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**Dhillon-Marty Foundation:**  
**Enriching society through cultural exchange**

*International foundation launches architecture, art and culture projects in India, Japan and the U.S. at "Salon de Tokyo".*

**Tokyo, Japan, March 19, 2013** – Sonia Dhillon-Marty, founder of the international Dhillon-Marty Foundation, announces four new international projects this month. Dhillon-Marty's goals and the goals of the foundation projects are to enrich society through cultural exchange in the arts, architecture and sustainable farming.

On March 20, the Dhillon-Marty Foundation will host an event, "Salon de Tokyo" at Motoazabu, Minato-ku, to introduce the four projects: the design and farming project **Punjab – Five Rivers**, the project **Free Women – Do Not Ban Skirts, Ban Rapists** in support of women in India and East Asia, the **Masu Project** celebrating Japanese craftsmanship, and **Hanami Essence**, a celebration of design, art, food, film and wine.

Guests from the art, design, architecture and academic communities as well as supporting government officials and business leaders will attend the salon and explore further opportunities for cultural exchange with the foundation.

**The Dhillon-Marty Foundation**

The Dhillon-Marty Foundation supports projects addressing economic transformation, social justice and cultural enrichment. The mission statement reads: "Art and culture enrich our lives and give us a sense of belonging while opening our heart and mind to be inclusive to society at large. In our projects, artists give back to the society by creating projects in small villages to showcase the local culture while sharing our call for social justice. We also feel that the mind is only effectively transformed if people are economically bettered as well.



For this we are helping farmers learn ways to make a living from their land using the best practices the new technologically enriched world has to offer while maintaining the rich cultures and ecology of their land.”

### **Current foundation project**

#### Champ de Portola: art studio and guesthouse design competition

In Oct. 2012 the Dhillon-Marty Foundation invited Stanford University's Architecture Program Director John Barton to conduct a charrette with professional architects and Stanford students in Portola Valley, California. The goal of the charrette was to design an art studio space and guesthouse for visiting artists. The purpose of the structure is to “nurture the creative process by providing artists with room, board, and a cloistered countryside environment where they can work amid natural beauty without interruption,” says Dhillon-Marty.

Thirty Stanford students and seven architects from four countries participated in the charrette and the final design will be revealed at "Salon de Tokyo". Construction will begin in California in 2013 and the first artist will take up residency in 2014.

### **Future foundation projects**

#### Punjab – Five Rivers

The Five Rivers project, inspired by the kanji (the Chinese character) “kawa” (the river), will promote sustainable farming, activation of agriculture and landscape design. University students will work on housing design and implementing Japanese satoyama and gardens as well as solar power energy production.

Mr. Yoshimasa Hayashi, Japan's Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries will propose a toast to the Five Rivers project at the “Salon de Tokyo”.

#### Free Women – Do Not Ban Skirts, Ban Rapists

The Free Women project was developed to raise awareness and improve the



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situation of women in India and East Asia by designing t-shirts protesting violence against women. The foundation is planning to present the t-shirts, made with organic cotton sourced from struggling farms in Punjab and printed in Japan, at a pop-up fashion show at Shibuya Crossing in Tokyo this spring.

### Masu Project

A traditional Japanese wooden masu box, used for sipping sake, will be presented at “Salon de Tokyo” for a ceremonial toast. The Dhillon-Marty original masu, an example of simple and elegant design, is made of tounou cypress, which is also used as a timber at Ise Jingu Shrine, the largest shrine in Japan.

A visit to the shrine is scheduled in October in order to introduce architects and visiting students to Japanese building craftsmanship utilized at Ise Jingu.

### Hanami Essence 2014

Hanami Essence is an umbrella event for a design charrette bringing together international university faculty and students concurrent with a documentary film series. FRENCH KISS wine tasting and glorious cherry blossom viewing complement the event.

### **Sonia Dhillon-Marty, a champion of cultural exchange**

Dhillon-Marty is a global citizen who spends her time between Tokyo, Paris, Punjab and California. Her credentials include a fine arts degree from Punjab University; an MBA from Santa Clara University, California; a public accountant certification; positions with Deloitte, Touche and Tohmatsu and Cisco systems. She studied wine at the Culinary Institute of American in Napa, California, and the University of California, Davis. She is the owner of her own French wine brand and was the first foreign woman to get a liquor license in Japan.

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