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# Sara Milonovich: Daisycutter

Sara Milonovich, a brilliant fiddler, singer, songwriter, and bandleader, released her CD *Daisycutter* in 2009. Described as “rural roots with an urban/world edge,” this album’s songs and music encompass folk, bluegrass, Celtic, zydeco, and American roots-rock music.

The album opens with the uptempo but poignant song, “Country Life,” written by Steve Knightley. With Gregory Liszt’s marvelous banjo and Milonovich’s powerful vocals and fiddles, “Country Life” touches on class issues and the troubles and dilemmas of the farmer’s life in an alt-country setting. This excellent song sets the tone for the album, warming up listeners for an exciting musical journey packed with electrified fiddling, folk-influenced balladry, and marvelous vocals. *Daisycutter* features anti-war/political songs such as “Insanity Street” and “Under the Weather,” love songs such as “Northern Cross” and “Last Dance,” renditions of well-known songs such as The Monkees’ “Pleasant Valley Sunday” and Peter Gabriel’s “Here Comes the Flood,” and several multi-instrumental pieces such as “Fiona’s Breakdown,” “The First Snowfall,” and “The Lake Arthur Stomp.” Produced by Milonovich’s longtime musical collaborator, guitarist/multi-instrumentalist Greg Anderson, *Daisycutter* is a real gem!

Growing up on a working farm in Montgomery County, NY, Milonovich picked up a violin at the age of four, and her passion for music never stopped. At seven, she joined The Adirondack Fiddlers, and by nine, she was fronting her own band. At age 12, she made her first recording, *Traditionally, Sara*, followed

by the CD *Mrs. Ippy Fiddle*, at 15. She then joined The McKrells, a legendary Saratoga Springs Celtic/bluegrass band, and also became a well-traveled, sought-after accompanist for artists in many musical genres. After leaving the band to attend Cornell University in Ithaca, graduating with a BS in Biology, she resumed touring around the US and Europe, performing with Pete Seeger, Richard Shindell, Cathie Ryan, Anne Hills, and Antje Duvokot, among others. Locally, Milonovich has also performed with various classical ensembles, including the Empire State Youth and Repertory Orchestras, several string quartets, and with members of the Albany, Glens Falls, and Schenectady Symphonies. Through her talents and successes, Milonovich has been praised by critics, as well as a wide range of audiences in different music genres.

Milonovich’s career is highlighted by many achievements. Under the name Sara Miles, her *Mrs. Ippy Fiddle* album was a nominated Grammy semifinalist (as was the album *Daisycutter*). She also collaborated with Pete Seeger on his Grammy Award-winning album, *At 89*. Her 2004 CD, with Greg Anderson, *Forward In All Directions!* was selected for the Top 10 World Music list in the *Village Voice* “Pazz & Jop” Critic’s Poll of 2004. At the 2001 Mount Airy Fiddler’s Convention in North Carolina, she won first place in the Bluegrass Fiddle and second in the Folk Song contests. In 2011, as a member of Mountain Quickstep, she toured Eastern Europe through the “Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad” cultural diplomatic program, sponsored by Jazz at Lincoln Center and the US Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

Other highlights from Sara’s *Daisycutter* CD include her composition “Fiona’s Breakdown,” with her fast, fleet-fingered fiddling, complemented by Mike Marshall’s mandolin, John Doyle’s acoustic guitar, and Viktor Krauss’s acoustic bass. “Insanity Street” and “Last Dance,” evince Milonovich’s gorgeous, melancholic vocals, along with beautiful bari-



Sara Milonovich. Photo by Arius Photography, courtesy of Sara Milonovich.

tone violin and guitars. Perhaps the most challenging song is “Here Comes the Flood,” written by Peter Gabriel. Milonovich delivers the song with full emotion, evoking an apocalyptic dream that often comes to the subconscious mind at night. Her enigmatic and lonesome voice captures the mood truthfully. For music lovers in New York, Milonovich currently can be seen either with her band (also named Daisycutter) or occasionally with Mountain Quickstep around the state.

*Daisycutter*’s new album, *Waiting for the Stars*, is slated for release in 2016, but limited copies are available at their live performances. Spearheaded by Sara’s original songs, including “Scarecrow” (a 2010 John Lennon Songwriting Contest finalist), the album paints windswept images of a modern ruralism, yet to make peace with its past while confronting an uncertain future. For more information, visit [www.daisycutter.net](http://www.daisycutter.net).

*Daisycutter*, was the April 2012 featured selection in the New York Folklore Society’s CD-of-the-Month *Voices in New York* membership program. For more information about Sara, visit the New York Folklore Society’s directory of traditional artists: [www.nyfolklore.org/tradarts/music/artist/milonovich.html](http://www.nyfolklore.org/tradarts/music/artist/milonovich.html)

The CD is available in the New York Folklore Society’s Gallery of New York Artists and online at: [www.nyfolklore.org/gallery/store/music.htm#saram](http://www.nyfolklore.org/gallery/store/music.htm#saram)



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