

= Yoko Ono =

Yoko Ono ( 小野 洋子 , Ono Yoko , born February 18 , 1933 ) is a Japanese multimedia artist , singer , songwriter , and peace activist who is also known for her work in performance art , music , and filmmaking . She is the widow and second wife of singer @-@ songwriter John Lennon .

Ono grew up in Tokyo , and studied at Gakushuin . She withdrew from her course after two years and rejoined her family in New York in 1953 . She spent some time at Sarah Lawrence College , and then became involved in New York City 's downtown artists scene , including the Fluxus group . She first met Lennon in 1966 at her own art exhibition in London , and they became a couple in 1968 . Ono and Lennon famously used their honeymoon at the Hilton Amsterdam as a stage for public protests against the Vietnam War with their performance , Bed @-@ Ins for Peace , in Amsterdam and Montreal in 1969 . She brought feminism to the forefront in her music , influencing artists as diverse as the B @-@ 52s and Meredith Monk . Ono achieved commercial and critical acclaim in 1980 with the chart @-@ topping album Double Fantasy , a collaboration with Lennon released three weeks before his death .

Public appreciation of Ono 's work has shifted over time , helped by a retrospective at a Whitney Museum branch in 1989 and the 1992 release of the six @-@ disc box set Onobox . Retrospectives of her artwork have also been presented at the Japan Society in New York City in 2001 , in Bielefeld , Germany , and the UK in 2008 , and Frankfurt , and Bilbao , Spain , in 2013 . She received a Golden Lion Award for lifetime achievement from the Venice Biennale in 2009 and the 2012 Oskar Kokoschka Prize , Austria 's highest award for applied contemporary art .

As Lennon 's widow , Ono works to preserve his legacy . She funded Strawberry Fields in New York City , the Imagine Peace Tower in Iceland , and the John Lennon Museum in Saitama , Japan ( which closed in 2010 ) . She has made significant philanthropic contributions to the arts , peace , Philippine and Japan disaster relief , and other causes . Ono continues her social activism , inaugurating a biennial \$ 50 @,@ 000 LennonOno Grant for Peace in 2002 and co @-@ founding the group Artists Against Fracking in 2012 . She has a daughter , Kyoko Chan Cox , from her marriage to Anthony Cox and a son , Sean Taro Ono Lennon , with whom she collaborates musically , from her marriage to Lennon .

= = Early life and family = =

Ono was born on February 18 , 1933 , in Tokyo , to Isoko Ono ( 小所 小野 Ono Isoko ) and Eisuke Ono ( 小所 小野 Ono Eisuke ) , a banker and former classical pianist . Isoko 's father was ennobled in 1915 . Isoko 's maternal grandfather Zenjiro Yasuda ( 山田 善次郎 Yasuda Zenjiro ) was an affiliate of the Yasuda clan and zaibatsu . Eisuke came from a long line of samurai warrior @-@ scholars . The kanji translation of Yoko 's first name Yoko means " ocean child " .

Two weeks before Yoko 's birth , Eisuke was transferred to San Francisco by his employer , the Yokohama Specie Bank . The rest of the family followed soon after , with Yoko meeting Eisuke when she was two . Her younger brother Keisuke was born in December 1936 . Yoko was enrolled in piano lessons from the age of 4 . In 1937 , the family was transferred back to Japan and Ono enrolled at Tokyo 's Gakushuin ( also known as the Peers School ) , one of the most exclusive schools in Japan .

In 1940 , the family moved to New York City . The next year , Eisuke was transferred from New York City to Hanoi , and the family returned to Japan . Ono was enrolled in Keimei Gakuen , an exclusive Christian primary school run by the Mitsui family . She remained in Tokyo through the great fire @-@ bombing of March 9 , 1945 , during which she was sheltered with other family members in a special bunker in the Azabu district of Tokyo , far from the heavy bombing . Ono later went to the Karuizawa mountain resort with members of her family .

Ono and her family were forced to beg for food while pulling their belongings in a wheelbarrow . It was during this period in her life , Ono says , that she developed her " aggressive " attitude and understanding of " outsider " status when children taunted her and Keisuke , who were once well @-@ to @-@ do . Other stories have her mother bringing a large number of goods with them to the

countryside , where they bartered them for food . In one anecdote , her mother bartered a German @-@ made sewing machine for 60 kilograms ( 130 lb ) of rice to feed the family . Her father remained in the city , unknown to the family , who believed he was in a prisoner of war camp in China . Ono told Amy Goodman of Democracy Now on October 16 , 2007 , that " He was in French Indochina , which is Vietnam actually .... in Saigon . He was in a concentration camp . "

By April 1946 , Gakushuin was reopened and Ono re @-@ enrolled . The school , located near the imperial palace , had not been damaged by the war , and Ono found herself a classmate of Prince Akihito , the future emperor of Japan . She graduated in 1951 and was accepted into the philosophy program of Gakushuin University as the first woman to enter the department . However , she left the school after two semesters .

= = New York City = =

= = College and downtown beginnings = = =

Ono 's family moved to Scarsdale , New York , without her after the war . When she later rejoined her family in the US , she enrolled nearby in Sarah Lawrence College . While her parents approved of her college choice , Ono said they disapproved of her lifestyle and chastised her for befriending people they felt were beneath her . In spite of her parents ' disapproval , Ono loved meeting artists , poets , and others who represented the bohemian lifestyle to which she aspired . Visiting galleries and art happenings in the city whetted her desire to display her own artistic endeavors publicly . American avant @-@ garde artist , composer , and musician La Monte Young , her first important contact in the New York art world , helped Ono start her career by using her Chambers Street loft in Tribeca as a performance space . After Ono set a painting on fire at one performance , her mentor John Cage advised her to treat the paper with flame retardant .

= = Return to Japan , early career , and motherhood = = =

In 1956 , Ono left college to elope with composer Toshi Ichiyanagi , a star in Tokyo 's experimental community . After living apart for several years , they filed for divorce in 1962 . Ono returned home to live with her parents and , suffering from clinical depression , she was briefly placed in a mental institution . Later that year , on November 28 , 1962 , Ono married Anthony Cox , an American jazz musician , film producer , and art promoter , who was instrumental in securing her release from the Japanese mental institution . However , because Ono had neglected to finalize her divorce from Ichiyanagi , her second marriage was annulled on March 1 , 1963 . After finalizing the divorce , Cox and Ono married again on June 6 , 1963 . She gave birth to their daughter Kyoko Chan Cox two months later on August 8 , 1963 .

The marriage quickly fell apart , but the Coxes stayed together for the sake of their joint careers . They performed at Tokyo 's Sogetsu Hall , with Ono lying atop a piano played by John Cage . Soon , the couple returned to New York with Kyoko . In the early years of the marriage , Ono left most of Kyoko 's parenting to Cox while she pursued her art full @-@ time . Cox also managed her publicity . She and Cox divorced on February 2 , 1969 . However , in 1971 , Cox disappeared with their then @-@ eight @-@ year @-@ old daughter , in the midst of the custody battle . He won custody after claiming Ono was an " unfit mother " due to her drug use . Ono 's ex @-@ husband subsequently raised Kyoko under the name Ruth Holman in an organization known as the Church of the Living Word ( or " the Walk " ) . Ono and Lennon searched for Kyoko for years , to no avail . She first saw Kyoko again in 1998 .

= = John Lennon = =

Fluxus , a loose association of Dada @-@ inspired avant @-@ garde artists that developed in the early 1960s , was active in New York and Europe . Ono visited London to meet artist and political

activist Gustav Metzger 's Destruction in Art Symposium in September 1966 , as the only woman artist chosen to perform her own events and only one of two invited to speak .

There are two versions of the story regarding how Lennon met Ono . According to the first , on November 9 , 1966 , Lennon went to the Indica Gallery in London , where Ono was preparing her conceptual art exhibit , and they were introduced by gallery owner John Dunbar . Lennon was initially unimpressed with the exhibits he saw , including a pricey bag of nails , but one piece had a ladder with a spyglass at the top . When he climbed the ladder , Lennon felt a little foolish , but he looked through the spyglass and saw the word " YES " which he said meant he didn 't walk out , as it was positive , whereas most concept art he encountered was " anti " everything .

