

Barbara Dane, blues singer and longtime political activist, dies at 97

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Oakland, October 22 (RHC)-- Legendary singer and activist Barbara Dane died in her Oakland home Sunday. She was 97 years old.

In the 1950s, Dane became a popular blues singer and performed with many leading musicians of the time, including Louis Armstrong, Muddy Waters, Willie Dixon and others.

She eventually largely dropped out of the commercial music world to focus on social justice, becoming involved in the civil rights movement, as well as the GI resistance movement during the Vietnam War.

She and her husband Irwin Silber started the record label Paredon to release music from freedom struggles across the globe. She was one of many artists whom the FBI surveilled because of their activism.

In 2018, Barbara Dane spoke about her remarkable life to Democracy Now.

“With parking lots filled up with playgrounds and schools, / We can do what we like 'cause we like what we do. / We'll build gardens and hospitals in every mall, / And we'll stop the wars once and for all. / What? / Stop the wars once and for all! / What? / Stop the wars once and for all! Yeah! / Be reasonable, and demand the impossible now. / Yes, be reasonable, and demand the impossible now.”

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