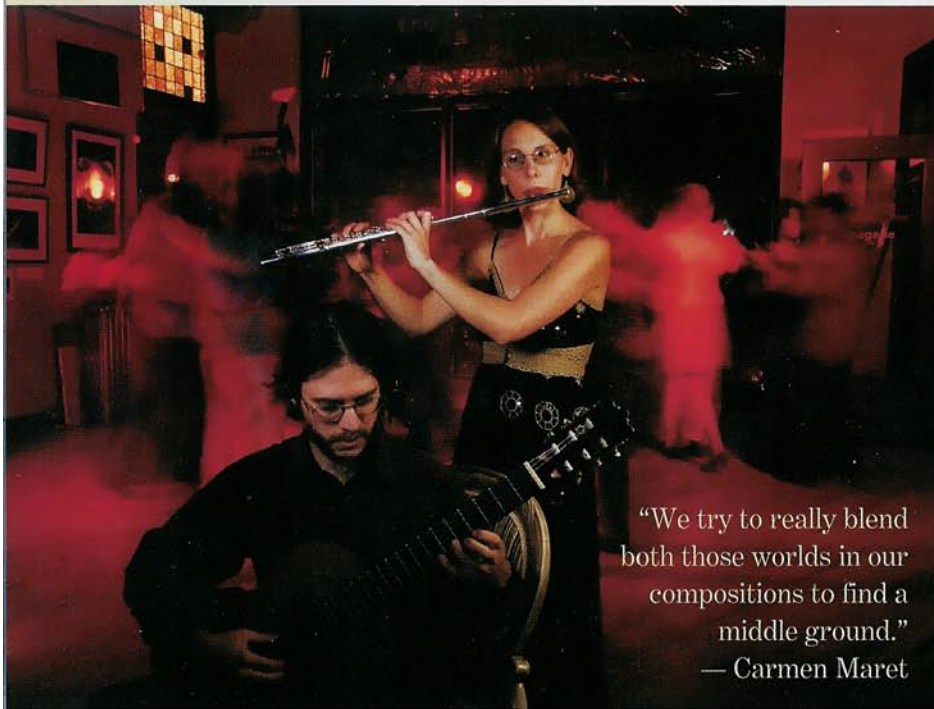


Joined at the hip

CARMEN MARET'S PASSION FOR TANGO AND DANCE MERGED WITH ANDREW BERGERON'S PENCHANT FOR GUITAR AND ORIGINAL MUSIC IN 2002. BY JULIET BENNETT RYLAH



"We try to really blend both those worlds in our compositions to find a middle ground."
— Carmen Maret

It takes two to tango, they say, so perhaps it is fitting that husband-and-wife team Carmen Maret and Andrew Bergeron are the only two members of Folias, a classical duo with a penchant for Argentine tango.

Folias originated in 2002 when classically trained flautist Carmen Maret met guitarist Andrew Bergeron in graduate school at Michigan State University. Maret, a native of Boise, Idaho, began playing the flute in grade school and went on to major in flute performance at the University of Missouri in Kansas City. It was there she developed a passion for tango music and dance, taking her to MSU where she earned master's degrees in flute performance and ethnomusicology.

During Maret's grad school days, Bergeron was also studying music at MSU, pursuing a master's in composition after receiving his undergraduate degrees in music and philosophy from Grand Valley State University.

Maret was searching for the right guitarist and found the perfect fit when introduced to Bergeron.

"I was looking for someone to play my music that I wrote, so at first it was kind of a trade," Bergeron said. "She would play the pieces that I wrote and I would play tango, and then we eventually merged the two together."

Their collaboration parlayed into regular gigs at Café Cuba-

Folias

Category: Classical

Releases: "WaterWay," 2008; "Marufo Vega," 2006; "Tangos Metamorphoses," 2004; and debuting September 2010, "The Latin Dance Projects."

Geography: Grand Rapids

Parity: Violinists Gidon Kramer, Assad Brothers

Curiosity: www.foliasmusic.com

no in Lansing and Mezza Café & Cabaret in Grand Rapids. Upon moving to Grand Rapids, the pair began developing both tango dance music and original, classical compositions.

"We try to really blend both those worlds in our compositions to find a middle ground," Maret said. The couple also founded the Grand Rapids Tango Community, and have taught tango dancing lessons.

"Tango is very melancholy," Maret said. "That's probably why I like it. It's incredibly nostalgic, sappy, melancholy, bittersweet. (Tango has) an intense, dragging beat."

Bergeron added, "It's from Argentina, not from Spain. Many people confuse tango with flamenco. The dance styles are different. Flamenco is more guitar. Tango is not necessarily a guitar thing."

Folias' most recent album, "WaterWay" (2008), is a collection of original arrangements inspired by water. Several of the pieces were written in 2007 while Maret and Bergeron were Artists in Residence at Lake Superior's Isle Royale National Park.

"We got to live there for three weeks in a cabin in the wilderness and give concerts," Maret said. "We wrote five pieces that premiered during the residency."

Folias is planning future projects, such as a Latin-based album with percussionist Brandon Grinwis, and a classical album comprised of both original compositions and pieces that have been written for them.

Their passion for music is clear in the intricacies of their recordings and in the moods they evoke. The two instruments work well together, the sounds as entwined as two people participating in Folias' signature dance.

"Music is our lives; it's a lifestyle," Maret said. "We're practically joined at the hip."

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