



Folk Music of Norway



Hardanger fiddling-folksongs-hymns-dance tunes
Hardingfele-stev-langeleik-slåtter-spelemannslag-religiøse folketonar

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Front cover photograph: Hardanger fiddle from Rauland, Telemark, once owned by the composer Eivind Groven.

Back cover photograph: fragment of the Baldishol tapestry from the Oslo Museum of Applied Art Kunstindustrimuseet Oslo.

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A SINAR A/S (OSLO) PRODUCTION

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Genuine folk music as part of an old and lively national culture is still flourishing in Norway, a country with a wild nature, numerous valleys, snow-covered mountains, lakes, deep forests, glorious fjords, remote communities, dark and long winters and shining summer nights. Norway has a long and rich tradition of musical expression. Norwegian folk music has survived through many generations and historical changes. Old folk tunes have kept surprisingly well, better than in the neighbouring lands and in some of the other industrial countries. The selection on this record represents some of the main types and styles of living folk-playing and singing, with their special sound and moods, from south west and central parts of Norway. The players and singers are some of the most outstanding folk musicians of the younger generation who carry on the folk traditions of their districts.

The Hardanger fiddle (*Hardingfele*) takes a central place on this record. This special peasant fiddle, with four melody strings and four underlying sympathetic strings, is almost a national symbol like the bagpipes of the Highlanders. As Henrik Ibsen describes it in his *Peer Gynt*, 'It ripples and sings like a stream at a waterfall.' Besides the Hardanger fiddle, the record includes typical folk singing from the farm-life of the farmers and mountaineers, old religious folk songs, ancient echo tunes of the *langeleik* (a kind of fretted zither) and old-time dances played by a group of country fiddlers.

Norwegians of the isolated rural districts are particularly proud of their folk traditions. Every year in summer-time local folk contests called *kappleik* are held in the various districts. Many players, singers and dancers with their national costumes participate in these folk festivals. A *kappleik* is never arranged for tourists. At rustic weddings fiddlers still play the old ceremonial music. Norwegian folk musicians, particularly the fiddlers, are organized in local groups all over the country and have their committees, meetings, publications and common activities. The Norwegian Broadcasting (NRK) transmits a weekly Sunday programme of authentic Norwegian folk music. As a whole, Norwegian folk music may be characterized as very versatile, with old and new things side by side. However, if one wants to find the characteristics of genuine Norwegian folk music, it is necessary to look among the old types. Norwegian folk tunes often have a shape related to the medieval type of melody making; the 'church' modes are common. Intervals which differ from those used in modern art music very often occur. The *slåtter* (old dance tunes) show an audacious and 'irregular' rhythm.

The distinction between the vocal and the instrumental in Norwegian folk music is mainly a practical one. No absolute distinction exists. Often we find the same musical motives in a vocal melody as in a piece played on folk instruments. The tunes and songs included in this record may serve as evidence of this close connection between vocal and instrumental folk music. Many of the dance melodies, wedding marches and other instrumental pieces have their origin in vocal folk music, and many folk songs have originated in instrumental folk music. Common features are: musical ornamentation, trills, grace notes and other decorations similar to the highly decorated Norwegian rose-painting, variations of small basic motives and a rhythm which is always 'complicated' and alive. This music, vocal and instrumental, more than any other expresses the basic character of the people who produce and make it.

Three original tunes (3, 4 and 22) are peasant melodies adapted by Grieg in his famous piano work *Slåtter*, op. 72. Two compositions for Hardanger fiddle are by the legendary fiddler Myllarguten. *Fanitullen* (track 1) is a piece for Hardanger fiddle used by Johan Halvorsen in his suite for Hardanger fiddle and orchestra, *Fossegrimen*. This folk tune, known in various versions, was a pop hit in Norway and internationally, a few years ago. The folk singing is generally unaccompanied. Norwegian folk songs (except the hymns) are usually sung in the various dialects still in everyday use. These regional dialects have preserved many old forms. The texts of the religious folk songs are usually from old hymn books (in Danish-Norwegian).

The strongest foreign influence on West Norwegian folk music has been the Scottish. For centuries there was a close contact between the Norwegians and the Scots, especially from 1500-1800, and it is very likely that Scotsmen brought with them songs and instruments with sympathetic strings on their trade expeditions to West Norway. We know also that in England, around 1300, there were several instruments which had sympathetic strings.

Background information and details about Norwegian folk instruments (Hardanger fiddle and langeleik) the folk music and its performers, translations and texts are included here.

Denne plate inneholder et variert utvalg av norsk vokal og instrumental folkemusikk i levende tradisjon i dag. Den gir et representativt bilde av og utsyn over norsk folkemusikk, slik den lever videre i fortsettelse og utvikling av de gamle tradisjoner. Men samtidig er det lagt vekt på den musikalske kvalitet, og på at platen skal være morsom og interessant å lytte til.

Hardingfela har fått en sentral plass på platen. Denne spesielle fiolin, med 4 strenger og 4-5 understrenger, er nesten som et nasjonalt symbol. Videre inneholder platen en rekke folkeviser og folkesanger, med emner fra dagliglivet på gårder og setre, vakre religiøse folketoner gamle melodier for langeleik, og gammeldans spilt av en gruppe felespillere.

Den norske folkemusikken har en rekke saertrekk, som atskiller den fra vanlig kunstmusikk, f.eks. brukes ofte andre intervaller, herunder kvarttoner, og skalaer beslektet med gamle kirketonearter. Rytmene, f.eks. i enkelte danser, kan være helt spesielle.

Melodiene og sangene på denne platen viser den nære forbindelse mellom det vokale og instrumentale i norsk folkemusikk. Ofte finner vi de samme musikalske motiver i en sang som i et instrumentalstykke.

