

# Pete Seeger's Lasting Legacy

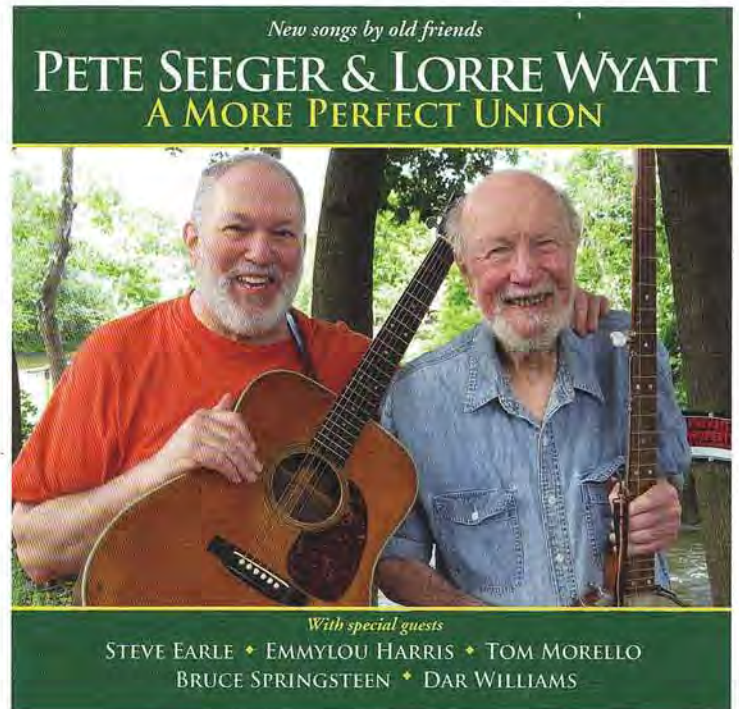
by John Rowen, *photography as noted*

Lorre Wyatt, Seeger's songwriting and frequent performing partner, first heard Seeger's songs at day camp. "The traditional tunes Seeger adapted took us on a trip around the world," Wyatt said. "Pete's own songs showed that the tradition of making homemade music was alive and well." On a live album, Seeger sings a spiritual and then remarks that a particular verse could be heard as commenting on black kids not being able to attend public school. Wyatt said, "This was a moment that changed my life. Pete reinvigorated an old song with fresh meaning and showed how their verses could comment on today's headlines."

below: *Pete Seeger and Lorre Wyatt in 1971 singing at the Pumpkin Sail.* photography by Patricia Greene ©



below: *The album A More Perfect Union (2012) with Pete Seeger and Lorre Wyatt. This was Pete Seeger's last recorded studio album and the only one he made of all new songs they wrote together.*



Wyatt observed that some songwriters look for a subject in the news, not because it's "a real part of their lives, but rather just another item on a checklist." "For me and Pete," he continued, "writing about the environment...came from deep inside. These were things we believed in, breathed in, and lived every day."

Seeger often found time for humor. Wyatt recalls going to the head (i.e. bathroom) on *Clearwater*. As he approached, he heard Seeger, in the head, singing a verse over and over. Pete told Wyatt, "I'm writing a song!" When Wyatt asked, "Why are you doing it here?" Seeger replied, "Well, I was having a little trouble, and I figured two heads are better than one!"