Lennon was also intrigued by Ono 's Hammer a Nail . Viewers hammered a nail into a wooden board , creating the art piece . Although the exhibition had not yet opened , Lennon wanted to hammer a nail into the clean board , but Ono stopped him . Dunbar asked her , " Don 't you know who this is ? He 's a millionaire ! He might buy it . " Ono supposedly had not heard of the Beatles , but relented on the condition that Lennon pay her five shillings , to which Lennon replied , " I 'll give you an imaginary five shillings and hammer an imaginary nail in . "

In a second version of Ono 's and Lennon 's first meeting , told by Paul McCartney , Ono was in London in 1965 compiling original musical scores for a book on which John Cage was working entitled Notations . McCartney declined to give her any of his own manuscripts , but suggested that Lennon might oblige . Lennon did , giving Ono the original handwritten lyrics to " The Word . "

In a 2002 interview , she said , " I was very attracted to him . It was a really strange situation . " The two began corresponding and , in September 1967 , Lennon sponsored Ono 's solo show at Lisson Gallery in London . When Lennon 's wife Cynthia asked for an explanation for Ono 's telephoning their home , he told her that Ono was only trying to obtain money for her " avant @-@ garde bullshit . " In early 1968 , while the Beatles were making their famous visit to India , Lennon wrote " Julia " and included a reference to Ono : " Ocean child calls me " , referring to the translation of Yoko 's Japanese spelling . In May 1968 , while his wife was on holiday in Greece , Lennon invited Ono to visit . They spent the night recording what would become the Two Virgins album , after which , he said , they " made love at dawn " . When Lennon 's wife returned home , she found Ono wearing her bathrobe and drinking tea with Lennon who simply said , " Oh , hi . "

Lennon wrote and recorded " Happiness Is a Warm Gun " on September 24 and 25 , 1968 @.@ which contains sexual references to Ono . A few weeks after Lennon 's divorce from Cynthia was granted , Ono became pregnant though she suffered a miscarriage of what would have been a male child on November 21 , 1968 .

= = = Bed @-@ Ins and other early collaborations = = =

During Lennon 's last two years with the Beatles , he and Ono began attending as well as creating their own public protests against the Vietnam War . They were married at the registry office in Gibraltar on March 20 , 1969 , and spent their honeymoon in Amsterdam campaigning with a week @-@ long Bed @-@ In for Peace . They planned another Bed @-@ In in the US , but were denied entry to the country . They held one instead at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel in Montreal , where they recorded " Give Peace a Chance " . Lennon later stated his regrets about feeling " guilty enough to give McCartney credit as co @-@ writer on my first independent single instead of giving it to Yoko , who had actually written it with me . " The famous couple often combined advocacy with performance art , such as in " bagism " , first introduced during a Vienna press conference , where they satirised prejudice and stereotyping by wearing a bag over their entire bodies . Lennon detailed this period in the Beatles ' song " The Ballad of John and Yoko " .

Lennon changed his name by deed poll on April 22 , 1969 , switching out Winston for Ono as a middle name . Although he used the name John Ono Lennon thereafter , official documents referred to him as John Winston Ono Lennon , since he was not permitted to revoke a name given at birth . The couple settled at Tittenhurst Park at Sunninghill , Berkshire , in southeast England . When Ono was injured in a car accident , Lennon arranged for a king @-@ sized bed to be brought to the recording studio as he worked on the Beatles ' last recorded album , Abbey Road .

The two collaborated on many albums , beginning in 1968 when Lennon was still a Beatle , with *Unfinished Music No.1 : Two Virgins* , an album of experimental musique concrète . The same year , the couple contributed an experimental piece to *The White Album* called " *Revolution 9* " . Also on *The White Album* , Ono contributed backing vocals on " *Birthday* " , and one line of lead vocals on " *The Continuing Story of Bungalow Bill* . " The latter marked the only occasion in a Beatles recording in which a woman sings lead vocals .

= = = The Plastic Ono Band = = =

Ono influenced Lennon to produce more " autobiographical " output and , after " *The Ballad of John and Yoko* " , they decided it would be better to form their own band rather than put the material out under the Beatles name . In 1969 , the Plastic Ono Band 's first album , *Live Peace in Toronto 1969* , was recorded during the Toronto Rock and Roll Revival festival . This first incarnation of the group also consisted of guitarist Eric Clapton , bass player Klaus Voormann , and drummer Alan White . The first half of their performance consisted of rock standards . During the second half , Ono took to the microphone and performed an avant @-@ garde set along with the band , finishing with music that consisted mainly of feedback , while she screamed and sang .

= = = First solo album and *Fly* = = =

Ono released her first solo album , *Yoko Ono / Plastic Ono Band* , in 1970 as a companion piece to Lennon 's better @-@ known *John Lennon / Plastic Ono Band* . The two albums also had companion covers : Ono 's featured a photo of her leaning on Lennon , and Lennon 's a photo of him leaning on Ono . Her album included raw , harsh vocals , which bore a similarity with sounds in nature ( especially those made by animals ) and free jazz techniques used by wind and brass players . Performers included Ornette Coleman , other renowned free jazz performers , and Ringo Starr . Some songs on the album consisted of wordless vocalizations , in a style that would influence Meredith Monk and other musical artists who have used screams and vocal noise in lieu of words . The album reached No. 182 on the US charts .

When Lennon was invited to play with Frank Zappa at the Fillmore ( then the Fillmore West ) on June 5 , 1971 , Ono joined them . Later that year , she released *Fly* , a double album . In it , she explored slightly more conventional psychedelic rock with tracks including " *Midsummer New York* " and " *Mind Train* " , in addition to a number of Fluxus experiments . She also received minor airplay with the ballad " *Mrs. Lennon* " . The track " *Don 't Worry , Kyoko ( Mummy 's Only Looking for Her Hand in the Snow )* " was an ode to Ono 's missing daughter , and featured Eric Clapton on guitar . That same year , while studying with Maharishi Mahesh Yogi in Majorca , Spain , Ono 's ex @-@ husband Anthony Cox accused Ono of abducting their daughter Kyoko from his hotel . Accusations flew between the two , as well as the matter of custody . Cox eventually moved away with Kyoko ; Ono would not see her daughter until 1998 . It was during this time that she wrote " *Don 't Worry Kyoko* " , which also appears on Lennon and Ono 's album *Live Peace In Toronto 1969* , in addition to *Fly* . Kyoko is also referenced in the first line of " *Happy Christmas ( War Is Over )* " when Yoko whispers " *Happy Christmas , Kyoko* " , followed by Lennon whispering , " *Happy Christmas , Julian* . " The song reached No. 4 in the UK , where its release was delayed until 1972 , and has periodically reemerged on the UK Singles Chart . Originally a protest song about the Vietnam War , " *Happy Xmas ( War Is Over )* " has since become a Christmas standard . That August the couple appeared together at a benefit in Madison Square Garden with Roberta Flack , Stevie Wonder , and Sha Na Na for mentally handicapped children organized by WABC @-@ TV 's Geraldo Rivera .

= = Separation from Lennon and reunion = =

After the Beatles disbanded , Ono and Lennon lived together in London and then in New York ? the latter to escape tabloid racism towards Ono . Their relationship , however , became strained by the threat of deportation Lennon faced ( because of drug charges filed in England ) , and Ono 's

separation from her daughter . The couple separated in 1973 , with Ono pursuing her career and Lennon living between Los Angeles and New York with personal assistant May Pang , with Ono 's blessing .

By December 1974 , Lennon and Pang were considering buying a house together , and he was refusing to accept Ono 's phone calls . The next month , Lennon agreed to meet Ono , who claimed to have found a cure for smoking . After the meeting , he failed to return home or call Pang . When Pang telephoned the next day , Ono told her Lennon was unavailable , being exhausted after a hypnotherapy session . Two days later , Lennon reappeared at a joint dental appointment with Pang , stupefied and confused to such an extent that Pang believed he had been brainwashed . He told her his separation from Ono was now over , though Ono would allow him to continue seeing her as his mistress .

