

## CADENCE

Cultural ADult Education and Nyckelharpa Cooperation in Europe

## CADENCE

*The Nyckelharpa – "... is no longer a disappearing relict from a small region of Sweden but a living force in the choir of music from different parts of the world, voices which together create good hope for the future of mankind."* Jan Ling, 2011

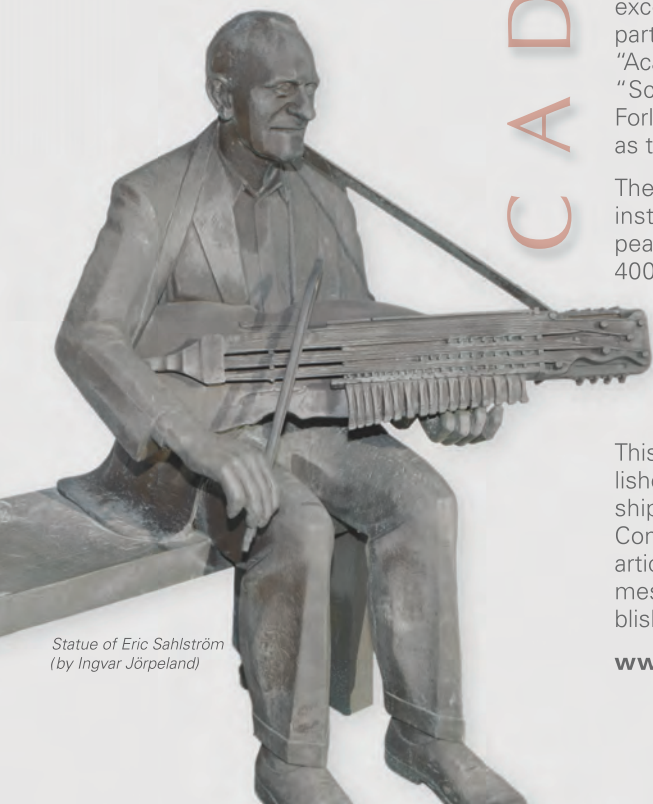
Between January and October 2010, a multinational study group visited three institutes for adult education in Sweden, Germany and Italy to exchange ideas and experiences about organisation, methods and activities of musical education.

As nyckelharpa teaching was the exceptional unifying subject of the partners "Eric Sahlström Institute", "Academy BURG FÜRSTENECK" and "Scuola di Musica Popolare di Forlimpopoli", this instrument was used as the basis for the common studies.

The nyckelharpa is a bowed string instrument, part of the Medieval European heritage, but during the last 400 years has only been played in the Swedish area of Uppland. Nowadays the interest in playing the nyckelharpa has increased worldwide and in many differing musical styles.

This CADENCE co-operation was established as a "Grundtvig Learning Partnership" and supported by the European Commission in 2009 – 2011. Additional articles and sheet music that are outcomes of the CADENCE project will be published on the website

[www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu](http://www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu)



Statue of Eric Sahlström  
(by Ingvar Jörpeland)



## NYCKELHARPA

## NYCKELHARPA



## CADENCE

CULTURAL ADULT EDUCATION AND  
NYCKELHARPA COOPERATION IN EUROPE

## Articles and Sheet Music

- Eric Sahlström Institutet
- Akademie BURG FÜRSTENECK
- Scuola di Musica Popolare di Forlimpopoli



The responsibility for the articles and the sheet music in this book is taken by the authors. They reflect aspects of the CADENCE partnership work and are available for download on our website:

[www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu](http://www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu)

Edition and layout: Karsten Evers

Cover layout: Michael Hofmann

Title illustration: Jule Bauer

Rear cover illustration: Bronze statue of Eric Sahlström

*Eric Sahlström (1912 – 1986) was a Swedish nyckelharpa player and composer. As an exceptional musician and genius instrument maker, he contributed like few others to the renaissance of nyckelharpa in Sweden in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, thus creating the basis for the present distribution of the instrument. The statue was made by the musician and sculptor Ingvar Jörpeland 1992.*

This CADENCE project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



## CADENCE

Cultural ADult Education and Nyckelharpa Cooperation in Europe  
Report on the CADENCE Partnership 2009 – 2011

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Scuola di Musica Popolare

Eric Sahlström Institutet

## CADENCE Articles

• The Nyckelharpa and its history <i>by Per-Ulf Allmo</i>	5
• The nyckelharpa in the CADENCE project <i>by Esbjörn Hogmark</i>	23
• Nyckelharpa manufacturing in Sweden <i>by Esbjörn Hogmark</i>	45
• “A keyed vielle” – Construction of the Instrument from the fresco in Siena, 1408 <i>by Silver Plachesi (guest article)</i>	61
• Parts of a Nyckelharpa - International Names	72
• Care and Maintenance of the Nyckelharpa <i>by Annette Osann</i>	73
• About tuning <i>by Emilia Amper</i>	99
• Nyckelharpa in Music Schools, The Beginning Interview with Anders Liljefors <i>by Ditte Andersson</i>	103
• How it All Started with Swedish Folk Music at the Royal College of Music (KMH) <i>by Ole Hjorth (guest article)</i>	125
• Das Institut für Volksmusik an der Königlichen Musikhochschule Stockholm <i>by Sven Ahlbäck (guest article)</i>	133
• Swedish Schools for Music and Arts <i>by Dag Krafft (guest article)</i>	163
• Musical Education in Germany <i>by Angelika Maier</i>	167
• Musical Education in Italy <i>by Gioele Sindona</i>	179



• Tre modelli di insegnamento della nyckelharpa / Three Models of Teaching the Nyckelharpa <i>by Gioele Sindona</i>	183
• Self-Learning by the Example of Nyckelharpa <i>by Jule Bauer</i>	195
• The Nyckelharpa as a Bowed Instrument in Music Education for Young Children <i>by Susanne Brameshuber (guest article)</i>	215
• The Search for a Methodology in Devising Exercises Suitable for Different Types of Nyckelharpa <i>by Marco Ambrosini</i>	231
• Body, Instrument and Swing, one Unit <i>by Josephina Paulson</i>	247
• The Language of Mind and Body in Playing the Nyckelharpa <i>by Carrado Bungaro</i>	253
• Playing in a Relaxed Way to Avoid Tendonitis <i>by Didier François</i>	277
• The Motion in Bowing <i>by David Eriksson</i>	305
• Anhemitonische Heptatonik auf traditions- musikalischer Basis in Hinblick auf die Nyckelharpa <i>by Boris Koller</i>	313
• Arranging a Rock-Tune for Nyckelharpa Ensemble <i>by Davide Castiglia</i>	349
• Analysis of a Contemporary Tune "La Musa danzante" <i>by Renzo Ruggiero</i>	351
• Aspects of Project-Management <i>by Karsten Evers</i>	355



## CADENCE Sheet Music

### CADENCE Concert Tunes

• Saltarello - Anonymous, Italy, 14 <sup>th</sup> century <i>arrangement: Marco Ambrosini</i>	365
• La musa danzante <i>Renzo Ruggiero</i>	366
• A Todeschina - Marco Uccellini <i>arrangement: Marco Ambrosini</i>	368
• Sa démarche chaloupée et provocante <i>Didier François</i>	369
• La rosa enflorace - Anonymous Sephardic romance <i>arrangement: Jule Bauer</i>	370
• Fantasia in sol minore <i>Marco Ambrosini</i>	371
• Polska efter Sven Donat - Trad. Småland <i>arrangement: Emilia Amper</i>	374
• Barockpolskan - Trad. Sweden <i>arrangement: Boris Koller</i>	382
• Kapad <i>Emilia Amper</i>	390
• Saltarello Romagnolo - Trad. Romagna, Italy <i>arrangement: Marco Ambrosini</i>	405

### Additional Sheet Music for Nyckelharpa

• CADENCE" composition <i>by Didier François &amp; Emilia Amper</i>	406
• 2 Easy Folk Tunes – Arranged for 2 Nyckelharpas <i>Angelika Maier</i>	407
• Polska fra Hoffsmýran <i>Emilia Amper</i>	408
• Manfrina romagnola <i>arrangement: Davide Castiglia</i>	416
• 3 Examples of Polyphonic Arrangements (Bach, Jobim, Satie) <i>Didier François</i>	418



## The Nyckelharpa and its History \*

by Per-Ulf Allmo

English translation by Matt Fichtenbaum

### Summary

The article gives an overview of the state of research on the history of the nyckelharpa. From medieval times, images have been preserved in churches in Italy, Sweden and Denmark. Hints and guesses point to German sources. During the Renaissance, the nyckelharpa is mentioned and illustrated in the music treatises of Agricola and Prætorius. Since the Baroque era, evidence of the nyckelharpa, including surviving instruments, has been found only in Sweden; in Uppland province, there is also a continuous tradition of playing.

### Content

1. Introduction, definitions
2. Overview of sources before 1900
  - 2.1. Images before 1469
  - 2.2. Images after 1469
  - 2.3. Written sources
  - 2.4. Surviving instruments from before 1950
3. Commentary on the sources
  - 3.1. Images before 1469
  - 3.2. Images after 1469
  - 3.3. Written sources
  - 3.4. Surviving instruments from before 1950
4. Conclusion and overview on the period from 1900 to today
5. The author Per-Ulf Allmo



## 1. Introduction

On the face of the Swedish 50-crown note is a picture of the opera singer Jenny Lind, called “The Swedish Nightingale”. The musical motif continues on the back, which shows a string instrument of ancient appearance, somewhat resembling a vielle, an early ancestor of the violin. Few people outside Sweden know this instrument’s name, or what it sounds like. Swedes recognize it as a nyckelharpa and know that it was once found only in Uppland province.

Those who research the nyckelharpa’s origins discover that instruments of this type have been found elsewhere in Europe. But there too little information to know when or where. In this article I present and discuss an overview of the available sources.



## Definitions:

A **nyckelharpa** is a string instrument, played with a bow. The pitches of its two to four melody strings are determined by sliding keys with tangents that stop the string, in contrast to the violin with its fingerboard. The principle is the same as that of the hurdy-gurdy.

The term **nyckelharpa** is used as a collective name for all instruments of this type, while **gammelharpa** – old ‘harpa’ – is used to mean the older forms found in Uppland before the introduction of the modern chromatic nyckelharpa in 1929.

In the text that follows, all geographical references refer to modern national and regional boundaries.





Map with important source localities



## 2. Overview of sources before 1900

### 2.1. Images before 1469

- 1350, stone carving in Källunge, Gotland, Sweden
- 1408, painting in Siena, Italy
- After 1450, Flemish and German church altar pieces in Sweden

### 2.2. Images after 1469

- 1469-1525, paintings in Danish and Swedish churches
- Encyclopedia of music by Agricola, Magdeburg, Germany (see also 2.3)
- 1565, painting in Rynkeby Church in Fyn, Denmark
- 1590, carved wooden relief in Hildesheim, Germany
- 1620, encyclopedia of music by Prætorius, Wolfenbüttel, Germany (see also 2.3)

### 2.3. Written sources

- 1529, encyclopedia of music by Agricola, in German
- 1619, encyclopedia of music by Prætorius, in German
- Danish written works
- Swedish written works

### 2.4. Surviving instruments from before 1950

- Two nyckelharpas, probably German, in the Carolino Augusteum Museum, Salzburg, Austria
- Several hundred gammelharpa instruments from Uppland, Sweden



### 3. Commentary on the sources

#### 3.1. Images before 1469

The only sources we have from before 1469 are depictions of instruments. In these we see that medieval instruments of vielle type sometimes had keys and tangents in small numbers. These paintings and sculptures are in typical Gothic style, showing musicians with light, wavy hair and long, flowing robes.

Similar instruments, but without keys, appear in the medieval song book collection Codex Manesse (1300, Zurich, Switzerland), in Germany's first Gothic cathedral in Magdeburg, and in Flemish and German altar pieces.

*Left, top:* Italy, Siena, Cappellina di Palazzo Pubblico, Angel with nyckelharpa, fresco by Taddeo di Bartolo, about 1408

*Bottom, left:* Sweden, Uppland, Church of Skutunge, triptych, 1490. One of 13 angels surrounding the Virgin Mary.

*Bottom, right:* Germany, Heidelberg, Codex Manesse, most extensive manuscript of songs of the Middle Ages, Tafel 312r: "Herr Reinmar der Fiedler", about 1300 to 1340, left a vielle without tangents.

*Right:* Sweden, Gotland, church of Källunge, southern entrance, about 1350, detail.  
(see also page 3 of this article)



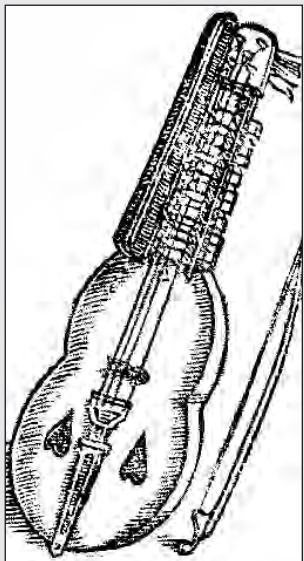


### 3.2. Images after 1469

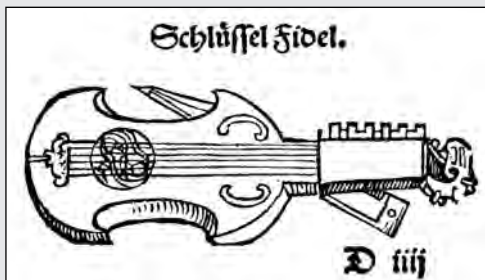
Besides the wooden relief in Hildesheim, we find in Germany only the depictions in Agricola's and Prætorius' encyclopedias, discussed below under written sources.

Both of these authors came from and lived their lives in the border region between eastern Germany and Poland. Specific to this area is a tradition of instruments with similarities to

Uppland's gammelharpa. This suggests that the gammelharpa may have been inspired by these instruments, similar in construction and playing although different in detail.



Left:  
Germany, Michael  
Prætorius, Syn-  
tagma Musicum II  
De Organographia,  
text 1619, images  
1620



Martin Agricola 1529,  
Musica Instrumentalis Deusch



Germany, Hildesheim,  
Knochenhaueramtshaus, 1590



The carved relief in Hildesheim, a putto – a cherubic child – playing a nyckelharpa found on the facade of the butcher's house, doesn't give much insight into the instrument. The house, furthermore, was not original: it was completely destroyed in a bombing in March of 1945 and reconstructed from photographs 1987 to 1989.

We know of medieval vielles equipped with keys. Danish and Swedish church paintings show other contemporary instruments in vielle, lute, or guitar form, with keys. There is, however, no evidence of any standard form of such keyed instruments, and no instrument resembling Uppland's gammelharpa.



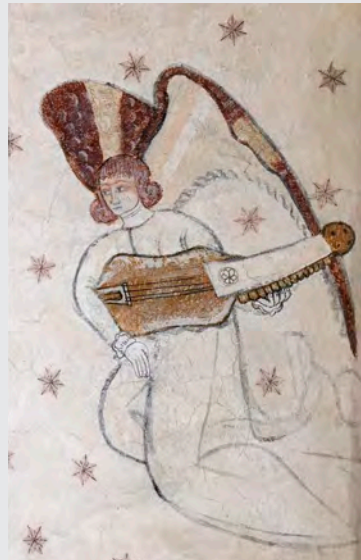
Sweden, Uppland, church of Älvkarleby, about 1500



Seden, Uppland, church of Lagga, about 1500



Sweden, Skåne, church of Emmislöv, about 1450-1475



Denmark, Rynkeby, about 1560



Art historians believe that such church paintings were the work of German painters, sometimes with local artisans as helpers. Essentially all these paintings have undergone restoration, often heavy-handed, which makes their authenticity doubtful. In the regions where these paintings are found, we find no account of the nyckelharpa's being played; this suggests that the inspiration for these paintings came from the painters' German background rather than locally.

The first depiction of a true gammelharpa is a water-color from around 1790, by Pehr Nordqvist of Stockholm.



Sweden, Per Nordqvist, about 1790



### 3.3. Written sources

Music chroniclers Martin Agricola (1529, 1545) and Michael Prætorius (1619) are the only writers who make mention of the nyckelharpa, but only in passing and without further detail. Both of these upper-class gentlemen use the term “Schlüsselfidel”, but one can ask whether that is a term of their own invention. Researchers often coin their own terms in the belief that they better describe the object in question; such new terms are sometimes adopted into general use.

Both Agricola and Prætorius write of the “Schlüsselfidel” as exclusively an instrument of society’s lower classes. Prætorius goes so far as to assert that it shouldn’t be considered “music,” and is, hence, hardly worthy of mention at all.

Two scholars in Denmark make mention of instruments with tangents. Hans Mikkelsen Ravn, who in 1646 called a lira – a hurdy-gurdy – a Nøglefeile, which is a direct translation of the German term, and Peder Syv, who in a 1663 book wrote that some poets are no more authors than bagpipers or nøglefedlere – players of nyckelharpa and hurdy-gurdy – are real musicians.

In Sweden the gammelharpa first appears in 1603, most often in court records and other written works. The first comprehensive description of the instrument first appears in 1899; isolated details turn up, however, in scholarly theses from 1684, 1686, 1698, 1702, and 1717.

In the oldest writings we see the term nyckelgiga – keyed gigue – used by scholars. That term eventually gives way to the folk term nyckelharpa or just harpa. A more recent source from 1939 tells of a German-born tobacco maker in Karlskrona, Sweden, Stefanus Cyrillus Rettig (1750-1828). Rettig described how, as a youth in Pomerania, Germany, he’d seen nyckelharpa-like instruments stored away in closets, but that they were so old-fashioned that nobody around knew anything about them.



