Bay Area: The Great Migration and Motown

Posted on December 2, 2013 by Rosemary Feurer

Thursday, **December 19**: The Rockin' Solidarity Labor Chorus presents The Great Migration and Motown. Diego Rivera Theater, San Francisco City College, Ocean Campus (Phelan & Ocean), San Francisco. 7pm, free. Info: (415) 648-3457, wynnegilbert@igc.org.

The Great Migration was the biggest under-reported story of the twentieth century. Over the span of six decades, around six million African Americans left Jim Crow behind and started over in northern cities. In the process, they transformed this country.

The Rockin' Solidarity Chorus tells that story in words and song. Chorus members tell their own migration narratives, and the text also draws on Isobel Wilkerson's *The Warmth of Other Songs* and some incisive analysis by Michael Moore. Musically, the repertoire includes (among much else) Civil Rights anthems, a Memphis Minnie blues, songs by the Bay Area's own Jon Fromer, and some reworkings of classics from Motown, a record label built by children of the migration.

Under the direction of Pat Wynne, the Rockin' Solidarity Chorus has been presenting aspects of working people's history and culture since 1999. The Chorus has performed at rallies, picket lines, and concerts throughout the Bay Area and beyond. We were invited to the 75th anniversary celebrations of the legendary Highlander Center in Knoxville, Tennessee (2007) and to celebrate May Day in Boulder, California as guests of the Rocky Mountain Peace & Justice Center (2009). Previous Chorus programs have addressed topics such as the Depression and the New Deal, the music of Pete Seeger and Woody Guthrie, outsourcing, and the history of immigration. Chorus members are a mix of unionists, Wobblies, unaffiliated folks, academics, activists, anarchists, and archivists.

- **6-7 p.m.** – Pot luck Supper and 40th Anniversary Program – Appreciations, Awards and Updates on the Fight to Save City College
- **7 p.m.** – Performance by the Rockin' Solidarity Labor Heritage Chorus

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Author



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Rosemary Feurer is Professor of History at Northern Illinois University. She is the author of *Radical Unionism in the Midwest, 1900-1950,* among other books and essays. She is working on The Illinois Mine Wars, 1860-1940 and a new biography of Mary Harris "Mother" Jones.

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