Rikdommen og omfanget av de gamle tradisjoner i norsk folkemusikk har gjort den til en uuttømmelig inspirasjonskilde for norske komponister. På platen høres tre slåtter som er de samme som ble brukt av Grieg i hans kjente verk for piano, *Slåtter*, opus 72. *Fanitullen* ble også brukt av Johan Halvorsen i hans suite *Fossegrimen*

De originale norske tekster til de forskjellige sanger er inkludert i det illustrerte heftet som følger med platen.

1 **Fanitullen** (The Devil's Tune)

This is a very popular *slått*, similar to a *halling* (dance), which became a hit a few years ago in a pop arrangement. Originally *Fanitullen* is a traditional tune for Hardanger fiddle. It was used by the Norwegian composer and conductor Johan Halvorsen (1864-1935) in his enchanting work *Fossegrimen* (The Elf of the Waterfall), usually heard as a suite in which the Hardanger fiddle makes its debut as a solo instrument in a modern symphony orchestra. The *slått* is played in various versions. On this record *Fanitullen* is performed by Knut Buen in the folk style, full of drive and inspiration, in two versions (at the beginning and end of the record).

2 **Kjerringa med staven** (The Old Wife with the Staff)

This is a simple folk song with nonsense syllables, known to every child in Norway. Knut and Hanne Kjersti Buen often perform this song in their school concerts with the whole class, pupils and teachers, joining in dancing western *springar* (a common Norwegian folk-dance). Here, Knut Buen accompanies Hanne Kjersti on the Hardanger fiddle. The song is here combined with another traditional song, *Hei, så dansa jenta mi* (Hey-ho, my girl danced).

*Kjerringa med staven
høgt oppi Hakkedalen
Åtte pottes rømme, fire merker smør
så kjinna Kari, Ola hadde før
Kjerringa med staven
høgt oppi Hakkedalen*



*Kjerringa med kjeppen
hoppa over bekken
Men så dart ho nedi og så blei ho blaut
Og så drog ho heimatt, og ho koka graut
Kjerringa med kjeppen
hoppa over bekken*

*Hei, så dansa jenta mi
sylvspekte sko på foto' si'
Kalemanktrøya hae ho ny,
det skal du sjå var dokkety'
Jenta mi
Hoj, ladi la
Hoj, ladi le*

The old wife with the staff
Far up in Hakkedal
Eight pots of sour cream, two pounds of butter
So much had Kari churned, and Ola before
The old wife with the staff
Far up in Hakkedal

The old wife with the stick
Jumped over the brook
Fell into it, and got very wet
Then she went home, and cooked some porridge
The old wife with the stick
Jumped over the brook

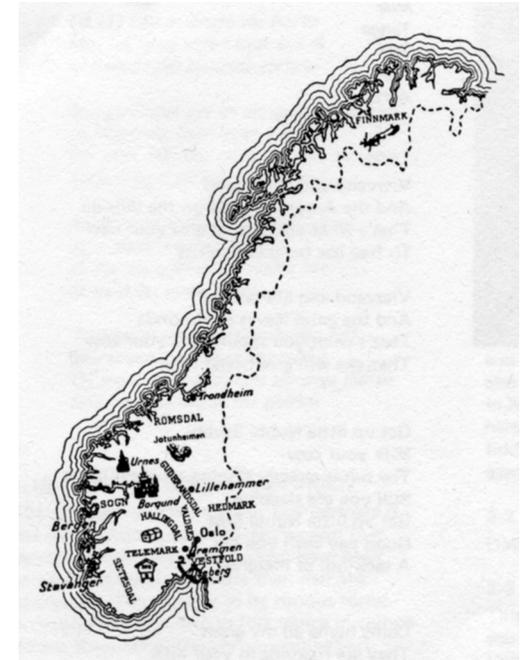
Hey-ho my girl danced
With silver-buckled shoes on her feet
Her Kalemank* jacket is brand new
Looking like doll's clothes
My girl
Hoi, ladi la
Hoi, ladi le
* kind of cloth

3 Rotnheimsknut (halling)

This piece is named after a man called Knut from Hallingdal, who apparently danced it so well that he became identified with it. The *halling* is a solo acrobatic dance for men, in 2/4 time. It requires years of training. The dancer sometimes stands upright and sometimes squats on the ground. The dramatic climax is reached when he makes a jump and kicks the hat from a stick held high by a girl standing on a chair. The dance has been said to descend from the Scottish reel, but only the rhythm, not the music, is common to the two dances. The *halling* is lively and energetic, largely built around a two-barred motive, which is repeated many times with different variations. Here it is performed by Knut Buen.

4 Gangar etter Myllarguten

The most famous fiddler ever born in Norway was Torgeir Augundson of Telemark (1801- 1872), called Myllarguten (The Miller's Boy). His fame went far beyond the boundaries of Telemark. He travelled over the whole of South Norway, and went to Hardanger thirty times and gave some concerts with Ole Bull, the world-renowned Norwegian violinist. At that time there were many extraordinary fiddlers living in the shadow of this brilliant fiddler. On November 23, 1972, a special memorial concert was held as homage to Myllarguten in the University Hall in Oslo, with King Olav among those present. Some of the best fiddlers in Norway, including the young Knut Buen from Telemark, who is considered by many the nearest to Myllarguten, played at the concert. Some of Myllarguten's own compositions are still played in the living tradition.



The *gangar*, in 6/8 time, is the calmest of the Norwegian folk dances, a 'walking dance' for couples. It often has a rather solemn character, and is perhaps of religious origin. The fiddler plays two beats to the bar. The *gangar* played here by Knut Buen, learned from Johannes Dahle, is by Myllarguten, and is considered one of the masterpieces for Hardanger fiddle.

5 Møykjaeringsvise (Spinster's Song)

This is a very characteristic Norwegian folk song, both in content and melody, but it has many parallels in the folk song of Western and Central Europe. Hanne Kjersti Buen, who sings it, learned it from Margit Finnekåsa, of Gransherad.