### Das dritte Capitel. Ein vnterweisung vom absetzen.

**W**enn du des nu alles hast ein vorstant  
So nym zum ersten für dich den Discant:  
Vnd yhn (Wie folget) mit Noten formit.  
Auff fünf odder sechs linien notyr.  
Doch also/das allzeit ein gangter schlag  
Vom andern abgefondert/ stehen mag.  
Auff das deßte leichter dich Kommet an  
Vnd subtil geschagt wird von yderman.  
Darnach setz den Tenor aus den Noten  
Ynn buchstaben/das sey dir geboten.  
Also/das des Tenors schleg ynn allen  
Gleich vnter des Discants Tact gefallen.  
Zum letzten den Bass. auch ynn buchstaben  
Vnd hör/ wie du dich mit yhm solt haben.  
Setze yhn mit seinem Tact/ wie ich zege  
Vnter des Tenors vnd Discants schlege.  
Wie ich dirs ynn der Figur wil weisen  
Wirstu mercken/so wird man dich preisen.  
Ein solch absetzen/ sag ich dir behend  
Magstu brauchen auff alle Instrument.  
Sie sind Clauirt odder vngelauirt  
Auff welchem man mehr denn eine stym furt.  
Wodoch hat die laut ein ander gestalt  
Welchs ym sechsten Capitel wirt vorzalt.  
Folget ein Figur/ Wie die Noten vnd  
Pausen gemacht werden \*\*

Germany, Martin Agricola 1529,  
Musica Instrumentalis Deusch, facsimile

### DE ORGANOGRAFIA.

79

Was aber sonst noch allerley anderer Art Instrumenta in der Sciagraphia,  
(als das Hackbrett/ Col. XVIII. Sawrenhyra/ Schlüsselfidel/ Strohsfidel/ Cym-  
belen/ Glöcklein/ Singelgel/ Vntambour de Biscaye, Col. XXII. Heer- o-  
der Kesselpauken/ Soldaten-Drumme/ Ambosi/ Colum. X. XIII. Auch an-  
dere Musckomitterische Türckische/ seltsame frembde Instrumenta, Col. 29. 30. 31.) ab-  
contrahirt/ gefunden/ vnd etliche darunter kühlich/ wie Sebastian V�hrdung nennet  
Dörtsche/ oder aber kumpen-Instrumenta kñntem genennet werden: weil dieselbe  
ein jeden betant/ vnd pur Music nicht eigndlich gehñren/ ist vnndertig/ darvon etwas  
zuschreiben/ oder zu erinnern: Allein diß/ das das Ambosi darumb auch mit in die  
Sciagraphian gesezt worden/ diweil Pythagoras aus desselben Klang vnd Vnter-  
scheyd der Hñmmer examiniret vnd erfunden hat/ worinn/ vnd in welchen propor-  
tionibus der Vnterschied drey Consonantien, so damals Consonantie Mußic  
genennet worden/ als nemlich der Octa, Quint vnd Quart beruhete. Darvon  
abertu Boethio lib. 1. Musices, cap. 10. & 11. Sowol in 2. Exercitatione Sethi  
Calviji ein mehrer vnd ausführlicher Bericht zu finden.

### Das XLVII. Capitel.

### Von Orgeln.

(Col. II. & XXXV. XXXVI.)

**D**er Person ist zwar in Tomi Primi Membro Primo aus etlichen Au-  
toribus eins vnd anders referiret vnd angebeutet worden: Allde-  
mahl aber die Notdurfft erfordert/ das die Orgeln etwas schärffer be-  
schriben/ vnd weitläufftiger daron muß geredet/ vnd also in diesem andern  
Theil nicht kan begriffen werden/ So solim folgenden dritten vnd  
vierden Theil dieses II. Tomi notdürfftiger Bericht folgen vnd angezeigt werden.  
Die Abcontrahierung eines Postiffts ist Col. IV. zu finden.

### Das XLVIII. Capitel.

### Von dem Postifft (Col. XXXVII.) so zu einerley Pfaffen drey absonderliche Register hat.

Xithier

Germany, Michael Prætorius,  
Syntagma Musicum II De Organographia,  
text 1619, images 1620, facsimile



### 3.4. Surviving instruments from before 1950

In general, folk instruments have not been seen as valuable – objects to be used rather than preserved – so we find few surviving examples.

In Salzburg two primitive string instruments with tangents were found. Their form resembles that of the Bohemian lyra, but beyond that we can't draw conclusions about their origins or how they were used.



Austria, Salzburg, two instruments with tangents

The Moraharpa was most likely made in the 1680's, inspired by the depiction in Prætorius' work.

Two nyckelharpas, one found in Vefsen in Norway and the other in Esse in Finland, can be seen as attempts to replicate the gammelharpa. Neither of these instruments can be connected to local musical traditions.

Finally, we find large numbers of surviving gammelharpa instruments from the mid-1600's and later.



*Right, top:* Gammelharpa, Blekinge Museum, Karlskrona. Origin from near Gävle, north Uppland

*Bottom, left:* Gammelharpa, privately owned. Origin from the parish of Harg, north-east Uppland

*Bottom, right:* 3-rows chromatic nyckelharpa, built by Olle Plahn

*Left:* Playing a 3-rows chromatic nyckelharpa





#### 4. Conclusion and overview of the period after 1900

Scholars and other refined folk have seldom considered the nyckelharpa to be a worthy instrument, so there is a general lack of source material available for further examination.

In Europe outside Scandinavia, before and during the Renaissance, there were clearly many experiments that added tangent mechanisms to contemporary string instruments of rebec, guitar, and lute form. But there is no record of these instruments' music and playing style, suggesting that the results were unsatisfactory and the instruments died out.

Only in Uppland province in Sweden do we find remaining evidence, consisting of a large number of surviving instruments and copious written records of the music. Both tales of legendary proportions and accounts more anchored in reality tell of particular players and their lives as musicians; some later records even provide wisdom about their musical repertoires.

Today we have the gammelharpa in continuous tradition from its first appearance, but it is the modern chromatic nyckelharpa, introduced in 1929 by musician and instrument-maker August Bohlin (1877-1949), that reigns supreme. And while Bohlin gave us this modern nyckelharpa, it is Eric Sahlström (1912-1986), composer and stunningly skillful player, who deserves the credit for the instrument's present popularity: had Sahlström not taken an interest in the instrument, it's likely nobody today would know what a nyckelharpa is, let alone be able to play one.

Today the modern Uppland nyckelharpa is played throughout the world, and applied to far more than strictly folk music: classical music, early music, world music, experimental music, and more.

Research into the history of the instrument and its use continues. Observations and comments are welcome: contact me at [per-ulf@allmo.se](mailto:per-ulf@allmo.se).



August Bohlin, 1877 – 1949



Eric Sahlström, 1912 – 1986



## Per-Ulf Allmo (Sweden)

Photographer, author of numerous articles, books and other publications about folk music and the nyckelharpa. Publisher in his own publishing company "Tongång".

After he first met Eric Sahlström in the 1960s, he was interested in the nyckelharpa and began to take photographs of instruments, collect texts and cultivate contacts with musicians. Since the 90's, he has intensified his efforts to collect information on the rich history of the nyckelharpa players and their instruments. More than 700 instruments have been personally examined. Upon request from Stockholm University, he works today primarily focusing on the nyckelharpa's earliest history. This article is a brief summary of the knowledge so far.

Comments and contributions are received gratefully at:  
per-ulf@allmo.se

In addition to the above, he has always been a great practitioner of folk dances and has built two and a half nyckelharpas. He participates with great interest in the European nyckelharpa cooperative effort and contributes with his well-founded knowledge.

*All photographs: Per-Ulf Allmo*



Photo: Esbjörn Hogmark

## The Nyckelharpa in the CADENCE Project

*By Esbjörn Hogmark*

This document is intended to answer some of the questions which have arisen about the nyckelharpa during the course of the CADENCE project. Unfortunately very little is known of the earliest history of the instrument but from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards we have a good idea of its history in Sweden. It is fascinating to learn that the instrument has been played there in an unbroken tradition, which also includes the making of the instrument, a process predominantly carried out by the players themselves.

### Table of contents

1. Introduction
2. Overview of the history of the nyckelharpa
3. Origin of the "modern" chromatic three-row nyckelharpa
4. Nyckelharpa making courses in the 1970s
5. Wood and wood quality of nyckelharpas throughout history
6. Sound quality from a Swedish perspective
7. What is now happening in Sweden, Europe and in the rest of the world?
8. Nyckelharpa making outside Sweden
9. Bass, tenor and alto nyckelharpa
10. What can we expect in the future?
11. Summary



## 1. Introduction

The nyckelharpa (keyed fiddle, Schlüsselfidel, vielle à clefs) was chosen as the unifying music tool in the project CADENCE, Cultural ADult Education and Nyckelharpa Cooperation in Europe. The reason for this is that the instrument exists today in all three countries involved in the project: Sweden, Italy and Germany. The revival of the nyckelharpa in Germany, and Italy in particular, has only occurred relatively recently. I will give a short explanation of the history of the instrument and how, in recent times, its use has spread all over the world. An overview of how the instrument was made in historical times and how it is made today is included.



Cappellina di Palazzo Pubblico, Siena, Italy. Angel with "Viola a chiavi", Fresco by Taddeo di Bartolo, 1408 (Photo by Per-Ulf Allmo)



Älkevarleby church in Uppland, Sweden. Angel with nyckelharpa, Fresco c. 1500



## 2. Overview of the history of the nyckelharpa

Briefly the instrument seems to have existed in central Europe since the 14<sup>th</sup> century alongside the fiddle and the hurdy-gurdy. For some reason it seemed to vanish completely in that area before the 17<sup>th</sup> century. At the same time it appeared in Sweden, but as an instrument quite different from the medieval ones. There is no evidence that the instrument existed in Sweden in the late medieval period despite the existence of paintings in numerous Swedish churches during the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. The pictures of nyckelharpa players on Swedish church ceilings were often made by artists coming from central Europe. They probably depicted instruments they had at that time in their home countries. In Sweden, around 1680, someone made two fiddle-type nyckelharpas, today called a **moraharpa**. Both instruments still exist; one is housed at the Zorn Museum in Mora in Dalarna and the other at the Music and Theatre Museum in Stockholm. Today it has become popular to make replicas of that instrument. It is much simpler to make its body compared to other types of nyckelharpas.

Most of the medieval nyckelharpas had a fiddle type shape with a flat bottom and a flat top. We think that the sides often were made of thin wood which was steamed to shape and then joined to a solid neck. This is an old technique used when making boxes and cabinets. This is the method used on the original moraharpa.

### The Swedish nyckelharpa

The Swedish nyckelharpa, first appearing in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, was made from a solid timber log. The neck, sides, and bottom were made from one piece of wood.

The manufacturing process started with cutting down a suitable spruce tree. The bottom part of the tree, c. 1 m from ground level, was cut to the length of a nyckelharpa. The log was then divided into two parts, each half being the raw material for a single nyckelharpa. Before starting to make the instru-



ment, the wood had to be carefully dried and aged. A few knots were acceptable, but no cracks.

After drawing the shape of the instrument on the wood the maker first shaped the outside and then hollowed out the inner body of the instrument with chisels and gouges.

This was a wood construction technique often used in the Nordic countries when making plates, bowls, sinks etc.

The core of the log was located in the centre of the bottom. The very thin (2-3 mm) and single acutely-curved top was made separately with a radius following the annual rings of the body. It took a lot of skill to make the top with an even thickness.

Instead of the violin influenced f-hole, common on today's instrument, the top had two round, or slightly oval, sound holes located on both sides of the tail piece.

The old Swedish nyckelharpa with its long narrow design was quite different from the



The photo above shows the author with two "real" gammelharpas. To the left a kontrabasharpa dated c.1780 and to the right a silverbasharpa dated c. mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. In spite of their age both instruments are in very good condition and can still be played today.



Observe the slanted sides and the acutely curved top which follows the annular rings



medieval fiddle-type nyckelharpas. This is why Swedes often claim that this instrument originated in Sweden without any influences from the medieval ones. Research is still ongoing on this point.

The way of holding the Swedish instrument also differs from the medieval instruments which were often held flat to the fiddler's chest while the Swedish instruments were, and still are, held further down on the chest or in the lap.

The photographs below show the different ways of holding the nyckelharpa.



To the left: Johan Hedin plays a replica of a medieval lute-type instrument made by Tommy Johansson. The instrument body, except for the top, is made in one piece. To the right: Eric Sahlström plays one of his own instruments in 1984

It is important to understand that the Swedish nyckelharpa and the technique to make it have existed unchanged for more than 400 years in northern and central Uppland. Since the instrument appeared in that area it has been made and played in an unbroken tradition.

### Gammelharpa: kontrabasharpa and silverbasharpa

Today we have a common name in Sweden for all the different types of instrument made from one piece of timber, namely the **gammelharpa** (old nyckelharpa). The two most



common variants of gammelharpas are the **kontribasharpa** which existed from the early 17<sup>th</sup> century until the beginning of the 1930s and the **silverbasharpa** which appeared around the mid-1800s and remained popular until 1940. The kontribasharpa was a fully chromatic instrument and some instruments were provided with quarter notes.



Three very old kontribasharpas stored at the Music and Theatre Museum in Stockholm. They are all made out of one spruce log. The tops are carved to the correct radius and not steamed.

The main difference between the kontribasharpa and silverbasharpa is that the latter has a mechanism/key box with a somewhat different set of keys. This was commonly the case in central northern Uppland where the dance music of that time did not need all the notes available on the fully chromatic kontribasharpa. The dance music was happy music in major keys emphasizing the rhythm.

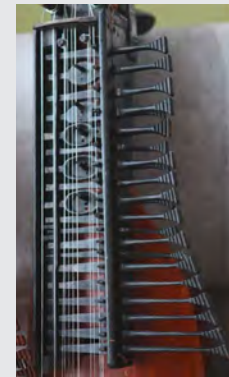


### 3. Origin of the “modern” chromatic three-row nyckelharpa

During the 1930s a couple of skilled nyckelharpa fiddlers who also played violin began to modify the instrument. The need for this arose from the new musical ideas of the 1920s which required an instrument better able to express melody and individual notes than the old instruments were capable of doing. To facilitate manufacturing they started to make the instrument body in several pieces. The sides and neck were still made in one piece but with a separate bottom and top. Later on, in the 1960s, the sides and neck were made from different pieces and then glued together before adding the bottom and top, as we do now.



Kontribasharpa c. 1780



Silverbasharpa c.1880



3-row chromatic  
Eric Sahlström type

**Eric Sahlström (1912-1986)** in particular, and his older fiddler friend August Bohlin, were the ones who changed the instrument to the modern chromatic version it is today. At that time they both played the violin and the silverbasharpa and their modification work originated from the silverbasharpa. They were influenced by the other instruments of the day, such as the accordion and the clarinet, which emphasized melody more than rhythm. The fact that they both played the violin affected the sound they sought from the new instrument.



Eric Sahlström first learned violin and accordion before learning to play a silverbasharpa which was given to him by his grandfather.

The changes Eric Sahlström made to the nyckelharpa are as follows:

- He made the top much flatter compared to the old instruments. He also introduced the violin inspired f-holes at the bridge sides.
- He did a lot of experiments with the key box but kept the basics from the silverbashapa. He added keys on the G-string, took away all the keys with double tangents and put just one tangent on each key.
- He kept the bass string tuned to C as it was on the silverbasharpa.
- During the 1970s he raised all 12 sympathetic strings to the top of the bridge giving them a stronger and more even effect on the sound.
- He also introduced a lamination technique (compression moulding process) for the sides which he learned from his job as a TV cabinet maker in a local company. This technique, he often pointed out, had no influence on the sound compared to the technique of making the sides from solid material with the help of a band saw. It just made the manufacturing process easier and faster.

On the left: Two nyckelharpas made by Eric Sahlström. To the left an instrument made in 1943, an instrument with sides and neck in one piece, with the top and bottom glued on separately. To the right an instrument he made in 1981 representing his final design with laminated sides and separate neck, bottom and top. (Photo taken by Sture Möllerman)



#### 4. Nyckelharpa making courses in the 1970s.

The folk music revival of the late 1960s brought a renewed interest in the nyckelharpa. Eric Sahlström, along with another local nyckelharpa player, Ceylon Wallin, quickly became very popular. Sahlström was already known by many Swedes from his radio programmes during the 1940s-1960s. He always produced an outstanding sound from his instrument. He also wrote many wonderful tunes that were musically quite modern but at the same time followed folk music tradition.



Wallin was known to play very elegantly and carefully preserved old traditions from his father. He was depicted on a Swedish stamp.

In the early 1970s there was a great dearth of instruments all over Sweden. The only maker was Eric Sahlström himself, but very soon, courses with Sahlström as the teacher were organized. This was of course, far from enough.

### Government supported evening courses

In order to obtain financial assistance for this kind of course, the organizer had to have plans and building methods approved at a high level in the Ministry of Education (Skolöverstyrelsen, today's Skolverket).

Two groups of people competed for this authorization. The winning design was produced by two men, **Mats Kuoppala/Liljeholm** and **Herold Lundin** who worked together in the Stockholm area. Their instrument was highly influenced by the violin which was the instrument Mats played. Another instrument design was under development and was authorized just a couple of years later. This is a design known today as the **Lars Bäckström** nyckelharpa.

### Stockholmsharpan/Lundinharpan

There were several hundred of the Kuoppala-Lundin (K-L) instruments made until the Bäckström model reached the market.

The K-L instrument was not designed according to the long tradition of nyckelharpa making culminating in Eric Sahlström's instrument. This soon turned out to be a big mistake. Very few of the **Stockholmsharpas** still exist. The instruments often broke because of the lack of understanding in the basic science of strength of materials. Their sound had a poor projection and they were quite heavy. They were also difficult to make because both the bottom and the top had to be carved out (double-radius) as is the case for a violin.



Most of the makers quickly changed from the K-L design to that of Bäckström.

**The KL design and its failure** shows what can happen if someone tries to make a product without taking into consideration the knowledge that already exists.

### Bäckströmsharpan

The **Bäckström nyckelharpa** was designed by a woodworking teacher, **Lars Bäckström**, from the village of Storvreta, near Uppsala. He was supported in his ideas by **Eric Sahlström** from Tobo and **Hasse Gille** from Österbybruk.

Bäckström issued a drawing and makers' instructions which very quickly spread all over Sweden. Together with Hasse Gille and Eric Sahlström, he started to teach many other woodworking teachers and skilled crafts people who would later become the teachers of nyckelharpa making courses. I myself became such a teacher in 1979, shortly after I made my first instrument.

### What has happened to the Bäckström nyckelharpa since 1970?

The Bäckström model had (and still has if the original drawings are used) some minor drawbacks in relation to what we think of today as a high quality instrument. Some of these are:

- The top and the bottom are thinned out near the edges, which Sahlström never did on his own instruments.
- The C and G melody strings on the early Bäckström instruments were supposed to be tuned slightly higher than they are today. This was reminiscent of how Hasse Gille and Ceylon Wallin tuned their instrument in the early 1970s. (Eric Sahlström had a different tuning more like the one we have today.) As a result of this, the position for the tangents on the keys acting on the C and the G strings are slightly inaccurate on the drawing. Today's maker should be aware of this when using Bäckström's drawing.



- The part of the bottom connected to the neck was made with a sharp corner at the side where the hand moves up and down on the keys. Bäckström, who drew the plans, was not a player himself.
- The sides of the instrument were not inclined as is common today and which has always been the case for the gammelharpa. This was probably done just to make the manufacturing process easier in that it was possible to make the sides directly using a band saw.

## 5. Type of wood and wood quality of nyckelharpas made throughout history

We know very little, if anything, about what kind of wood was used in the medieval instruments. We can see from the many very old instruments at the Music and Theatre Museum in Stockholm that the bodies of almost all the **kontrabasharpas** were made of spruce. The logs used were often taken from a fast growing local tree. This is obvious from the large distance between the annual rings.

