

FRANK EVANS & BEN PLOTNICK

MADISON ARCHIVES

A duo album of original music for banjo & fiddle.

Tracklist

1. Port City Stomp
2. The Ballad of John Mac
3. Lee's March
4. Felicity's Reel
5. Piker's Breakdown
6. Todos Santos
7. Daisy and Bobby
8. Riverbend Marshes
9. Parkdale Foxtrot
10. Dunn Hollow
11. Golden Slippers

Tracks 1,2,4,6,7,8

© Benjamin Plotnick, SOCAN

Tracks 3,5,9,10

© Frank Evans, SOCAN

Track 11 *traditional*

www.frankevansmusic.com

www.slocanramblers.com

www.benplotnick.com

www.thefretless.com

www.oliverthecrow.com

Credits

Arranged, recorded and produced by Frank Evans & Ben Plotnick. Mixed & Mastered by Ivan Rosenberg. Photography & Design by Kaitlyn Raitz.



When fiddle player Ben Plotnick (of *The Fretless* & *Oliver the Crow*), and banjo player Frank Evans (of *The Slocan Ramblers*) decided to push through the many mental and financial stresses of 2020 and take the opportunity to work on a project that had been festering for some years, the two friends may not have realized what they were signing up for. On their duo album *Madison Archives*, the pair tested their own capacity for instrumental improvisation, technique, home recording, and sanity. However, the triumphant outcome is an extremely ambitious yet completely effortless sounding collection of original tunes.

Plotnick and Evans developed a friendship while they carved out their respective paths in the Toronto folk and bluegrass scene. Plotnick joined The Fretless, a Juno-award winning string quartet known for their groundbreaking work in traditional music styles while Evans toured heavily with his Juno-nominated, IBMA-winning bluegrass & old-time band The Slocan Ramblers.

Although the idea for the duo album first came to mind while the two were in Toronto, by the time they got around to making it they had both moved to Nashville. When Evans arrived in June of 2020, both had completely clear calendars due to the Pandemic, and they decided that the time was perfect to record their long-discussed album. So the pair cleared out Evans' small apartment and put up sound dampers. They spent the better part of a month recording hundreds of takes, from which eventually emerged the eleven track collection, featuring ten original tunes as well as their take on the traditional "Golden Slippers". The result is *Madison Archives*, the virtuosic and spellbinding result of two musicians exploring the sonic potential of their instruments as sole companions.

Throughout *Madison Archives*, Evans and Plotnick demonstrate immense control, both in their technical playing and their ability to direct the narrative of the tune and move it in new and interesting directions. From the standout opening number "Port City Stomp", which rages through a Celtic influenced melody, to the totally surprising "Todos Santos" which begins in a straightforward fashion before breaking into rhythmic based experimental sound improvisation on both fiddle and banjo, the album is delicious treat for any traditional or instrumental music enthusiast to dig their ears into, and a testament to the fact that old sounds can always be reinvented given ample inspiration and tenacity.