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Music

5/8/2008

# Dancing at the revolution

*Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Kingston hosts Pat Humphries & Sandy Opatow this Saturday*

by Cheryl A. Rice

Separately they are Pat Humphries and Sandy Opatow, two formidable folk music forces. Together, as Emma's Revolution (after the mover and shaker Emma Goldman, who said, "If I can't dance, I don't want to be a part of your revolution,") they are a tsunami of activism, a tidal wave for peace. Pete Seeger said of Humphries' music: "The powers that be can control the media, but it's hard to stop a good song...Pat's songs will be sung well into the 22nd century." They'll be appearing at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Catskills this Saturday, May 10. The concert starts at 8 p.m.



*Pat Humphries and Sandy Opatow*

Humphries and Opatow were in the process of moving from New York to the Washington, DC area when the events of September 11, 2001 unfolded. Horrified by how quickly talk of revenge flooded the airways, Humphries says on her website, "Two days later, the words 'peace,' 'salaam' and 'shalom' ['peace' in Arabic, Hebrew and English] started playing 'round and 'round in our heads. We wrote the words into a song, and singing it broke through our despair and shouted down the voices calling for war." They scrawled the words quickly onto their white tee-shirts on the way to a peace rally in New York City; and not only did the song catch on, so did the shirts.

They are for sale on the website, and wherever Humphries and Opatow play. Opatow said that, to date, they've sold "more than 20,000...! We hear from folks who wear them everywhere from Peru to Israel, and they've shown up in places we couldn't have expected: We took our first tour to Scotland in the summer of 2006 to perform at the Scottish Parliament's 'Festival of Politics.' The Guardian of London's weekend magazine featured an article on Iraq War resisters, with a photo of Camilo Mejia [the first officer to refuse to return to Iraq] wearing our shirt!"

Their latest CD, roots, rock and revolution, was released in 2007. Their song "If I Give Your Name" won the Grand Prize in the Folk Category of the John Lennon Songwriting Contest. Humphries' songs, "Keep on Moving Forward (Never Turning Back)," "Common Thread" and "Swimming to the Other Side," have become well-known anthems for peaceniks around the world and have been translated into seven languages. Humphries also had the honor of performing at a United Nations memorial to congresswoman Bella Abzug. Together they currently reside in the Washington, DC area.

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Catskills is located at 320 Sawkill Road in Kingston, off Washington Avenue and the infamous roundabout. Advance tickets are \$12; at the door they are \$15. Refreshments are promised. For tickets and information, contact Michele Mugnos at (845) 546-2139, or e-mail her at stereofreedom@yahoo.com.

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