*Møykjaerings sut å drags
er ikkje beste plaga
Alder tenkte eg den tid da eg var ung
gutelykka skulle blivi meg så rung
belarar eg venta mange*

*Åri dei er så lange
møykjaering må eg gange
Eg kan ikkje skjøna hoss det kan hava seg
det at gutan ikkje bela vil til meg
- Huff, hoss det her er lågå*

*Fireogtjuge haeve
ringar og søljur gjaeve
klaedi hev eg bå ta silkje og ull
kista mi ho er stappende full
Og skinnfellar hev eg mange*

*Uppe hjå Per i Åsen
hev eg ei kyr på båsen
Sauti hev eg stadene ni
somme stader ein og somme stader tri
Men enno kom han, den dåsen!*

*Faer eg så ingen annen
lyt eg nå tale skaden
Brennvin vil eg drikke, røykje dessmeir
sk rå tobakk otor pipur utav leir
so vil eg tidi drive*

The spinster's sorrow
Is not the lightest kind of sorrow
I never imagined when I was young
That I would have such bad luck with the boys
I expected so many wooers

The years are so long
As a spinster I have to live
I cannot understand how it could be
That the boys do not want to make love to me
Oh, that this should be my lot!

Twenty-four fine rings
And lovely brooches I have
With clothes both of silk and wool
My chest is crammed full
And fur rugs I have plenty

Up yonder at Per on the Hill's
I have a cow in the byre
Sheep I have in nine places
In some places one and some places three
But then he came, that fool!

If I get no one else
I have to put up with him
Brandy I'll drink, and smoke even more
Tobacco in a pipe of clay
So I'll pass away time

6 Three *stev* about the *hulder* (cattle songs)

Hanne Kjersti Buen sings old and new *stev*-melodies from Telemark. *Stev* is the name given to a literary form, a special type of a single four-line stanza, frequently used in Norwegian folk poetry. The two types of *stev* are *gammelstev* (old *stev*) and *nystev* (new *stev*), with different rules for the number of accented syllables as well as for the rhyme.

While the *gammelstev* is rare now, the *nystev* has flourished, especially in the districts of Telemark and Setesdal, up to the present time. The old *stev* is metrically constructed so that the first and third lines have four accented syllables and the second and fourth lines have three accented syllables. The second and fourth lines rhyme. The form is exactly like the old four-lined ballad type. The new *stev* has four accented syllables in each line; the first and second lines rhyme, as do the third and fourth. There is some difference between the old and new *stev* also in content. The new *stev* is often purely lyrical, usually about farm-life, love, and the enjoyment of nature, while the old *stev* is sometimes of a more narrative type.

These single stanzas are sung to traditional *stev*-melodies. The tunes used for the *stev* in Norway are very numerous. To a *stev*-text one may choose whatever traditional *stev*-melody one likes, and the tunes used for the new *stev* often have the same deeply traditional qualities as those for the old *stev*.

These three *stev* concern the *hulder* (fairies). In the first, the fairy is calling to the cow-girl and advising her what herbs to feed to her cow, to ward off evil spirits and to give more milk.

Viervand is vervain, *Mariahand* is the *Orchis maculata*, *Amonda* is the Paris daisy or marguerite. In the second *stev*, the fairy is shouting to the girl who has overslept. In the third *stev* the fairy is summoning home her goats, calling them by name. Hanne Kjersti Buen learned the first two songs from Brita Bratland, of Vinje, and the third from Anne Tjønn, of Tuddal.

*Viervand og Mariahand og
Amondalauvet i lio
det skal du gjeve kyre di
for vond vet' å fri ho*

*Viervand og Mariahand
og Amondalauvet det gode
det skal du gjeve kyre di
så skal ho mjølke froe*

*Statt upp stutte Nubbi Stubbi
mjølka di ku
Soli skine alt i liom
enno søve du
Statt upp stutte Nubbi Slå
gode Iøni skal du få
ein fudde sekke med finnstrå*

*Kom heimatte geitene mine
dei gjeng borti fjello dine
Mjelle
Mile
Tange
Tile
Åle
Aerte
Litigeit og Terte*



Viervand and Mariahand
And the Amonda-leaves on the hillside
That's what you should give your cow
To free her from evil spirits

Viervand and Mariahand
And the good leaves of Amonda
That's what you should give your cow
Then she will give better milk

Get up little Nubbi Stubbi
Milk your cow
The sun is already shining on the hillside
Still you are sleeping
Get up little Nubbi Slaa
Good pay shall you get
A sack full of matgrass

Come home all my goats
They are roaming in your hills
Mjelle
Mile
Tange
Tile
Aale
Erte
Litigeit and Terte

7 So er drengjen i oppvokstre (Boys in Their Youth)
Four *stev* sung by Hanne Kjersti Buen. These *stev* were put together by Hanne Kjersti herself from several sources. The fourth verse was written by her, and the tunes are her own versions of traditional melodies. The two first *stev* are old *gammelstev*, the last three more recent *nystev*.

*So er drengjen i oppvokstre
som seljutein oprunne
Og so er dei i augom sjå
som rimarelden brunne*

*Halsen er som skoren tein
ag hendan er som mjødd
Og so er dei i augom sjå
sam soli renn or fjødd*

*Den svarte blomen hev eg funne
ved kyrkjevegen der er han runne
Eg fann den blomen ved ein kyrkjeveg
var det 'kje undarleg den vaks der?*

*Eg ser deg gangand' nedmed strandi
den svarte blomen du ber i hondi
Men suti botnar vel au eigong
det er bare livet som skile 'kon*

*Sandvassbylgjon dei rullar høglegt
dei tikje livet er bare løglegt
Det er som dei ropar: kom her utpå
sa skal me lindra den suti, du*

cont. after

The Hardanger Fiddle

We do not know exactly how old the Hardanger fiddle is. Probably it was created some time between 1550 and 1650. Nor do we know for sure whether the instrument is of Norwegian origin or has evolved through the modification of instruments imported from abroad. Certainly, instruments from abroad have contributed to its development.

