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Bus Stop Bangladesh: a performance for Storytelling with Saris
by Monica Jahan Bose

Performance dates: June 4, 12, 19, 2013 / 5 – 7:30 pm

At Mt. Rainier City Hall, 1 Municipal Place, Mount Rainier, MD 20712



BUS STOP BANGLADESH is a three-part public intervention held on June 4th, 12th, and 19th from 5 to 7:30 pm outside the bus stop at Mt. Rainier City Hall featuring the stories and art of 12 women from Katakali Village, Bangladesh, an island community adversely affected by climate change, presented by artist/activist Monica Jahan Bose, and sponsored by *Art Lives Here*.

Through performance and installation, Monica Jahan Bose will bring the art and stories of a dozen women from a remote Bangladeshi island to Mt. Rainier. The

intervention will each day display four saris created with woodblock and hand-painted words and images by the women of Katakali Village, Bangladesh, as part of *Storytelling with Saris*, a collaborative printmaking and story project which highlights the achievement of literacy by women of Katakali. These saris will hang from Mt. Rainier City Hall, visually representing the story of each woman's achievements and courage in rebuilding her life, learning to read, and surviving successive cyclones and other effects of climate change.

The saris hanging from an American municipal building recreates the visual sensation of saris hanging while drying in the village. The performance will include sounds, voices, and songs recorded directly from the village, immersing the public with the sounds of a remote area in Bangladesh merged with the urban sounds of the bus stop. The juxtaposition of the rural with the urban, and the climate-impacted with the carbon-emitting, results in several dichotomous visual and auditory relationships between place, culture, and history. Bose will interact with the public, sharing stories and biographical postcards about the women who made the saris. *Bus Stop Bangladesh* calls attention to the issues of global literacy, climate change, and the critical role of women in bringing about social change.

Monica Jahan Bose is a Bangladeshi-American artist and activist. Her work includes painting, drawing, printmaking, installation and performance. She uses the sari as a metaphor for the female body and spirit, investigating gender, identity, desire, and women's role as carriers of tradition. Her performance/installation *Indelible Scent* for Art Asia Miami was featured in the Miami Herald's Basel Week coverage. Bose studied art at Wesleyan University and Shantiniketan (India) and has a law degree from Columbia University. She has been working on literacy and ecological projects with the women of Katakali for thirteen years. For more images or details see <http://storytellingwithsaris.com/> or contact Monica Jahan Bose (monicjahanbose@gmail.com or 202-509-6282).

Art Lives Here is a National Endowment for the Arts collaborative partnership in Mt. Rainier, Maryland between the arts community and local businesses, two community development corporations, four cities, and the Prince George's County. It seeks to enliven the Mount Rainier, Maryland town center and increase the regional visibility of the Gateway Arts District using a mix of temporary projects and equity investments to support existing small business, attract commercial in-fill, prepare for new anchor developments, and further strengthen the diverse, creative, streetwise communities.

Visit the Art Lives Here website at www.ArtLivesHereMD.wordpress.com to learn more about this year-long visibility campaign within the Gateway Arts District.

Also, visit www.myGatewayArts.org, the FREE online portal for arts activities in the Gateway Arts District; our community's best tool to search for artists, designers, arts-related organizations and businesses in the Gateway Arts District.

Contact Neena Narayanan, Art Lives Here Coordinator, at Joe's Movement Emporium, at Neena@joesmovement.org or 301-699-1819.

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Joe's Movement Emporium is the community performing arts center of World Arts Focus, a 501(c) (3) charitable organization founded in 1992. The mission is to promote participation and practice in dance, movement, and performing arts traditions from around the world while using the arts as a key tool to revitalize community. Founded in 1992, World Arts Focus provides educational and cultural programs incorporating dance, movement and performing arts traditions from around the world. For more information call (301) 699-1819 or visit joesmovement.org.

The National Endowment for the Arts was established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government. To date, the NEA has awarded more than \$4 billion to support artistic excellence, creativity, and innovation for the benefit of individuals and communities. The NEA extends its work through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector. To join the discussion on how art works, visit the NEA at arts.gov