

Report of the 6th International Conference of Museums for Peace

Ikuro Anzai, Chairperson of the Organizing Committee

The 6th International Conference of Museums for Peace was held successfully with fertile results during 6-10 October 2008 at Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto University of Art and Design, and Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. In addition to the Proceedings of the Conference, the participants from foreign countries received two books written in English, which are "Museums for Peace Worldwide" edited by Kazuyo Yamane and "Museums for Peace: Past, Present and Future" co-edited by Ikuro Anzai, Joyce Apsel and Syed Sikander Mehdi. The former book is now being translated into Japanese by Dr. Yamane.

In addition to approximately 70 overseas participants from 24 countries on 5 continents, the Conference was attended by several thousands participants in total including many directors and staffs of domestic peace-related museums, students and citizens. Not only the Conference was the greatest in the number of participants in the history, but also it was remarkable in its contents including 7 commemorative speeches (Peter van den Dungen [General Coordinator of the International Network of Museums for Peace], Kate Dewes [Consultative Adviser to the UN Secretary General on Disarmament Issues], Hiromu Nonaka [Former Head of the Cabinet of Japan], Ikuro Anzai [Chairperson of the Organizing Committee], Kiyoshi Amemiya [President of Yamanashi Hitachi Construction Machinery Co. Ltd.], Hiroshi Senju [President of Kyoto University of Art and Design], and Tadatoshi Akiba [Mayor of the City of Hiroshima]), 19 interest group sessions on varieties of themes, 5 symposia and panel discussions, a meeting of an A-bomb survivor's testimony, post-conference panels in Tokyo and Matsue, cultural presentations at Kyoto University of Art and Design (*Kyogen* [Japanese traditional drama], *Wadaiko* [Japanese traditional drum performance], tea ceremony, and *Kagura* [Japanese Shinto's liturgical drama]), and reception parties at Kyoto and Hiroshima. Many of the overseas participants enjoyed the Conference with highly favorable impressions.

As to the Conference theme "peace literacy," there were very active discussions from different points of view which are to be further developed and enriched through uninterrupted international collaborations of peace educationalists. The concept of "peace literacy" is, in a sense, a fundamental capacity to understand what is going on in the world in the context of peace, and to put into practice what she/he thinks necessary to resolve peace issues. For this capacity to be actually shown, it is indispensable for us to have confidence that such social problems can be resolved by the joint efforts of citizens, which was richly demonstrated by the impressive keynote speech by Dr. Kate Dewes who talked enthusiastically about such effective movements including World Court Project in 1995 which opened a new pathway approaching to the total abolition of nuclear weapons. In Dr. Betty Readon's session on peace education, there were lively discussions about the role of peace museums in the field of peace education.

In addition to the exhibitions of historical facts on wars and conflicts, plenty of experiences were reported on the activities in the field of art performance and entertainment, which suggested that it is becoming important to enrich the activities of peace museums through the collaboration with varieties of methods that can reach people's heart.

There also were impressive discussions on the role of peace museums in reconciliation especially in the commemorative symposium chaired by Professor Akihiko Kimijima of Ritsumeikan University, in which different cases of reconciliatory efforts in Vietnam, Pakistan, Guatemala and Korea were vividly reported after an excellent keynote presentation by Dr. Takashi Yoshida of Western Michigan University. Mr. Akio Komatsu, President of Komatsu Electric Industry Co. Ltd., directing Human Nature Science Institute Foundation, organized a session entitled "From Confrontation to Reconciliation", which was followed by a post-conference session on the 11th of October in Matsue city focusing on the reconciliation between Korea and Japan.

The success of the General Meeting of the International Network of Museums for Peace held on the 7th and 8th of October was another important result of the Conference. The Network did not have any statute to date, but the General Meeting finally decided the statute, official logo, new Board Members, and action plans, which are expected to play an important role to promote activities of the Network. The official logo adopted by the General Meeting was the one used for the 6th International Conference of Museums for Peace, which was originally designed by Mr. Yusuke Saito, an art student of Tohoku University of Art and Design who made an entry for the logo design contest for the 6th Conference.

During the Conference, a number of special exhibitions were concurrently carried out, which was also unprecedented. There were the Exhibitions of the Museums for Peace Worldwide prepared by the students of the College of Social Sciences of Ritsumeikan University under the instruction of Professor Ryotaro Katsura, the Vice-Director of Kyoto Museum for World Peace; Exhibition of International School Textbooks prepared by the students of Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University; Special Exhibition on the Works of Late Iccho Ito, Ex-Mayor of Nagasaki; Exhibition of Traditional Kyoto Doll produced by a distinguished artisan Mr. Yukio Kataoka who is one of the members of "Friends for Peace", a citizens' volunteer working at Kyoto Museum for World Peace, "Peace Mask Exhibition" organized by Ms. Kim Myong Hee, a Korean artist living in Kyoto, and so on.

Needless to say, fundamental success of the Conference is the fruit of the efforts of all the people who jointly cooperated for preparation including unselfish voluntary activities of as many as 70 students and members of "Friends for Peace." The important task for us is how to make the young bud sprouted in this Conference fully bloom in the nearest future by tackling with difficult problems that confront us in collaboration and further develop our Network along the right lines based fundamentally on what we decided in the General Meeting. Especially,

the newly established Executive and Advisory Board are expected to establish a stable financial basis that can enable the Network to have a secretariat office which will hopefully be functioning as a base camp for implementing our action plans.

Logo of the International Network of Museums for Peace



INMP

The International Network of Museums for Peace

This logo was designed by a student of Tohoku University of Art and Design named Yusuke Saito, who intended to express through the overlapping pink and blue feathery, heart-shaped objects that peace can not be achieved by an individual but by cooperation among individuals with different sense of values, and that peace is something fragile which must be cultivated carefully with love. He chose blue as a symbol of earth, and pink as a symbol of love and friendship. He also hoped to express gradual and steady spread of peace wave by the gradations of pink and blue.

The alphabetical letters under the figure is tentative. The logo is going to be finally completed by the hand of professional designers.