The Norwegian name of the instrument is *hardingfele*. *Fele* is a dialect word for violin, *harding* an inhabitant of Hardanger, a district in southwestern Norway between Bergen and Stavanger. So *hardingfele* would mean a fiddle from Hardanger. The earliest Hardanger fiddle known to us, the *Jåstad-fele*, was made by Ola Jonson Jåstad, Ullensvang parish, Hardanger. The fiddle is narrow, high and small, much smaller in fact than those now in use, and it has two sympathetic strings.

Legends describe how the fiddlers were taught to play by the elf of the waterfall, called in Norwegian *fossegrimen*. If they wished to master the Hardanger fiddle they had to pay the *fossegrim* a leg of lamb. Some only gave him a leg bone. They learned to tune the fiddle but never to play it. With the use of magic the fiddlers could learn to tear the strings on a rival's fiddle. Norwegian folklore is full of tales about fiddlers who learned tunes from the fairies or in their dreams.

The tone colour of the Hardanger fiddle is somewhat different from that of the ordinary fiddle, mainly because of its special tunings. The most usual tuning is ADAE. The sympathetic strings are generally tuned DEF#A. If the instrument has five under-strings they are tuned BDEF#A. Many pieces for Hardanger fiddle require a special tuning of the over-strings, e.g. *trollstilt* (troll-tuning) AEAC#, and *gorrolaus* FDAE. The Hardanger fiddle has four metal sympathetic strings which, vibrating together with the melody strings, give the instrument its special timbre. The flat bridge is lower than on the ordinary violin.

Two-part playing, a kind of polyphonic technique, therefore is comparatively common. It involves sharp dissonances such as seconds, sevenths and ninths. This type of 'primitive' polyphony is also to be found in the folk-music of other countries, but it is very typical of Hardanger fiddling. The instrument requires a technique different from that used for the ordinary violin (no glissando or vibrato, for example).

Hardanger fiddle tunes are primarily used as dance-music (*slåtter*). The music has always been transmitted by living example, with fiddlers picking up tunes from each other. Sometimes we are able to follow the development of single tunes from fiddler to fiddler. In tradition, such a transformation may be called 'composition' even if the alteration is minimal. In our times some famous fiddlers have composed new tunes for the Hardanger fiddle. Because of their nature the tunes remain organic and alive. None of the great fiddlers learned to play from printed or written notes. Many of them maintain that their music cannot be written down correctly.

Rhythm in Hardanger fiddle music is flexible, shaped in connection with the dance. It is often rich in syncopations. The basic musical motives are short, often two bars long and repeated and varied many times. Musical fantasy finds its main expression through the variation and combination of these small basic motives. The Hardanger fiddle is primarily a dancing instrument. This dance-music is named *slått*, an old Norwegian word from the verb *slå* meaning to strike or pluck. Accordingly the term *slått*, points back to a time when the musician *slo* (plucked) the strings of the instrument with the fingers or with a plectrum. This refers to instruments which preceded the Hardanger fiddle. The most widespread among the Norwegian folk-dances appearing on this record are *halling*, *springar* and *gangar*.

In eastern Norway, near the frontier with Sweden, the Hardanger fiddle is much less used than in the regions of western and central Norway. In eastern Norway we find very fine players on the ordinary violin, who carry on a rich tradition of fiddle tunes. But no doubt the Hardanger fiddle is king among Norwegian folk-instruments.

Three Hardanger fiddle melodies on the record (3, 4 and 22) are tunes used by Edvard Grieg in his work *Slåtter* for piano, op.72 (1903), familiar to pianists all over the world. All the 17 pieces in this work are from the repertoire of the fiddler Knut Dale from Telemark, who wrote to Grieg in 1901, and suggested that he might adapt this folk-music for piano. Grieg's friend Johan Halvorsen notated for him 17 *slåtter* performed by Knut Dale. These same *slåtter* have also survived in the living fiddlers' tradition and not only in the concert hall. Knut Buen, who is playing these tunes, learned them personally from Johannes Dahle from Tinn in Telemark, one of the greatest fiddlers of Norway and a grandson of Knut Dale. The Dale family is known for its many fiddlers. At the age of 86, Johannes Dahle is still active in playing and composing his own *slåtter*.

cont.

Boys in their youth
Are like willow twigs
And to look into their eyes
Is like the glare on the horizon at sunset

Their necks are like stripped willow twigs
And their hands white as newly fallen snow
And to look into their eyes
Is like sunrise over the mountains

The black flower did I find
It grew by the church lane
I found that flower by the church lane
Isn't it strange that it grew there?

I saw you walking on the shore
You held the black flower in your hand
But sorrow shall come to an end some day
It is only life which parts us

The waves on the shore are rolling high
They feel that life is without a care
It is as if they shout: come out here
We shall ease your sorrow

8 **Bånsuller** (three lullabies)

In Norwegian *bån* = child, *sull* = a little melody; thus *bånsull*, a lullaby. The melodies for children constitute a vigorous and rich group within Norwegian folk songs. This type seems to have preserved its heritage from the Middle Ages, showing a relationship between Norwegian folk tunes and the international medieval church song (the Gregorian chant). A characteristic of melodies for children is the preference for simple resources and an even monotonous rhythm.

The first lullaby was learned from Margit Finnekåsa, Gransherad, the second from Anne Tjønn, Tuddal, and the third is well known in the tradition. Hanne Kjersti Buen is the singer.

Sull, sull, liten tull
tru me hae stugo full
av slike ørsmå gutar
Sull, sull liten tull
tru me hae stugo full
av slike ørsmå jenter

*Sulla, lulla, lite gull
tru me hae stugo full
loftet og klåven
eldhuset og kåven
Stugo maett
krakkjen sett
rundt ikring åren*

*Bissam, sullam bâne'
gryta heng i lånet
koka full av rome-graut
te det vesle båret*

Lull, lull, little baby
If only the room was full
Of such tiny little boys
Lull, lull, little baby
If only the room was full
Of such tiny little girls

Lull, lull, little darling baby
If only the room was full
The attic and the barn
The cookhouse and the alcove
The room full
Sitting on stools
Around the open hearth

Bissam, sullam* baby
The pot is hanging over the fire
Full of boiling cream porridge
For the little baby

* words commonly used for cradling

9 Katt-Ola-Visa

The theme of this song from Hinnøy is very common in Norwegian folklore and literature generally. The story is about a wedding. The bride was beautiful and her father rich, and the celebration was prepared in the best way possible.

