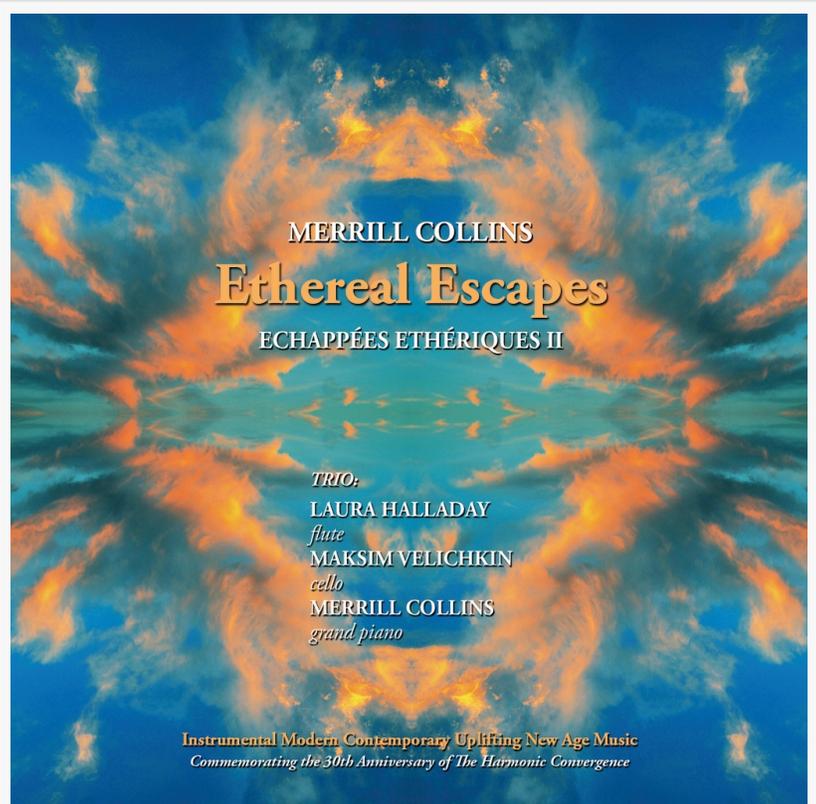


The 30th Anniversary of The Harmonic Convergence Inspires a New Album, **ETHEREAL ESCAPES**, a Transcendent Musical Roadmap

Drawing on Overtones, Harmonics and Mythologies she created in 1987, Merrill Collins re-teams with Laura Halladay, Maksim Velichkin on a passionate peace album.

SANTA MONICA, CA, USA, August 15, 2017 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In 1987, new age author and artist Jose Arguelles launched a word-of-mouth [Harmonic Convergence](#) campaign calling for 144,000 “sun dancers” to gather near sacred sites at dawn on August 16-17 to open the doors to an era of unprecedented change and preparation for a new evolutionary cycle on Earth. The event was celebrated worldwide by tens of thousands of people and marked the first time human beings simultaneously coordinated their prayers, meditations, and ceremonies at sacred sites around the planet. This outpouring of intention closely coincided with an exceptional alignment of the planets. Pianist and composer [Merrill Collins](#) participated in that historic event 30 years ago, and it has inspired her, musically, ever since.



Ethereal Escapes, a new album by Merrill Collins, and the sequel to Echappées Etheriques, released in celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the Harmonic Convergence. Artwork by Yvon Chausseblanche.

This week, as the 30th anniversary of the Harmonic Convergence approaches, Collins will celebrate by releasing a special "vocal version" of “Particles in Space,” a song from her new album [Ethereal Escapes](#). This new work is the transcendent, alternately whimsical and poignant sequel to Collins’ critically-acclaimed 2016 recording Echappées Ethériques (debuting at #5 on ZMR Global Airplay Charts), which celebrates a harmonic convergence of a different kind: the beautiful and daring musical chemistry between the renowned pianist and two of her longtime friends and collaborators, flautist Laura Halladay and cellist Maksim Velichkin. Bringing everything full circle, the ambitious, hour long 16-track collection seamlessly connects three imaginative mythological narratives – The Story of the Conductor of the Music of the Spheres, The Story of the Fountain of Jewels, and The Story of the

Emerald - that were written in 1987, when Collins' birthday coincided with the Harmonic Convergence.