When the **silverbasharpa** was first built, it was full spruce, but by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, some of the instruments had bodies made in alder or birch. The tops were always made in spruce.

The **Kuoppala/Lundin nyckelharpa** was made with the bottom in maple, the top in spruce and the sides and neck in birch or alder.

The **Bäckström nyckelharpa** was also made with a maple bottom and alder for the sides and the neck. Eric Sahlström often used a piece of hardwood for the bottom, such as beech, oak, ash, maple, hard spruce, mahogany etc.

For the last 10 to 15 years, the winning instruments in the annual nyckelharpa making competition, which I am responsible for since the passing of Eric Sahlström, have had a full spruce body.



On average, we judge 50 instruments per year. In recent years the jury has consisted of myself together with Per-Ulf Allmo, Sigurd Sahlström and the winner of the contest the year before. The winning instrument is the instrument which has the best sound.

The type of wood used in the key box (sides and keys), tuning pegs, tail piece, nut and bridge varies among the makers. Today most makers make the tailpiece, bridge and nut in maple and the keys in birch. Birch makes less noise in the key box.

## 6. Sound quality from a Swedish perspective

I think that the old kontrabasharpa, like the Finnish five-stringed kantele, which nearly disappeared in recent times, had sound qualities that have been forgotten for almost

100 years but are now coming alive again in our modern instruments. The sound quality is dependent not only on the design of the instrument but also on the quality and kind of material used in the body.

What is the character of a good nyckelharpa sound?

This is a question with many different answers. Traditionally in Sweden, we think that a good nyckelharpa sound has:

- a quite a long lasting sound on all notes.
- a distinctive and brilliant sound in the upper register.
- a clear and strong sound in the bass register that gives double stops a good sound.
- an overall strong and even sound in the whole tone register helping the nyckelharpa player to hear his / her own instrument when playing with other nyckelharpa or violin players (very common today).
- A sound that at the same time is full and warm but has a noticeable brilliance and sharpness.



The kontrabasharpa also had some nice design features affecting the sound positively, which were forgotten but have been brought back during the last 15 years.

- Sides are now slanted again (not the case for the Bäckström model)
- The joint of the bottom to the neck is now made with a large chamfer to facilitate playing on the upper keys (not the case with the Bäckström model).
- Today's instruments weigh 1.7-2.0 kg, much less than K/L and B instruments which weigh 2.0-2.5 kg.

## 7. What is now happening in Sweden, Europe and in the rest of the world?

I regularly run seminars and courses at the Eric Sahlström Institute with the focus on improving the quality of the nyckelharpa.

Since 1970, we have made only minor changes to the nyckelharpa which we now call the **3-row chromatic nyckelharpa of Eric Sahlström's model**.

Today's instruments are smaller, with a narrower body and neck. They have slanted sides even at the rear and weigh much less. They have a very good and evenly strong sound on all three melody strings.

For those interested in exploring Swedish nyckelharpa making in more depth, I recommend that you contact The Eric Sahlström Institute: [www.esitobo.org](http://www.esitobo.org) and perhaps join some of the seminars or courses.

### Number of nyckelharpa players around the world

Today the nyckelharpa is played all over the world. In Sweden we have tens of thousands of instruments. In the USA, nyckelharpas might soon number one thousand and in Japan,



a couple hundred. In countries like France, Spain, Holland and Germany, they also exceed one hundred, and Italy and Great Britain now have some tens of players.

### USA and Japan

The instrument has been accepted quite differently in different countries. Those playing the instrument in the USA and Japan are interested in Swedish folk music. They buy their instruments from Sweden and want to have today's standard Sahlström model.

### Europe (outside of Sweden)

In Europe, the nyckelharpa has been accepted from a different perspective. People from France, Spain, Italy, etc. want to use the instrument in their own music and it is not always a regular Sahlström nyckelharpa that suits this. They often like a softer, more cello-like sound. They also often want to be able to play notes below the standard G string, meaning they add keys on the fourth string. This is something that has been done in Sweden for quite a long time but remains rare because of the difficulty in making the notes on that string sound clear enough with tangents acting on it.



Annette Osann, is here playing an instrument she made herself. She has put keys on 4 melody strings. The instrument body according to Bäckström. Annette Osann has a qualification in violin making.



A characterization of the “European” sound, if I am allowed to generalize a little, would be:

- A generally softer sound on all strings. This sound may very well fit the medieval and the baroque music traditions. It also suits other kinds of music where the stronger and pushier sound of a Sahlström type of instrument has to be avoided.
- The A string is often a wound string which has a softer sound compared to a plain steel string. The Sahlström type instruments sometimes use wound A strings when it is necessary to even out the sound character between the three melody strings.
- A number of keys on the string that traditionally in Sweden is a fixed bass string often tuned to the low C. The sound of these notes is very seldom acceptable. It is weak and fuzzy. The instrument design is not optimized to give a good sound for key notes on the C string. It would probably sound better with slightly longer strings and a larger body volume.

## 8. Nyckelharpa making outside Sweden

### USA

For the last 25 years or so, nyckelharpas have been made outside Sweden, first in the USA and later in Europe. The USA makers, like the USA fiddlers, want to very strictly follow the Swedish making tradition. They buy nyckelharpa kits from Sweden and Swedish makers have visited the country to teach them.

### Europe (Sweden excluded)

In Europe the situation has turned out differently. Some makers want to learn from Sweden, and other makers, often skilled violin or guitar makers, want to go their own way, using the old Bäckström model as a basis for their designs.

The reason for this might be that Bäckström advocated maple for the bottom together with sides which are not slanted, a feature which would be familiar to a violin maker.



## 9. Bass, tenor and alto nyckelharpa

Nowadays in Sweden, the nyckelharpa can be studied in elementary schools, general music colleges and even the Royal College of Music in Stockholm, where it is possible to study for a master's degree in nyckelharpa playing. Ever since different schools in Sweden have introduced folk music into their syllabi, the quality of traditional music making on the nyckelharpa has grown immensely. This in turn has put pressure on nyckelharpa makers to improve the quality of their instruments.

The popularity of playing the nyckelharpa in groups and in combination with other instruments has also grown, which has increased the need for nyckelharpas with a different sound. Groups need instruments with a sound which is complementary to the standard Sahlström type of instrument and to their violins. A comparison with the baroque instrument family can be made here. The bass/octave, tenor and alto nyckelharpa all exist today and are used in many groups. These instruments differ more or less only in size (by a scaling factor) from a standard Sahlström instrument.

Bass nyckelharpas have a string length of 510 mm; tenor and alto have 440 mm, compared to the standard length of a Sahlström type, which is 400 mm.

There are also instruments, smaller by a scaling factor, made for children. Their string length varies between 300 and 380 mm. The most common being 340-360.

Strings for bowed instruments are an extremely complicated topic. It takes numerous experiments to get a satisfactory sound result. To function well with the bow, longer strings, compared to shorter, have to be both thicker and heavier.

An interesting fact is that the old types of instruments, kontrabasharpa and silverbasharpa, are undergoing a revival. Young players often want to have a different type of instrument to gain extra attention when they perform on stage.



Picture shows a tenor nyckelharpa designed by Johan Hedin, built by a violin maker Peder Källman and owned by Tobias Schmidt from Germany. The instrument is tuned: e1, a, d and g. My wife Åsa is playing.

## 10. What can we expect in the future?

There is no doubt that we have only seen the beginning of the spread of this fascinating instrument. There still remains much to do regarding the optimizing of all the different types of nyckelharpas to facilitate their use in a much broader musical context than we have today.

From being an instrument which only existed in only one size and one model shortly after the nyckelharpa revival during the 70s, 80s and 90s, the instrument today is made in a number of different individual styles. This is not always good. For instance, it might make group education in classes more difficult compared to all students using the same kind of instrument tuned in the same way.



Today in Sweden, we (and those at The Eric Sahlström Institute) believe that it is important to keep the Sahlström nyckelharpa model as the basic standard instrument

for the foreseeable future. This instrument also has, through Eric Sahlström and others, a clear connection to the historical instruments. This is a guarantee that we are using all the knowledge of nyckelharpa design and manufacturing technology developed over several hundred years (just as with the Stradivarius violin). It is also why this is the subject of our building courses and seminars and is the model used to produce children's instruments.



The Eric Sahlström Institute initiated a project with the aim of making 25 child-sized nyckelharpas. The reduction factor is 0.85 which gives a 340 mm string length. Picture taken from one of the last meetings at the Institute early Summer 2010.



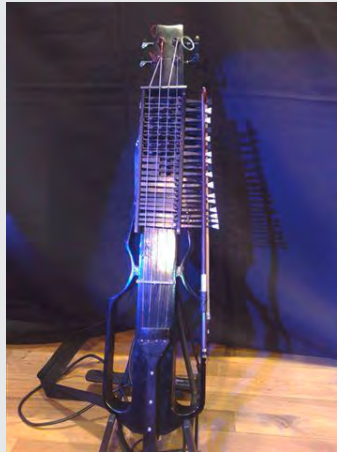
## 11. Summary

My intention with this report is to give people who are interested in the nyckelharpa and its construction an overview of what has happened in the past, what is going on today and what we might expect in the future.

I have not done any research in this matter; I just want to share with you what I have learned through more than 30 years of nyckelharpa playing and nyckelharpa making.

Thank you for your attention

**Esbjörn Hogmark**



Hopefully we will see more of this instrument in the future; a four-row electric nyckelharpa for rock and pop music. The instrument is made by Olle Plahn from Falun.



David Olsson, miner at the mines near Österbybruk north-ern Uppland in the 1920s.



Ambjörn Hogmark 3 years



## Esbjörn Hogmark, Sweden

Esbjörn Hogmark is a professional nyckelharpa manufacturer and nyckelharpa player from Uppland. He was a scholar and friend of Eric Sahlström. He was one of the founders of the Eric Sahlström Institute and is now member of the board. Together with family members he plays in the ensemble "Hogmarkarna" (the Hogmarks).



English language checked by Philip Moate from England  
Content checked by nyckelharpa researcher Per-Ulf Allmo  
All photographs unless otherwise indicated are taken by the author



## Nyckelharpa Manufacturing in Sweden, Past and Present

*By Esbjörn Hogmark*

### 1. Introduction

This document is one of the concluding documents in the project CADENCE, a project encompassing collaboration between the three schools: Burg Fürsteneck in Germany, Scuola di Musica Popolare in Forlimpopoli, Italy and The Eric Sahlström Institute in Sweden. The theme of the project is adult education of music played on the nyckelharpa, an instrument which cannot be bought in an ordinary music shop. It can only be purchased from skilled instrument craftsmen.

The intention of this document is not to give a detailed step-by-step description of how to make a nyckelharpa. On the contrary, it deals with a wider perspective on high quality instrument making in general, with its focus on the nyckelharpa. To get the whole picture, it is important to understand how the instrument has been made throughout history.

This document is not based on any kind of academic research or other kind of investigations; it is just the author's personal opinion on the subject, an opinion based on more than 30 years as a folk music player, and a maker of more than 100 nyckelharpas spread widely over the world.



## 2. Making a top quality instrument demands so much more from the maker than “just a good woodworker’s craftsmanship”.

That’s why making top quality instruments, like making good music, often takes a life-long dedication.

Making a good instrument has much in common with making good music. It takes both skill and knowledge of the subject area. As the musician needs a lot of practising time to handle the instrument to develop the music ability, the instrument maker also needs a lot of time to learn how to handle different tools and to understand the difference between good and bad instruments. And like a piece of music can be split up into different sub-parts; rhythm, quality of individual tones, ornamentation, harmonies etc.; an instrument can also be judged from different perspectives: quality of sound, aesthetic appearance, functionality, etc.

**A musician has to work to improve all the separate parts of his or her music and finally put them together into the final piece. An instrument maker also has to improve all the different aspects of his or her instrument and finally put it together into a well functioning, good sounding and aesthetically pleasing instrument.**

The nyckelharpa instrument has throughout history always been adjusted to the music of the time. This adaptation is very obvious today, and along with the nyckelharpa entering new music areas in the last decades, a number of different types of nyckelharpas have been born to fit that music. They are all modifications of the basic nyckelharpa, but still they have a clear connection to the roots of the instrument in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Finally, the most successful nyckelharpa makers must work in close contact with skilled players. Both parties often gain a lot through this kind of collaboration. They create a win-win situation and can together bring the music to new interesting levels.

**Appendix 1.** Shows an attempt to list the different sub-parts involved in making a good nyckelharpa.



## 3. The Swedish nyckelharpa and how it has been made throughout history

The root of the Swedish nyckelharpa is described more in detail in the article “**The Nyckelharpa in the CADENCE project**” by **Esbjörn Hogmark**.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the oldest preserved nyckelharpas are stored at the Music and Theatre Museum in Stockholm. They are estimated to be made in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. They all have the characteristic long and rather narrow shape with a single acutely-curved top with two round or oval sound holes. The body, including bottom, sides and neck, is made in one piece. The top is made separately and glued to the body. Both body and top are made of Swedish spruce. The body, its shape and how it was made, stayed the same for about 350 years, until around 1930-1940, and it seems that the adaptations made to accommodate the music of the time was more or less done on the key box only.

The nyckelharpa instrument consists primarily of two separate parts: the body and the key box. The body is made to give the best sound and the key box to make it easy to express the individual notes. In addition, the instrument must be made easy to handle, i.e. not too big and heavy.

The way of making the nyckelharpa body was, after cutting down a suitable tree and cutting up a log, first to shape the outside and then hollow the inside, preferably while the wood was not completely dried. When the wood dries out, especially if it is spruce, it shrinks and becomes very hard to work on.

Tools used to hollow the log were various kinds of axes, chisels and gouges.

The first attempt to use a different manufacturing technique was to make both top and bottom separately and then glue them to a body frame consisting of neck and sides made from one piece of wood. Later on, along with the folklore revival and Eric Sahlström, the nyckelharpa body frame was made differ-

1 See: [www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu](http://www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu) - Articles



ently. One way, which is still the most common, is to make neck and sides separately alongside the bottom and top. Another technique, developed by Eric Sahlström and others, was to use a compression moulding technique. This technique is in contradiction to the older solid wood sides technique and has only been accepted by a few makers today.

The nyckelharpa was almost on its way to disappear extinction during 1940-1950. In all of Sweden, there remained only a handful of nyckelharpa players playing the old traditional tunes, and they were located in the northern part of the county Uppland. One of them was Eric Sahlström. Together with a couple of other nyckelharpa players and makers, he made some modifications to the instrument so it could play the more melodic music of that time. This was the time when accordions, clarinets and violins were entering the folklore scene in Uppland. Sahlström made an instrument that was known to have an outstanding sound. He won a number of fiddler's competitions and got very popular for his nice compositions. He had the opportunity to, on a regular basis during 1940-1960, play on Swedish radio.

During the folklore revival of 1970-1980, there was a continuing lack of existing good instruments. With government financial support from the ministry of education and the department of schools, a number of evening courses were started, using Eric Sahlström as inspiration. Plans and manuals were approved and thousands of instruments were made. These instruments were of a good enough quality to fulfil the musical need of that time. Most of these early modern instruments are not accepted today by young skilled nyckelharpa players. They fail in sound quality as well in functionality and ergonomics.

**Today the nyckelharpa has a position in Sweden as a very important cultural heritage. It is also unofficially approved to be the Swedish national instrument.**

This means that those who deal with the making of nyckelharpas often take a kind of national responsibility to preserve what earlier generations have done to the instrument.



Today those who drive the instrument into future forms of music making are the most skilled nyckelharpa players. They often work in close collaboration with skilled makers.

One way of doing this in a broader perspective is to run seminars and short courses in nyckelharpa making. This has been done regularly in Sweden for more than 15 years.

These seminars often involve musicians and scientists together with the instrument makers. Jointly, they try to make the instrument even more fitting into the music of today, while not eliminating the connection to its ancient roots.

**It is interesting to see that today the construction of the nyckelharpa has taken some steps back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century.**

The body of the highest quality instruments of today is often made in full spruce, just as it was done three hundred years ago. This design produces a very good sound in combination with a light weight instrument. The best instruments today are also smaller than the ones that were made twenty years ago. Both their bodies and necks are narrower. They are equipped with a key mechanism of higher precision, giving less noise and also a more precise play than the older ones.

The instrument can also be custom designed to fit the needs of different players.

The nyckelharpa has lately been made in several different forms, more or less to fit into various musical contexts. Bigger instruments with longer strings tuned in lower ranges are made alongside smaller instruments tuned like violins. Also smaller instruments are made specifically for children. The standard length of strings is 400 mm. Children's sized instruments are made with a string length between 300 and 380 mm with 340-360mm being the most common. In spite of their shorter length they are tuned like the normal sized ones. Their sound becomes a little weaker but still acceptable.



#### 4. The nyckelharpa in the Swedish action plan for folk music and folk dance

In the Swedish action plan for folk music and folk dance, initiated by ESI, there is from now on a part dealing with the different folklore instruments.

Excerpts from that document, which focuses on the nyckelharpa, states:

There are three levels of support for continuity and further development of skills and knowledge regarding the nyckelharpa-making guild:

##### Level 1.

Good historical valuable instruments should be documented with pictures and plans. The leading nyckelharpa makers should be documented.

##### Level 2.

Regular short courses and seminars in nyckelharpa making should be established. (Continuation of existing)

Instrument making should in a proper way be introduced into various school syllabi and curriculums to provide for student interest.

##### Level 3.

A more comprehensive nyckelharpa maker's education should be established, preferably in combination with similar programs for the making of other instruments, not only folklore instruments.

##### Finally.

A consultant service with nationwide coverage is proposed to be set up at the Eric Sahlström Institute. The service should have a holistic responsibility and should initiate and be in charge of the above suggested action steps. The Institute should also appoint an expert council who would be especially helpful in establishing the strategies for further work in the field of folk music instruments.



#### 5. What has the Eric Sahlström Institute (ESI) done for instrument makers?

It is written in the "Mission of the ESI" that *special attention should be directed to the nyckelharpa instrument, both in how to play it and how to make it.*

Since the Institute started in 1998, this author has initiated and managed a number of seminars and short courses in nyckelharpa making.

Every year in June, usually in the week before Midsummer, there is a two-day course called *Nyckelharpa Makers Master Class*. At the end of November-beginning of December, there is a seminar in nyckelharpa making. This seminar has also been running every year since 1998.

The basic objective of these seminars and courses, all of which are open to foreign attendees, is to give makers a good opportunity to meet each other and to share knowledge. A main topic is chosen for each session and often reflects what is happening within the nyckelharpa making world. The seminar and courses are always done together with skilled nyckelharpa players.



A nyckelharpa made by the author in 2007



## 6. Some conclusion comments

This document has two appendices:

One listing several aspects of what a nyckelharpa maker should be aware of and gain knowledge in, and one which contains a set of pictures taken from the building process. Most of the pictures show how to make a standard chromatic 3-row nyckelharpa model created by Eric Sahlström.

