

# CIVILIAN

ART PROJECTS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

March 18, 2018

**CONTACT:**

Jayne McLellan

[jayne@civilianartprojects.com](mailto:jayne@civilianartprojects.com)

202-607-3804

Facebook: Civilian Art Projects

Twitter: Civilianartproj

## MONICA JAHAN BOSE

### Weather the Storm



**EXHIBITION ON VIEW:**

March 31 – April 21, 2018

**OPENING RECEPTION:**

Saturday, March 31, 2018, 7-9pm

**SARI WORKSHOP & SING-A-LONG:**

Saturday, April 14, 2018, 3pm

**ARTIST TALK & CLOSING RECEPTION:**

Saturday, April 21, 2018, 3pm

SAT 12:00 to 6:00 p.m. & by appointment  
4718 14th St NW/ Washington, DC / 202-607-3804 / [civilianartprojects.com](http://civilianartprojects.com)

Civilian Art Projects presents *Weather the Storm*: New paintings, video, prints, and saris by DC-based artist Monica Jahan Bose. The exhibition opens to the public on Saturday, March 31 at 7pm, and will be on view until April 21, 2018.

*Weather the Storm* is the culmination of numerous performances and climate art actions that Bose has led since November 2016. The title of the exhibition derives from a Bengali song that the artist has been singing in her performances, lines from which appear in her paintings. She has taken Tagore's "*Kharobayu Boye Bege* (Storm Winds Are Blowing)" and replaced "O boatman," with "O Woman" to create a feminist song about working together to row a boat to shore during a storm.

Over several years, Bose has collaborated with homeless women from Calvary Women's Services in Anacostia; women from One Billion Rising, a global platform to end violence against women; and the women of her ancestral village, Katakhal Village, Barobaisdia Island, Bangladesh. Bose's performances, paintings, videos, works on paper, and saris explore themes of empowerment, environment, mythology, and community.

According to the artist, "My new performance paintings try to capture the power of the body outdoors, situated in nature and the built environment, struggling to undo our damage to the earth. I returned to painting on canvas to document performance because paint best expresses movement and the strange magic of performance. Actually, I plan my performances as live paintings, with aesthetics as important as meaning. The exhibition creates a sensory experience of my recent multi-layered performance art actions on climate change."

A Bangladeshi-American artist and lawyer who has lived in seven countries, Bose uses Bengali and English text and women's writing as integral elements in her work, highlighting multilingualism and women's agency and literacy. Bose has long used the sari — 18 feet of unstitched handwoven fabric — to represent women's lives, both in her paintings and in her ongoing social practice project, *Storytelling with Saris*.

She has started using the coconut as a symbol of climate resilience. Each of her recent performances about climate change — in Miami, Washington, DC, Honolulu, Paris, and Katakhal Village, Bangladesh — involved months of planning to create a woman-centered community, which comes together to collect dozens of coconuts to build a raft, sew saris together to make a massive sari, write carbon reduction pledges on saris, or grow and plant a coconut tree.

The exhibition is accompanied by a new publication, *Rising Up to Climate Change: Storytelling with Saris*, and is funded in part by a grant from the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, which is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts.

Bose has exhibited her work extensively in the US and internationally (17 solo shows, numerous group exhibitions), and her over 20 performances have engaged thousands of people. Her ongoing collaborative project *Storytelling with Saris* has travelled to nine states and several countries and been featured in numerous publications and TV and radio programs. Her work has appeared in the *Miami Herald*, the *Washington Post*, *Art Asia Pacific*, the *Milwaukee Sentinel*, the *Honolulu Star Advertiser*, the *Japan Times*, and all major newspapers in Bangladesh. She recently created a large-scale installation and performance for the Smithsonian's Ae Kai Culture Lab in Honolulu. She will travel to Athens in July for a solo exhibition in connection with the UNESCO World Book Capital celebration. She has a B.A. in the practice of art (painting) from Wesleyan University, a post-graduate diploma in art from Santiniketan, India, and a J.D. from Columbia Law School.

# CIVILLIAN

---

ART PROJECTS

**Image credits:** “Storm Winds Are Blowing,” 2018.

Additional images can be found at [www.civilianartprojects.com](http://www.civilianartprojects.com). High-resolution images are available upon request. Exhibition hours are Saturday 12 to 6pm and by appointment.