Ono and Lennon 's son , Sean , was born on October 9 , 1975 , Lennon 's 35th birthday . John did not help relations with his first son when he described Julian in 1980 as being part of the " ninety percent of the people on this planet [ who resulted from an unplanned pregnancy ] " and that " Sean is a planned child , and therein lies the difference . " He said , " I don 't love Julian any less as a child . He 's still my son , whether he came from a bottle of whiskey or because they didn 't have pills in those days . " The couple maintained a low profile for the next five years . Sean has followed in his parents ' footsteps with a musical career , performing solo work , working with Ono , and forming a band , the Ghost of a Saber Tooth Tiger .

= = = Lennon 's murder , tributes , and memorials = = =

John Lennon retired from music , becoming a househusband to care for Sean , until shortly before his murder in December 1980 , which Ono witnessed at close range . She has stated that the couple were thinking about going out to dinner after spending several hours in a recording studio , but were returning to their apartment instead , because Lennon wanted to see Sean before he was put to bed . Following the murder , Ono went into complete seclusion for an extended period .

Ono funded the construction and maintenance of the Strawberry Fields memorial in New York City 's Central Park , directly across from the Dakota Apartments where they lived and Lennon died . It was officially dedicated on October 9 , 1985 , which would have been his 45th birthday . In 1990 , Ono collaborated with music consultant Jeff Pollack to honor what would have been Lennon 's 50th birthday with a worldwide broadcast of " Imagine " . Over 1 @,@ 000 stations in over 50 countries participated in the simultaneous broadcast . Ono felt the timing was perfect , considering the escalating conflicts in the Middle East , Eastern Europe , and Germany .

In 2000 , she founded the John Lennon Museum in Saitama , Saitama , Japan . In March 2002 , she was present with Cherie Blair at the unveiling of a 7 @-@ foot statue of Lennon , to mark the renaming of Liverpool airport to Liverpool John Lennon Airport . ( Julian and Cynthia Lennon were present at the unveiling of the John Lennon Peace Monument next to ACC Liverpool in the same city eight years later . ) On October 9 , 2007 , she dedicated a new memorial called the Imagine Peace Tower , located on the island of Viðey , 1 km outside the Skarfabakki harbour in Reykjavík , Iceland . Each year , between October 9 and December 8 , it projects a vertical beam of light high into the sky . In 2009 , Ono created an exhibit called " John Lennon : The New York City Years " for the NYC Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Annex . The exhibit used music , photographs , and personal items to depict Lennon 's life in New York , and a portion of the cost of each ticket was donated to Spirit Foundation , a charitable foundation set up by Lennon and Ono .

Every time Mark Chapman has requested release from prison ? as he is allowed to do every two years ? Yoko Ono has come out strongly against it . As a relative of the victim , her opinion has a strong influence on the parole board .

= = Artwork = =

= = = Fluxus = = =

Ono is often associated with the Fluxus group , whose founder George Maciunas , her friend during the 1960s , admired and promoted her work enthusiastically , giving Ono her US show at his AG Gallery in 1961 . Maciunas invited her formally join the Fluxus group , but she declined because she wanted to remain independent . She did however , collaborate with him , Charlotte Moorman , George Brecht , and the poet Jackson Mac Low , among others associated with the group .

John Cage and Marcel Duchamp were significant influences on Ono 's art . She learned of Cage at Sarah Lawrence and met him through his student Ichiyanagi Toshi in Cage 's legendary experimental composition class at the New School for Social Research : She was thus introduced to more of Cage 's unconventional neo @-@ Dadaism first hand and his New York City protégés Allan Kaprow , Brecht , Mac Low , Al Hansen and the poet Dick Higgins .

After Cage finished teaching at the New School in the summer of 1960 , Ono was determined to rent a place to present her works along with the work of other avant @-@ garde artists in the city . She eventually found a cheap loft in downtown Manhattan at 112 Chambers Street that she used as a studio and living space . Supporting herself through secretarial work and lessons in the traditional Japanese arts at the Japan Society , Ono allowed composer La Monte Young to organize concerts in the loft . Both began organizing a series of events there from December 1960 through June 1961 , with people such as Marcel Duchamp and Peggy Guggenheim attending , and both Ono and Young claimed to have been the primary curator of these events , with Ono claiming to have been eventually pushed into a subsidiary role by Young . The Chambers Street series hosted some of Ono 's earliest conceptual artwork , including Painting to Be Stepped On , which was a scrap of canvas on the floor that became a completed artwork upon the accrual of footprints . With that work , Ono suggested that a work of art no longer needed to be mounted on a wall and inaccessible . She showed this work and other instructional work again at Maciunas 's AG Gallery in July 1961 .

= = = Cut Piece , 1964 = = =

Ono was a pioneer of conceptual art and performance art . A seminal performance work is Cut Piece , first performed in 1964 at the Sogetsu Art Center in Tokyo . The piece consisted of Ono , dressed in her best suit , kneeling on a stage with a pair of scissors in front of her . She invited then instructed audience members to join her on stage and cut pieces of her clothing off . Confronting issues of gender , class and cultural identity , Ono sat silently until the piece concluded at her discretion . The piece was subsequently performed at New York 's Carnegie Hall in 1965 and London 's Africa Center in 1966 . Of the piece , John Hendricks in the catalogue to Ono 's Japan Society retrospective wrote : " [ Cut Piece ] unveils the interpersonal alienation that characterizes social relationships between subjects , dismantling the disinterested Kantian aesthetic model ..... It demonstrates the reciprocity between artists , objects , and viewers and the responsibility beholders have to the reception and preservation of art . "

Other performers of the piece have included Charlotte Moorman and John Hendricks . Ono reprised the piece in Paris in 2003 , in the low post @-@ 9 / 11 period between the US and France , saying she hoped to show that this is " a time where we need to trust each other . " In 2013 , the Canadian singer , Peches reprised it at the multi @-@ day Meltdown festival at the Southbank Centre in London , which Ono curated .

= = = Grapefruit book , 1964 = = =

Another seminal piece of conceptual art is Ono 's small book titled Grapefruit . First published in 1964 , the book reads as a set of instructions through which the work of art is completed @-@ either literally or in the imagination of the viewer participant . One example is " Hide and Seek Piece : Hide until everybody goes home . Hide until everybody forgets about you . Hide until everybody dies . " Grapefruit has been published several times , most widely distributed by Simon & Schuster in 1971 , who reprinted it again in 2000 . David Bourdon , art critic for The Village Voice and Vogue , called Grapefruit " one of the monuments of conceptual art of the early 1960 's . " He noted that her

conceptual approach was made more acceptable when white male artists like Joseph Kosuth and Lawrence Weiner came in and " did virtually the same things " she did , and that her take also has a poetic and lyrical side that sets it apart from the work of other conceptual artists .

Ono would enact many of the book 's scenarios as performance pieces throughout her career , which formed the basis for her art exhibitions , including the highly publicized retrospective exhibition , This Is Not Here in 1971 at the Everson Museum in Syracuse , New York , that was nearly closed when it was besieged by excited Beatles fans , who broke several of the art pieces and flooded the toilets . It was her last major exhibition until 1989 's Yoko Ono : Objects , Films retrospective at the Whitney .

Nearly fifty years later , in July 2013 , she released a sequel to Grapefruit , another book of instructions , Acorn via OR Books .

= = = Experimental films , 1964 ? 72 = = =

Ono was also an experimental filmmaker who made 16 short films between 1964 and 1972 , gaining particular renown for a 1966 Fluxus film called simply No. 4 , often referred to as Bottoms . The five @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half @-@ minute film consists of a series of close @-@ ups of human buttocks walking on a treadmill . The screen is divided into four almost equal sections by the elements of the gluteal cleft and the horizontal gluteal crease . The soundtrack consists of interviews with those who are being filmed , as well as those considering joining the project . In 1996 , the watch manufacturing company Swatch produced a limited edition watch that commemorated this film .

