

STEPHEN BULGER GALLERY

## GERRY DEITER

(b. New York City, NY, 1934 – 2005)

Born in Brooklyn, Deiter began taking photographs of the city at a very early age. Surrounded by art and fashion during his teens, he was often in the company of famous New York fashion and commercial photographers. Soon he regularly had fashion spreads in *Women's Wear Daily* and his work was on the cover of *Harper's Bazaar* magazine. He was asked to teach at the famous Pratt Institute. He also photographed the jazz scene in New York and shot the first two album covers for Frank Zappa. In the 1960s, Deiter became involved in the anti-Vietnam war movement where he documented numerous protests. In 1968, he moved to Canada, where he settled in Montréal and continued to work as a photojournalist featured in publications such as *Time Magazine* and *Life*.

In 1969, Deiter was assigned by *LIFE* magazine to photograph Lennon and Ono at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel during their protest against America's involvement in the Vietnam War. He captured hundreds of images of the couple in public and behind the scenes, as celebrities and visitors poured through the room. It was during this protest that Lennon wrote the song *Give Peace A Chance*, which he then recorded spontaneously with an unlikely crowd who just happened to be there at the time. Despite the media attention that the event received, Deiter's photographs were never published in *LIFE*; it was bumped in favour of another story about the war. Instead, they were filed away for 30 years until 2001 when the events on September 11<sup>th</sup> inspired Deiter to try and rekindle the couple's message of peace, love and compassion.

These images eloquently captured the spirituality and the idealism that lay behind the media event. In 2005, Gerry Deiter wrote "Being present at the birth of that powerful anthem to peace had a special significance to me, helping me to embark on a new life, both professionally and spiritually. It was a time for revolution, of social and political upheaval that, like the words and music of *Give Peace a Chance*, echoes down through the decades and inspires us today to bring peace, compassion and justice to the world."

By 1970, Deiter had moved to the West Coast where he became the first photographer to sail with the *Greenpeace Too* to protest nuclear testing on Amchitka Island. He was the founding editor of the newspaper, *Prince Rupert This Week*, and continued his news work as a contributing editor to the online news site, *Peace, Earth & Justice News*.