

## Music noted as important place in helping with peace

### Daniel Pearl Harmony for Humanity event slated Friday

BY VICKI SISKA • FOR THE COLORADOAN • OCTOBER 22, 2009

Daniel Pearl was a respected and well-liked reporter for the Wall Street Journal and working as the Journal's South Asia Bureau Chief when terrorists abducted him Jan. 23, 2002, shortly after the World Trade Center tragedy of Sept. 11.

A militant group calling itself The National Movement for the Restoration of Pakistani Sovereignty claimed the kidnapping of Pearl, and when their demands for the freeing of all Pakistani terror detainees and the release of a halted U.S. shipment of F-16 fighter jets to the Pakistani government were not met, they slit Pearl's throat. They then beheaded him; an act so horrific that the world was shocked. Pearl's body wasn't found until May 16, when it was discovered in a shallow grave on the outskirts of Karachi, nicknamed "the City of Lights."

It would have been easy to take revenge, to continue the hate. Especially for those closest to Pearl: his wife, Mariane, was pregnant with their first child at the time of his capture. But Daniel Pearl's family chose a different reaction. In response to the horrific death of a son, husband and soon-to-be father, Pearl's family created the Daniel Pearl Foundation to promote cross-cultural understanding through journalism, innovative communication and music, as the well-respected and creative journalist also was an inveterate musician, forming impromptu sessions and enjoying the company of musicians wherever he traveled.

The mission of the foundation is not to raise money to fight terrorism, but to address the root causes of Daniel's tragedy, in the spirit, style and principles that shaped his work and character: uncompromised objectivity and integrity; insightful and unconventional perspective; tolerance and respect for people of all cultures; unshaken belief in the effectiveness of education and communication and the love of music, humor and friendship, which were so much a part of Daniel's life, his family said. As a way of remembering Daniel, the Pearl family invited people to create or support a musical event on the day he would have turned 39 - Oct. 10, 2002. It was with these first musical performances that the seeds were planted for the Daniel Pearl Music Days and the Harmony for Humanity musical events that now occur around the world.

In 2002, the Daniel Pearl Music Days were inaugurated with more than 100 concerts in 17 countries and has grown to include more than 3,100 performances in 85 countries. Locally, the Foothills Unitarian Church has sponsored a Daniel Pearl Harmony for Humanity event for the last six years, and will again be offering a concert this year.

World class singer/songwriter and six time Grammy nominee John McCutcheon will be appearing at the church Friday.

Daniel Pearl Music Days uses the power of music to promote cross-cultural understanding and reaffirm commitment to humanity, and in this regard, long time peace activist, teacher and storyteller John McCutcheon is the perfect embodiment of the Harmony for Humanity values, the family said. Johnny Cash referred to him as the "most impressive instrumentalist I've ever heard."

Harmony for Humanity concerts are not organized by governments or the media or the military. They have grown out of one family's love for their son. And so, for a brief time in October, people around the world voluntarily come together to affirm the love we are capable of giving to all of humanity, and to share through the medium of music the idea that we can find a way to live together in peace.



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