

Music inspired during The 1987 Harmonic Convergence released

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.

This week, as the 30th anniversary of the Harmonic Convergence approaches, Collins will celebrate by releasing a special vocal version of “Particles in Space” from her new album *Ethereal Escapes*. *Ethereal Escapes* is the transcendent, alternately whimsical and poignant sequel to Collins’ critically-acclaimed 2016 recording *Echappées* *Ethériques*, 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 “vocal version” of the song, featuring acclaimed vocalist and fellow peace activist [SEAY](#), with Armand Hutton on background vocals, and the *Ethereal Escapes* ensemble; this new version is scheduled for imminent release, in conjunction with this week’s timely anniversary of the Harmonic Convergence.

“Particles in Space” was born of Collins’ lifelong peace activism; in 1983, a dedicated group called 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. “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.

Collins has a long history of popular recordings where 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 the 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. 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, resolves 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.”

Collins is offering an additional bonus in this week’s Harmonic Convergence 30th Anniversary celebration on her [website](#). New York Times Bestselling Author and multi-Grammy and Latin Grammy winning producer Kabir Sehgal penned *Ethereal Escapes*’ colorful liner notes, which illuminate the essence of Merrill’s stories that emerged from

her past as the trio was creating the music. On August 16th and 17th, the full version of these stories will be available as free downloads on www.spiralingmusic.com.