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GLOBAL WARMING IS OVER! (if you want it)

BY LOU PARDI

Over 40 years ago, in a time before Brangelina, a celebrity couple set out to change the world and end the Vietnam War.

The couple was John Lennon and Yoko Ono and they spread their message on billboards across the world read that 'WAR IS OVER! (if you want it) Happy Christmas John and Yoko'.

The message was spread from Athens, Amsterdam, Berlin, Hong Kong, London, Los Angeles, Paris, Toronto, Tokyo and Rome and remains an inspiration to this day. John and Yoko held bed-ins in Canada and Europe, inviting high-profile politicians and media to share their bed and discuss the issue. An echo of John and Yoko's campaign will be seen at this year's Sustainable Living Festival.

The festival features an extensive program that culminates with a three-day main event celebrated in Federation Square. 'Create' is the festival's arts program, which highlights the value of creativity in achieving a sustainable future through music, films, performance and sculpture. Highlights include an edible bedroom sculpture by Lynda Hood, and the not-so-friendly *Amon Dull* by Al Ouchtomsky and Hugo Atkinds. The BMW Edge Gallery will host an exhibition of works from familiar and up and coming contemporary artists around the theme 'safe', including a performance work from Maggie Brown entitled *self restraint*.

Ken Yonetani, who represented Australia at the 2009 Venice Biennale, has been an artist for over 10 years, often addressing climate change in his art. His wife Julia Yonetani has been recording his art for over five years. "We were asked by a friend of ours to do something for 350.org for a climate change action last year," says Julia. "Ken has done a lot of artwork about climate change but he hasn't really done anything that was a political action. He came up with this idea with the saying 'War is over', that if you do a T-shirt saying 'Global Warming is over', then 'War is over' is in it. We thought we would do T-shirts in the theme of John Lennon and Yoko Ono, saying 'GLOBAL WARMING IS OVER! (if you want it)'. And we had a great reaction to the T-shirts, then I thought maybe we should

do a bed-in like they did.

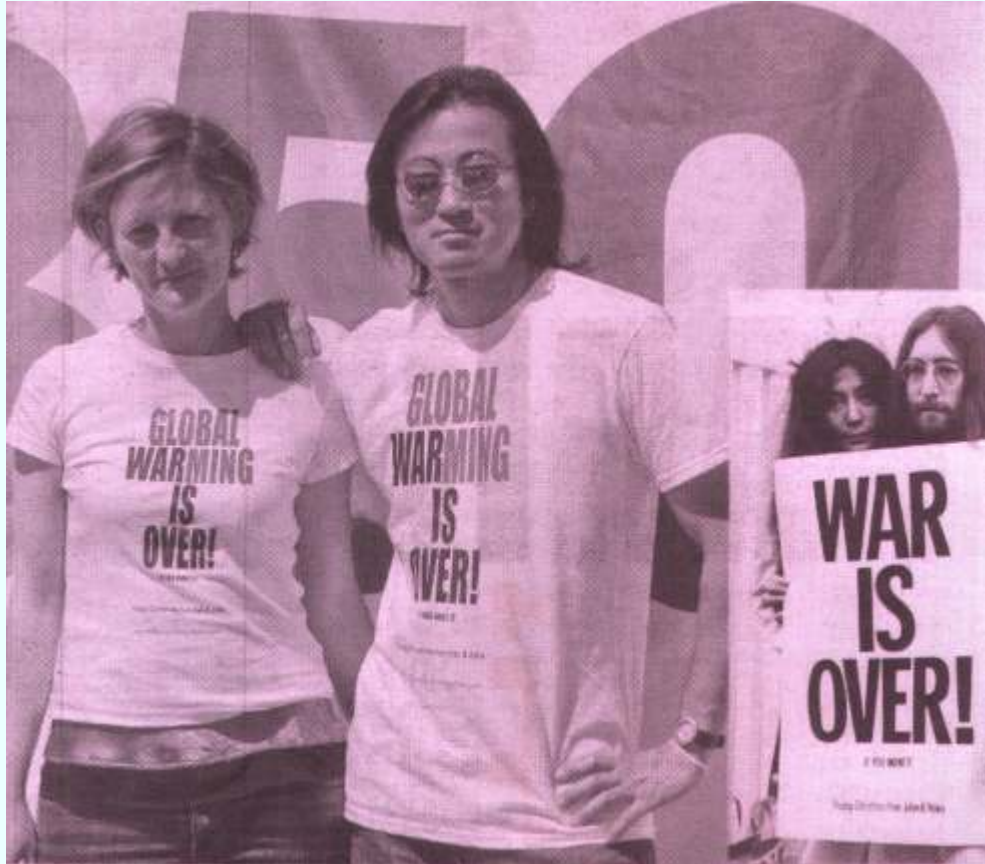
"First of all we were thinking of having it in a gallery, but it's actually much better that we've ended up having it as part of a festival, because we can get an audience which is not necessarily the people that normally go to galleries, this is more general and accessible for people," says Julia. Although it does mean they'll be out in the elements for the three-day event. "Maybe it might be part of the project if it's 45 degrees; we'll be making a point," jokes Julia. "We are going to go to our bed at night, although I've booked a hotel across the road from Federation Square, so we can watch our bed from our bed."

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While Ken's name is certainly well-known in art circles, this event will put Ken and Julia in the spotlight as personalities. "It should be fun and interesting, we want to make it a fun thing, nothing too serious," says Julia. "That's what we loved about the John and Yoko thing as well, obviously they were being serious but John had that personality, where he was serious but at the same time he was funny and fun about it. We just want to have fun, it's not something we want to take too seriously."

While the approach is relaxed, the message is serious. "The message is the same as the message that John and Yoko had: if you want something you can actually make it

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happen. Maybe it was a lot more prevalent in the peace movement; it seems in some ways, even though it's really hard, it seems easier to stop a war. Both of them (war and global warming) we should be able to stop by human action, because they're caused by human action. But we want to have fun with it," she reiterates.

As for the T-shirts that started it all, "They'll be for sale at the promotion tent of the festival," says Julia. Once the festival finishes, the message will continue to be spread through footage on Ken and Julia's website

(kenandjuliayonetani.com); and quite a few chest-sized billboards.

Ken and Julia Yonetani will remake John Lennon and Yoko Ono's 'War Is Over (if you want it)' campaign from a bed in Federation Square this Friday February 19 to Sunday February 21, 10am-5pm to highlight the urgency of action on climate change as part of this year's The Sustainable Living Festival.