To write a description of how to make a good instrument would take some 1000 pages and still not be enough to teach the instrument-making craft.

Pictures provide more information on the subject but there are many parts in the building process where even pictures are far from enough. A set of video clips would probably be the best.

**But in my opinion with more than 30 years' experience as a nyckelharpa player and maker, the best way to learn to play or to make a good instrument is to go to someone you respect to learn and practise as a disciple. This way of learning, by joining a luthier master as an apprentice, often gives a good result very quickly. There is so much more to be learned, other than just "dimensions and tools", to reach the recognition as a master nyckelharpa maker.**

Thank you for your attention

January 2011

**Esbjörn Hogmark**



## Appendix 1

**Instrument making is an art form, not just a practical skill!**

*"Making a good instrument involves so much more!"*

Apart from having *good practical skills*, including knowledge of how to use common carpentry tools, the instrument maker should have a reasonably good understanding of the following related areas:

1. A basic idea of good sound quality, based on your own ideals and intuition
2. Instrument acoustics, bowed and plucked
3. History of the instrument is important for makers who want to show respect for achievements from past generations
4. Aesthetics regarding exterior shape, colour and ornamentation, all requiring artistic skills
5. Properties and choice of material suitable for acoustic instruments
6. Design and construction of the instrument according to basic stress and strain principals and theories/mechanics of building materials
7. Design for best functionality and ergonomics
8. To be ranked among the best, the maker should be able to provide some innovative features moving the artistic side forward
9. Contacts with other makers, good musicians and dancers for feedback purposes
10. Adaptation to other forms of music
11. Entrepreneurial skills to market and sell the instruments
12. History tells us that the best makers are also good musicians



## Appendix 2



Above: The author with a friend with a spruce log in the band saw machine. Cutting out pieces for the body frame and bottom

Left: Maple for the key box, bridge tuning pegs etc.



Above: The sides can be cut out from a thick spruce plank

Right: Sides are cut out with a band saw



Left: 2 necks are cut out with a band saw

Above: The final body frame are glued together

Right: Glowing of top with help of special clamps

Below: Reinforcement for the tuning pegs





Key box right side and left side



Intermediate row key blanks



Key heads pre shaped



How to cut out the key head



Bent down keys



The final key box before staining



Staining takes concentration. Here at a summer Master Class



Before and after applying shellac on top of the stain color. Shellac change the color to more yellow and red.



To make a copy of an old nyckelharpa, "Gammelharpa", you have to work directly on the full spruce log. It takes an awful lot of hard work to hollow out the inside.

English language checked by Do Ann Holzman from USA  
All photographs are taken by the author



## Esbjörn Hogmark, Sweden

Esbjörn Hogmark is a professional nyckelharpa manufacturer and nyckelharpa player from Uppland. He was a scholar and friend of Eric Sahlström. He was one of the founders of the Eric Sahlström Institute and is now member of the board. Together with family members he plays in the ensemble "Hogmarkarna" (the Hogmarks).





## "A Keyed Vielle"

Construction of the Instrument  
from a Fresco by Taddeo Di Bartolo –  
Siena (Italy), 1408

*By Silver Plachesi*

The idea of undertaking the extremely difficult challenge of constructing the first example of the keyed vielle, of which the only Italian picture is available in an extremely beautiful fresco by Taddeo di Bartolo (maintained in excellent state in the Cappella of the Palazzo Comunale di Siena dated 1408), was born from involvement in a course concerning the Nyckelharpa at the School of Popular Music of Forlimpopoli (Scuola di Musica Popolare di Forlimpopoli).



As an architect by profession, and a musician through passion, my childhood was spent in the Italian region Romagna, in the dusty carpentry workshop of my grandfather Romeo, in contact with materials and tools (which today would be considered authentic antique pieces), which over the years I learnt to use well, as well as gaining extensive knowledge of the characteristics of wood.



Over the years, my profession as an architect has led me to refine designing methodologies in very diverse areas – let me say “from the spoon to the skyscraper”. And right in the middle I found the space for the difficult challenge of designing and constructing this marvellous instrument.



Having to start exclusively from an image in a fresco, the method used was inevitably deductive.



Cappellina di Palazzo Pubblico, Siena, Italy, Fresco by Taddeo di Bartolo, 1408



Firstly, visual examination of the image in question, and others of the same period, suggests a strong similarity and therefore a credible derivation of this strange “keyed” instrument with the vielle.

*The vielle was used frequently until the end of the XV century (the period in which it is pictured in great detail, especially in numerous works by Hans Memling, and in a famous politico by Jan van Eyck) In the XVI century it was surpassed by other bow instruments, particularly by the family of “violas with legs”, but the idea of an instrument tuned to fifths without keys was taken up again by hand held violas (the violin, the viola and the cello). In the iconography available it seems to be used both by court musicians (minstrels) and by groups of angels playing and singing – therefore one can deduce that it was used for both profane and religious music.<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> <http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Viella>, May 2011



Analogy in the shape of the body and the bow with the vielle depicted in the beautiful fresco of Melozzo from Forlì.



The form of the resonant box and the proportions are similar, apart from the neck, which in the keyed vielle is obviously bigger, so as to contain the mechanics, and therefore the tangents moved by the keys which are very visible in the picture.

At this point, taking into account all that was evident in the fresco, a decision had to be taken concerning the real dimensions of the instrument.

The starting point had to be the calculation of the Diapason – that is to say the distance between the nut and the bridge.

Research into the measurements of the diapason used in vielles of that period was not of much help, as they varied from 33.5 to 58 cm.

It was decided to fix the diapason at 39.5 cm, the measurement used in almost all contemporary nyckelharpas.

Uncertain that the choice made was the best possible, I carried out an incredible series of measurements of all parts of the image, including the figure of the angel in order to confirm the proportions, and the figures that I had decided to use.

I remembered a text entitled “Human Dimension” by Julius Panero and Martin Zelnik, an extraordinary manual of useful measurements for planning. In the introduction one reads: “Interest on the part of philosophers, artists, literary men and architects on measurements of the human body is very antique. The only complete work on antique architecture available to us by Vitruvius, who lived in the first century BC in Rome, wrote: *“The body of man, as nature has composed it, the face, from the chin to the edge of the forehead and the hairline is proportionately one tenth of the body, and in equal proportion is the open hand from the articulation to the tip of the middle finger; the head from the chin to the top of the cranium is an eighth ...”*

Calculating therefore all possible proportions with the measurement 39.5 already fixed, the angel would have been 1.65/1.70 metres tall.



Real planning began from this point – the exact form and dimensional relationships, body measurements, and the neck of the instrument.

The next step was to decide how many, and which strings to mount, and the type of key mechanism.

The reduced number of keys shown in the fresco, five to be exact, led one to suppose that the same key was at the head of two tangents, therefore two keyed strings. Therefore it had to be diatonic.

The definitive solution adopted, in agreement with Marco Ambrosini was the following:

#### 4 strings tuned as follows:

**A** for the first string keyed the bottom (with reference to the instrument), **D** and **G** for the second and third, Two drones, the fourth at the top (with reference to the instrument) another **D** and keyed. It was also decided to insert a sixth varying from the image in the fresco.

Basic planning – dimensions, form, the decision concerning materials began in June 2009 though construction did not begin until November. The transition from the purely theoretic phase, to planning and construction, was made possible thanks to my attendance at a course at the SCHOOL OF LUTEMAKING OF COLORNO taught by Lino Mognaschi, lute maker and constructor of my nyckelharpa and of 80% of all those actually present in Italy, a highly qualified person in this subject.

Attendance at this school led to my changing my mind from the idea of building a model, with good aesthetic characteristics, and good workmanship, to one of pure and professional lute making, constructed according to traditional rules, methodology, and use of materials.



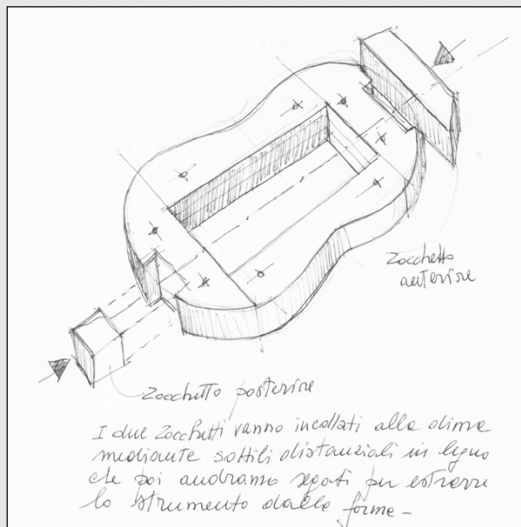
The first sketches on paper – June 2009

I continued research on the choice of woods, and the most suitable sectioning, on their sound characteristics, on the techniques for curving the ribs and on the analytic study of all the phases of construction. I also researched, for my

own curiosity based on an interest in physics, those aspects of sound associated with the construction of an instrument of this type. It was also important to keep the weight as light as possible without compromising the resistance and strength of the instrument itself.

### Some phases of construction

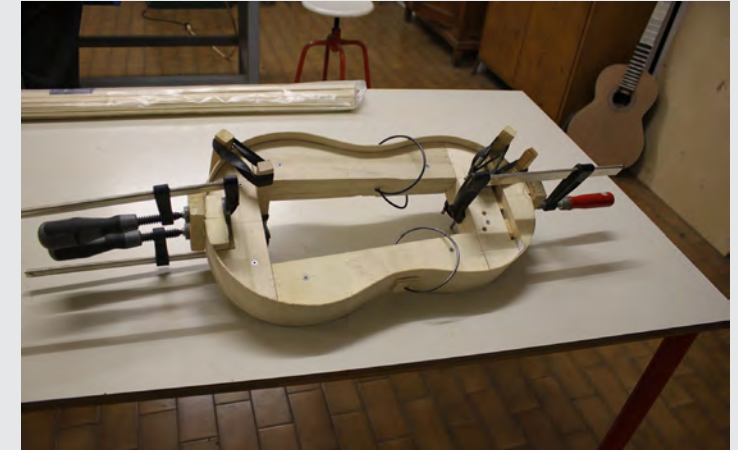
Planning and realisation of the template and the mounting of top and lower blocks



(The blocks are in well seasoned spruce)



Gluing of the ribs to the blocks



Planing and preparation of the neck and the head





Realization of the coined joint  
between the body and the neck



Preparation, gluing and dowelling of the neck, lower belly  
and the construction of the related bass bar  
(belly in maple, bass bar in spruce.)



Here is the instrument in its definitive form, finally closed with the upper and lower belly finished. The harmonic and the relative longitudinal bass bar are in spruce, the bridge is in beech, the tail piece not yet visible in this photo is to be in Italian walnut.

In this phase a balsa model of the keyboard was constructed in order to evaluate its form and dimensions, more or less completed. This verification was extremely useful, and the model underwent several modifications before the keyboard was definitive.



The keyboard, constructed in maple was conceived as an autonomous element, and to facilitate the varnishing it was varnished separately, and assembled when this was completed.

29 September 2010

**Silver Plachesi**



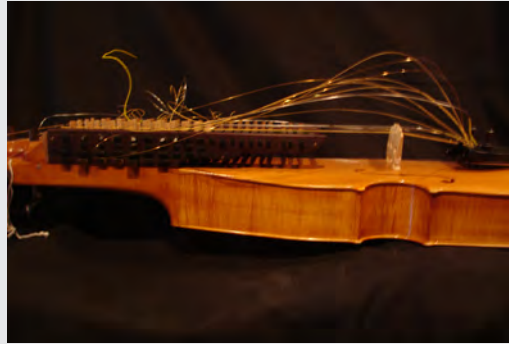
### Silver Plachesi, Italy

Born at Forlì (FC). He holds a degree in mathematics and in architecture, and also holds a diploma from the Academy of Fine Arts from Brera (MI) and from Ravenna (RA). A passion for "popular music" has taken him firstly to the study of the hurdy gurdy guided by Sergio Berardo and Patric Bouffard, and then to attendance at the "European Nyckelharpa Training" at the Scuola di Musica Popolare di Forlimpopoli. His main interest is to introduce the nyckelharpa into popular dance music. In 2009, he founded the group TRAS an BALL.



Silver Plachesi (right) together with the instrument builder Lino Mugnaschi (left)





gents

## 7. The bow

### 1. Problem identification and solutions Troubleshooting

The instrument does not respond,  
makes noise or sounds flat

- the diameter of the strings is too big
- the strings are dirty (*Photo No. 1*)
- too much resin or old rosin
- the bow hairs are worn
- the bridge or the sound post have moved (*Photo No. 2*)
- key on the string: the tangents are too loose or too thin.

#### The instrument rattles and clatters

- Open string: the notches in the upper nut or bridge are too deep and/or the string rests on the wood at two points. (*Photo No. 3, 4, 5, 6*)
- One melody string or resonant string touches a tangent by resonance. (*Photo No. 7*)
- The resonant strings are so close that they touch each other. (*Photo No. 8*)
- Key on the string: the tangents are too loose or too thin.
- The melody string hits the resonant string when the key is pressed. (*Photo No. 9*)

Photo No. 8

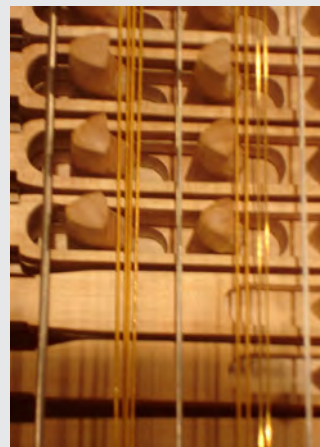


Photo No. 1



Photo No. 2

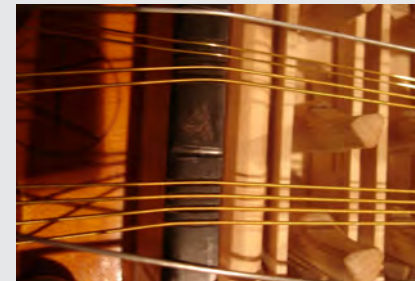


Photo No. 3



Photo No. 4



Photo No. 5

Photo No. 7



Photo No. 6

Photo No. 9





### Constant or recurring background noise

- buttons of clothes or jewels hit the instrument while you are playing
- the string's winding wire is damaged
- the fine tuner or the mechanics are loose. (Photo No. 10)

### What you can do yourself

## 2. Cleaning

A quote from Leopold Mozart, 1789

*"One must always keep one's instrument clean, and the belly and strings especially must be cleaned of all rosin-dust before one begins to play."*

- After playing you should clean your instrument with a soft cloth, a microfibre cloth for example, to remove the rosin.

(Photos No. 11, 12)

If the varnish has lost its shine, you should give the instrument to an instrument maker for polishing. He can also clean the instrument from the inside (rice). (Photos No. 13, 14)

Be very careful when cleaning the instrument yourself with varnish cleaner, especially in the case of instruments with cracks: cleaning products invariably contain oil, which increases the size of the cracks. (Photo No. 15)

Rosin residues on the strings can be removed with Acethon or string cleaner.

**WARNING! VARNISH!**  
Place a cloth underneath!

(Photo No. 16)

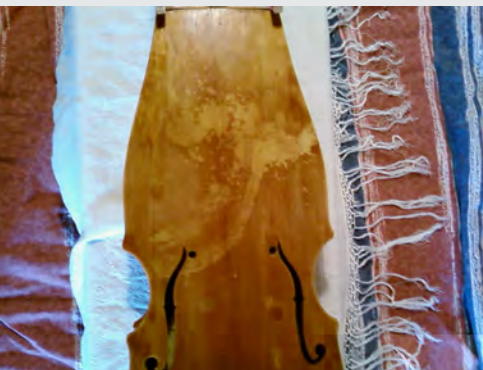


Photo No. 16

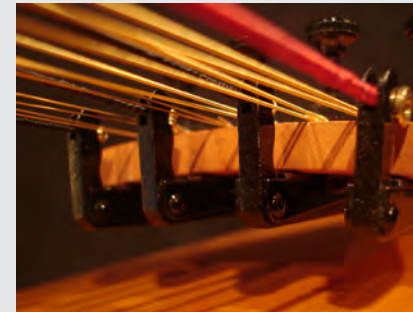


Photo No. 10



Photo No. 11



Photo No. 12



Photo No. 13



Photo No. 14



Photo No. 15



### 3. Strings

The strings should be replaced from time to time. This is the case if they have a poor response or sound dull or the wire winding is damaged.

Concert coming up: Replace strings early!

#### Changing strings (Photo No. 17)

If you have to change all 4 to 16 strings, they should be exchanged individually as otherwise the bridge could move or the sound post could move or fall down.

Should this happen nonetheless, immediately reduce the string tension.



Photo No. 17

#### Notches for the strings

When you change strings, the notches in the top nut and bridge should be lubricated with a bit of graphite (soft pencil).

(Photo No. 18)

The cut of the string should have 1/3 of its diameter in the wood, otherwise the string cannot vibrate freely or whistles.

(Photo No. 19)

If the old strings at the bridge or nut were damaged, the scores/notches should be inspected and repaired.

Very often new strings get damaged because they do not slide well in the notches and get caught.



#### Bridge protection (Photo No. 20)

A bridge protection made of parchment should be glued under the a-string, especially with a thin string.

#### Stringing (Photo No. 21)

The string should be wrapped regularly, without overlapping itself (unnecessary wear on the string).

If possible, they should run from the peg hole to the head plate so that the conical peg is tightened.



Photo No. 18



Photo No. 19



Photo No. 20



Photo No. 21



#### Pegs (Photo No. 22)

The pegs are fitted conically in the top plate/peg box; in other words, they become thinner toward the tip to prevent the peg from slipping.

#### Lubricate pegs (Photo No. 23)

The surfaces of the pegs must be lubricated occasionally: dry soap reduces friction, chalk increases it. (Photos No. 24, 25)

Especially in low humidity conditions (heated rooms in winter), the wooden pegs get a little thinner, they shrink and keep slipping. To compensate for this shrinkage, the pegs must be strongly pressed into the top plate (peg box) when you are tuning the instrument. If lubrication of the pegs does not help, the cone no longer fits and it is recommended you go to the instrument maker to have the cone adjusted.