In March 2004 , the ICA London , showed most of her films from this period in their exhibition The Rare Films of Yoko Ono . She also acted in an obscure exploitation film in 1965 , Satan 's Bed .

= = = Wish Tree , 1981 ? present = = =

Another example of Ono 's participatory art was her Wish Tree project , in which a tree native to the installation site is installed . Her 1996 Wish Piece had the following instructions :

Make a wish

Write it down on a piece of paper

Fold it and tie it around a branch of a Wish Tree

Ask your friends to do the same

Keep wishing

Until the branches are covered with wishes .

Her Wish Tree installation in the Sculpture Garden of the Museum of Modern Art , New York , established in July 2010 , has attracted contributions from all over the world . Other installation locations include London ; St. Louis ; Washington , DC ; San Francisco ; the Stanford University campus in Palo Alto , California ; Japan ; Venice ; and Dublin .

= = = Recognition and retrospectives = = =

John Lennon once described her as " the world 's most famous unknown artist : everybody knows her name , but nobody knows what she does . " Her circle of friends in the New York art world has included Kate Millett , Nam June Paik , Dan Richter , Jonas Mekas , Merce Cunningham , Judith Malina , Erica Abeel , Fred DeAsis , Peggy Guggenheim , Betty Rollin , Shusaku Arakawa , Adrian Morris , Stefan Wolpe , Keith Haring , and Andy Warhol ( she was one of the speakers at Warhol 's 1987 funeral ) , as well as George Maciunas and La Monte Young . In addition to Mekas , Maciunas , Young , and Warhol , she has also collaborated with DeAsis , Yvonne Rainer , and Zbigniew Rybczy?ski .

In 1989 , the Whitney Museum held a retrospective of her work , Yoko Ono : Objects , Films , marking Ono 's reentry into the New York art world after a hiatus . At the suggestion of Ono 's live @-@ in companion at the time , interior decorator Sam Havadtoy , she recast her old pieces in

bronze after some initial reluctance . " I realized that for something to move me so much that I would cry , there 's something there . There seemed like a shimmering air in the 60s when I made these pieces , and now the air is bronzified . Now it 's the 80s , and bronze is very 80s in a way - solidity , commodity , all of that . For someone who went through the 60s revolution , there has of course been an incredible change . . . . I call the pieces petrified bronze . That freedom , all the hope and wishes are in some ways petrified . "

Over a decade later , in 2001 , Y E S YOKO ONO , a 40 @-@ year retrospective of Ono 's work , received the International Association of Art Critics USA Award for Best Museum Show Originating in New York City , considered one of the highest accolades in the museum profession . YES refers to the title of a 1966 sculptural work by Yoko Ono , shown at Indica Gallery , London : viewers climb a ladder to read the word " yes " , printed on a small canvas suspended from the ceiling . The exhibition 's curator Alexandra Munroe wrote that " John Lennon got it , on his first meeting with Yoko : when he climbed the ladder to peer at the framed paper on the ceiling , he encountered the tiny word YES . ' So it was positive . I felt relieved . ' ? The exhibition traveled to 13 museums in the U.S. , Canada , Japan , and Korea from 2000 through 2003 . In 2001 , she also received an honorary Doctorate of Laws from Liverpool University and , in 2002 , was presented with the honorary degree of Doctor of Fine Arts from Bard College , as well as the Skowhegan Medal for work in assorted media . The next year , she was awarded the fifth MOCA Award to Distinguished Women in the Arts from the Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles . In 2005 , she received a lifetime achievement award from the Japan Society of New York , which had hosted Yes Yoko Ono and where she had worked in the late 1950s and early 1960s .

In 2008 , she showed a large retrospective exhibition , Between The Sky And My Head , at the Kunsthalle Bielefeld , Bielefeld , Germany , and the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art in Gateshead , England . The following year , she showed a selection of new and old work as part of her show " Anton 's Memory " in Venice , Italy . She also received a Golden Lion Award for lifetime achievement from the Venice Biennale in 2009 . In 2012 , Ono held a major exhibition of her work To The Light at the Serpentine Galleries , London . She was also the winner of the 2012 Oskar Kokoschka Prize , Austria 's highest award for applied contemporary art . In February 2013 , to coincide with her 80th birthday , the largest retrospective of her work , Half @-@ a @-@ Wind Show , opened at the Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt and travelled to Denmark 's Louisiana Museum of Modern Art , Austria 's Kunsthalle Krems , and Spain 's Guggenheim Museum Bilbao . In 2014 she contributed several artworks to the triennial art festival in Folkestone , England

= = Musical career = =

= = = Pre @-@ Lennon = = =

Ono studied piano from the age of 4 to 12 or 13 . She attended kabuki performances with her mother , who was trained in shamisen , koto , otsuzumi , kotsuzumi , nagauta , and could read Japanese musical scores . At 14 Yoko took up vocal training in lieder @-@ singing . At Sarah Lawrence , she studied poetry with Alastair Reid , English literature with Kathryn Mansell , and music composition with the Viennese @-@ trained André Singer . Of this time Ono has said that her heroes were the twelve @-@ tone composers Arnold Schoenberg and Alban Berg . She said , " I was just fascinated with what they could do . I wrote some twelve @-@ tone songs , then my music went into [ an ] area that my teacher felt was really a bit off track , and ..... he said , ' Well , look , there are people who are doing things like what you do and they 're called avant @-@ garde . ' " Singer introduced her to the work of Edgar Varèse , John Cage , and Henry Cowell . She left college and moved to New York in 1957 , supporting herself through secretarial work and lessons in the traditional Japanese arts at the Japan Society .

She met Cage through Ichiyanagi Toshi in Cage 's legendary composition class at the New School for Social Research , and in the summer of 1960 , she found a cheap loft in downtown Manhattan at 112 Chambers Street and allowed composer La Monte Young to organize concerts in the loft with



her , with people like Marcel Duchamp and Peggy Guggenheim attending . Ono only presented work once during the series . In 1961 , years before meeting Lennon , Ono had her first major public performance in a concert at the 258 @-@ seat Carnegie Recital Hall ( smaller than the " Main Hall " ) . This concert featured radical experimental music and performances . She had a second engagement at the Carnegie Recital Hall in 1965 , in which she debuted Cut Piece . She premiered The Fog Machine during her Concert of Music for the Mind at the Bluecoat Society of Arts in Liverpool , England in 1967 .

== 1980s ==

In early 1980 , Lennon heard Lene Lovich and the B @-@ 52 's ' " Rock Lobster " on vacation in Bermuda . The latter reminded him of Ono 's musical sound and he took this as an indication that she had reached the mainstream ( the band in fact had been influenced by Ono ) . In addition to her collaborations with experimental artists including John Cage and jazz legend Ornette Coleman , many other musicians , particularly those of the new wave movement , have paid tribute to Ono ( both as an artist in her own right , and as a muse and iconic figure ) . For example , Elvis Costello recorded a version of Ono 's song " Walking on Thin Ice " , the B @-@ 52 's ( who drew from her early recordings ) covered " Don 't Worry , Kyoko ( Mummy 's Only Looking for Her Hand in the Snow ) " ( shortening the title to " Don 't Worry " ) , and Sonic Youth included a performance of Ono 's early conceptual " Voice Piece for Soprano " on their experimental album SYR4 : Goodbye 20th Century .

On December 8 , 1980 , Lennon and Ono were in the studio working on Ono 's song " Walking on Thin Ice " . When they returned to The Dakota , their home in New York City , Lennon was shot dead by Mark David Chapman , a deranged fan who had been stalking Lennon for two months . " Walking on Thin Ice ( For John ) " was released as a single less than a month later , and became Ono 's first chart success , peaking at No. 58 and gaining major underground airplay . In 1981 , she released the album Season of Glass , which featured the striking cover photo of Lennon 's bloody spectacles next to a half @-@ filled glass of water , with a window overlooking Central Park in the background . This photograph sold at an auction in London in April 2002 for about \$ 13 @,@ 000 . In the liner notes to Season of Glass , Ono explained that the album was not dedicated to Lennon because " he would have been offended ? he was one of us . " The album received highly favorable reviews and reflected the public 's mood after Lennon 's assassination .

