IMAGINE PEACE

yoko ono
2011
IMAGINE PEACE

Among the earliest of artists working in the genre of Conceptual Art, Yoko Ono has consistently employed the theme of peace and used the medium of advertising in her work since the early 1960s. YOKO ONO IMAGINE PEACE Featuring John & Yoko’s Year of Peace explores these aspects of her work over the course of more than forty years.

Four recent and current works, IMAGINE PEACE MAPS (2003/2011); WISH TREE (1996/2011); ONOCHORD (2003/2011); and IMAGINE PEACE TOWER (2006/2011) offer gallery visitors an opportunity to participate individually and collectively with the artist in the realization of the work. Consider the world with fresh eyes as you stamp the phrase “IMAGINE PEACE” on the map location of your choice. Attach your wish for peace to the WISH TREE, and this wish will be sent to the IMAGINE PEACE TOWER in Reykjavik, Iceland, where it will shine on eternally, joining more than a million others previously collected. You are also welcome to beam the message “I Love You” to one and all using the ONOCHORD flashlights. You may take an ONOCHORD flashlight and an IMAGINE PEACE button as a gift to you from the artist and carry the message out into the world. As Ono has often observed: “The dream you dream alone is just the dream, but the dream we dream together is reality.”

The exhibition expands into the side gallery and throughout the region, with IMAGINE PEACE billboards and banners on campus and in the local community.

YOKO ONO IMAGINE PEACE Featuring John & Yoko’s Year of Peace was curated by Kevin Concannon and John Noga and first presented in 2007 at the Emily Davis Gallery at the Myers School of Art/The University of Akron.

Dr. Kevin Concannon and John Noga
ONOCHORD

I LOVE YOU

Yoko Ono
ONOCHORD, 2003/2011
Mixed media installation with 9-minute video and keychain flashlights © Yoko Ono
JOHN & YOKO’S YEAR OF PEACE (1969-1970)

Yoko Ono’s IMAGINE PEACE project carries forward conceptual and formal strategies the artist has employed from the earliest years of her career, not only in her seminal solo works, but in her collaborations with John Lennon. In 1965, she created works specifically for the advertising pages of The New York Arts Calendar. Picking up from her Instructions for Paintings, a 1962 exhibition at Tokyo’s Sogetsu Art Center in which she exhibited written texts on the gallery walls designed to inspire viewers to create 'the described images in their minds, with these IsReal Gallery works, Ono created purely conceptual exhibitions. The theme of peace is also evident in works such as White Chess Set, recreated here as Play It By Trust (Garden Set version) (1966/2011). Lennon’s songwriting during this period had shifted from more conventional themes of romantic love to grander anthems for the Flower Power generation. The Beatles’ worldwide satellite broadcast of Lennon’s “All You Need Is Love” in the summer of 1967 featured a parade of signs with the word “Love” in multiple languages. The couple’s most famous collaborative works, the Bed-Ins (1969) and the War Is Over! campaign (1969-1970), were conceived as elements of a larger peace advertising campaign. The Bed-Ins took advantage of the inordinate amount of press attention the couple received by inviting the world press to their honeymoon suite where they talked about peace. As Ono told Charles Childs of Penthouse magazine: “Many other people who are rich are using their money for something they want. They promote soap, use advertising propaganda, what have you. We intend to do the same.”

In December of 1969, Ono and Lennon launched their War Is Over! campaign, a project that included billboards and posters in eleven cities of the world simply declaring “War Is Over! If You Want It. Happy Christmas from John & Yoko.” As with Ono’s earliest instruction pieces, viewers were invited to transform their dreams into reality. Ono has explained, “All my work is a form of wishing.”

Dr. Kevin Concannon and John Noga
Imagine Peace Tower
2006/2011
Videy Island, Reykjavík, Iceland
Courtesy of Yoko Ono
YOKO ONO IMAGINE PEACE
Featuring John & Yoko’s Year of Peace
September 6 - October 15, 2011

September 6th, 1:00 - 2:00 pm
Lecture:
“Yoko Ono: Imagining Peace 1966-2011”
Dr. Kevin Concannon
Professor of Art History and
Director, School of Visual Arts, Virginia Tech

Presented by
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Curated by
KEVIN CONCANNON and JOHN NOGA

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Most of all, I want to thank Yoko Ono for sharing her work and message with the Stony Brook community.

Rhonda Cooper
Director

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University Art Gallery
Staller Center for the Arts
Stony Brook University
Stony Brook, New York 11794-5425
Tel: 631.632.7240 Fax: 631.632.1976
www.stallercenter.com/gallery

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Yoko Ono
IMAGINE PEACE, 2003/2011
Billboard installation (visible in Gallery and on banners and billboards at Stony Brook University and local communities)
www.IMAGINEPEACE.com