Photo No. 22



Photo No. 23



Photo No. 24



Photo No. 25



## 4. The bridge

A quote from Leopold Mozart, 1789, may help:

*"The bridge also affects the tone greatly. For instance, if the tone is too shrill or penetrating or, so to speak, piercing and therefore unpleasant, it can be softened by using a low, broad, and rather thick bridge which has been but very slightly cut away underneath."*

*If the tone is too weak, soft, and muffled – then one should use a thin bridge, not too broad, and as high as circumstances permit, greatly carved away both underneath and in the centre."*

*Such a bridge must above all be of very fine-grained, well-seasoned wood, with well closed pores. (Photos No. 26, 27)*

*Further, the bridge has its place on the belly midway between the two openings, one on either side, which have the form of a Latin f." (Photos No. 28, 29)*



Photo No. 26



Photo No. 27



Photo No. 28

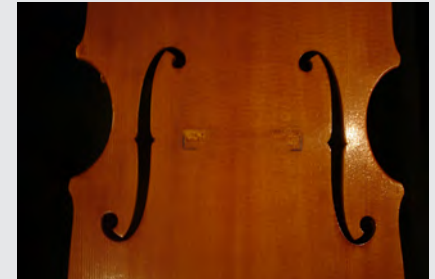


Photo No. 29



### Exceptional situation (Photo No. 30)

After checking the bridge position of the Nyckelharpa, the distances of the tangents to the strings must be inspected.

If the keyboard/neck has shifted slightly to the centre line, the bridge position must be adjusted.

If, with the normal bridge position, the strings clatter, i.e. hit the tangents, the bridge should be moved a few millimetres to bass or treble. (Photo No. 31)

If the problem occurs only for one string, however, the string itself can be moved.

### Bridge position on profile (Photo No. 32)

The flat side of the bridge, which faces the tail piece, is positioned at a right right angle to the base.

### Straight back of the bridge (Photo No. 33)

Tuning may cause the bridge to warp. (Photo No. 34)

If the bridge is standing at an angle, it should be straightened up due to the risk of falling over. In addition, the entire surface of the bridge feet should be in contact with the top so as to optimize the sound.

If the bridge cannot be moved due to the enormous pressure of the strings, it is recommended to tune the strings down (especially the sympathetic strings).

In serious cases use the "hammer" method ....

(Photo No. 35)



Photo No. 30



Photo No. 31

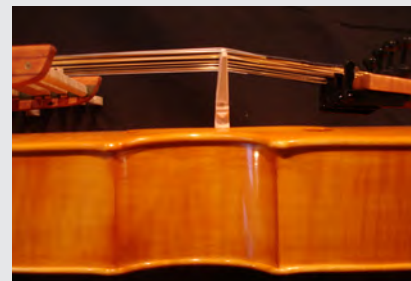


Photo No. 32

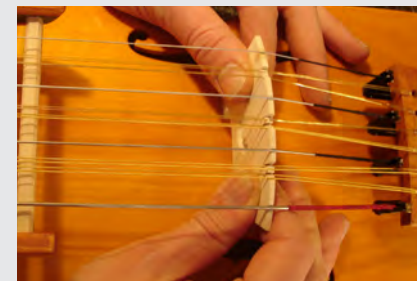


Photo No. 33



Photo No. 34



Photo No. 35



## 5. The sound post

Quote from Leopold Mozart, 1789:

*"The sound-post must be neither too long nor too short, and must be placed to the right of and slightly behind the foot of the bridge. It is of no small importance to set the sound-post correctly. One has to slip it to and fro many times with great patience, each time carefully testing the quality of various notes on each string, continuing in this fashion until the best tone possible has been obtained."*

**Should the musicians themselves move the sound post?**

Risk: cracks, damaged ff-holes ...



Photo No. 36

It may be helpful to mark the position of the sound post with a pencil on the bottom of the instrument.

(Photo No. 36)

If new construction or major repairs are performed, a new sound post may be required after about six months.

If the sound post falls down, the strings must be tuned down to reduce the pressure on the top!

**Position of the sound-post** (Photos No. 37, 38, 39, 40)

**Open glue spots or cracks** (Photo No. 41)

It should be checked now and then whether the top and bottom are still bonded well with the ribs.

Hazards: WARNING: sometimes the tuning goes down on all strings simultaneously. This is a sign of a loosened connection between top and upper block or, more commonly, between the top and lower block. Top cracks can easily occur in this situation. (Photo No. 42)

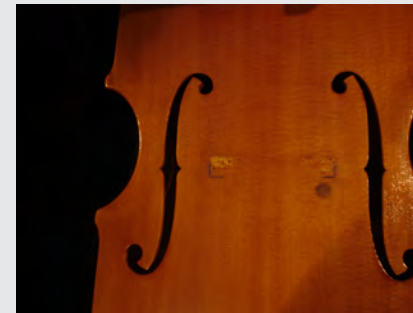


Photo No. 37



Photo No. 38

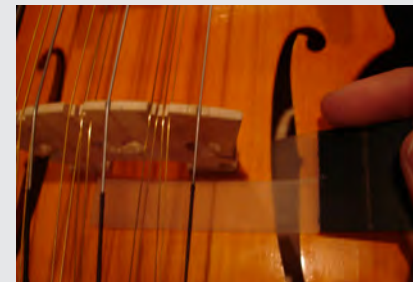


Photo No. 39

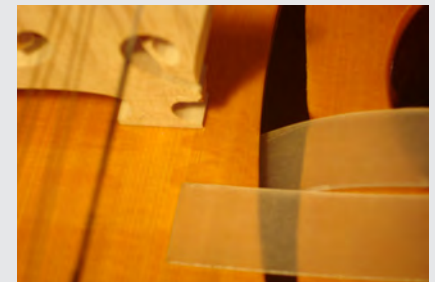


Photo No. 40



Photo No. 41



Photo No. 42



## 6. Keys and tangents

The resonant string is too close to the tangent

*(Photo No. 43)*

A resonant string is so close to the tangent, that it vibrates against it and rattles. This often happens where the string vibrates the most and affects the respective tangents.

**Carving** *(Photo No. 44)*

You can cut the tangents to make them thinner.

Caution! Remove as little material as possible, as otherwise the tangent will not remain stable!

**Tuning** *(Photo No. 45)*

To tune the tangents you need a pair of pliers which is upholstered with leather so as not to damage the tangent. Please observe the scale!

The tangent of the 12th key (on the a-string for example) halves the scale. If this is not the case, the bridge should be moved to the right place before tuning.

In most cases, the scale length is 400 mm.



Annette Osann

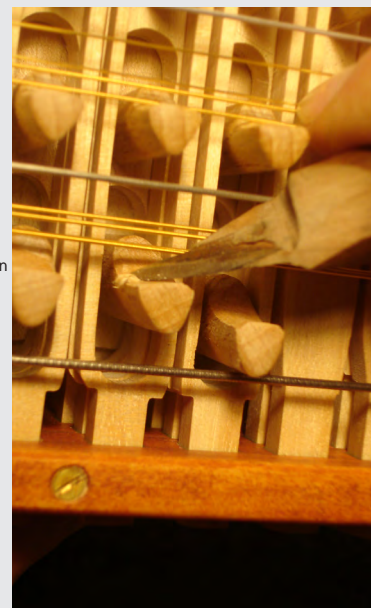


Photo No. 44



Photo No. 43



Photo No. 45

## Dismantling a keyboard

With the following method you don't need to take off the strings. You should ensure that all the keys are numbered! Otherwise, it is advisable to arrange the keys in sequence ...

- Unscrew the top bars. *(Photo No. 46)*



Photo No. 46



- Remove the highest keys. (*Photos No. 47, 48, 49*)

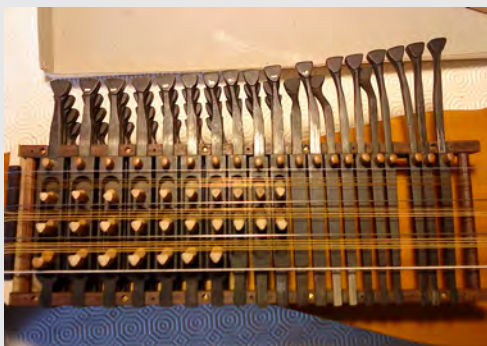


Photo No. 47

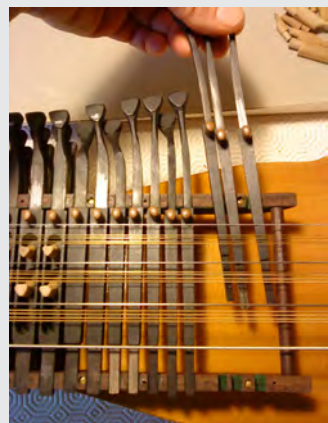


Photo No. 48

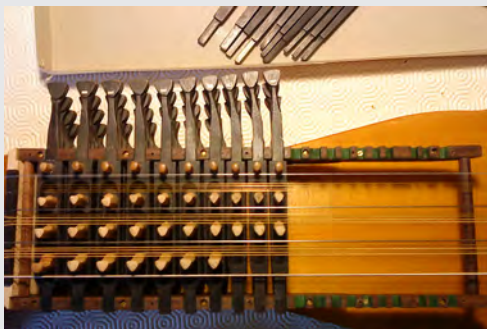


Photo No. 49

- Unscrew all the screws of the second-top bar. (*Photo No. 50*)



Photo No. 50



- Carefully pull out the sidebars. (*Photos No. 51, 52, 53*)

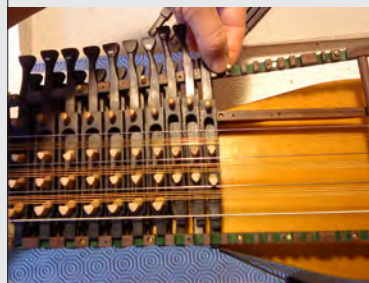


Photo No. 51



Photo No. 52

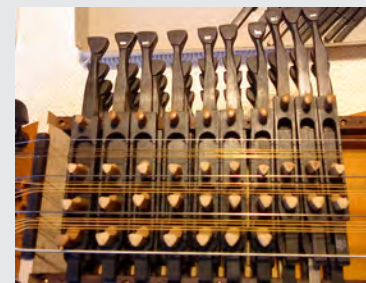


Photo No. 53

- The second row. (*Photos No. 54, 55*)
- Screw ... (*Photo No. 56*)



Photo No. 54



Photo No. 55



Photo No. 56

- Remove the bars of the second row. (*Photos No. 57, 58, 59, 60*)



Photo No. 57

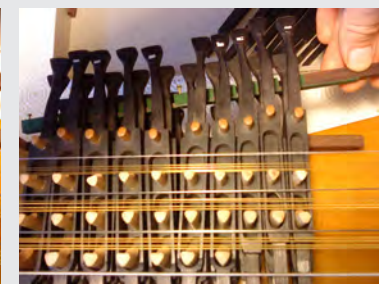


Photo No. 58



Photo No. 59



Photo No. 60

- Now the following keys can be removed in threes.  
(Photos No.61, 62, 63)



Photo No. 61



Photo No. 62



Photo No. 63

- The third row: Screw ... (Photos No. 64, 65, 66, 67, 68)



Photo No. 64

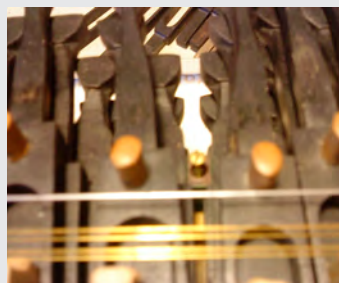


Photo No. 65

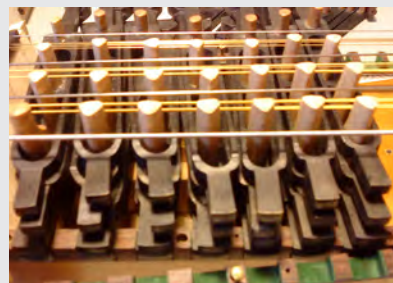


Photo No. 66

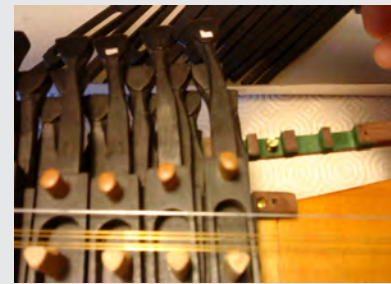


Photo No. 67

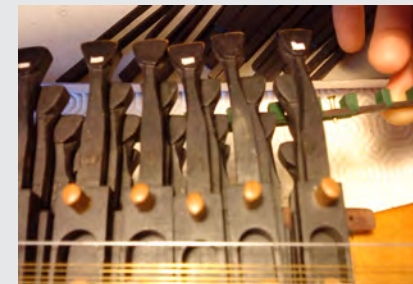


Photo No. 68

- Now only the lowest bars remain ... (Photo No. 69)



Photo No. 69



Photo No. 70

- ... and the rest of the keys can be removed in groups of four.  
(Photos No.70, 71, 72, 73)

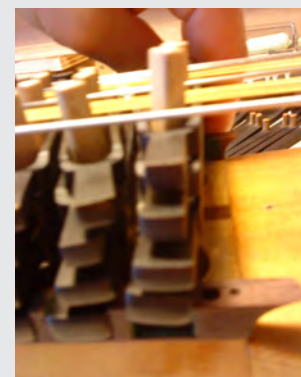


Photo No. 71

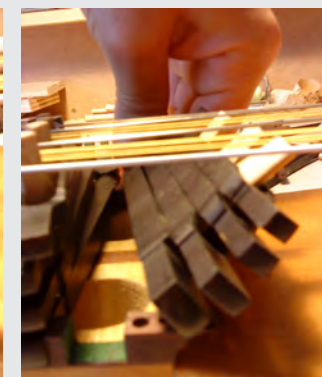


Photo No. 72

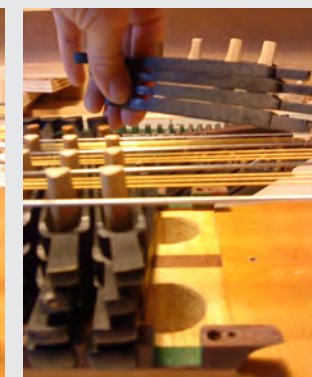


Photo No. 73



### How to make new tangents

First, the tangents are cut to length. Then the anchor is formed and the tangent is pressed into the key.

*(Photo No. 74, 75, 76, 77, 78)*



Photo No. 74



Photo No. 75



Photo No. 76



Photo No. 77



Photo No. 78



### Mending keys that don't fall back easily while playing

- Remove material with a file. Warning: file evenly! *(Photo No. 79)*
- Finish with a smooth sandpaper file. You can apply some wax for protection and wipe dry. *(Photo No. 80)*



Photo No. 79



Photo No. 80

### Assembly of the keyboard

(the strings have been removed) *(Photo No. 81, 82, 83)*

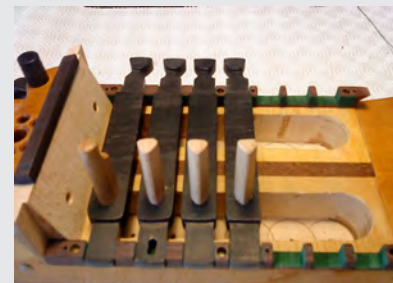


Photo No. 81

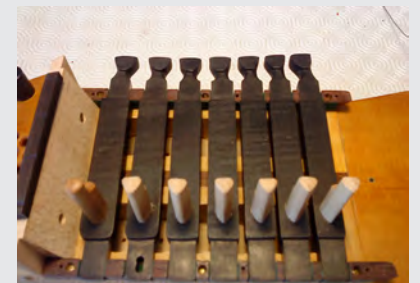


Photo No. 82



Photo No. 83



- When screwing the side rails make sure that no bumps are produced. *(Photo No. 84)*



Photo No. 84

- A key is loose and wobbles as a result
- A quick solution is ...*(Photo No. 85)*

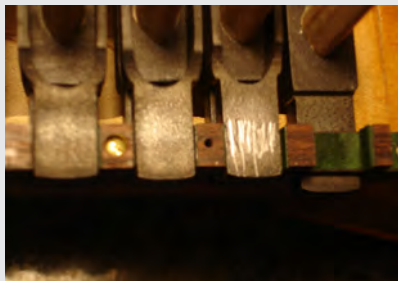


Photo No. 85

- ... thin, self-adhesive felt, which reduces the gap somewhat. *(Photos No. 86, 87)*



Photo No. 86

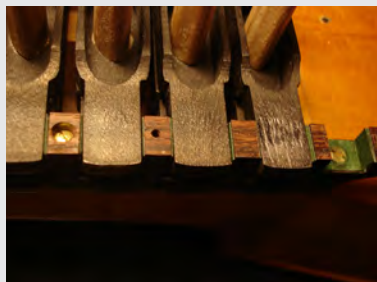


Photo No. 87



- The third row of keys. *(Photo No. 88)*



Photo No. 88

- The second row of keys. *(Photos No. 89, 90)*



Photo No. 89



Photo No. 90

- The first row of keys. *(Photos No. 91, 92)*



Photo No. 91



Photo No. 92



## 7. The bow

There are many different bows for the nyckelharpa, varying in weight, length and elasticity, which shall not be discussed in detail here.

The choice of bow is very much a matter of personal preference, but it also depends on the instrument and the choice of strings.



Photo No. 93



Photo No. 94



Photo No. 95



Photo No. 96



The bow stick should be cleaned of rosin using a dry cloth.

Torn hairs should be cut off. Breaking them off could loosen the nodes in the box. *(Photo No. 93)*

If the bow hair is dirty and not yet worn out, you can clean them with methylated spirits. For this purpose, the methylated spirits is applied to a cloth with which you can rub the bow hairs. *(Photo No. 94)*

Shake dry. *(Photo No.95, 96)*

Box and wedge in the bow head  
*(Photo No.97, 98, 99)*

Box and wedge in the bow frog  
*(Photo No.100, 101, 102)*



Photo No. 97



Photo No. 98

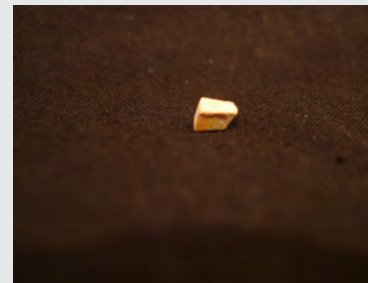


Photo No. 99



Photo No. 100



Photo No. 101

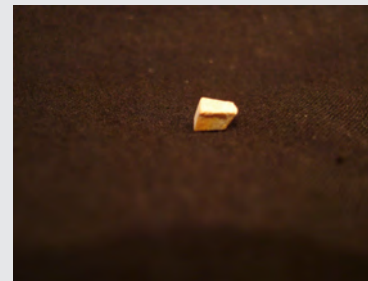


Photo No. 102



## Annette Osann (Germany / France)

- born in 1974 in Stuttgart (Germany).

**She began her musical education playing cello in Augsburg.**

- 1995/1998 Annette studied at the School for Violin Making in Mittenwald
- 1998/99 she completed her apprenticeship in the Schellong Osann workshop in Hamburg, where
- she passed the journeyman's examination
- since 1998 she has concentrated on nyckelharpa making
- 1999/2000 she worked together with J-C. Condi (Remoncourt)
- since 2001 she has developed a personal nyckelharpa model, and during this time she has also
- worked in A. Meyer's workshop (Metz) and in N. Desmarais' workshop (Grenoble).