In 1982 , she released It 's Alright ( I See Rainbows ) . The cover featured Ono in her famous wrap @-@ around sunglasses , looking towards the sun , while on the back the ghost of Lennon looks over her and their son . The album scored minor chart success and airplay with the single " Never Say Goodbye " .

In 1984 , a tribute album titled Every Man Has a Woman was released , featuring a selection of Ono songs performed by artists such as Elvis Costello , Roberta Flack , Eddie Money , Rosanne Cash , and Harry Nilsson . It was one of Lennon 's projects that he never got to finish . Later that year , Ono and Lennon 's final album , Milk and Honey , was released as an unfinished demo . It peaked at No. 3 in the UK and No. 11 in the U.S. , going gold in both countries as well as in Canada .

Ono 's final album of the 1980s was Starpeace , a concept album that she intended as an antidote to Ronald Reagan 's " Star Wars " missile defense system . On the cover , a warm , smiling Ono holds the Earth in the palm of her hand . Starpeace became Ono 's most successful non @-@ Lennon effort . The single " Hell in Paradise " was a hit , reaching No. 16 on the US dance charts and No. 26 on the Billboard Hot 100 , and the video , directed by Zbigniew Rybczy?ski received major airplay on MTV and won " Most Innovative Video " at Billboard Music Video Awards in 1986 . In 1986 , Ono set out on a goodwill world tour for Starpeace , primarily visiting Eastern European countries .

== 1990s ==

Ono went on a musical hiatus until signing with Rykodisc in 1992 to release the comprehensive six

@-@ disc box set Onobox . It included remastered highlights from all of Ono 's solo albums , as well as unreleased material from the 1974 " lost weekend " sessions . She also released a one @-@ disc sampler of highlights from Onobox , simply titled Walking on Thin Ice . That year , she sat down for an extensive interview with music journalist Mark Kemp for a cover story in the alternative music magazine Option . The story took a revisionist look at Ono 's music for a new generation of fans more accepting of her role as a pioneer in the merger of pop and the avant @-@ garde .

In 1994 , Ono produced her own off @-@ Broadway musical entitled New York Rock , featuring Broadway renditions of her songs . In 1995 , she released Rising , a collaboration with her son Sean and his then @-@ band , Ima . Rising spawned a world tour that traveled through Europe , Japan , and the United States . The following year , she collaborated with various alternative rock musicians for an EP entitled Rising Mixes . Guest remixers of Rising material included Cibo Matto , Ween , Tricky , and Thurston Moore . In 1997 , Rykodisc reissued all her solo albums on CD , from Yoko Ono / Plastic Ono Band through Starpeace . Ono and her engineer Rob Stevens personally remastered the audio , and various bonus tracks were added , including outtakes , demos , and live cuts .

== = 2000s == =

2001 , saw the release of Ono 's feminist concept album Blueprint for a Sunrise . In 2002 , Ono joined The B @-@ 52 's in New York for their 25th anniversary concerts , coming out for the encore and performing " Rock Lobster " with the band . Starting the next year , some DJs remixed other Ono songs for dance clubs . For the remix project , she dropped her first name and became known simply as " ONO " , in response to the " Oh , no ! " jokes that dogged her throughout her career . Ono had great success with new versions of " Walking on Thin Ice " , remixed by top DJs and dance artists including Pet Shop Boys , Orange Factory , Peter Rauhofer , and Danny Tenaglia .

In April 2003 , Ono 's Walking on Thin Ice ( Remixes ) was rated No. 1 on Billboard 's Dance / Club Play chart , gaining Ono her first No. 1 hit . She returned to No. 1 on the same chart in November 2004 with " Everyman ... Everywoman ... " , a reworking of her song " Every Man Has a Woman Who Loves Him " , in January 2008 , with " No No No " , and in August 2008 , with " Give Peace a Chance " . In June 2009 , at the age of 76 , Ono scored her fifth No. 1 hit on the Dance / Club Play chart with " I 'm Not Getting Enough " .

Ono released the album Yes , I 'm a Witch in 2007 , a collection of remixes and covers from her back catalog by various artists including The Flaming Lips , Cat Power , Anohni , DJ Spooky , Porcupine Tree , and Peaches , released in February 2007 , along with a special edition of Yoko Ono / Plastic Ono Band . Yes I 'm a Witch has been critically well received . A similar compilation of Ono dance remixes entitled Open Your Box was also released in April of that year .

In 2009 , Ono recorded Between My Head and the Sky , her first album to be released as " Yoko Ono / Plastic Ono Band " since 1973 's Feeling the Space . The all @-@ new Plastic Ono Band lineup included Sean Lennon , Cornelius , and Yuka Honda . On February 16 , 2010 , Sean organized a concert at the Brooklyn Academy of Music called " We Are Plastic Ono Band " , at which Yoko performed her music with Sean , Clapton , Klaus Voormann , and Jim Keltner for the first time since the 1970s . Guests including Bette Midler , Paul Simon and his son Harper , and principal members of Sonic Youth and the Scissor Sisters interpreted her songs in their own styles .

== = 2010s == =

In April 2010 , RCRD LBL made available free downloads of Junior Boys ' mix of " I 'm Not Getting Enough " , a single originally released 10 years prior on Blueprint for a Sunrise . That song and " Wouldn't ( I 'm a Star ) " , released September 14 , made it to Billboard 's end of the year list of favorite Dance / Club songs at # 23 and # 50 respectively . The next year , " Move on Fast " became her sixth consecutive number @-@ one hit on the Billboard Hot Dance Club Songs chart and her eighth number @-@ one hit overall . In January 2012 , a Ralphi Rosario mix of her 1995 song " Talking to the Universe " became her seventh consecutive No. 1 hit on the Billboard Hot Dance Club

Songs chart , and both songs charted again as favorites on Billboard 's year @-@ end lists for Dance / Club songs for 2011 . In 2013 , She and her band released the LP Take Me to the Land of Hell which featured numerous guests including Yuka Honda , Cornelius , Hirotaka " Shimmy " Shimizu , mi @-@ gu 's Yuko Araki , Wilco 's Nels Cline , tUnE @-@ yArDs , Questlove , Lenny Kravitz , and Ad @-@ Rock and Mike D of the Beastie Boys . Her online video for " Bad Dancer " released in November 2013 , which featured some of these guests , was well @-@ liked by the press . By the end of the year she had become one of three artists with two songs in the Top 20 Dance / Club and had two consecutive No. 1 hits on Billboard 's Hot Dance Club Play Charts . On the strength of the singles " Hold Me " ( Featuring Dave Audé ) and " Walking on Thin Ice " the artist , the then @-@ 80 @-@ year @-@ old beat Katy Perry , Robin Thicke , and her friend Lady Gaga . In 2014 , " Angel " was Ono 's twelfth number one on the US Dance chart .

= = = Collaborations = = =

During her career , Ono also has collaborated with Earl Slick , David Tudor , Fred DeAsis , and Richard Maxfield . As a dance music artist , Ono has worked with re @-@ mixers / producers including Basement Jaxx , Bill Kates , Keiji Haino , Nick Vernier Band , Billy Martin , DJ Spooky , Apples In Stereo , Damien Price , DJ Chernobyl , Bimbo Jones , DJ Dan , Craig Armstrong , Jorge Artajo , Shuji Nabara , and Konrad Behr .

In 2012 , the album Yokokimthurston was released featuring a collaboration with Sonic Youth 's Thurston Moore and Kim Gordon . Notable also as the first collaboration between Moore and Gordon after their divorce , it was characterized by AllMusic as " focused and risk @-@ taking " and " above the best " of the couple 's experimental music , with Ono 's voice described as " one @-@ of @-@ a @-@ kind . "

= = Public image = =

Ono was frequently criticized by the press and the public for many years . She was blamed for the breakup of the Beatles and repeatedly criticized for her influence over Lennon and his music . Her experimental art was also not popularly accepted . The English press were particularly negative , and prompted the couple 's move to the US . As late as December 1999 , NME was calling her a " no @-@ talent charlatan " , and in October 2013 , the mother of tennis pro Andy Murray took over a Twitter handle entitled Destroying Yoko Ono on Twitter .

