

# Mara Levine: Facets of Folk (2019)



(Cover Photo by Manny Krevat / Design by Hillary Foxsong)

**LABEL:** Mara's Creations / Bell Buckle Records

**PRODUCED BY:** Mara Levine, Bob Harris, John Guth

**RETAIL OUTLETS:** MaraLevine.com, BellBuckleRecords.com, CD Baby

#1 Album, #1 Artist, #1 Song, 9 songs in the top 25, FAI Folk DJ Chart: Jan 2019.

#3 Album, #2 Artist, #5, #11, #25 songs overall: 2019 FAI Folk DJ Chart

22 weeks: Bluegrass Today "Grassicana" Chart (Top 15) 2017/2018

#5 Album NACC Chart, February 2019

*"Some people, like the one described in Leonard Cohen's classic song, are born with a Golden Voice. Mara Levine is one of those gifted few who fit that definition. Hearing her sing makes you stop whatever you are doing and LISTEN! Known for her warmth, sincerity and impeccable natural musicality, she makes us all listen more intently, and celebrate the beauty that she brings to every song she sings and inspires us to do better ourselves, in whatever field we work. Thank you Mara for making us all remember the poetry of lyricism."* - DAVID AMRAM, Composer, Conductor, Multi Instrumentalist

Called one of the best singers of her generation by Christine Lavin, folksinger and jewelry designer Mara Levine, like a skilled gem cutter, selects songs with inherent beauty, examines them carefully, then crafts and polishes them to a glittering brilliance. According to folksinger and activist Si Kahn, "Layering harmony line on top of harmony line, Levine creates rich tapestries of sound and emotion."

With her third album, FACETS OF FOLK, Levine has found her true voice and it rings clearly and powerfully like a bell or chime, reminiscent of her inspirations Judy Collins and Joan Baez, as she explores some of the different faces of the folk genre. Most songs on the project are filled with Levine's lush harmony arrangements and invite the listener to sing along.

"As I was selecting material for my third" CD said Levine, "I was inspired by the current political and social challenges facing us today, and thought a great deal about the importance of speaking out against injustice, both societal, and for people in our lives who are being wronged."

On FACETS OF FOLK, Levine presents a number of songs of social conscience with themes of taking a stand, making a difference, considering the treatment of others and becoming a better person. Those tunes, written by popular contemporary songwriters as well as emerging talents, are all carefully set among folk favorites and lesser known songs. The lead off track, "You Reap What You Sow," (Susan Shann) recorded with bluegrass luminaries Greg Blake, Bob Harris, Rob Ickes, Andy Leftwich, Mollie O'Brien, Mark Schatz and Scott Vestal, was extremely well received when it was released as a single in November 2017, hitting #1 on the Folk DJ chart and spending 22 weeks on the Bluegrass Today Grassicana chart.

A traditional holiday song from the Scottish Hebrides, "Taladh Chriosda" has been re-recorded with frequent touring partners Gathering Time. Four additional songs were recorded with Gathering Time, including a rousing version of the Tommy Sands protest anthem, "Daughters and Sons", featuring special guests Kim and Reggie Harris swapping lead vocals with Levine, and "By My Silence" a provocative warning about the perils of remaining passive in the face of injustice, written by award winning Florida singer-songwriters Ellen Bukstel and Nick Annis, which reached #1 on the Folk DJ Chart when it was released as a single in September 2017.

FACETS OF FOLK was co-produced by Bob Harris, (Johnny Cash, Vasser Clements, Girlyman) who plays guitar and helped with arrangements on many of the tracks, and also with John Guth (Tom Chapin, Galt MacDermot) who plays various instruments and helped with arrangements on five of the tracks. Other contributing musicians; Kim and Reggie Harris, Robin Greenstein, Michael G. Ronstadt, Ed Trickett, Josh Joffen, Terry Kitchen, Caroline Cutroneo, Jan Alba, Harold Morton, Sean McComiskey, Barbara Novick, Cheryl Prashker, Tilman Reitzle, Akiva Wharton and Patrice Avsharian Wiseman.