Photo: Bruno Thiebergien

**In 2007 Annette opened her own workshop for**

- nyckelharpa making
- making and restoring baroque instruments
- common repairs for string instruments.

**Annette performs as a soloist on nyckelharpa and**

- since 2005 she plays in Duo Arcangelo with Juliette Thiebergien (baroque cello)
- since 2008 she plays in Arcangelo en trio with Juliette and Perrine Thiebergien (baroque violin and nyckelharpa)
- since 2009 she plays chamber music together with Elise Rollin (organ)

**Annette teaches nyckelharpa playing**

- at the Akademie Burg Fürsteneck (Germany)
- at the Scuola di Musica popolare di Forlimpopoli (Italy)
- at the Conservatoire interdépartemental des deux vallées (Paris).

She not only teaches playing technique, but also the basics of instrument making and instrument care.

[www.annetteosann.de.vu](http://www.annetteosann.de.vu)

All photos taken by the author and Christophe Babot.



## About Tuning

*By Emilia Amper*

### Why I have chosen to tune in fifths

When I started playing as a 10-year old, my nyckelharpa was tuned in the traditional way for chromatic nyckelharpas: A, C, G, C (from top to bottom, "C-tuning"). After maybe 7 years I decided to change to tuning in fifths (A, D, G, C/D/A, "D-tuning") and try that for a while. I was inspired by Johan Hedin and some specific tunes I was playing at the moment, which were more suited for playing on a nyckelharpa that was tuned in fifths. It took a while to get into it and learn the new fingering of old tunes I already knew, but it went quite smoothly. And then I just never wanted to go back.

When it comes to choosing a tuning on the nyckelharpa, the needs you and your music have should decide! Speaking of Swedish traditional music for a while: To me, the reason to have the C-tuning, to have an open C-string, is if you specifically need that in the music you play. For example, if you play a lot of traditional nyckelharpa tunes from the area Uppland in Sweden, you will find a lot of tunes in C major. The style of playing includes a lot of open strings and use of drones, here the C-tuning is perfect! If you don't have the C-tuning, it just won't be the same.

If you on the other hand play a lot of tunes from all over Sweden, a lot of fiddle tunes etc, an open D-string, and therefor the D-tuning, is much more suitable and useful.

Also, without speaking specifically about Swedish traditional music, the D-tuning has more logic to it, since it has the same interval between all the melody strings. This means that the



patterns of all scales and all chords are the same, no matter where on the keyboard you start. Especially when improvising and accompanying, playing things based on scales and chords, this is good. Also, since I have an extended keyboard (meaning that I have more keys, that go higher up, on each string), the D-tuning is more logic and practical: Instead of jumping up and down with my left hand, I can play in position, and since I have the D-tuning I can apply the same fingering everywhere and on all the strings.

### Why I have chosen to use the equal temperament

Intonation is all about compromise... Since the nyckelharpa has fixed keys, it can never be all perfect. So you must decide for yourself what is best to do. The majority of the traditional tunes from the Nordic countries are in D, G, A, C, F and Bb, and it might also be these keys that sound the best on the instrument (due to the possibility of open strings and the traditions for using open strings together with the melody etc). Therefore, some nyckelharpa players that I know in Sweden have chosen to use an intonation pattern that favours these keys, but where other keys suffer. But since I meet and play in so many different styles and with so many different instruments, in all kinds of modes and keys in my musical work, I have found that the equal temperament works best for me in the intonation of my leaves (the intonation done before you play). Anything else would mean a too big risk of total crash either inside of the scale that I am playing solo, or between me and my co-musicians. Working as a studio musician, meeting other musical genres and traditions or playing with for example a piano are all good examples of when I think it works best to use the equal temperament tuning.

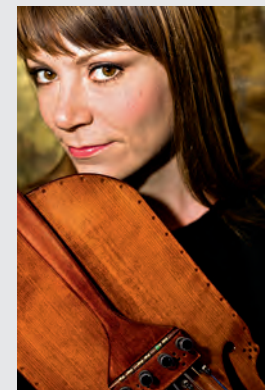
Using the equal temperament is not perfect, but for me it seems to be the best option. It means that all notes are a little bit false, but it also means that no single tone sticks out being extremely out of tune. The important thing is that I then, with



both left hand and right hand technique, actively intonate while I play, to make the key I am in sound as good as possible. The active left and right hand technique also help evening out the differences in the sound quality in different places of the scale and on the different strings and the different keys (the ones you push to shorten the string). To me, the constant working of the left and the right hand, the constant creating and shaping of the tone, is about both intonation and sound making at the same time. Therefore it is very hard, and even irrelevant, to separate tone making from intonation and vice versa.

My biggest frustration when it comes to intonation is that I don't have any quarter notes on my instrument, which I need when I play for example Persian and Swedish music. I sometimes try to turn my leaves to intonate even more in some direction, for some specific tune, concert or project, but it is never as much as I would like or need.

As an end comment, obvious to the experienced nyckelharpa player, I just want to emphasize the importance of changing strings regularly, using a good rosin that you feel comfortable with, going over and making sure your keys are all well intonated and tuning your instrument very often and thoroughly. It really makes a big difference to your sound!



**Emilia Amper, Sweden**

(\*1981) is a nyckelharpa player, singer and composer from Sweden, and winner of the World Championships of Nyckelharpa 2010. She has performed all over the world solo and with Swedish and Nordic folk music groups (like Absolut Trio and Blink), Persian classical musicians, jazz and pop/rock musicians (such as Jon Lord from Deep Purple) and the Norwegian

Photo: Simon Johansson



chamber orchestra The Trondheim Soloists (with whom she won the Norwegian Grammy Spellemannsprisen 2011).

She is a popular music and dance teacher as well as dance musician in Sweden and abroad, a former student and now member of the board at the Eric Sahlström Institute in Tobo, and she has a Bachelor in Musicology with a special in composition from the University in Trondheim, a Bachelor in Swedish Folk Music/Nyckelharpa from the Royal University College of Music in Stockholm and a Nordic Master in Folk Music (with studies in Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Norway).

Her musical passions are polskas, bowing technique, expression and dance groove, and her playing style has been described as dynamic, elegant and groovy.

[www.emiliaamper.se](http://www.emiliaamper.se)



Emilia Amper and Erik Rydval, BURG FÜRSTENECK, October 2010



## Nyckelharpa in Music Schools The Beginning

*Interview with Anders Liljefors by Ditte Andersson*

**Anders Liljefors**, violin, fiddle and nyckelharpa player born in 1928, worked his whole career as a teacher in "Kommunala musikskolan", the local council (Kommune /Comune) music school, where most Swedish children learn to play. He was one of the two people to first bring nyckelharpa into the music school at the end of the 60's. This is a transcription of an interview that I, Ditte Andersson, had with Anders on the 15th of September 2010.

**Ditte:**

*This interview is really about the "nyckelharpa" in the local council music school, but I still want to ask you, because it is not perfectly clear to me, how it happened that you started to play the violin?*

**Anders:**

It think it was because my mother, who played the piano, wanted somebody to play with.

**Ditte:**

*But why did it come to be the violin?*

**Anders:**

Well, I can't say, really. It might just be because the postman, Mr. Lindkvist, he happened to play the violin. He wasn't directly a violinist, but he played the violin.

And I got the idea to take lessons from him. He lived in town, so I cycled down to him; I think I was about 10 years the first time.

**Ditte:**

*Was it your mother that got you a violin?*



**Anders:**

*I can't really remember how I got the first one that I played on. But the one that I played on "for real" later, and which I still have, that one I got because we got a little inheritance after uncle Ludvig.*

**Ditte:**

*How was uncle Ludvig related to you?*

**Anders:**

He was my father's brother, and he was a quite well-to-do farmer just outside Uppsala.

**Ditte:**

*So his full name must have been Ludvig Andersson, then?*

**Anders:**

Yes. And when he died, me and my siblings, all the six of us, got 500 "kronor" each (about 57 Euro 2011-02-06). This must have been around the beginning of the 40's.

I remember it as one of my greatest childhood memories; the whole family went to Stockholm to entertain ourselves for the money we had inherited, and the first thing we did was to go to Erik Lindholm's violin workshop on Drottninggatan ("Queen's Street"). We stepped in and said: – How do you do; we would like to buy a violin. And among others he took out this one, which I bought. It cost as much as I had inherited, i.e. 500 "kronor". I still have it, and still play on it.

Well, I continued to get lessons from the postman, and cycled to him in rain and sunshine. I think I went to him for quite some time.

**Ditte:**

*What sort of music did you play, was it mostly classical?*

**Anders:**

Yes, it must have been; he himself played only from sheet music, and no folk music at all. I can't remember any particular book that we used ... I think that he had material that I borrowed.



**Ditte:**

*How did you get in contact with folk music, then?*

**Anders:**

Two of my elder siblings, Cajsa and Ulf, started to dance folk dances with Ungdomsringen (literally "The Youth Circle", an organization for folklore of all kinds, now called Folkdansringen, "The Folk Dance Circle").

And for some reason or other I ended up playing for them, together with other folk musicians ("spelmän") in the organization.

I liked it very much, and then I met Marianne (Anders' wife) in those circles. She was dancing and I was playing. I had great times with them.

**Ditte:**

*But after that you joined the local "spelmans"-organization, too, didn't you?*

*(Spelman = folk musician on any level, professional or amateur, literally meaning a person who plays.)*

**Anders:**

Yes, about the same time. Around 1943, -44 or so. Through the players that I met in the folk dance organization.

**Ditte:**

*And then you came to know Ivar Tallroth and all the other players?*

**Anders:**

Yes, and especially Olle Jansson and Curt Tallroth who were comparatively young then, around 18 or 20. We were the young ones back then. And I also met Ole Hjorth.

**Ditte:**

*Ole was born in 1930.*

**Anders:**

Yes. And in spite of the difference in age, and the fact that



there were so few younger people, it was very pleasant. So that's how I ended up in those circles.

**Ditte:**

*And you played for the Zorn badge and got bronze level in 1948, didn't you?*

(For information, see: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zorn\\_Badge](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zorn_Badge))

**Anders:**

Yes. And so did Curt Tallroth and Ole Hjorth, if I remember it correctly.

**Ditte:**

*But then, at some point, you must have decided to get an education. Well, you or somebody else.*

**Anders:**

My mother probably had a share in that as well. Oh yes, and after the postman I studied for a real violin teacher in Uppsala, Willy Böck.

One of all the German musicians who came to Sweden during the 2nd world war. He taught at Uppsala Musikskola (Ditte's remark: old, private school that doesn't exist any more).

**Ditte:**

*Ha, I went there, too. To learn to play piano.*

**Anders:**

Who was your teacher?

**Ditte:**

*His name was Otto Lehner.*

**Anders:**

Otto Lehner, oh yes. Willy Böck, he worked as a musician, too. A very capable guy.

With him I played more and more classical music. And one of the folk dancers was a pianist, and we played together sometimes, little pieces for violin and piano.



Then I had another friend, Gunnar Ahlqvist, who was going away to study at "Fokliga Musikskolan" in Arvika (in the west of Sweden; has nothing to do with folk music – it is a folk high-school for classical music. /Ditte's remark). He meant to be a school teacher, and was going there to study piano playing, and one day he said to me: " – Why don't you go with me to the school?"

And since you didn't have to do tests or anything to get in there I said: "Yes, why not?" Then I spoke to my mother and father and were allowed to go.

**Ditte:**

*What was the aim of that education, to be a teacher?*

**Anders:**

No, just to learn you instrument better.

**Ditte:**

*Was it one year?*

**Anders:**

I stayed for two years, actually. You could stay as long as you wanted, as long as you registered. Some people had been there many years.

During that time I didn't play much folk music, except during the holidays.

When I came back again after my studies I started to play for the folk dancers again, since they were such nice people.

After some time I got the idea that I should apply for admission into the Royal College of Music in Stockholm, to become a qualified teacher.

I took two years, back then, to become a teacher, and I think I got my exam in 1955.

**Ditte:**

*Who was your violin teacher at the Royal College?*



**Anders:**

I don't remember, Rudolf something. He wasn't much of a violinist, because he had an arm injury, but he was a capable teacher. But at the same time I actually took some private lessons for Sven Karpe (well-reputed Swedish violinist and violin professor; /Ditte's remark). I also started to have a few pupils of my own, while I was still studying.

**Ditte:**

*Did you live in Stockholm then?*

**Anders:**

No, I commuted, by train.

Then, when my education was finished in 1955, I applied for, and got, my first steady job up in Österlövsta.

**Ditte:**

*Did you work for Tierp's "kommun", then?*

**Anders:**

No, Österlövsta was a separate "kommun" back then.

**Ditte:**

*Well, what happened to your folk music playing during the college year, then?*

**Anders:**

I continued to be a member of the "spelmans"-organization, and up in Österlövsta I met with Olle Jansson, and we played together quite much. We played some gigs together, too.

**Ditte:**

*Your first job in Österlövsta, was that full time?*

**Anders:**

Yes.

**Ditte:**

*So you moved there, too?*

(It is about 70 km to the north of Uppsala. /Ditte's remark)



**Anders:**

Oh yes, and that was some situation! Marianne and I married in august of 1955. She had applied for admission to CGI (school in Stockholm, were you study to be a physiotherapist; /Ditte's remark). I had applied for the job in Österlövsta. We had no idea how it would end. After the wedding we went to a friend down in Småland, and stayed for almost a fortnight. We went there with him, and back by hitchhiking; that was our honeymoon ...

When we came home again we learnt that she had been accepted at GCI and I had got the job in Österlövsta. So there was nothing else to do that say " – Bye, bye Marianne!", and then she went to Stockholm, and I went to Österlövsta, and then we lived like that for two years.

**Ditte:**

*How often did you see each other?*

**Anders:**

Well, during the weekends.

**Ditte:**

*Home in Uppsala?*

**Anders:**

Yes. At her or my parents.

**Ditte:**

*I remember that you said that you went around between the schools in Österlövsta on a moped, or was it a bike?*

**Anders:**

I used a moped my first year. I remember complaining about that to somebody once, saying "And here I am, having to go between schools on a moped!" Lasse Näsbom (friend of Anders', father of Torbjörn Näsbom), who had the job in Österlövsta before me, happened to be in the room. He said, very discreetly: "-Well, me, I had to use a bicycle."



**Ditte:**

*Did you manage to get a car after that?*

**Anders:**

Yes, Marianne's parents helped us out so we could buy an old Volkswagen. So with that I went to Grönö, Valparbo, Lövsåbruk and all of those places.

And I lived in the former cantor's lodge. There was only two rooms and an old iron heater. And a big, bloody hall. I lit a fire in the heater in the morning before I went away, but that didn't last long. They just put in a zinc unit, and a bucket under it. Then I learnt that you have to carry out more water than you carry in, for some strange reason. It felt like that, anyway.

**Ditte:**

*What instruments did you teach – was it just the violin?*

**Anders:**

No, I taught mandolin, recorder, piano and violin.

**Ditte:**

*Had they prepared you for the other instruments at college?*

**Anders:**

No.

**Ditte:**

*So you just had to sort out that by yourself?*

**Anders:**

Yes. I actually reflected on that, that at the Royal College homework could be to analyse the chords of a Beethoven sonata or something like that ... and then, when actually working, you met little children who played the recorder.

Up in Österlövsta I also had the privilege of meeting Sture and Sven Andersson (folk musicians).

**Ditte:**

*You brought folk music into your teaching quite soon, didn't you?*



**Anders:**

Yes, after less than a year I had a little "spelmanslag" (folk music group) in the music school.

**Ditte:**

*So was it your intention to work with both the genres, classical and folk?*

**Anders:**

Yes.

**Ditte:**

*Did you do it on purpose, or did it just happen?*

**Anders:** Yes, I was thinking that many of them are comfortable to play and have nice melodies ... I've almost always had that thought, that even if they aren't going to be world famous violinists, they should always get the opportunity to learn at least 10 Swedish folk tunes by heart. To learn the actual trick how to learn by ear, so to say. Not to end up like many people who has drilled playing from sheet music to a point where they can't even imagine themselves playing by ear. So all violin players and "mandolists" and others, they should play tunes by heart. But at the same time they were playing from violin books to learn how to read music.

That's what was so fantastic about it, that one could, at the music school in Uppsala, begin to teach people by ear. That wasn't really accepted at the time. For example, if you wanted to play the guitar, you couldn't go to the music school just to learn how to play chords and accompaniment, it had to be melody playing.

**Ditte:**

*But, at the beginning up in Österlövsta, if you had a pupil who really liked to play folk tunes by ear, and didn't want to do the other stuff, what did you do?*

**Anders:**

Then I let them do that. But after only about half a year I had started a little orchestra there, and the ones that discovered



that it actually was quite pleasant to play in it, they were allowed to join, and then they had to learn how to read music, so most time it went parallelly; but if they only wanted to play by ear ... well, that was okay with me.

**Ditte:**

*And those could play in you "spelmanslag" (= group of folk musicians).*

**Anders:**

Yes.

**Ditte:**

*And this must have been around 1955 to 1957.*

**Anders:**

Yes, about two years.

**Ditte:**

*You have had, most of your life, been playing in a string quartet with Mats Kuoppala, Lars Näsbom and Bosse Andersson. How did that happen? Bosse Andersson was a mate from your childhood, wasn't he?*

**Anders:**

Yes, we started to play together around the age of 12.

**Ditte:**

*Did he play the cello all the way from the start?*

**Anders:**

Yes, he played the cello and I the violin.

**Ditte:**

*And you kept in contact?*

**Anders:** Yes, and Mats Kuoppala was studying at the folk high-school in Arvika too, and there we came to know each other. He was from Tierp originally, and had an interest for folk music from the beginning. So we found each other through folk music, and also started to play string quartet together when we studied in Arvika.



**Ditte:**

*But you didn't know Mats before?*

**Anders:**

I'd heard of him, but never met him.

**Ditte:**

*What about Lasse Näsbom?*

**Anders:**

Lasse also studied in Arvika at the same time. He played the double bass. And I and Mats and some other person had come so far as to have a group with two violins and one viola, so we asked Lasse "– Couldn't you play the cello with us?", and he said "–Why not?" So that's how we got together.

Then, when I got the job in Österlövsta, I, Mats and Lasse continued to play together, trios and stuff, because Mats had moved to Tegelsmora, just by the church, and had got his first job as a music teacher in Vendel, and Lasse Näsbom worked up in Hållnäs, in the music school there, so we lived in the same area.

After about two years I moved back to Uppsala, and Mats, who had moved to Kungsängen (just north west of Stockholm), found a cellist down there, so we picked up the string quartet (Lasse changing to viola. /Ditte's remark) again, Lasse, Mats, I and the cellist. But he was an engineer and moved to Iceland. Then we asked my old friend Bosse Andersson to join us on the cello.