Her name still connotes the figure of the evil female interloper to the mainstream . Courtney Love , Kurt Cobain 's widow , has endlessly been compared to Ono for her supposed bothersome role in Nirvana 's businesses and as a scapegoat for Cobain 's suicide .

In 2007 , when American singer Jessica Simpson was dating Dallas Cowboys quarterback Tony Romo , the Simpson @-@ Romo relationship was blamed for Romo 's poor performances . In response , some Cowboys ' fans gave her the moniker " Yoko Romo . "

In March 2015 , Perrie Edwards , member of English girl group Little Mix , was compared to Yoko Ono and criticised for being the supposed reason for Zayn Malik 's departure from the British boy band One Direction , creating tension within the group and causing widespread controversy .

= = 2000s = =

One month after the 9 / 11 attacks , she organized the concert " Come Together : A Night for John Lennon 's Words and Music " at Radio City Music Hall . Hosted by the actor Kevin Spacey and featuring Lou Reed , Cyndi Lauper and Nelly Furtado , it raised money for September 11 relief efforts and aired on TNT and the WB .

During the Liverpool Biennial in 2004 , Ono flooded the city with two images on banners , bags , stickers , postcards , flyers , posters and badges : one of a woman 's naked breast , the other of the same model 's vulva . ( During her stay in Lennon 's city of birth , she said she was " astounded " by the city 's renaissance . ) The piece , titled My Mummy Was Beautiful , was dedicated to Lennon 's

mother , Julia , who had died when he was a teenager . According to Ono , the work was meant to be innocent , not shocking ; she was attempting to replicate the experience of a baby looking up at its mother 's body , those parts of the mother 's body being a child 's introduction to humanity .

Ono performed at the opening ceremony for the 2006 Winter Olympic Games in Turin , Italy , wearing white , like many of the other performers during the ceremony , to symbolize the snow of winter . She read a free verse poem calling for world peace as an introduction to Peter Gabriel 's performance of " Imagine " .

On December 13 , 2006 , one of Ono 's bodyguards was arrested after he was allegedly taped trying to extort \$ 2 million from her , threatening to release private conversations and photographs . His bail was revoked , and he pleaded not guilty to two counts of attempted grand larceny . In February 16 , 2007 a deal was reached where extortion charges were dropped , and he pleaded guilty to attempted grand larceny in the third degree , a felony , and sentenced to the 60 days he had already spent in jail . After reading an unapologetic statement , he was released to immigration officials because he had also been found guilty of overstaying his business visa .

On June 26 , 2007 , Ono appeared on Larry King Live along with McCartney , Ringo Starr , and Olivia Harrison . She headlined the Pitchfork Music Festival in Chicago on July 14 , 2007 , performing a full set that mixed music and performance art . She sang " Mulberry , " a song about her time in the countryside after the Japanese collapse in World War II for only the third time ever , with Thurston Moore : She had previously performed the song with John and with Sean . On October 9 of that year , the Imagine Peace Tower on Viðey Island in Iceland , dedicated to peace and to Lennon , was turned on with her , Sean , Ringo , George Harrison 's widow Olivia in attendance .

Ono returned to Liverpool for the 2008 Liverpool Biennial , where she unveiled Sky Ladders in the ruins of Church of St Luke ( which was largely destroyed during World War II and now stands roofless as a memorial to those killed in the Liverpool Blitz ) . Two years later , on March 31 , 2009 , she went to the inauguration of the exhibition " Imagine : The Peace Ballad of John & Yoko " to mark the 40th anniversary of the Lennon @-@ Ono Bed @-@ In at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel in Montreal , Canada , from May 26 to June 2 , 1969 . ( The hotel has been doing steady business with the room they stayed in for over 40 years . ) That year she became a grandmother , when Emi was born to Kyoko .

In May 2009 , she designed a T @-@ shirt for the second Fashion Against AIDS campaign and collection of HIV / AIDS awareness , NGO Designers Against AIDS , and H & M , with the statement " Imagine Peace " depicted in 21 languages . Ono appeared onstage at Microsoft 's June 1 , 2009 , E3 Expo press conference with Olivia Harrison , Paul McCartney , and Ringo Starr to promote the Beatles : Rock Band video game , which was universally praised by critics . Ono appeared on the Basement Jaxx album Scars , featuring on the single " Day of the Sunflowers ( We March On ) " .

= = 2010s = =

On February 16 , 2010 , Ono revived an early Plastic Ono Band lineup with Eric Clapton , and special guests including Paul Simon and Bette Midler . On April 1 of that year , she was named the first " Global Autism Ambassador " by the Autism Speaks organization . She had created an artwork the year before for autism awareness and allowed it to be auctioned off in 67 parts to benefit the organization . Ono appeared with Ringo Starr on July 7 at New York 's Radio City Music Hall in celebration of Starr 's 70th birthday , performing " With a Little Help from My Friends " and " Give Peace a Chance " . On September 16 , she and Sean attended the opening of Julian Lennon 's photo exhibition at the Morrison Hotel in New York City , appearing for the first time photos with Cynthia and Julian . She also promoted his work on her website . On October 2 , Ono and the Plastic Ono Band performed at the Orpheum Theatre in Los Angeles , with special guest Lady Gaga , whom she deeply admires .

On February 18 , 2011 , her 78th birthday , Ono took out a full page advert in the UK free newspaper Metro for " Imagine Peace 2011 " . It took the form of an open letter , inviting people to think of , and wish for , peace . With son Sean , she held a benefit concert to aid in the relief efforts

for earthquake and tsunami @-@ ravaged Japan on March 27 in New York City . The effort raised a total of \$ 33 @,@ 000 . In July 2011 , she visited Japan to support earthquake and tsunami victims and tourism to the country . During her visit , Ono gave a lecture and performance entitled " The Road of Hope " at Tokyo 's Mori Art Museum , during which she painted a large calligraphy piece entitled " Dream " to help raise funds for construction of the Rainbow House , an institution for the orphans of the Great East Japan Earthquake . She also collected the 8th Hiroshima Art Prize for her contributions to art and for peace , that she was awarded the year prior .

In January 2012 , a Ralphi Rosario mix of her 1995 song " Talking to the Universe " became her seventh consecutive No. 1 hit on the Billboard Hot Dance Club Songs chart . In March of the same year , she was awarded the 20 @,@ 000 @-@ euro ( \$ 26 @,@ 400 ) Oskar Kokoschka Prize in Austria . From June 19 to September 9 , her work To the Light was exhibited at the Serpentine Gallery in London . It was held in conjunction with the London 2012 Festival , a 12 @-@ week UK @-@ wide celebration featuring internationally renowned artists from Midsummer 's Day ( June 21 ) to the final day of the Paralympic Games on September 9 .

On June 29 , 2012 , Ono received a lifetime achievement award at the Dublin Biennial . During this ( her second ) trip to Ireland ( the first was with John before they married ) , she visited the crypt of Irish leader Daniel O 'Connell at Glasnevin Cemetery and Dún Laoghaire , from where Irish departed for England to escape the famine . In February 2013 , Ono accepted the Rainer Hildebrandt Medal at Berlin 's Checkpoint Charlie Museum , awarded to her and Lennon for their lifetime of work for peace and human rights . The next month , she tweeted an anti @-@ gun message with the Season of Glass image of Lennon 's bloodied glasses on what would have been her and Lennon 's 44th anniversary , noting that more than 1 million people have been killed by guns since Lennon 's death in 1980 . She was also given a Congressional citation from the Philippines for her monetary aid to the victims of typhoon Pablo . She also donated to disaster relief efforts after typhoon Ondoy in 2009 , and she assists Filipino schoolchildren .