But when most of the guests and the bridegroom were drunk and had fallen asleep, one of the guests, Katt-Ola, wanted to try his luck with the bride. So he took her out, put her in a boat and rowed away with her.

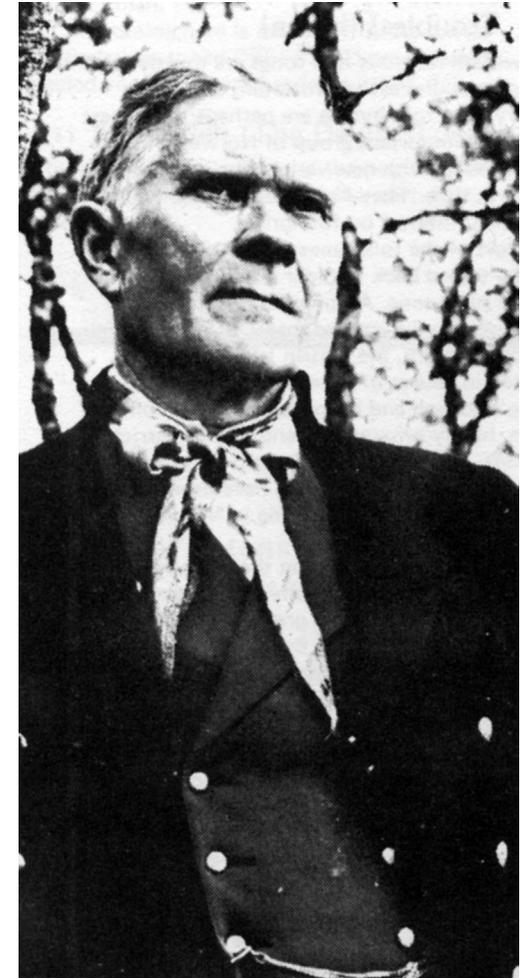
Then the bridegroom woke up and missed his bride. After a thorough search, he finally realized what had happened, and with all his men he rushed out in pursuit of the couple.

Sung by Edvard Ruud from Aun (Northern Norway), one of the most distinguished traditional singers in Norway today.

*Der holdtes et bryllup i Halsebøvik
Det vara mangfoldige daga
og brura var fager - og faren var rik
og alt på det beste var laga*

*Og dit så kom han Knut Larsa på Lein
oppvoksen i Lund inn i landet
Han var då den mannen som gilde sku hald
Han førte den gyldne kanne*

*Så drakk de då vinen og mjøden god
Dei somna i bord og i benka
Katt-Ola han fann på eit artig puss
han lysta med brura og skjemta*



*Katt-Ola tok brura ut i si hand
han had ho med seg ut å kjøle
Hann sett ho i båten og ror som ein mann
si løkka så ville han prøve*

*Brurgommen han vakna og kring seg han såg
Då såg han at brura var borte
Han luk ta og vera i kvar ei krå
til dass at det bynte å sortne*

*Brurgommen gav ut ei t forferdeleg rop
og ropet var fullt ut av vrede
Stå opp, stå opp mine venner, stå opp
hjelp meg etter brura å leite*

*Nokken i kobbe og nokken i kval
ag nokken i ertnerhude -
så for dei igliønna det salte hav
så kula fer unna krute*

*Tilthornet det er eit umåteleg fjell
Storstigen kan ikkje opprekke
Og ingen med krut kan sprengje det ut
før murane dei er for tjukke.*

10 **Nordfjordingen** (springar)

The *springar* (in 3/4 time) for two partners is the most widespread of the Norwegian folk-dances. Among the *slåtter* which have been printed and published more than half are *springdans*. The *springar* in its various forms is particularly common in folk-dance in competitions (*kappleik*). The corresponding verb *springe* means to jump or to run. The *springar* is probably the most difficult to comprehend as far as its rhythm is concerned. It is 3/4 time but the three beats do not all have the same length. It is impossible to play *springar* correctly on other instruments than the Hardanger fiddle or an ordinary fiddle. The fiddler beats time with the foot according to the steps of the dancers.

Nordfjordingen, from Lars Fykerud, Telemark, is performed by Hauk Buen.

11 **Ramsen** (Springar)

Hauk Buen learned this tune from the fiddler Olav Løndal, of Tuddal, Telemark.

12 **Bruremarsj** (wedding march)

The Hardanger fiddle repertory includes a special group of bridal marches, *bruremarsj*. (*Brur* is a dialect word for bride.) In former days, a wedding was an imposing affair and a big feast, where there was much need of a fiddler. The procession to the church was the real introduction to the wedding celebration. At the head of the procession came the fiddler or fiddlers playing bridal marches. Our example, played by Knut and Hauk Buen on Hardanger fiddles, and learned from Lars Fykerud, has many related tunes in Western Europe.

13 **Hamburger-polka fra Hardanger**

Local country-bands, usually fiddlers' groups with or without accordion and guitar, meet regularly to play dances for entertainment. The sound of these fiddlers' bands is typical of the shining nights during summertime when night and day mix. They play not only old dances but also relatively more modern dances which came to Norway in the 19th century. Our examples here are played by Vestlandsgruppa, with fiddles, accordion and guitar. The players are aged from 12 to 70.

14 **Springleik fra Jostedalen.**

Played by Vestlandsgruppa.

15 **Springar fra Hardanger.**

This is a wedding couple dance from the south-western district, played by the fiddlers of Vestlandsgruppa.

