

CONTACT: Christine Kaculis
Susan Blond, Inc.
212-333-7728 x130
Email: christinek@susanblondinc.com

YOKO ONO TO ADDRESS THE UN'S GENERAL ASSEMBLY ABOUT LANDMARK "BACK TO THE GARDEN" GLOBAL ARTS INITIATIVE

To commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the Atomic Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Yoko Ono, along the Mayors for Peace alliance, launches unprecedented arts initiative to eliminate nuclear weapons by the year 2020.

NEW YORK, May 3, 2005 –Yoko Ono will speak to the General Assembly of the United Nations tomorrow, May 4, 2005, regarding the launch of the *Back to the Garden* arts initiative, a program designed to support the *Mayors for Peace* “2020 Vision” campaign, which seeks the elimination of nuclear weapons by the year 2020. *Mayors for Peace*, an organization that consists of 942 Mayors from 110 countries representing half a billion people, partnered with EPOP International, a company solely dedicated to creating cause-related initiatives, to create and develop *Back to the Garden*. This arts initiative will comprise of an unprecedented benefit concert and five-year traveling art exhibit to support the “2020 Vision” campaign and call for a true global liberation from the threat of nuclear annihilation.

Ono, who will speak during the UN's during the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference at the UN, is a fitting representative for the *Back to the Garden* initiative given that she is a survivor of the Tokyo fire bombings during World War II and witnessed the terror of modern warfare first-hand. As result of that harrowing experience, Ono has spent much of her life fighting for peace, often expressing herself though art.

“EPOP is honored to be apart of this campaign and firmly believe that artists from around the world will help Mayor Akiba shine a spotlight on the complex problem of nuclear weapons, and show the public how they can help affect a solution through his ‘2020 Vision’ campaign,” stated EPOP CEO David Clark. The name of the initiative, *Back to the Garden*, is borrowed from music luminary Joni Mitchell's song “Woodstock” and refers to the Garden of Eden and a time before weapons of mass destruction existed.

In addition, prior to Ono's address to the UN General Assembly tomorrow, Christie's Auction House is supporting a benefit art auction tonight with artists including Yoko Ono, Kiki Smith and Julian LeVerdiere participating. All proceeds of the “Back to the Garden” art initiative will go to the Nihon Hidankyo, the largest organization of A-bomb survivors and a nominee for the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize. This organization, based in Japan, represents the 300,000 living survivors of the atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, also called the “Hibakusha.”

ABOUT

MAYORS FOR PEACE

The Mayors for Peace, which is represented by 942 Mayors from 110 countries representing half a billion people, builds solidarity and facilitates coordination among the cities that support the Program to Promote the Solidarity of Cities toward the Total Abolition of Nuclear Weapons. The 2020 Vision

Campaign is providing renew inspiration to peace activists everywhere and is reaching out to involve new constituencies in this non-partisan effort.

NIHON HIDANKYO

The Nihon Hidankyo is nominated for the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize. They represent the 300,000 living witness/survivors (or hibakusha). Its officers and members are all atomic bomb survivors. Founded in 1956, Nihon Hidankyo have helped build the worldwide nuclear abolition movement and have testified at numerous United Nations sessions on nuclear test bans, nuclear non-proliferation, and disarmament. In recent years, Nihon Hidankyo has worked with a range of Japanese and other nongovernmental organizations to organize citizens' conferences focusing attention on the consequences of nuclear war and advocating the abolition of nuclear weapons.

EPOP INTERNATIONAL

Founded in 2000, EPOP creates and produces unique cause-related events. In addition to creating the Back to the Garden initiative, EPOP most recently originated The Anne Frank 75th Birthday Tribute, and "46664," the landmark AIDS initiative in South Africa hosted by Nelson Mandela and supported by Oprah Winfrey, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, President Bill Clinton, Sir Richard Branson and others. The event was globally broadcast on United Nations World AIDS Day on MTV and BCC, and included performances by Bono and The Edge of U2, Beyonce, The Corrs, Queen, Peter Gabriel, and many others.

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