

Fredericksburg Music Club, Inc. Presents Sonic Escape In Concert, Flute and Violin Duo April 23, 2017

Sonic Escape, Flute and Violin Duo

Performers Biography

Fiddle-dancing for thousands in Tiananmen Square. A flute concert on skis in the mountains of Vermont. Couchsurfing parties in the Arctic Circle. A cross-country caper in a busted \$500 minivan. Adventure abounds when art rules life, and sharing it with the world is what Sonic Escape's about!

Who is Sonic Escape?

Shawn Wyckoff and Maria Millar founded Sonic Escape in 2009. Armed with flute & violin, their game plan – use hyper-instrumentals to fill hearts with indescribable joy – has landed them on hundreds of stages across 30+ North American states, provinces and beyond (click to see where)! Maria and Shawn push themselves to the brink – singing, dancing, telling stories, and above all, playing their hearts out with a “wonderfully imaginative... anything goes sense of fun.” (The Washington Post, 2014)

They met at The Juilliard School. A love of blading the streets of New York (and a spring break in Ireland) forged a romance powered by fun. But playing the flute & violin together? No way! Too shrill, hard to tune. Temptation kicked in, though, and Shawn and Maria gave it a go. Tuning took 2 years; matching breath & bow took even longer. Composing music that amplifies the virtuosity, range and emotion of the flute & violin – that's when the real fun began. They knew they'd arrived when an audience exclaimed, “Hurry, lock the doors! Don't let them leave!!”

After several years of frenzied, fabulous touring, Maria and Shawn reflected. “How can we further connect with communities to make a lasting difference?” Their answer: Four Seasons Rising (4S↑), a project that combines music + activities to inspire action for Earth. Featuring The Symphony, a concerto for flute, violin and orchestra composed by Maria and funded by Canada Council for the Arts, 4S↑ is rooted in the belief that music should unite and ignite.

Performing arts centers such as Lincoln Center (NYC), Chautauqua Institution (Chautauqua, NY), Irish Arts Center (NYC), Oxnard Performing Arts & Convention Center (Oxnard, CA) and the Imperial Theatre (Sarnia, ON) have provided formidable stages for Sonic Escape's larger-than-life sounds and moves. Concerts and workshops at the University of Missouri (St. Louis, MO), University of Wisconsin (Whitewater, WI), Penn State (Erie, PA), Hofstra University (Hempstead, NY) and The Juilliard School (NYC) have enabled them to share with audiences and students alike! Then there's festivals... whether thousands camp without running water or gather in idyllic town squares, Sonic Escape loves them all and has performed at the Summer Arts Festival (Huntington, NY), Blue Skies Music Festival (Clarendon, ON), Elora Festival (Elora, ON) and Cherry Blossom Festival (Philadelphia, PA). Lastly, Canada Council for the Arts, Chamber Music America and the Puffin Foundation have generously funded Sonic Escape's compositions, travels, and the creation of a 5-day community residency. So look out! When you see that green minivan rolling into town, make way for the 2 nomads (and maybe even 2 traveling cats) that are Sonic Escape: good times and superb music are sure to follow!

Who is Maria?

Violinist and composer Maria Kaneko Millar has performed as a soloist throughout Canada, Ireland, China, Japan and the US; The Canadian, British and American Broadcasting Corporations as well as The WB's One World Jam, CBS Sunday Morning and CBS The Early Show have aired her work. 170 performances as Solo Dancing Fiddler in Riverdance On Broadway and the North American and Asian Tours of Riverdance: The Show featured improvised solos and simultaneous dance. Maria also performed in Radio City Music Hall's One World Jam and premiered her creation for 5 prerecorded violin tracks and 1 live dancing violinist, All for One, on CBC's nationally televised The Great Canadian Music

Dream. Maria has toured North America with her one-woman show of original works for violin, voice and dance, playing venues such as The Kennedy Center and The Library & Archives of Canada. Canada Council for the Arts, Alberta Foundation for the Arts and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council have awarded Maria with composition and space grants; Samson sponsors Maria, providing audio, wireless and effects processing equipment specific to her roles as singer, acoustic/electric violinist and dancer. Maria lives to improvise: her arrangements and aural transcriptions of Asian, Celtic, Gypsy, Klezmer, Tango, Turkish, blues, jazz, pop, rock and classical music have laid the foundation for fearless ad-libbing in any setting. Maria holds accelerated BM/MM's in Violin Performance from The Juilliard School.

And Shawn?

Flutist Shawn Wyckoff is an avid solo and chamber musician who has been featured in performances at Carnegie Hall, Avery Fisher Hall, The Kennedy Center, Weill Recital Hall, Merkin Concert Hall, The Library of Congress, BargeMusic, MOMA and the Guggenheim Museum. Shawn is the artistic director, flutist and music arranger for TetraWind, a woodwind quartet specializing in contemporary American music. Shawn's orchestral work includes concerts with Continuum, One World Symphony and The Harmonia Opera Company. Shawn is a First Prize winner of The Judith Lapple National Flute Competition, the Flute Society of Washington Competition and The Friday Morning Music Club Woodwind Competition. He was named a Maryland Distinguished Scholar of the Arts and received the Stephen Brewster Award (as chosen by a panel of National Symphony Orchestra musicians), the John Philip Sousa Award and the National Alliance for Excellence Award. Shawn holds a BM in Flute Performance from The Juilliard School.

Source: <http://www.sonicescapemusic.com/>