16 **Slåttestev** (dance songs).

Agnes Buen Gårnas sings a set of *slåttestev* (or *slåtterim*), verses sung to dance-music. As in some other countries, people in the old days often held dances without any fiddler. Instead of instrumental music short songs would be sung, fitting the rhythm of the chosen dance.

Such songs might be sung to nonsense syllables, or to brief lyrical texts.

*Ser du guten min uti måneskinn -
han med gullkrulla hår og med ring på fing
Stundo so ae'n so fager og fin -
men stundo so ae'n so full som eit svin*

*Ser du guten min uti måneskinn -
han med gullkrulla hår og med ring på fing
Snillan guten min, snillan guten min,
med krulla hår, men med ring på fing*

*Snillan guten min, snillan guten min,
med krulla hår men med ring på fing*

Do you see my boy in the moonlight
Him with the golden curls and a ring on his finger?
Sometimes he is fair and fine
But sometimes he is drunk as a swine.

Do you see my boy in the moonlight
Him with the golden curls and a ring on his finger?
My dear kind boy with a ring on his finger,
Golden curls, but a ring on his finger.

My darling boy with a ring on his finger,
Golden curls, but a ring on his finger.



17 **Haugebonden** (ballad)

The majority of Norwegian ballads have been found in Telemark, but only small remnants of the ballad tradition are still to be found today. *Haugebonden* has a very close connection with old folk beliefs about the relationships between people and spirits. This version, sung by Agnes Buen Gårnas, comes from Rikard Gøytil of Rauland, Telemark.

*Aa de va' den heilage jolekvell
at bonden ville burr finne limar
aa som han kaam seg i bakkonor,
daa høyrde han koss haugjebonden rimar,
Snillan du!
Der lyer han paa, bonden,
Mae haugjebanden dansar og rimar.*

*Aa høy du de, du bonde go,
kvi tuktar du 'kje drengjine dine?
Om d'ae alli so heilag ein jolekvell
dei danser i hovdegjaaro mine
Snillan du osb.*

*Aa eg sko' gjer' deg eit sylverstaup
som stende paa fjoran foto
at femten mann kan drikke godt rus,
aa bonden sjau uti fljote.*

*Eg sko' gjeve deg skjurta den
ae sauma mae silkjen kvite,
den sauma Donsi, dotte' mi
den ti ho heime sat pike.
Snillan du!
Det lyer han paa, bonden,
mae haugjebonden dansar og rimar.*

And it was on the holy Christmas Eve,
The peasant went out to find besoms,
And when he wandered uphill and north,
He heard the barrow-man rhyming, the
ancient man in the mound:
'My good peasant!'
The peasant stops and listens,
While the barrow-man dances and rhymes.

'Oh listen to me, my peasant brave,
Why don't you chastise your servant-men?
Be it ever so holy a Christmas Eve
They go dancing on the roof of my barrow.
My good peasant' etc,

'Oh, I should give you a silver goblet
Standing on four feet.
Big enough for fifteen men to get drunk
And for the peasant himself to float in.

'And I should give you a shirt so fine
Stitched with pure white silk.
It was made by Donsi, daughter of mine,
Before she left us and married.
My good peasant!'
To this he listens, the peasant,
While the barrow-man dances and rhymes.



18 Fanteladda (dance tune)

The *langeleik* (long harp) is an ancient Norwegian instrument, a kind of fretted zither, with one melody string tuned to G and three or more accompanying tuned strings used as drones. The *langeleik* is still played in the valley of Valdres. The form is straight sided, or as in the Valdres model slightly curved with sometimes a pegbox at each end. It is possible that it derives from the old Norwegian *fidla*, mentioned in the sagas as a plucked instrument.

The *langeleik* holds a honorable place in Norwegian folklore, especially in the Valdres district. It is said that every second girl in Valdres can play on the *langeleik*. The technique of playing is interesting, only three fingers of the left hand being used (enabling the musician to play legato), while the right hand plucks the strings with a plectrum. Generally, the tunes played on the *langeleik* are *lydårslatter* (melodies for listening to, not for dancing), but in Valdres the *langeleik* is very common also as an instrument for dancing.

Fanteladda, played here by Elizabeth Kvaerne, is a *springar* from Valdres. The Valdres *springar* is rhythmically different from the *springar* of Telemark and western Norway.

19 I oletjedden (pastoral melody)

A *lydårslått* played by Elizabeth Kvaerne.

20 Når mitt øie, trett av møie

(When My Eye, Tired of Troubles) (hymn)

Norwegian religious folk songs are mostly traditional melodies set to Protestant religious poetry. The folk hymns are perhaps the richest and most important group of Norwegian folk songs today, with new variants being created in our own time. They have been studied with particular interest by folklorists.

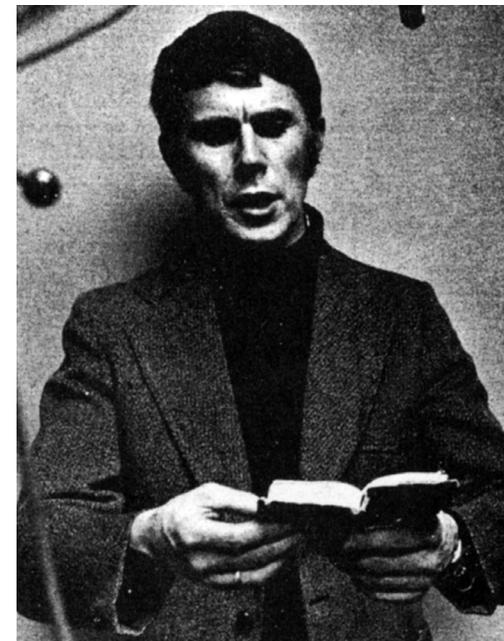
Most of the folk tunes to domestic hymns can be traced back to older church melodies and to plain-song. Among the tunes found in old hymn books are also many of foreign origin (from Denmark, the British Isles, etc), recreated in course of time by the Norwegian living tradition and becoming religious folk songs, highly ornamented and without strict rhythm. The use of ornaments is very common. The original melodic models have been radically altered during their replanting in Norwegian soil.

