Haruko Smith is the Founder and Chair of the September Concert Foundation. She is also the Director of Felissimo New York, for which she is spearheading a new joint initiative with UNESCO called "Design 21 Social Design Network" where design responds to social, humanitarian, and environmental needs. Initially started as an International Design Award on the occasion of United Nations’ 50th Anniversary in 1995, this new phase of the project is the first online community UNESCO has ever supported.

She also serves as the Executive Director of the UNESCO/Tribute 21 Fund, overseeing the launch of DREAM (Dance, Read, Express Art, Music) Centers for children in post-conflict regions of the world. Since 2002, DREAM Center has opened in Kabul (Afghanistan), Port-au-Prince (Haiti), Phnom Penh (Cambodia), Monrovia (Liberia) and will soon open in East Jerusalem.

Prior to starting the September Concert, she spent many years commuting between New York and San Francisco, where she had founded a U.S.-Japan business consulting company, Trans Pacific Bridge, Inc. During this time she was greatly influenced by Milton Moskowitz who introduced to her the concept of corporate social responsibility and the notion that we are all responsible for our social and natural environment. She helped to found the Future Generations Alliance Foundation, which co-published the Earth Times, the official newspaper on record during the Earth Summit in Rio in 1994, in partnership with the Earth Pledge Foundation.

She eventually sold her company and went to live in Paris for 4 years where she started a series of joint projects with UNESCO. It is also where she first witnessed an event called “La Fete de la Musique,” an annual day of music for its citizens, on which the September Concert was partially modeled.

Haruko was born in Japan and was educated both there and in the U.S. Her first job was as a 21-year old high school math teacher in an international school in Tokyo. Even though it was only for a year, it put her career on a path that consistently posed the challenges and excitement of working in an international environment.

Overall, she has over 30 years of experience in international business and facilitating and producing cross-cultural projects and events. In 2005, she was a New Yorker of the Week on NY1 and a nominee for NY Public Library’s Brooke Astor Award.

Throughout her life the love of the arts has never taken a backseat. Haruko is an amateur dancer, figure skater, musician, and artist; as such, she feels extremely fortunate that there is not much separation between her career and her hobbies.