In June 2013 , she curated the Meltdown festival in London , where she played two concerts , one with the Plastic Ono Band , and the second on backing vocals during Siouxsie Sioux 's rendition of " Walking on Thin Ice " at the Double Fantasy show . In July , OR Books published Ono 's sequel to 1964 's Grapefruit , another book of instruction @-@ based ' action poems ' this time entitled , Acorn . She was made an honorary citizen of Reykjavík , Iceland , on October 9 , 2013 . That same year , she became an honorary patron to Alder Hey Charity .

On February 26 , 2016 , Ono was hospitalized after suffering what was rumored to be a possible stroke . It was later announced that she was experiencing extreme symptoms of influenza .

= = Political activism and social media = =

Ono has been an activist for peace and human rights since the 1960s . After their wedding , she and Lennon held a " Bed @-@ In for Peace " in their honeymoon suite at the Amsterdam Hilton Hotel in March 1969 , where the pair of newlyweds in pajamas invited visitors and members of the press , eager to talk about and promote world peace . Another Bed @-@ In two months later at the Queen Elizabeth Fairmont in Montreal resulted in the recording of their first single , " Give Peace A Chance " , a top @-@ 20 hit for the newly christened Plastic Ono Band . Other performance / demonstrations with John included " bagism , " iterations with John of the Bag Pieces she introduced in the early 1960s , which encouraged a disregard for physical appearance in judging others . In December 1969 , the two continued spread their message of peace with billboards in 12 major world cities reading " WAR IS OVER ! If You Want It - Happy Christmas from John & Yoko . "

In the 1970s , Ono and Lennon became close to many radical , counterculture leaders , including Bobby Seale , Abbie Hoffman , Jerry Rubin , Michael X , John Sinclair ( for whose rally in Michigan they flew to sing Lennon 's song " Free John Sinclair " that effectively released the poet from prison ) , Angela Davis , and street musician David Peel . Friend and Sexual Politics author Kate Millett has said Ono inspired her activism . Ono and Lennon appeared on The Mike Douglas Show , taking over hosting duties for a week . Ono spoke at length about the evils of racism and sexism . She remained outspoken in her support of feminism , and openly bitter about the racism she had

experienced from rock fans , especially in the UK . Her reception within the UK media was not much better . For example , an Esquire article of the period was titled " John Lennon 's Exclusive Gloopie " and featured an unflattering David Levine cartoon .

In 1999 , after the Columbine High School massacre , Ono paid for billboards to be put up in New York City and Los Angeles that bore the image of Lennon 's blood @-@ splashed spectacles . Early in 2002 she paid about £ 150 @, @ 000 ( \$ 213 @, @ 375 ) for a billboard in Piccadilly Circus with a line from Lennon 's " Imagine " : " Imagine all the people living life in peace . " Later the same year , she inaugurated a peace award , the LennonOno Grant for Peace , by giving \$ 50 @, @ 000 ( £ 31 @, @ 900 ) in prize money originally to artists living " in regions of conflict " . The award is given out every two years in conjunction with the lighting of the Imagine Peace Tower , and was first given to Israeli and Palestinian artists . Its program has since expanded to include writers , such as Michael Pollan and Alice Walker , activists such as Vandana Shiva and Pussy Riot , organizations such as New York 's Center for Constitutional Rights , even an entire country ( Iceland ) .

On Valentine 's Day 2003 , on the eve of the Iraqi invasion by the US and UK , Ono heard about a couple , Andrew and Christine Gale , who were holding a love @-@ in protest in their tiny bedroom in Addingham , West Yorkshire . She phoned them and said , " It 's good to speak to you . We 're supporting you . We 're all sisters together . " The couple said that songs like " Give Peace a Chance " and " Imagine " inspired their protest . In 2004 , Ono remade her song " Everyman ..... Everywoman ..... " to support same @-@ sex marriage , releasing remixes that included " Every Man Has a Man Who Loves Him " and " Every Woman Has a Woman Who Loves Her " .

In August 2011 , she made the documentary film about the Bed @-@ Ins Bed Peace available for free on YouTube , and as part of her website " Imagine Peace " . In January 2013 , the 79 @-@ year @-@ old Ono , along with Sean Lennon and Susan Sarandon , took to rural Pennsylvania in a bus under the banner of the Artists Against Fracking group she and Sean created with Mark Ruffalo in August 2012 to protest against hydraulic fracturing . Other group members include Lady Gaga and Alec Baldwin .

Ono promotes her art , and shares inspirational messages and images , through a robust and active Twitter , Instagram , and Facebook presence . In April 2014 her Twitter followers reached 4 @. @ 69 million , while her Instagram followers exceeded 99 @, @ 000 . Her tweets are short instructional poems , comments on media and politics , and notes about performances .

= = Relationship with the Beatles = =

According to journalist Barry Miles , after Lennon and Ono had been injured in a car accident in June 1969 , partway through recording Abbey Road , a bed was installed in the studio with a microphone so the latter could make artistic comments about the album . Miles thought Ono 's continual presence in the studio during the latter part of the Beatles ' career put strain on Lennon 's relationship with the other band members . George Harrison verbally assaulted her after she took one of his chocolate digestive biscuits without asking . The English press dubbed her " the woman who broke up the Beatles " , but Ono has stated that the Beatles broke up themselves without any direct involvement from her , adding " I don 't think I could have tried even to break them up . " In an interview with Dick Cavett , Lennon explicitly denied that Ono broke up The Beatles and even Harrison said in an interview with Cavett that The Beatles had problems long before Ono came on the scene .

While the Beatles were together , every song written by Lennon or McCartney was credited as Lennon ? McCartney regardless of whether the song was a collaboration or written solely by one of the two ( except for those appearing on their first album , Please Please Me , which originally credited the songs to McCartney ? Lennon ) . In 1976 , McCartney released a live album called Wings over America , which credited the five Beatles tracks as P. McCartney ? J. Lennon compositions , but neither Lennon nor Ono objected . After Lennon 's death , however , McCartney again attempted to change the order to McCartney ? Lennon for songs that were solely or predominantly written by him , such as " Yesterday , " but Ono would not allow it , saying she felt this broke an agreement that the two had made while Lennon was still alive , and the surviving Beatle

argued that such an agreement never existed . A spokesman for Ono said McCartney was making " an attempt to rewrite history " .

In a Rolling Stone interview in 1987 , Ono pointed out McCartney 's place in the process of the disintegration of the band . On the 1998 John Lennon anthology , Lennon Legend , the composer credit of " Give Peace a Chance " was changed to " John Lennon " from its original composing credit of " Lennon ? McCartney . " Although the song was written by Lennon during his tenure with the Beatles , it was both written and recorded without the help of the band , and released as Lennon 's first independent single under the " Plastic Ono Band " moniker . Lennon subsequently expressed regret that he had not given co @-@ writing credit to Ono instead , who actually helped him write the song . In 2002 , McCartney released another live album , Back in the U.S. Live 2002 , and the 19 Beatles songs included are described as " composed by Paul McCartney and John Lennon " , which reignited the debate over credits with Ono . Her spokesperson Elliott Mintz called it " an attempt to rewrite history . " , but nevertheless , Ono did not sue .

In 1995 , after the Beatles released Lennon 's " Free as a Bird " and " Real Love " , with demos provided by Ono , McCartney and his family collaborated with her and Sean to create the song " Hiroshima Sky is Always Blue " , which commemorates the 50th anniversary of the atomic bombing of that Japanese city . Of Ono , McCartney stated : " I thought she was a cold woman . I think that 's wrong ..... she 's just the opposite ..... I think she 's just more determined than most people to be herself . " Two years later , however , Ono publicly compared Lennon to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart , while McCartney , she said , more closely resembled his less @-@ talented rival Antonio Salieri . This remark infuriated McCartney 's wife Linda , who was dying from breast cancer at the time , and when Linda died less than a year later , McCartney did not invite Ono to his wife 's memorial service in Manhattan .

