

Homespun Community Dancing

“What Makes Peter, Paul & George Exceptional?” A Fun Interview with Peter, Paul & George.

1. What makes you three exceptional

Paul: I started dance later in life after years of being dance phobic, and I know how to teach people who have never had success with or enjoyment of dancing.

Peter: Our musicianship is exceptional.

I am a multi-instrumentalist - frets, reeds and keys – and have toured internationally, played in the Prairie Home Companion house band, and teach at Ashokan Fiddle and Dance camps with Jay Ungar & Molly Mason.

George is one of the premier exponents of Quebecois and Cape Breton fiddle styles in the U.S. and is a master of the 5-string banjo.

George: "Peter and I play some of the most rhythmic & dynamic dance music in the Northeast."

2. What makes your material exceptional?

Paul: I have collected more than 300 dances - from the US and fifty-eight countries - that have great music and interesting choreography, and are suitable for people who have little no experience in dancing.

Peter: We not only have done over 1000 school residencies in the last 20 years, but we usually cap them with a "family dance night." School principals tell us that the event is often one of the most fun and engaging events in their school year. Musical spontaneity is one of our specialties. We can instantly invent a new tune based an audience member's name, engage the audience in a brief discussion on "What does traditional mean?" and hear a pin drop in a group of 100 when we demonstrate each of the instruments we play.

3. What is your extraordinary value?

Paul: We have a huge repertoire of music and dance, and know which dances are best for the participants who attend.

4. Can you work magic with any audience put in front of you?

Paul: Yes. As soon as we start playing music we can assess how the audience is reacting to us and choose appropriate dances and music for them.

5. Are you witty and engaging? How?

Paul: We keep our programs relaxed and welcoming, and we use humor to help to ease any trepidation among the participants.

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6. Do you share fascinating or obscure educational and inspirational tidbits between pieces?

Paul: Much of our repertoire of music and dance has fascinating background information. We are especially good at tracing the dance and music over the course of history to show how it has evolved both through passage of time and also through being passed on from different cultures to America

7. Have you done significant research into your sources and topics?

Paul: Yes, I have over a hundred books on traditional dance and I spend a great deal of time with online research, going to conferences, and engaging almost daily with colleagues around the world on list serves.