warming.

Bose transformed the space in the Embassy with her installations using saris wound into sheer pod-like shapes hanging from power cords of the second story balcony and onto the main auditorium. She cut out designs in the fabric that she says are an allusion to the latticed walls in the women's chambers (the hawa mahals) of Moghul palaces, the perforated walls that allowed royal women to observe the world outside while remaining unseen. Bose raises questions about the role of women in maintaining heritage in a globalizing world where women still lack power. She stated, "My art is a journal of my thoughts and reactions to our world. I explore identity, love, and gender. I use women's clothing – the sari, sari blouse, boots – to comment on women's place in the world. Women are so often defined by what we wear. I am interested in the coverings that are considered appropriate for women, and the duality women face between being 'attractive' yet 'virtuous.' I am fascinated by the dichotomies between tradition and globalization, and love and violence. I try to create work that is beautiful yet thought-provoking, with the goal of stimulating dialogue towards a more tolerant and equal world."

