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Monday, November 5, 2012

## Where The Heart Lives by Mara Purl Tour Starts Today

Posted by Rach on 8:00 AM, Book Tour, except Mara Purl/Where The Heart Lives, Womens Fiction - No comments



Join us for our 5 day tour from November 5 - 9

All stops are interviews but this is a double blog tour which means our hosts interviewed Mara Purl and Mara Purl has also interviewed our hosts and she will post her interviews on her blog <http://marapurl.wordpress.com/>

11/5  
Melissa - <http://thenovicechristian.com>

11/6  
Liz - <http://devotedmommyof3.blogspot.com>

11/7  
Jacinta - <http://www.charismamedianetwork.com>

11/8  
Susan - <http://coziecorner.blogspot.com>

11/9  
Rachel - <http://stressedrach.co.uk>



**Title:** Where The Heart Lives

**Author:** Mara Purl

**Genre:** Women's Fiction

**Length:** 384 pages

**Publisher:** Bellekeep Books (November 5, 2012)

### Book Description:

Is the heart smarter than the head? Artist Miranda Jones begins to trust her heart enough to escape from her life of privilege and start over in Milford-Haven, the small town of undiscovered beauty on California's Central Coast. She connects with environmentalist Samantha Hugo—a brilliant PhD twenty years her senior who gave up a son years earlier; and with restaurant owner Sally O'Mally who left Arkansas to create her own dream. Each woman wrestles with her own core issues while balancing demanding careers with the attentions of interesting men. None is aware that journalist Christine Christian has just been murdered while investigating a half-built house. Though the book stands alone, it is also Book 1 in the critically acclaimed, popular series, a multi-generational saga. Based on Purl's BBC Radio drama Milford-Haven U.S.A.



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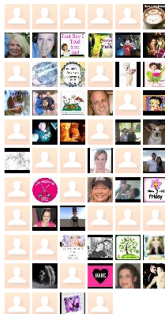


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#### About The Author:

Mara Puri is the author of the popular Milford-Haven Novels, based on her original hit radio drama Milford-Haven U.S.A. that reached 4.5 million listeners on BBC radio. Mara is a former journalist for the Associated Press, the Financial Times of London and Rolling Stone, and a former actress on Days Of Our Lives.

#### Excerpt:

Miranda knew she'd driven through downtown Los Angeles because the signs had told her so. But, terrified she'd miss one turn-off or another, she'd barely spared a glance for the tall skyscrapers and historic buildings as they'd whizzed by. She'd allowed herself one distraction: switching to the Doobies cassette and listening to it all the way to Hollywood, the band's rocking rhythms enveloping her in their infectious joy.

She knew when she got near the Bowl, she'd recognize the concrete and granite, multi-tiered, multi-figured statue fountain that landmarked its entrance. She'd read about this elaborate art piece that'd virtually replaced the original hillside, built between 1938 and 1940—the largest of hundreds of WPA projects in Southern California—by George Stanley, depicting the Muses of music, dance, and drama. The uppermost figure, the Music Muse herself, knelt, playing a harp; standing elsewhere on the structure stood the other Muses. Sure enough, when Miranda exited at Highland Avenue, she followed the well-marked designators that had her looping over the freeway, and she spotted the entrance immediately.

*The Muse looks serene . . . as if she knows the musicians will be listening, following her guidance.*

Following Zack's earlier instructions, Miranda pulled into the nearly empty parking lot, then on foot began to climb the hill leading to the amphitheatre. As she topped the rise that allowed side access just past the first ring—where VIPs and season-ticket holders probably sat in box seats—she walked to the center of the semicircle. Bathed in bright California sunshine, the bare bones of the theatre stood revealed: the rainbow-shaped white band shell the focal point; quarter-circles of seats fanning outward and up the hill, the entire seating area framed by a living wall of trees. She looked behind her up the hill at row upon row of seats, believing this venue would indeed hold more than seventeen thousand, the largest natural amphitheatre.

She stood still for a moment longer, sensing vibrations of concerts past . . . as if they'd been absorbed by the stage and seats, hills and trees—and, long held, were on the verge of releasing. *This is sacred space . . . artist space . . . I can feel it. The hopes and dreams of careers . . . the magical moments of connection between performers and audiences.* Miranda's eye was drawn to a man who wandered alone onto the deserted stage. *Tall and lanky . . . a shock of dark hair with a trimmed beard to match. He must be a sound tech because rehearsal doesn't start for a little while.*

She watched with interest as he scrutinized the four platforms that each held a full drum set. *Four drummers? That'd sure rock the house.* Now the man paid particular attention to one of the drum sets, shifting the racks and bouncing on the stool before adjusting its height. *Didn't realize anyone but the drummer himself would adjust the instruments . . . but what do I know?*

He began to play. *Curious to be hearing an acoustic instru-ment when it's surrounded by speakers the size of library book-shelves.* Drawn by the sound, Miranda walked down a few rows closer to hear him better. *Rat-tat-tat-tat tat-tat-ta-tat-tat. Then he repeated the pattern. I know that figure . . . it's the opening of "I'm Here to Love You." Oh! That's not a techie, that's one of the Doobies!* She took another few steps closer. He changed songs. *What's this one? So fun to identify a song just by the percussion— no melody, no lyrics.* She almost recognized it.

She noticed his lips were moving. *He must be singing . . . he's still too far away for me to hear.* Now she saw he was staring at her as he sang. She'd been seen, and felt she should leave immediately, and yet he was holding her there with his gaze and with his music. She knew the song now. "One step closer," he sang, while he hit his drums in magical cadence. She laughed out loud at the joke, and stood beaming at him while he played.