**Ditte:**

*You seem to have worked in similar ways, you and Mats Kuoppala, he in Kungsängen and you in the Uppsala area. How did it happen that you and Mats started to play nyckelharpa?*

**Anders:**

It was the time when it started to happen things around the nyckelharpa ... and some years earlier Mats and I had started the summer courses at Wik castle.



(Ditte's remark: These summer courses were for Mats' and Anders' regular pupils in their music schools, and there they played mainly orchestral music, but also folk music.)

**Ditte:**

*That was at the end of the 60's, wasn't it?*

**Anders:**

Yes, I think so. We had started the courses at Wik castle, and every year they started with a concert with Viksta-Lasse and Eric Sahlström on Sunday evening, because we always started on a Sunday.

And by then the interest for building nyckelharpas had increased ... I think that the increased interest for building them and playing them sort of went hand in hand ... it is hard to see the exact connection between the building and the playing. The real "wave" came during the 70's, anyway. I, myself, bought my nyckelharpa from Eric Sahlström in 1968.

**Ditte:**

*And was that because you had seen and heard Eric Sahlström at the Wik courses?*

**Anders:**

Well, we had been to many "spelmansstämmor" (folk musicians gatherings), so we, for sure, had experienced the nyckelharpa, but for me it never appeared in its full radiance, so to say, until I heard Eric. Before that, well, it wasn't the same technique, or the same sound, not the same execution ... not enough to tempt your ear; he was the one that opened my ears.

**Ditte:**

*Did Mats Kuoppala buy his at the same time?*

**Anders:**

He bought his from a builder in Kungsängen, Härold Lundin, who started to build his own model. Maybe he even bought his a year or so before I bought mine. And Lasse Näsborn also played nyckelharpa.



**Ditte:**

*How did he start?*

**Anders:**

Hm ... I think that the three of us spurred each other.

**Ditte:**

*Did you start to play nyckelharpa just for your own pleasure?*

**Anders:**

Yes, we did. And we started to play together, and then started to bring it when we went to different gatherings with folk musicians. We also discovered that there was other nice music, apart from the fiddle repertoire.

**Ditte:**

*You and Mats Kuoppala went to Norway to play several times, to play school concerts.*

**Anders:**

Yes.

**Ditte:**

*It must have been something a little extra, to bring the nyckelharpas, I mean.*

**Anders:** Yes, ha ha, we went there with one fiddle each, and one nyckelharpa each, and "träskofiol" (a fiddle made from a clog), and "spilåpipa" (a Swedish small flute, like a recorder but in one piece) and jew's harps and all sorts of stuff, and then we had already been on tour for Rikskonserter ("Concerts Sweden") here in Sweden, one turn to Småland, one to Skåne and one up in Lappland.

I remember that everyone that was going on those tours had to go to a short course with Dorothy Irving, to learn about performing etc. And I remember, particularly, one thing that she said: "Above all, if you play the wrong note, don't show it with the slightest sign, because that is embarrassing for the audience, and it can also be the case that 80% didn't hear it."



**Ditte:**

*Exactly!*

After Österlövsta you got a job closer to Uppsala, didn't you?

**Anders:**

Yes, I got a new job in 1958. I was employed by Vattholma kommun as their first instrumental teacher, which was a separate council back then (incorporated with Uppsala kommun in 1971. /Ditte's remark). The first year I was employed half time, because they wanted to test the concept of having a music school.

Together with violin/fiddle, I was also teaching guitar, piano, recorder, and even some cello or other. I was alone on the job the first year, but gradually, as the school got going, the hired teachers that specialized in those other instruments, thank Heaven.

**Ditte:**

*But then it was incorporated with Uppsala.*

**Anders:**

Yes.

**Ditte:**

*But you continued with the same concept, i.e. that all pupils should learn at least 10 Swedish tunes by heart, and also tuning into what they were interested in.*

**Anders:**

Yes, I kept it as a rule, that everybody should least have the feeling of what it means to play by ear, and maybe become a little interested in that way of playing ... not many classical pieces are constructed in a way so that a beginner can learn them by ear. Folk music, on the other hand, is made for that.

**Ditte:**

*Yes, also the fact that it is created to play solo makes it ideal to play when you are on your own.*



**Anders:**

Yes.

**Ditte:**

*Mats (Kuoppala), he was working in Kungsängen at the same time, and Lasse Näsbom was still working in the north of Uppland; did you ever, consciously, discuss this approach to teaching, or did you just happen to work in similar ways?*

**Anders:**

I can't remember us talking about it. But we said to each other, when we planned our first summer course, I think it was at Biskops Arnö, that "Now we'll have the first course where you don't have a bloody written note." The whole week we played by ear only. The pupils were regular pupils from him (Mats Kuoppala) and from me.

**Ditte:**

*And this was before the Wik courses?*

**Anders:**

That was before, yes.

**Ditte:**

*And you and Mats decided that?*

**Anders:**

Yes.

**Ditte:**

*When did you start with letting the pupils play nyckelharpa, and how did it happen?*

**Anders:**

Well, for my part, here in Storvreta and around, I think it was parents and pupils that who asked for it.

I mean, since there weren't a bunch of nyckelharpas lying around, I couldn't say "Here is a nyckelharpa, play it!"; it had to come from the parents. Quite a number of the parents and others had built nyckelharpas, so you could borrow instruments



for the pupils. So I'm quite sure that the interest came from outside the school – it wasn't anything that I could direct.

**Ditte:**

*Do you think that the situation was about the same for Mats down in Kungsängen?*

**Anders:**

Yes, I'm sure.

**Ditte:**

Did the headmaster of the school have a problem with this, or interfered in any way?

**Anders:**

No.

**Ditte:**

*Who was the headmaster at that time?*

**Anders:**

I think it was Rolf Ek.

**Ditte:**

*This must have been quite soon after the time you got your own nyckelharpa.*

**Anders:**

Let's say that I had played a year or so. And, as I said, quite a number of people were building instruments, and realized afterwards that it would be nice to be able to play on them, too. I also brought Eric Sahlström a couple of times, to play at Lions-bazaars and such, which made people turn on even more.

And then some of my pupils started to play nyckelharpa, for example Sverker Åkered, who had started with violin and then fiddle. Folk music was quite natural for him, because his father came from Boda (in Dalarna). The same thing happened with Peder Källman, when he discovered the nyckelharpa he became interested in it. Toivo Wiskari too, and all the rest of them who played in Harpan Min ("My harp"; Anders' and



Mats Kuoppala's youth group. /Ditte's remark). That's how it started here around Storvreta, and it was the same way when I started to work in town (Uppsala) – parents phoned me on behalf of their children, because they knew I taught nyckelharpa.

**Ditte:**

*And this could have been around 1969, -70?*

**Anders:**

Something like that, yes.

**Ditte:**

*How did it happen that Mats Kuoppala and you decided to form the group Harpan Min, with pupils from your two, different schools?*

**Anders:**

I think it was a result of the fact that we brought nyckelharpa into the summer courses at Wik

There we saw that if we put his and my nyckelharpa pupils together we would have a pretty good group. It was also good for them to meet other players.

**Ditte:**

*So at that time you had both violins/fiddles and nyckelharpas at the courses?*

**Anders:**

Yes.

**Ditte:**

*For how long did these courses take place?*

**Anders:**

It feels like almost 10 years.

**Ditte:**

*Then you started the summer courses at Säbyholm, courses for anybody that wanted to play nyckelharpa. That was three years, 1973, -74 and -75.*



**Anders:**

That's right.

**Ditte:**

*I was there in 1974.*

*Those courses were initiated by you and Mats too, weren't they?*

**Anders:**

Yes. And by then we had a quite decent bunch of nyckelharpa players.

And even if nyckelharpa wasn't so easy to tune back then – nobody used tuning machines, and there were keys and pegs and all sorts of stuff – you noticed that it was much easier to get a group of players sound decently together playing nyckelharpa (than fiddle) ... 'cause everybody was, at least, if you had tuned properly, playing in tune. For some reason – I've thought about that afterwards – it is easier to have a group of nyckelharpa players sound acceptable quite soon. With violins/fiddles there's always somebody that doesn't have a good enough ear.

**Ditte:**

*Many of the ones that played in Harpan Min have become musicians and teacher. Toivo, for example, is he a teacher?*

**Anders:**

Yes, he actually works with music therapy.

**Ditte:**

*And Sverker is a music teacher.*

**Anders:**

Yes, he is.

**Ditte:**

*Instrumental or in class?*

**Anders:**

In music school. He teaches violin/fiddle, nyckelharpa, double bass and this and that.



**Ditte:**

*Peter Hedlund ("Puma") and Åsa Jinder, from Mats gang, has continued as musicians, too.*

*And then Peder, he came from you, and works mostly with violin and nyckelharpa building.*

**Anders:**

That's right; he started as a Suzuki pupil, and he was quite good on violin. But one day his dad said to me: "Could you take over Peder, he has completely grown tired of violin playing". So we played a couple of times, folk music, and his interest started to come back, but then he saw the nyckelharpa and was really turned on, and after that he got his interest for music back, and became a gifted guitar and nyckelharpa player, and found joy in the fiddle as well. I've noticed that about Suzuki pupils; they are often totally worn out at the age of 15, having completely lost the drive to play.

**Ditte:**

*For how long did you work at the music school?*

**Anders:**

Until I retired.

**Ditte:**

*1993, then. But you had some private pupils after that, didn't you?*

**Anders:**

Yes, a few who came home to me.

**Ditte:**

*And you continued with violin/fiddle and nyckelharpa parallelly, and classical and folk music? And the idea that everybody should be able to play some tunes by heart?!*

**Anders:**

Yes, because, as I said, I think it is a pleasant way to make music, not putting a music stand up every time.



It's an easy way to get together and play, and be able to take interest in something else than just the sheet music. You have more time to listen instead.

**Ditte:**

*Yes, and the problem is greatest with the ones that are mediocre in music reading. If you are a good reader you look at the sheet music now and then, not all the time, and it doesn't take all your focus.*

**Anders:**

Exactly.

**Ditte:**

*But most pupils and students are mediocre readers.*

**Anders:**

Yes, and then the focus ends up on the wrong body organ, so to say.

**Ditte:**

*Now I've brought up all the questions I had planned. Do you want to add something?*

**Anders:**

Not that I can think of. Maybe, once again, the way it all started with the nyckelharpa, how parents built them, and their children started to play on them, in spite of the fact that they were big and heavy. I have never had such parent support as from the parents of the nyckelharpa pupils, I have to say. They have always been there and listened, been interested and helpful.

**Ditte:**

*Isn't that because when the nyckelharpa became well-known because of the "folk music wave", it was more accessible from a psychological point of view? The fiddle has always been depicted as so bloody unreachable; you have to start playing it preferably before you were born, and other myths surrounding it, while it has been less myth around*



*nyckelharpa, and more sort of "OK" to try to play it when you are an adult.*

**Anders:**

Yes, and also the fact that if you just press the right button it sounds more or less acceptable.

So many people who had been, for example, interested in folk dance, started to build nyckelharpas. And this "building wave", in spite of it resulting in a large number of bad instruments hanging around in peoples' homes, it still gave people instruments to play on, and gradually their demands on the instruments increased and they got other ones, or learnt to build in a different way.

**Ditte:**

*Shall we turn it off?*

**Anders:**

Let's turn it off!

### Ditte Andersson, Sweden



Photo: Ditte Andersson

Ditte Andersson is a musician with one foot in Swedish folk music and the other in a mix of genres, like Scots traditional music, rock and blues. She is an accomplished nyckelharpa player, fiddler, singer, composer and story teller. Her aim, as an artist and composer, is to create music in the borderland between folk and popular music, in an acoustic, small-sized format. Ditte is also an experienced teacher on a free-lance basis (Master of Education in Music, main subject Swedish Folk Music, corresponding to 240 ECTS credits).

[www.ditteandersson.se](http://www.ditteandersson.se)



Eric Sahlström, photo: Esbjörn Hogmark



## How it All Started with Swedish Folk Music at KMH<sup>1</sup>

### A Personal Retrospect

By Ole Hjorth

**Ole Hjorth**, born 1930 – folk musician, violinist and violin/fiddle teacher. Started working at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm (KMH) at the middle of the 1970's. Responsible for the folk music educations at KMH until 1995.

At the beginning of the 1970's an organizational committee (OMUS) was formed, with the purpose of reforming higher education in music in Sweden. Until 1971 the *Royal Academy of Music* had the main responsibility for higher education in music, but after that the educational institutions became "musikhögskola", i.e. colleges, with responsibility for themselves. The old system was primarily concentrated on western art music. OMUS thought that the higher education in music did not correspond to the musical society of today, and set up committees and expert groups to find out how it should be instead.

These expert groups noticed, among other things, that where important parts of Swedish musical life which ought to be a part of the picture – especially Swedish folk music and afro- and jazz music, which were decided by these groups to be "neglected genres". The OMUS reform aimed at changing and bringing new things without making the running of the schools more expensive; very bad starting point for improvements. I, myself, was elected for an expert group that was, among other things, going to concern itself with what was called "neglected genres".

<sup>1</sup> (KMH = Kungliga Musikhögskolan; Royal College of Music in Stockholm)



Swedish folk music had – via Hjort Anders Olsson (with whom I am not related) – provided my way into music on the whole and was an important part of my identity as a musician. I was, at that time, employed as a non-permanent teacher at KMH, without any connection to folk music. During the 1960's I was employed by the *Royal Opera*, playing in the *Royal Opera-House Orchestra*. Beside that I was teaching a couple of years, in the Local Council Music School (Kommunala musikskolan), through which my interest in teaching and teaching methods was developed. 1969 – 71 I studied at KMH to be a qualified violin teacher, whereupon I decided to leave the Royal Opera and focused on teaching the violin. My folk music also had a very natural position in my teaching.

My commission in the OMUS expert group suited me very well from an ideological point of view. My point of view was that Swedish folk music was treated in a very condescending way by the classical establishment, which had always deranged me. Of course folk music occurred occasionally in council music schools, but it was generally taught by teachers with a background in western classical music. For folk music as a genre that was, of course, not very satisfying.

I regarded the work of the local council music schools as being central for all music. Yet, I saw a problem in the fact that only musicians practicing western classical music could get formal qualifications to teach, which depended on the fact that the classical repertoire, without exception, was the basis for admission to the educations that trained instrumental teachers, as well as examinations of the students after the education. Musicians with another background and without a college education could, at the best, get an employment with a lower salary (at the time a salary class system was used). I saw this as, of course, very unfair.

I haven't kept my official letter to OMUS, but remember well the essential of its content. Its aim was to legalize the traditional teaching and "handing over" of folk music by giving



"spelmän", folk musicians, the possibility to become qualified teachers, with an education that was useful on the labour market. Accordingly, the starting point was not an education for to become a folk musician, but that active folk musicians, through a formal qualification, should be given the possibility to work in a music school on the same conditions as other violin teachers. Furthermore, their particular competence could bring new elements into the ordinary teaching, and, in that way, be a great asset. From what I can see now I was right. These musicians were a great educational resource.

Concerning the question of having an education aiming at musicianship, I didn't have a clear idea about how this should, or could, be done. Therefore I let that wait for the present. It was a question of, in the first place, to get one's foot into the system, and not be too hasty. It was important to move at a slow pace. I therefore suggested that this should happen through an education called *Fiolpedagogisk fortbildning av verksamma spelmän* (Further education in violin/fiddle teaching methods for active folk musicians). I.e. a course aiming at the largest group (of folk musicians), the fiddle players. To qualify for the course the applicant would have to substantiate, through a playing test, one's instrumental, musical and stylistic skills (to show that the applicant was naturally rooted in some Swedish folk music tradition). My official letter should, according to my proposal, be referred to all folk musicians organizations in the country for consideration (In folk music Sweden of that time the only organizations where *Ungdomsringen*<sup>2</sup> and *Sveriges Spelmäns Riksförbund*<sup>3</sup>!). The responses were positive, as far as I can remember. OMUS then commissioned KMH to create such a course for folk music (as well as one for afro/jazz) and KMH, on its part, commissioned me to carry out a pilot course in the autumn of 1976. The school first suggested, precariously, a course lasting for one term. The headmaster immediately changed it, sensibly enough, to one year. The year after, the course already became regular, with entrance exami-

2 Literally "The Youth Circle", an organization for folklore of all kinds, now called *Folkdansringen*, "The Folk Dance Circle".

3 The National Association for Sweden's Folk Musicians



nations. During the spring of 1977 the course was extended to two years, according to requirements from the students, and the same change was done on the classical and afro/jazz side. The corresponding classical course aimed at students who had passed through a musicians education or had equivalent qualifications, and the directions for the course intended for folk musicians was meant to be similar to that. In 1981 the option "I/E<sup>4</sup> Swedish folk music" of the instrumental-/ensemble teacher study programme came into existence.

Concerning a musicians education within the genre Swedish folk music, I didn't have any ideas as to how that would be designed. I was more interested in the educational side, which I saw as the most natural way to go. Another important issue was what the education should lead to. My thought was to give folk musicians a natural way of supporting themselves by teaching their music, and at the same time they would be a significant educational resource. I realized that a certain breadth in genre knowledge was positive for the music school, which influenced the contents of the course. For me the vital point was that it is a matter of teaching music, and that it is important that the teacher knows the music that he or she is teaching.

Therefore, strictly materialistically, my view was – especially with the limited resources with regards to time and money – that the content should be concentrated mostly on what needed to be supplemented, and least on what the students were already best at. With that as a starting point, they had, so to say, already been examined in their own genre when passing the entrance examination. In practice this meant that western classical music was prioritized during the education, regarding their main instrument. This was received positively. I, similarly, had an idea that the students on the classical side also needed to broaden their horizons with an addition of folk music. I never got any response to that. The people on that side had a different way of thinking. There's no money for that, the word was. To me it was a question of prioritizing.

4 I/E, instrumental and ensemble teacher, is the common education to have for teachers in music schools. It extends over four years (240 ECTS credits).



Insufficient resources and a lack of specialized teachers in some subjects meant compromises. The meagre allowances for guest teachers constituted a great problem. Subjects within the main genre of the course, Swedish folk music, were teaching methods and practical experience of teaching adults, and folk dance. Important parts were teaching adults, aiming at folk music, and making good use of the students own repertoire, in the way that they should contribute as much as possible with tunes that we analysed and, in part, used in the practical activities.

The lessons in teaching methods for children were held together with the classical students. The purpose was to create a greater acceptance on the labour market, but it was also good for the students to study together with others.