Among the texts used in the Norwegian religious folk song tradition one finds a remarkable number of poems by the great Danish Pietist hymn-writer Hans Adolf Brorson (1694-1764). (Pietism was a religious movement which came to Norway from Germany and Denmark during the 18th century.)

Når mitt øie, trett av møie (When My Eye, Tired of Troubles) comes from Landstads Hymn Book, text by H A Brorson. It is sung by Sondre Bratland, whose singing is directly inspired by old traditional singers of religious folk songs, especially by Flagnar Vigdal.

*Når mitt øie, trett av møie
Mørkt og vått av tåreregn
Ser med lengsel fra sitt fengsel
Op mot Salems blide egn,
Å, hvor svinner da min ve
Bare ved ditop st se!*

*Jeg fornemmer folkestemmer,
Alle slags blandt englers lyd,
Dem de driver op med iver,
I Guds lovsangs fulle fryd
- Å, hvor sier da min sjel
Verden gladelig farve!*



*Ja, jeg skuer dine druer,
Paradis, den livets frukt,
Dine søte roser møte
Meg alt nu med deres lukt,
Giver tidens åndedrag
Evighetens luft og smak.*

*Lammets klare brudeskare
Ser jeg midt i paradiset,
Hvor de svømmer som i strømmer
Av Guds søte lov og pris!
Snevre vei og korte tid,
Å, hvor er din ende blid!*

*Nådens kilde, Jesus milde,
Som oss himlen vant så huld,
Se hvor dines lengsel pines
Under tidens aften - kuld!
Når, o kjaere brudgom, da
Vil du hente mig herfra?*

When my eye, tired of troubles,
Dark and wet with rain of tears,
Looks with longing from its prison
Up towards the gentle regions of Salem
Oh, then I feel my woe
Fading just by looking up there!

I discern all kinds of human voices
Amongst the sound of angels,
The voices rising in ardour,
Praising God with love and joy.
Oh, how my soul then joyously
Bids farewell to the world!

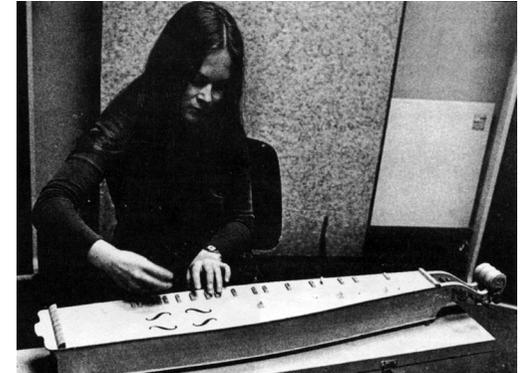
Yes, I see your grapes,
Paradise, the fruit of life.
Your sweet roses meet me
Already now with their scent,
Giving to the breath of time
The smell and taste of eternity.

The joyful bridal flock of the Lamb,
I see in the midst of Paradise,
How they swim, as it were, in currents,
Of sweet praise to God.
Narrow road and short time,
Oh, how gentle is your end!

Source of mercy, gentle Jesus,
Who won for us glorious heaven,
Look how the longing of your
worshippers is tormented
By the evening-cold of time.
When, oh beloved bridegroom,
Will you fetch me from here?

21 Store Store Gud (Great Great God)
The words of this hymn are by Tor Ullsvik, and were written
in 1930. Again, Sondre Bratland is the singer.

*Store, store Gud!
Kven kan deg forstå?
Underleg er vegen som du fører dine på.
Men om vegen ritt vert trong,
Eg fram til målet ser,
Den fagre, fagre himmelheim.
Tenk snart så er eg der!*



*Store, store Gud
Som oss livet gav,
Sjå det liknar vesle blom som snart lyt falla av.
Så det visna må og døy,
- Det livets lagnad er
Men bakom dødens skuggeland
Eg himmelheimen ser.*

*Store, store Gud,
Takk for denne von,
Takk for all din kjaerleik og for fresla ved din Son!
Du meg fann i ungdoms år,
Du kalla med veg namn.
Du vil og sikkert føra meg
Til himlens lyse hamn.*

*Jesus, løys meg meir
Frå kvart band som bind!
Vert min livsstrid tung, så lat meg sjå i himlen inn!
Og lat vona verta sterk
Så gjennom tåreglans
Eg skoda kan min hlmelheim,
Mi krona og min krans!*

*Svikefulle verd!
Du bind mange fast,
Mang ein gjekk her vonfull, glad, men vonene dei brast
Takk då, takk, min Frelsar kjaer!
Eg nå til deg er fest
Med blodets sterke band, og då
Mi livsvon aldri brest*

Great, great God!
Who can understand you?
Strange is the road on which you lead your own.
But if the road is often narrow,

I look forward to its ending
In the glorious home of heaven.
I shall soon be there.

Great, great God,
Who gave us life.
See, it is like the tiny flower which
soon must wither and die.
Such is the destiny of life.
But beyond the shadowland of death
I see the heavenly home.

Great, great God!
I thank you for your love and for
our salvation by your son.
You found me in the years of my youth.
You called me by name.
Surely you will lead me
To the harbour of heaven.

Jesus, set me free
From every bond that binds.
If my struggle be hard, let me look into heaven!
And let my hope be strong
So that through tears
I may see my heavenly home,
My crown and my wreath!

Deceitful world!
You bind so many.
They wandered here full of hope and joy,
but their hopes were broken,
I thank you, dear Saviour!
Now I am bound to you
With the strong ties of your blood, and
My hope of life shall never be broken.