1. You Reap What You Sow ★  
(Susan Shann) 3:08
2. Daughters and Sons (Tommy Sands) 3:50 ★
3. Hey, That's No Way to Say Goodbye ★  
(Leonard Cohen) 3:12 \*
4. Tree of Life (Eric Peltoniemi) 3:19
5. A Perfect Rose (Terry Kitchen) 3:50 ★
6. Be the Change (Arlon Bennett) 3:24 ★
7. By My Silence ★  
(Ellen Bukstel & Nick Annis) 3:32
8. Taladh Chriosda (Traditional) 2:56
9. Child of Mine (Bill Staines) 3:46
10. Upstream (Si Kahn) 3:04
11. The Moment Slipped Away ★  
(Christine Lavin) 3:58
12. Bitter Green (Gordon Lightfoot) 2:54 ★
13. Song for the Asking (Paul Simon) time 2:13

★ **Key Track.** See reverse for annotated track list and artists who contributed their talents to this album.

*"When Chris Lavin and David Amram are saying, 'looky here', we're going to look. On her third album, Levine marks her territory as the new standard bearer for folk music with this classically framed set that finds her interpreting worthy modern classics, protest music, and some of the sweetest vocalizing you'll find this side of the golden sounds of the 60's. A flat-out winner throughout, this isn't about lo-fi, nostalgia or whatever --- it's a delightful slice of the here and now, hitting the nail right on the head. Well done".* - CHRIS SPECTOR, MIDWEST RECORD

*"Mara Levine is a gifted singer who's expressive and versatile voice is suited to any style of music she darn well pleases to focus on, including bluegrass, country or folk."* - DEDE WYLAND, SKYLINE

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# Mara Levine: Facets of Folk (2019)

## Annotated Track Listings with Featured Performers

### 1. You Reap What You Sow (Susan B. Shann) 3:08

An up-tempo bluegrass track with a positive message about doing your best at whatever you do and reaping the rewards or fruits of your labors, or possibly keeping your word and commitments and that will be returned to you in kind. With luminaries Greg Blake (vocals), Bob Harris (guitar), Rob Ickes (Dobro), Andy Leftwich (mandolin), Mollie O'Brien (vocals, courtesy of Remington Road Records), Mark Schatz (bass) and Scott Vestal (banjo).

### 2. Daughters and Sons (Tommy Sands) 3:50

This mid/up-tempo folk anthem with a rousing sing-along chorus speaks to the struggles of oppressed people leading to gains in freedom, justice, equality and peace for future generations, reminding us that the fight is not over. With Kim & Reggie Harris (lead & harmony vocals), Gathering Time (harmony), Reggie (guitar), Mark Schatz (bass), Andy Leftwich (fiddle) and Sean McComiskey (Charm City Junction) button accordion, Cheryl Prashker & Akiva Wharton, percussion.

### 3. Hey, That's No Way to Say Goodbye (Leonard Cohen) 3:12

Slow, folk. A sorrowful lament about soon to be separated lovers, as a duet with Caroline Cutroneo singing lead on the first verse as she does in our live performances, with Caroline and Bob Harris on guitars, and Michael G. Ronstadt on cello.

### 4. Tree of Life (Eric Peltoniemi) 3:19

Mid-tempo, folk. From the 1983 play "Plain Hearts: Songs and Stories of Midwestern Prairie Women", the first two verses are comprised entirely of the names of quilting patterns. With Caroline Cutroneo (guitar, harmony), Hillary Foxsong (harmony) John Guth (bass) and special guest Ed Trickett on hammered dulcimer!

### 5. A Perfect Rose (Terry Kitchen) 3:50

Slow, folk. A subtle song about forgoing wastefulness. John D. Rockefeller, an avid gardener once said that in order to get a perfect rose you had to prune all the other buds from the bush. Terry said, "Possibly good gardening advice, but more than a little scary coming from the richest man in the world." With Terry Kitchen (guitar, bass, mandolin, vocals).

