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BRENDA RAY: WORLD VOICES PROJECT

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A SOUND INSTALLATION OF NEARLY 50 VOICES FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRIES FEATURING THE READING OF EXCERPTS OF THE DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

JULY 20-AUGUST 3, 2008, SOUTH STREET SEAPORT

New York, NY (July 1, 2008)—From July 20 through August 3, 2008, nearly 50 different voices reading the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights may be heard in World Voices Project. An engaging and poetic sound installation created by artist Brenda Ray, this project is a celebration of the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Human Rights. Held at The South Street Seaport, Pier 17, Third Floor Atrium,

Fulton and South Streets, admission to the event is free and open to the public. Hours are: Weekdays 12-7pm, weekends 12-9pm. Opening reception: Sunday, July 20, 6-9pm. For more information, contact 212.477.0961 or log on to www.worldvoicesproject.com.

Brenda Ray began the World Voices Project two years ago, and the project continues to evolve. She has interviewed friends, colleagues and artists from different countries, covering nearly 50 nations and different languages. Among the many voice recordings are languages such as Tigrinya of Eritrea, Amharic of Ethiopia, Mongolian, Zulu and Shona of Zimbabwe.

Letting each voice speak for itself, Ray taped the readings with little treatment. At South Street Seaport, she has installed a jungle of hanging headphones, offering a pristine listening environment. Several headphones include multiple languages mixed together, transforming the recordings into a mosaic of sounds with the understanding that our common humanity transcends language barriers.

"Voices move me. To me, hearing a language I do not speak is like looking at a painting; it takes me on an unexpected journey," states Ray. "I've recorded these voices to alert people that despite the signing of the Declaration of Human Rights 60 years ago, numerous countries continue to violate the tenets of the Declaration," she says. "The World Voices Project is an effort to remind anyone who cares to listen that these rights are for us all; no matter what religion, language, gender, race, social class or income level; when it comes to human rights, we speak with one voice."

Ray continues to work on this project, with the goal to include every spoken language. Volunteers who would like to be recorded for this project may contact the artist at: 212.477.0961.

In 1948, Eleanor Roosevelt, as President of the U.N. Human Rights Commission, spearheaded the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Today, the document has become the most widely translated document in the world, with a current total of 335 translations.

The United Nation's Regional Information Centre (UNRIC) in Brussels has incorporated several World Voices tracks onto their web site commemorating the Declaration of Human Rights (<http://www.KnowYourRights2008.org/>).

UNRIC is hoping to exhibit the installation at the European Parliament in November- December, 2008.

About The Artist

Brenda Ray is a film sound recordist and has worked on countless commercial and documentary films since 1982, including most recently, *Glass: A Portrait of Philip in Twelve Parts*, a film about the life of composer Philip Glass, directed by Scott Hicks; *Taxi to the Dark Side*, the Academy Award Winner/Best Documentary '08, directed by Alex Gibney, and Julian Schnabel: An HBO Portrait, directed by Karen Goodman and Kirk Simon, among other films. Previous audio art work includes *Our Dreams* (2006), a musical audio track incorporating ten voices that describe their favorite memories, dreams, loves, and what makes them laugh. *Our Dreams* is recorded in several languages, including Hungarian, Croatian, French, Susu, Mandarin, Portuguese, English, Spanish, German, and Russian. *Warsaw-Dakar* (2007) is a techno-trance piece incorporating French, Polish, English and Walof.

World Voices Project has been made possible in part by:

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