The production of Collins' pieces encompasses new age, contemporary instrumental and classical styles, powerfully and emotionally putting our planet's role in the Universe in perspective while conveying the utter vastness of space and the majestic beauty of the ether. Four of the tracks are finalists in the Global Peace Song Awards. "The Fountain of Jewels Activated", "Triumphant Upon Arrival" and "With Every Heartbeat" are finalists in the Classical Category. "Particles in Space" is a finalist in the New Age Music category, prompting the idea to produce a new version of the song with vocals by acclaimed vocalist (and fellow peace activist) SEAY, and music by the Ethereal Escapes ensemble; this new version is scheduled for imminent release, in conjunction with this week's timely anniversary of the Harmonic Convergence.



The new vocal version of Merrill Collins' single "Particles in Space" features vocalist and peace activist SEAY. Artwork by Yvon Chausseblanche.

"Particles in Space" was born of Collins' lifelong peace activism; in 1983, a dedicated group from Palos Altos - Beyond War - inspired Merrill to write songs bringing awareness to the need for nuclear disarmament. In 2017, "Particles in Space" regains the spotlight, refocusing our important plea for peace.

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Merrill Collins

"Remembering the Emerald" is another of Collins' memorable pieces, and was dedicated to Avon Mattison, founder of Pathways to Peace, where Collins was "Composer-in-Residence" in 1986 and 1987.

The artist has a long history of popular recordings in which she and her players interact with each other like they're in a musical conversation, "where each person's intuition guides their commentaries and input." Likewise, a colorful musical

dialogue drives Ethereal Escapes, from the opening swirl of cello accents, dreamy flute and elegant piano on the opening track "The Fountain of Jewels Activated" through the film score lush soaring interaction at the end of the closer "Triumphant Upon Arrival."

Collins' narratives gave rise to a poem that emerges when the song titles are read in sequence ("Our peaceful uprising continues/flowing directly to love/We heard earth weeping/remembering the Emerald..."), the moods of the songs reflecting their titles. For instance, "In The Bigger Picture" is spacious, hypnotic and a bit ominous," while "Living in Harmonious World" offers a dreamy sense of floating in the heavens, and "Flowing Directly To Love" is reflective and lushly romantic. In contrast, "We Heard Earth Weeping" is dark and soulful.

"I love these stories and my memories of the Harmonic Convergence," she says. "Historically it is a reminder to the people on this planet to be mindful of the bigger picture. We had nuclear threats then, and now we hear North Korea daring us to engage. A nuclear scare, and choosing a deliberate peace, closes the album with a reminder that we must hold love as our basis of civilization and humanity."

Collins, a classically-trained New Jersey native, has collaborated over the years with world class musicians to create harmonic, peaceful and uplifting works for meditation, inspiration, and relaxation on her indie label Spiraling Music. Many of her projects involve vocal tracks as well as instrumental ones. Her catalog includes Sky Watching (with cellist Michael Fitzpatrick), Cinema Musique (with Nicole Garcia), Cello & Piano Sanctuary (with Joseph Herbert), Blossoms and Christmas Presence. Merrill has performed and composed music for the 50th Anniversary of the United Nations, UNCHR Human Rights Day, Amnesty International, United Way, Pathways to Peace, UN World Habitat Day and Earth Day.

"There are many themes present in Ethereal Escapes, but the essence is our yearning to arrive at a place of loving vibration, summed up in the track "Flowing Directly To Love", Merrill says. "The overall spiritual intention of both Echappées Ethériques and Ethereal Escapes is to lift people upward vibrationally, and all of the harmonic progressions are custom designed to spiral up. For Laura, Maksim and I, making this album was highly therapeutic. The Ethereal Escapes are very real to us, and these are the gift we want to share with a world that needs this kind of loving musical therapy as well."

It is Collins' hope that individuals and radio hosts will play Ethereal Escapes throughout the 30th Anniversary of the Harmonic Convergence and the coming eclipse to remember the power of coming together in a harmonious way. Collins is offering an additional bonus on her website in celebration of the events: free downloads of Ethereal Escapes' colorful liner notes in full, as penned by bestselling author and multi-GRAMMY-winning producer Kabir Sehgal; these insightful notes illuminate Merrill's stories, which emerged from her past as the trio was creating the music. Visit www.spiralingmusic.com.

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Flautist Laura Halladay, Cellist Maksim Velichkin, and pianist/composer/peace activist Merrill Collins reunite to create music for the 30th Anniversary of the Harmonic Convergence. Photo by Yvon Chausseblanche.

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