

# **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  
i                      ii                      iii

YOKO ONO 2011

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."

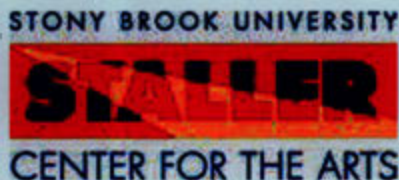
Dr. Kevin Concannon and John Noga



John Lennon & Yoko Ono  
Montreal Bed-In, 1969  
Photo: Ivor Sharp  
© Yoko Ono



Yoko Ono  
*IMAGINE PEACE TOWER*  
2006/2011  
Videy Island,  
Reykjavik, 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

UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY, STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY

Originally organized by

THE MYERS SCHOOL OF ART, THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON

Curated by

KEVIN CONCANNON and JOHN NOGA

Original catalogue available at Gallery desk

---

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to express my gratitude to Kevin Concannon, John Noga, and Studio One, NYC, for their assistance with this exhibition. I also want to thank Bag One Arts, NYC, and Mikihiko Hori, Alexandria, Virginia, for generously lending important works for this exhibition.

The 2011-2012 University Art Gallery exhibition schedule is made possible by a generous grant from the Paul W. Zuccaire Foundation. Additional funding has been provided by the Friends of Staller Center.

I also want to express my appreciation to members of the Staller Center for the Arts staff: Joe Esser, Pat Moran, Pete Pantaleo, and Dan Richholt, for installation assistance; Olga Lomshakova, Nicole Robilotta, and Pancho Westendarp, Gallery Assistants; Cristina Cruz, Elena Alexandra Iosub, Sally Lau, Elizabeth Lee, Alex Mei-Yang Liang, Eileen Quaranto, Jessica Rybak, Amy Tanzillo, Jason Yim, and Quimeng Wang, Gallery Interns; Liz Silver, Staller Center Production Manager, Liz Lamendola, Technical Director, and the Staller Center Technical Crew for exhibition lighting; and Aubrey Szczygiel, Gallery Secretary.

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

Rhonda Cooper  
Director

Catalogue design: Karsten Grumstrup  
© 2011 University Art Gallery, Stony Brook University

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](http://www.stallercenter.com/gallery)

Cover image:

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](http://www.IMAGINEPEACE.com)