22 **Myllarguten bruremarsj** (bridal march by Myllarguten)
This tune, played here by Knut Buen, was used by Grieg in his *Slåtter*, op. 72. It is one of the best-loved bridal marches composed by Myllarguten, who according to legend made it for the wedding of his sweetheart who was marrying another man. The tuning here is AEAE, with the sympathetic strings tuned C#E F#A. There are unexpected changes in rhythm from 2/4 to 3/4.

23 **Fanitullen** (The Devil's Tune)

This is the second version of the popular dance tune played by Knut Buen at the start of this record.

Knut Buen was born 1948 in Telemark, a district in southern Norway extremely rich in folk traditions. Knut was born into one of the most outstanding folk music families in Norway, a family that still carries on the living traditions of the most genuine Norwegian folk music. In his parents' home, folk songs and fiddle *slåtter* were heard daily. Knut is now one of the very few folk musicians in Norway who has made music his full time occupation. He gives numerous concerts every year in concert halls (e.g. repeatedly at the Bergen Festival) and often with his wife Hanne Kjersti for children in schools all over Norway. He is systematically collecting folk music material from living tradition.

Hauk Buen (born 1933 in Telemark) is the elder brother of Knut. Hauk is an acknowledged master of the Hardanger fiddle, and is known from many radio programmes.

Hanne Kjersti Buen (born 1951) was 'educated' as a folk singer after she moved to Telemark and married Knut. The couple often perform together as musicians, and cooperate as producers of radio programmes. They are also very active in stimulating the local folk music milieu in the countryside. They live in an old farmhouse in Tuddal, Telemark, with their two children.

Agnes Buen Garnås (born 1946 in Telemark), the sister of Hauk and Knut, studied cultural work and cultural education as a preparation for her work to make folk music better known and understood in Norway and to stimulate local folk music activities. She is an outstanding *kveder* and well known from many radio performances.

Edvard Ruud (born 1907) is a very fine representative of the musical traditions of Northern Norway. In addition to singing, he has been active as a researcher of folk song. He even has his own private museum on his farm, which is in itself a historic site with remnants of several thousand-year-old settlements. His singing for radio programmes and records and his extensive touring have made him known all over Norway.

Sondre Bratland (born 1938 in Telemark) grew up in a milieu with strong traditions and extensive activities in folk music. He earns his living as a teacher, but is well known as a singer of religious folk songs, through several radio and TV performances. In his spare time he has collected vocal folk music, especially religious folk tunes.

Elisabeth Kvaerne (born 1953) learned to play the *langeleik* as a ten-year old in Aurdal, Valdres. At present she is studying music and ethnology at Oslo University. She has performed in many concerts for school children, and played many years each summer in folklore programmes at the Valdres Folk Museum.

Vestlandsgruppa, from the *Laget for folkemusikk*, Oslo is one of the oldest established fiddlers' groups in Norway. The players come from the western part of the country.

Knut Buen - født 1948 - er en fremragende hardingfelespiller og en av de få heltids folkemusikere i Norge. Kjent fra offentlige konserter og skolekonserter over hele Norge. De tre slåtter som svarer til Griegs opus 72 lærte han i deres originale form av Johannes Dahle, sønnesønn av Knut Dale, som var Griegs kilde.

Hauk Buen - født 1933 - bror av Knut, er anerkjent mester på hardingfele. Han vokste opp i Telemark og har fra barndommen hatt direkte kontakt med folketradisjonene.

Hanne Kjersti Buen- født 1951 - ble 'utdannet' som folkemusiker etter at hun ble gift med Knut Buen og flyttet til Telemark. Ekteparet oftr ofte sammen, som kunstnere og som produsenter av radioprogrammer etc. Her synger hun folkeviser og stev, delvis i egen utforming, med sin klokkeklare røst.

Agnes Buen Garnas - født 1946- er kjent som en fremragende *kveder* (spesiell syngemåtte) og for sitt aktive arbeid for norsk og internasjonal folkemusikk, bl.a. ved konsertarrangementer o.l.

Edvard Ruud - født 1907 - representerer de musikalske tradisjoner i Nord-Norge. Som sanger er han kjent over hele Norge fra en rekke turneer, radioprogrammer etc., men han er også aktiv som forsker av folketradisjoner.

Sondre Bratland - født 1938 - har en usedvanlig vakker stemme, med en myk og varm klang. Har synger religiøse folkesanger med en hengivelse av stor virkning.

Elisabeth Kvaerne - født 1953 - lærte å spille *langeleik* i Valdres som 10-åring, og er nå en av Norges fremste unge musikere på dette instrument.

Vestlandsgruppa at av de eldste etablerte spillemannslag i Norge. Det holder til i Oslo, men musikerne kommer opprinnelig fra Vestlandet. Her spiller de både springar og gammeldans.

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SINAR A/s

MUSIKK

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Deres brev
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Deres ref.
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OSLO, 7.9.1977

Dear Mr. Russel,

May we come with some ideas and suggestions for the promotion of the Folk Music of Norway, in the press-announcements (in journals, newspapers and your publications). We would like to propose to mention some of the following points (so that we can also use it here), if possible:

First time on a British folk label:

Recently recorded genuine and lively folk music from Norway.

All ^{new} original recordings made in Norway, (released for the first time).

Representative selection (choice) of some of the main types and styles of living folk playing and/singing traditional.

Performed by some of the most outstanding folk musicians, players and singers, in Norway.

Among them: the brothers Knut and Hauk Buen from Telemark, Hanne Kjersti, Edvard Ruud, Sondre Bratland and a fiddlers country band of 16 players from Western Norway.

The record includes: Hardanger fiddling (the ^{highly decorated national} peasant-fiddle with 4 underlying sympathetic strings), Old time dance tunes, cattle songs, stev songs, ballad, melodies of the langeleik, unaccompanied hymns sung to medieval tunes., wedding marches.

With the record enclosed an illustrated booklet with background information and details about Norwegian folk instruments (Hardanger fiddle and langeleik, the folk music and its performers, complete texts and translations.

You can of course formulate it as you like. With thanks, Yours truly,
Scubit.