### 6. Be the Change (Arlon Bennett) 3:24

Mid-tempo, folk. Rosa Parks and Gandhi set examples for others to "Be the Change", and we can choose to make a difference by participating, voting and raising our voices. With John Guth (lead guitar, mando guitar, bass), Robin Greenstein (harmony), Bob Harris (rhythm guitar) and Barbara Novick (harmony vocals)

### 7. By My Silence (Ellen Bukstel/Nick Annis) 3:32

Mid-tempo, folk. A powerful song about the regret of keeping a fearful silence during the Holocaust, inspired by Rev. Martin Niemöller, a German Protestant Minister imprisoned for seven years in concentration camps for finally speaking out against the Nazis. "By My Silence" has won accolades including; Grand Prize Winner in the 2008 Music to Life Song Competition, Winner, 2010 Int'l New Zealand Peace Song Competition; Folk Finalist, the 2009 John Lennon Song Competition. With Gathering Time (harmony); Stuart Markus (rhythm guitar), Hillary Foxsong, Gerry McKeveny (lead guitar, bass).

### 8. Taladh Chriosda (Ta-La-Da Cree-Os-Da) 2:56

(Trad, lyrics Randal Rankin) Mid-tempo. Also known as Christ Child's Lullaby, The original hymn was written in 1854, later set to a folk tune from the Scottish Hebrides. Mary sings to her newborn son. With Gathering Time (harmony), John Guth (guitars, mando-guitar, bass) and Patryce Avsharian Wiseman (fiddle).

### 9. Child of Mine (Bill Staines) 3:46

Mid-tempo, folk. A poignant, tender song sung by parents to their child, recorded as a duet with Josh Joffen. With Jan Alba (flute), Bob Harris (rhythm guitar), John Guth (acoustic lead guitar, electric guitar, bass).

### 10. Upstream (Si Kahn) 3:04

Mid-tempo, folk. Written for Si's Bristol Bay album as part of an ongoing fight to prevent the building of the Pebble Mine at the headwaters of Bristol Bay, Alaska where 40% of the world's wild Sockeye Salmon go to spawn. As a member of Musicians United to Protect Bristol Bay, I continue to sing this song and spread awareness so others can join the fight. With John Guth (bass), Eleanor Kleiner (harmony), Harold Morton (guitar)

### 11. The Moment Slipped Away (Christine Lavin) 3:58

Slow. Inspired by a chance encounter with a famous actress, Lavin reflects on her own missed opportunities to make a difference in the lives of others, and reminds us that it is never too late. With Bob Harris (guitar) and Tilman Reitzle (string and percussion arrangements) Additional arrangements: Harris/Levine. Thrilled to have my former classmate, Tilman, contributing to this moving song.

### 12. Bitter Green (Gordon Lightfoot) 2:54

Mid-tempo Folk. A beautiful, haunting and tragic ballad about separated lovers, with Gathering Time providing lush harmonies and John Guth on guitars, bass and strings.

### 13. Song for the Asking (Paul Simon) 2:13

Slow, folk. Suggested by my friend, Nick Arietano, for the close of the album, the lyrics perfectly summarize how I feel about Facets of Folk, a labor of love two years in the making. "This is my song for the asking, ask me and I will play all the love that I hold inside". With Gathering Time (harmony), Bob Harris (guitar), and Michael G. Ronstadt (cello).

*"Part of the role of the folk singer has been to get people to think about issues in society they might not - or might prefer not to - think about otherwise. On Facets of Folk, Mara has collected some of the best modern and classic folk songs on topics that call out for consideration - and arranged and produced them to near creative perfection. We are proud to be a part of it, and thrilled with the results." - Stuart Markus, Gathering Time*

**See reverse for album description, artist bio and contact information.**