When the song finished, the musician continued to look at her for a moment, then stood from his stool to place his drum-sticks carefully in preparation for the rehearsal. When he looked in her direction again she gave him a nod and turned to go in search of Zack, but he called, "Don't run away."

Miranda waited as he came toward her with an easy gait. "Hi," he said, extending his hand. "I'm Keith."

"Hi . . . hi," stammered Miranda. "I'm . . . I'm Miranda."

"I'm . . . I'm here with Zack." "I'm . . . I'm here with Zack."

"Cool," said Keith. His eyes shone. "Here for rehearsal?"

"Yes . . . I'm sorry, I didn't mean to disturb your practicing. I mean your preparation."

Keith laughed. "It's cool. Zack told us you'd be here."

Glad I had someone to play for."

She chuckled. "Oh, I don't think you're going to lack for people to play for."

"Been to one of our shows before?"

"No, this'll be the first. But I've loved your music for a long time."

"You're not coming to the show Friday night here in L.A."

"You're coming to the Central Coast Bowl, right? Live up there?"

"Yes, in a little town called Milford-Haven."

"Beautiful area. What do you do there?"

"I'm a painter."

He nodded as if he understood. "That's great. My wife is an artist too. So, hey, enjoy."

And we'll see you after the Saturday show."

"Great." Miranda smiled up at him. "Thank you."

"For what?"

"For the concert. The one you played for me, and the one you're about to play."

He smiled, then left the amphitheatre, she imagined to go backstage.

"Miranda!"

She turned to see Zack waving from mid-auditorium.

"Come on up . . . want to show you something!"

Zack Calvin watched her slim toward him. *She looks great . . . that long glossy hair, the tight jeans.* He kissed her on the cheek when she arrived, inhaling her fresh, spicy scent. "I see you found it okay."

"Yes! I wouldn't say I've mastered the L.A. freeways, but

I'm managing to get around."

"So you met Keith Knudsen."

"Had my own private concert." She giggled. "Very nice of him."

"Nothing like an appreciative audience. So this is what I wanted to show you." He pointed to the middle row of seats where lighting technicians had established a temporary control center, electrical conduit and a maze of wires draping across seats, lighted panels glowing across a complexity of dimmers and sliders. "Thought we'd show you some of the lighting effects we're going to be using." Zack nodded to a lighting tech.

"Of course, you can't see it clearly until it's dark, but this will give you some idea."

She looked toward the darker inner portion of the band shell. "Oooh!"

"Bring it up a little brighter on the Cyc, Brian," Zack asked.

"What's a Cyc?" Miranda asked.

"It's short for psychodrama," replied Brian, "which is what I'm about to be starring in, if I don't get this thing

working." Miranda stared at him, confused.

"No, actually it sounds like 'psych' but it's short for 'cyclorama,'" the technician corrected. "It's the wall all the way upstage—at the back of the stage, that is."

"It's a canvas," Miranda said, "and you paint with light."

"I like that. Hey, man, where'd you find her? This one's a keeper."

Zack chuckled and saw Miranda blush. Remembering her strong aversion to attention, he quickly made her excuses.

"Look, Bn, are you okay for a few? Rune should be here any minute, but call me if there's a disaster. I'm on the two-way."

"Rune's around here somewhere, and I'll do what I can, but don't wander off too far, even if you do have a beautiful date."

Zack looked at Miranda. "Shall we?"

He led her on a short walking tour of the Bowl's vast backstage area. *Hope she's not bored. Hard to tell, she's so quiet.* "So that's about it as far as the sight-seeing goes."

Rehearsal should start in a couple of minutes. Want to stay?"

With a huge smile, she answered, "I wouldn't miss it!"

Miranda Jones followed Zack, resuming her original spot mid-audience. *He seems kind of formal today, like he hardly knows me. Well, that's true, he doesn't. And I imagine he's got a lot on his mind with the rehearsals, the shows, moving from one venue to the next.*

"I apologize," he said, "for being, well, distracted. Enjoy the rehearsal, and I'll find you afterward to say goodbye before you take off."

She looked up at him as he paused for a moment, noticing a shift in his expression. *Wistful? Worried?* "It's okay, Zack. Don't be concerned about me."

She thought for a moment he might lean down to kiss her, but instead he turned to go.

A moment later, her attention was grabbed by watching the band members arrive on stage and begin to pick up their instruments. She tried to identify each of them from photos she'd seen on their album covers.

She reached into her backpack to grab her artist journal and a pencil, then began sketching the stage and musicians, her hand moving fast to capture what she could of the quicksilver flow of energy.

"One . . . two . . ." she heard, and then the familiar strains of "Long Train Runnin'" began to play, Tommy Johnston taking center stage to sing his strong lead. Then the focus shifted to Michael McDonald as he sang "Minute by Minute," the syncopation and minor chords a contrast to the straight-ahead rock. Yet the focus was never really on one musician. They shared the spotlight, traded phrases. Michael's piano riffs

. . . John McVie's haunting guitar solo . . . Pat Simmons's clear tenor. . . Love the variety. *These guys really do rock.*

Just when the song was reaching a crescendo, an isolated drum strike there, and Michael, who'd been anchoring the tune with his signature chords, began instead to play the theme song from *Leave It to Beaver*.

She couldn't help but laugh out loud. After a brief exchange of words, they started the song again. This time Miranda couldn't sit still, so she stood and began to dance in her aisle, carried away by the vibrant energy of the music.

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