Accepting an award at the 2005 Q Awards , Ono mentioned that Lennon had once felt insecure about his songwriting . She had responded , " You 're a good songwriter . It 's not June with spoon that you write . You 're a good singer , and most musicians are probably a little bit nervous about covering your songs . "

In an October 2010 interview , Ono spoke about Lennon 's " lost weekend " and her subsequent reconciliation with him . She credited McCartney with helping save her marriage to John . " I want the world to know that it was a very touching thing that [ Paul ] did for John . " While visiting with Ono in March 1974 , McCartney , on leaving , asked " [ W ] hat will make you come back to John ? " McCartney subsequently passed her response to Lennon while visiting him in Los Angeles . " John often said he didn 't understand why Paul did this for us , but he did . " In 2012 , McCartney revealed that he did not blame Ono for the breakup of the Beatles and credited Ono with inspiring much of Lennon 's post @-@ Beatles work .

= = = Relationship with Julian Lennon = = =

Ono had a difficult relationship with her stepson , Lennon 's son Julian , which has improved over the years . He has expressed disappointment at her handling of Lennon 's estate , and at the difference between his upbringing and Sean 's , adding , " when Dad gave up music for a couple of years to be with Sean , why couldn 't he do that with me ? " More egregiously , however , Julian was left out of his father 's will , and he battled Ono in court for years , settling in 1996 for an unspecified amount which the papers reported was " believed to " be in the area of £ 20 million , which Julian has denied .

He has admitted that he is his " mother 's boy " , which Ono has cited as the reason why she was never able to get close to him : " Julian and I tried to be friends . Of course , if he 's too friendly with me , then I think that it hurts his other relatives . He was very loyal to his mother . That was the first thing that was in his mind . " Nevertheless , she and Sean attended the opening of Julian 's photo exhibition at the Morrison Hotel in New York City in 2010 , appearing for the first time for photos with Cynthia and Julian . She also promoted the exhibition on her website , and Julian and Sean are close .

= = In popular culture = =

Canadian rock band Barenaked Ladies ' debut single was " Be My Yoko Ono , " first released in 1990 and later appearing on their 1992 album Gordon . The lyrics are ? a shy entreaty to a potential girlfriend , caged in terms that self @-@ deflatingly compare himself to one of pop music 's foremost geniuses . ? It also has a ? sarcastic imitation of Yoko Ono 's unique vocal style in the bridge ? .

In 2000 , American folk singer Dar Williams recorded a song titled " I Won 't Be Your Yoko Ono . " Bryan Wawzenek of the website Ultimate Classic Rock described the song as " us [ ing ] John and Yoko as a starting point for exploring love , and particularly , love between artists . "

The British band Elbow mentioned Ono in their song " New York Morning " from their 2014 album The Take Off and Landing of Everything ( " Oh , my giddy aunt , New York can talk / It 's the modern Rome and folk are nice to Yoko " ) . In response Ono posted an open letter to the band on her website , thanking them and reflecting on her and Lennon 's relationship with the city .

The post @-@ punk rock band Death of Samantha named themselves after a song from Ono 's 1973 album Approximately Infinite Universe .

= = Discography = =

= = = Albums = = =

= = = Albums with John Lennon = = =

= = = Compilations , soundtrack albums and EPs = = =

Onobox ( 1992 )

Walking on Thin Ice ( 1992 )

New York Rock ( 1994 ) ( Original cast recording )

A Blueprint for the Sunrise ( 2000 ) ( 3 @-@ track EP included with YES YOKO ONO book )

Don 't Stop Me ! EP ( 2009 )

= = = Remix albums = = =

Rising Mixes ( 1996 )

Yes , I 'm a Witch ( 2007 )

Open Your Box ( 2007 )

Onomix ( 2012 )

Yes , I 'm a Witch Too ( 2016 )

= = = Tribute albums = = =

Every Man Has a Woman ( 1984 )

Mrs. Lennon ( 2010 )

= = Singles = =

= = = B @-@ side appearances on John Lennon singles = = =

" Remember Love " ( on " Give Peace a Chance " ) ( 1969 )

" Don 't Worry , Kyoko " ( on " Cold Turkey " ) ( 1969 )



" Who Has Seen the Wind ? " ( on " Instant Karma ! " ) ( 1970 )  
 " Why " ( on " Mother " ) ( 1971 )  
 " Open Your Box " ( on " Power to the People " ) ( 1971 )  
 " Listen , the Snow is Falling " ( on " Happy Xmas ( War Is Over ) " ) ( 1971 )  
 " Sisters , O Sisters " ( on " Woman Is the Nigger of the World " ) ( 1972 )  
 " Kiss Kiss Kiss " ( on " ( Just Like ) Starting Over " ) ( 1980 )  
 " Beautiful Boys " ( on " Woman " ) ( 1981 )  
 " Yes , I 'm Your Angel " ( on " Watching the Wheels " ) ( 1981 )  
 " O 'Sanity " ( on " Nobody Told Me " ) ( 1984 )  
 " Your Hands ( ????? " ) ( on " Borrowed Time " ) ( 1984 )  
 " Sleepless Night " ( on " I 'm Stepping Out " ) ( 1984 )  
 " It 's Alright " ( on " Every Man Has a Woman Who Loves Him " ) ( 1985 )

= = Books and monographs = =

Grapefruit ( 1964 )  
 Summer of 1980 ( 1983 )  
 ???? ( Tada @-@ no Watashi ? Just Me ! ) ( 1986 )  
 The John Lennon Family Album ( 1990 )  
 Instruction Paintings ( 1995 )  
 Grapefruit Juice ( 1998 )  
 YES YOKO ONO ( 2000 )  
 Odyssey of a Cockroach ( 2005 )  
 Imagine Yoko ( 2005 )  
 Memories of John Lennon ( editor ) ( 2005 )  
 2 : 46 : Aftershocks : Stories From the Japan Earthquake ( contributor ) ( 2011 )  
 ??? Vocal China Forever Love Song  
 Acorn ( 2013 )

= = Films = =

= = = Director = = =

Eye blink ( 1966 , 5 min )  
 Bottoms ( 1966 , 5 ½ min )  
 Match ( 1966 , 5 min )  
 Cut Piece ( 1965 , 9 min )  
 Wrapping Piece ( 1967 , approx . 20 min , music by Delia Derbyshire )  
 Film No. 4 ( Bottoms ) ( 1966 / 1967 , 80 min )  
 Bottoms , advertisement / commercial ( 1966 / 1967 , approx . 2 min )  
 Two Virgins ( 1968 , approx . 20 min ) , a portrait film consisting of super @-@ impositions of John 's and Yoko 's faces .  
 Film No . Five ( Smile ) ( 1968 , 51 min )  
 Rape ( 1969 , 77 min ) , filmed by Nick Rowland , a young woman is relentlessly pursued by a camera crew .  
 Apotheosis ( 1970 , 18 ½ mins )  
 Freedom ( 1970 , 1 min ) , a slow @-@ motion film showing a woman attempting to take off her bra .  
 Making of Fly ( 1970 , approx . 30 min )  
 Up Your Legs Forever ( 1970 , 70 min ) , a film consisting of continuous panning shots up a series of 367 human legs .  
 Erection ( 1971 , 20 min ) , a film of a hotel 's construction over many months , based on still

photographs by Iain McMillan .

Sisters , O Sisters ( 1971 , 4 min )

Luck of the Irish ( 1971 , approx . 4 min )

Blueprint for the Sunrise ( 2000 , 28 min )

Onochord ( 2004 , continuous loop )

= = = Collaborations = = =

With John Lennon , Bed @-@ In , ( 1969 , 74 min )

With Jonas Mekas , Fly ( 1970 , 25 min ) , a fly crawls slowly across a woman 's naked body .  
Premiered at the Cannes Film Festival in May 1971 .

= = = Actress or as self = = =

Satan 's Bed ( as an actress ) , directed by Michael Findlay

Let It Be ( 1970 , 81 min )

Imagine ( 1971 , 70 min )

Flipside ( Canadian TV show , 1972 , approx . 25 min )

Mad About You ( American TV show , guest star in 1995 episode " Yoko Said " )