The practice with adult beginners meant teaching in groups of total beginners. My idea was that it is a good basic experience to have a group of pupils that have never touched a violin/fiddle before. The students did this as team project with me as the tutor. Adult beginners on fiddle/violin was, commonly, a neglected group, which it felt quite natural for us to take care of. The practice with children took place both internally, together with classical students, and externally through classroom observations<sup>5</sup> and participation in my own teaching of whole classes in primary school<sup>6</sup>.

Concerning higher levels of teaching it was a question of both group and private lessons. The folk music subjects were my responsibility, except for dancing, where Henry Sjöberg was the obvious choice.

That the tuition of the students own main instrument (violin/fiddle) was "classical" owed to the fact that the emphasis was on training fiddle/violin teachers with Swedish folk music as their main genre for working at local council music schools. Yet another type of one-sided teachers was not desirable. The fiddle was the most common folk music instrument and the closest possibilities for work were places as fiddle/violin teachers.

5 We went to see quite a number of skilled violin teachers. /Ditte's remark.

6 Ages 7 – 9



The ensemble subject assumed, over the years, a nice form, and the (four year) instrumental/ensemble teacher education was designed to open the educational door for musicians on other instruments (than the fiddle) as well as broaden and strengthen the folk music genre at the Royal College.

We did a number of study trips, to the Shetlands for example, and Hungary and Finland, and participated in a few ESTA<sup>7</sup> conferences. We played concerts, like lunch hour concerts at the Concert Hall in Stockholm, and shows, among others at the Cultural Centre in Stockholm, where people who had never played before were taught how to play the fiddle/violin for half an hour or so. We provided the instruments. Those were experiences that I have continued to develop even after my retirement from the Royal College. They have exerted influence on my view of teaching.

We played students concerts. The one which is the most vivid in my memory as an example of our position at the Royal College, was the time when the audience consisted of three buddies of one of the students, and the college's director of studies. That was the situation back then.

The scarce economy resulted in the idea that the students should participate in the lessons with the classical students, with teachers that had an understanding of the situation. Meaning compromises. When, for example, guest teachers were invited to the teaching methods lessons concerned with teaching children, this was coordinated by the "classical" side.

The resources for the folk music courses' own genre were far to meagre. The curriculum for the lessons in "Music and society"<sup>8</sup> were, as an example, utterly disgracefully useless for the folk music students, and they protested forcefully.

After having stipulated the subjects of the course, the number of lessons were decided on, and that was that. It was extremely difficult to bring about any changes. All changes of the con-

<sup>7</sup> European String Teachers Association

<sup>8</sup> What is commonly called "music history".



tent of the course had to be agreed on by the study board, and that was not a simple process.

The main problem for us working with the folk music educations was not real reluctance as much as an monumental ignorance at influential levels, together with a sort of amiable lack of interest. That is the toughest type of resistance you can have, since it is so difficult to answer to. Nor did our presence at the college arouse any interesting issues for the college as a whole, as I experienced it. Among the folk musicians themselves that happened quite a lot, which was a good thing. Classical music was the all-embracing genre, who knew everything. This was reflected in the fact that the term violin meant classical violin, piano meant classical piano etc. The expression "seriös musik" is still synonymous with western art music. All the way up to the Royal Music Academy.

One year before my retirement a door was opened for Swedish folk music when I/we "got" our own department, with budget and all. I got fantastic help from Sven Ahlbäck to manage that whole year. Retirement came at the right moment. The new possibilities could be taken over by young, knowledgeable and keen people.

When I look back upon these years I get a tremendous feeling of what I feel that I have taken part in. So much enjoyable and inspiring and so much to learn from, but also, as is evident in the above, tough times. What carried me through all the hard work was the incredibly positive power from the students.

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This article, which was printed in the book *1976 – 2006, 30 år med folkmusik på KMH* (1976 – 2006, 30 years with folk music at the Royal College), is translated by Ditte Andersson, and published here with the permission of Ole Hjorth, the author, and Susanne Rosenberg, the head of the department of folk music at the Royal College. All the footnotes are by Ditte Andersson.



Ole Hjorth and Sven Ahlbäck, Tobo, January 2010, photo: Karsten Evers



## Das Institut für Volksmusik an der Königlichen Musikhochschule in Stockholm \*

Wie wurde es zu dem, was es heute ist?

Ein persönlicher Rückblick  
auf 30 Jahre Volksmusikausbildung an der KMH

von Sven Ahlbäck

*Übersetzung aus dem Schwedischen: Angelika Maier.<sup>1</sup>*

Der folgende Artikel erschien in einem Buch, das die Königliche Musikhochschule in Stockholm (KMH) 2009 zum 30-jährigen Jubiläum ihrer Volksmusikausbildung (1976 – 2006) herausgab.

CADENCE dankt Professor Sven Ahlbäck für die freundliche Genehmigung, seinen Beitrag hier zu veröffentlichen!

Heute vor zehn Jahren veranstalteten wir zum ersten Mal das Låt!-Festival hier an der Königlichen Musikhochschule (KMH). Damals wie heute hatten wir Studenten und Lehrer der nordischen Volksmusikausbildungen auf Hochschulebene eingeladen. Diese Initiative unseres damals ziemlich neu aufgebauten Volksmusikinstituts hier in Stockholm war sozusagen der Samen für Norrtrad, ein Netzwerk für akademische Ausbildungen innerhalb der Volksmusik. Norrtrad ist inzwischen ein etabliertes Netzwerk innerhalb von Nordplus<sup>2</sup> mit einem gemeinsamen jährlichen Festival.

\* 1 The original swedish version can be found on [www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu](http://www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu)

2 Nordplus = Programm für lebenslanges Lernen des Nordischen Rates  
(Anmerkung der Übersetzerin)



Dieses zehnjährige Jubiläum steht für eine unglaublich expansive Periode sowohl für die Volksmusikausbildung hier an der Königlichen Musikhochschule Stockholm als auch überhaupt in ganz Nordeuropa. Im Laufe der Zeit sind neue Ausbildungen in Dänemark, Finnland, Norwegen, Großbritannien, Irland und Estland hinzugekommen, die teilweise durch unseren nordischen Austausch inspiriert wurden. Aber auch schon bestehende Ausbildungsgänge haben sich weiterentwickelt. Außerhalb der skandinavischen Länder gibt es keine Ausbildungen mit vergleichbarer Ausrichtung, Breite und Qualität.

Die Entwicklung hier im Institut für Volksmusik der KMH in diesen zehn Jahre ist in vieler Hinsicht bemerkenswert. Die Anzahl der Studenten nahm zu, aber noch stärker wuchs die Zahl der Bewerber für die Ausbildung. Darüber hinaus haben wir heute ganz andere Möglichkeiten, was Lehrer, Räume, Finanzen, Ausrüstung usw. angeht, und nicht zuletzt viel mehr Erfahrung. Für mich persönlich, der ich meine Stelle als Dozent und Leiter des neugegründeten Volksmusikinstituts vor zehn Jahren antrat, war das eine faszinierende Reise.

Neben dem 10-jährigen Låt!-Jubiläum feiern wir 2006 auch 30 Jahre Volksmusikausbildung an der Königlichen Musikhochschule Stockholm, und das regt wirklich zu einem Rückblick an. Wenn man die mehr als 200-jährige Geschichte dieser Schule betrachtet, hat hier in den 30 Jahren, seit es die Volksmusikausbildung gibt, wirklich eine große Veränderung stattgefunden. Ich beendete meinen Auftrag als Leiter des Instituts letzten Sommer und würde gerne die Gelegenheit nutzen, um hier einige persönliche Aspekte dieser Entwicklung niederzuschreiben. Man kann diese Entwicklung aus vielen unterschiedlichen Blickwinkeln betrachten – als einen spannenden Demokratisierungsprozess innerhalb des Musiklebens – als eine institutionelle Konkretisierung der Zurück-zur-Natur-Bewegung der 1970er Jahre, der so genannten Grünen Welle (gröna våg) – als Spiegel der Institutionalisierung des freien Musikerlebens – als einen Teil der Entwicklung der Hochschule und der Akademisierung des praktischen Berufslebens usw.



Aber es zeigt auch eine spannende musikalische und musikpädagogische Entwicklung, die „allen Widrigkeiten zum Trotz“ stattfand und bereits tiefe Spuren im heutigen Musikleben hinterlassen hat. Ich meine, dass es Anlass gibt, darüber zu staunen, und über das, was geschah, und was heute von vielen von uns Beteiligten als selbstverständlich empfunden wird, nachzudenken.

### Volksmusik an der Hochschule – wozu denn das?

Selbst den Gedanken an eine Volksmusikausbildung an der Musikhochschule kann man als absurd ansehen, weil sich Volksmusik ja gerade dadurch auszeichnet, dass sie außerhalb der Institutionen, Akademien, außerhalb formalisierter Ausbildungen heranwächst. Ein wichtiger Auftrag für die Musikalische Akademie und spätere Musikhochschule war, musikalische Bildung zu verbreiten und gegen musikalische Unbildung zu kämpfen, gegen etwas, was in der Musikgeschichte oft als volkstümliches Musizieren bezeichnet wurde. Volksmusik wurde oft mit Amateurmusik gleichgesetzt. Dass man diese gerade in der Hochburg der professionellen Musik finden soll, ist immer noch alles andere als selbstverständlich, weder an der Musikhochschule selbst noch außerhalb.

Ich war selbst einer von denen, die vor 30 Jahren angelockt wurden, sich für den neu eingerichteten Studiengang für Volksmusiker zu bewerben. Im Herbst 1979 begann die Ausbildung. Wie viele meiner Generation hatte ich Ende der 1960er Jahre damit begonnen Volksmusik zu spielen, als die so genannte Zurück-zur-Natur-Bewegung ihren Anfang nahm, und gleichzeitig mit ihr ein neu erwachtes Interesse an Volksmusik. Damals war Volksmusik fast identisch mit schwedischer Spielmannsmusik auf der Geige. Dass ich mit dem Spielen anfang, hatte weniger mit der Zurück-zur-Natur-Bewegung zu tun, als vielmehr mit dem Interesse an Volksmusik in meiner Familie – mein Vater spielte Musik – und damit, dass ich die Möglichkeit bekam, von Anton Jernberg, einem wirklichen Großmeister mit einer reichen und faszinierenden Tradition, zu lernen und mit ihm zu spielen.



In den 1970er Jahren wurde die Volksmusik zum Symbol für alternatives, volksnahe und demokratisches Musizieren, das gut zum damaligen Zeitgeist passte und eine Art klingende Protestbewegung gegen amerikanische, kommerzielle Kulturreinflüsse war. Volksmusik war „in“. Als sie sich mit Popbands zusammentat, z.B. im Treffen zwischen Contact und Skäggmanslag, in Kebnekajses bunter Stil Mischung, oder als Volksmusiker wie zum Beispiel Pers Hans, Björn Ståbi und Ole Hjort bekannte Begleitmusiker für damals populäre Sänger wurden, befeuerte das natürlich meine und anderer junger Volksmusiker Liebe zu dieser Musik. Einige dieser Volksmusiker fingen an, als Profis zu arbeiten, und es entstand eine Nachfrage nach professionellen Volksmusikern. Ich selbst spielte mit dem Sänger Bengt Sändh. Als Fünfzehnjähriger wurde ich zusammen mit anderen sehr erfahrenen Studiomusikern für eine seiner Plattenaufnahmen engagiert. Welche Inspiration! Der Gedanke, die Musik zum Beruf zu machen, kam damals bei mehreren meiner Generation auf.

Gleichzeitig war es die goldene Zeit der Amateurmusiker.

Volksmusik war dem damaligen Zeitgeist nach umso „echter“, je weniger die ausführenden Musiker geschult waren. Der „beste“ Volksmusiker war der schweigende, intuitive, ein Naturkind oder Proletarier, ein Hinterwäldler mit möglichst uralter Tradition.

Das Bemühen um Volksnähe trieb manchmal seltsame Blüten. Man stimmte z. B. sein Instrument absichtlich ein bisschen schräg. Es war fast ein Muss, dass man bei seinen Auftritten Schnaps trank und dass man sich in phantasievolle volkstümliche Klamotten warf, die denen der heutigen Mittelalterszene in nichts nachstanden. Diese eingebildete Volksnähe war weit entfernt von dem Ideal, mit dem ich in Kontakt mit Anton Jernberg und dem traditionellen Volksmusikmilieu in Uppland aufwuchs, ein Milieu, das man fast als elitär bezeichnen könnte. Es gab dort wenig Anerkennung für den, der sein Instrument oder den traditionellen Spielstil nicht beherrschte. Aber



selbst in dieser Szene war der Amateurstatus die Norm. Als sich zum Beispiel Anton seinen Lebensunterhalt zeitweise mit seiner Musik verdiente, achtete er darauf, noch einen anderen Beruf zu haben. Die Volksmusik als Beruf war in den Köpfen der Leute mit Sauferei, Schlampigkeit und Nachlässigkeit verbunden. In seiner Heimat wurde der großartige Musiker Viksta Lasse von vielen vor allem als ein schlechter, nachlässiger Bauer wahrgenommen und seine Bedeutung als Musiker nicht besonders anerkannt. Sich beruflich mit Volksmusik zu beschäftigen war also in jener Zeit keineswegs selbstverständlich, das Wort „folkmusiker“ war gerade erst erfunden worden und noch nicht gängig.

Als bekannt wurde, dass an der Musikhochschule in Stockholm eine Ausbildung für Volksmusiker eingerichtet wurde, bekam das eine große Bedeutung für Volksmusiker meiner Generation. Plötzlich war es nicht mehr nur eine mögliche freiberufliche Beschäftigung als Musiker am Rande des Musiklebens, die einen erwartete, sondern hier wurde eine Berufsausbildung zum Geigenlehrer mit Ausrichtung Volksmusik angeboten. Nicht dass mir klar war, was es bedeutete als Geigenlehrer zu arbeiten, aber die Tatsache, dass es eine Ausbildung gab, die sich an mich als Volksmusiker richtete, bewirkte, dass es mir plötzlich realistischer erschien, mir die Volksmusik als Beruf vorzustellen.

Wie es dazu kam, dass dieser Ausbildungsgang zustande kam, wird an anderer Stelle dieser Jubiläumsschrift erzählt. Deshalb will ich hier nicht näher darauf eingehen. Aber dass der Studiengang von einem so angesehenen Volksmusiker wie Ole Hjort geleitet wurde und dass so bekannte Volksmusiker wie Kalle Almlöf, Kungs Levi, Bo Isaksson und Jonny Soling zum ersten Studentenjahrgang gehörten, bürgte für Qualität. Man muss darauf hinweisen, dass es Ole Hjorts Verdienst war, dass die Ausbildung überhaupt zustande kam. Das war möglich durch seine Kompetenz sowohl als klassischer Geiger und Geigenlehrer mit Anstellung an der Musikhochschule als auch als traditionsverbundener Volksmusiker, der auch im damaligen



Musikleben anerkannt war. Außerdem trug das radikale Kulturklima der damaligen Zeit dazu bei, dass so eine Ausbildung akzeptiert wurde. Das zeigte sich auch in der OMUS-Reform der höheren Musikausbildung.

So bewarb ich mich also als Neunzehnjähriger für diese Ausbildung und war glücklich, dass ich angenommen wurde. Ich weiß nicht mehr genau, wie viele sich beworben hatten, aber ich habe das Gefühl, dass wir so etwa zehn bis fünfzehn waren.

### Eine Ausbildung praktizierender Volksmusiker

Die Ausbildung, in die ich kam, unterschied sich von der heutigen auf vielerlei Weise. Zuerst einmal war es keine Ausbildung in Volksmusik. Es ging nicht darum, Volksmusik an der Königlichen Musikhochschule zu unterrichten. Es wurde erwartet, dass wir uns die schon vorher in unseren Volksmusikkreisen zu Hause angeeignet hatten. Das entsprach auch ziemlich genau meiner eigenen Auffassung, und ich glaube, dass auch die meisten meiner Mitstudenten so dachten. Ich war überzeugt, dass ich „die Volksmusik beherrschte“, nachdem ich unter anderem über zehn Jahre mit Anton Jernberg gespielt hatte und durch ihn ein Teil der echten Spielmannstradition geworden war, und nachdem ich schon mehrere Jahre lang öffentliche Auftritte hatte und in Radio, Fernsehen und auch im Ausland aufgetreten war, vor drei Jahren den Titel „Riksspelman“ erworben hatte usw. In diesem Alter ist ja das Selbstvertrauen oft auf einem Höhepunkt! Dagegen hatte ich nur sehr vage Vorstellungen davon, was ich auf der Musikhochschule lernen sollte, und was es überhaupt bedeutete, eine formelle Musikausbildung zu machen.

Obwohl vorausgesetzt wurde, dass man nicht auf der Musikhochschule war, um sich mit Volksmusik zu befassen, herrschte in Volksmusikerkreisen und in der Volksmusikbewegung ein großes Misstrauen gegen die Ausbildung. Ich kann mich daran erinnern, dass ein alter Musiker in meiner Heimat mich warnte, das Vibrato zu erlernen, wenn ich an die Musikhochschule



le käme. Wenn man einmal damit begänne, käme man nicht mehr davon weg!

Der Grundgedanke bei der neuen Ausbildung war, dass wir unser musikalisches und pädagogisches Handwerkszeug erweitern sollten, dass wir das lernen sollten, was uns noch fehlte, damit wir dann von einer der damals wichtiger und zahlreicher werdenden kommunalen Musikschulen als Geigenlehrer angestellt werden könnten. Dass bedeutete, dass wir hauptsächlich klassische Musik und klassische Geigenmethodik während unserer Ausbildung studierten, die auch deshalb nur zweijährig war. Eine Ausnahme waren der Volkstanzkurs mit Henry Sjöberg und die geigenmethodischen Seminare mit Ole Hjort, in denen wir hin und wieder in unseren Volksmelodien stöbern durften, um Beispiele für ein Repertoire zu finden, das sich für Anfänger eignet.

Für einen forschen 19jährigen vom Lande war es natürlich ein gewaltiger Schock, plötzlich auf fast allen Gebieten ein völliger Anfänger zu sein. Eine völlige andere Art und Weise Geige zu spielen, zu intonieren, sich Musik vorzustellen, einfach alles war anders! Zu verstehen, was bewusstes Üben bedeutet, war schon einmal etwas ganz Neues. Ich hatte mich bis dahin sozusagen spielenderweise voran gearbeitet und weiterentwickelt. Das war toll, es gab große Herausforderungen, aber manchmal war es auch ziemlich mühsam.

Wir waren im ganzen vier Volksmusiker in einer Schule mit mehreren hundert Studenten. Da bekam man schnell das Gefühl, dass man eigentlich gar nicht existierte. Wenn wir manchmal zum Spaß spielten, so dass man es in der Cafeteria hörte, konnte es passieren, dass wir von anderen Studenten, die während ihrer Pausen ihre Ruhe haben wollten, angeranzelt wurden. Klassische Musik war die Norm und sie war viel andersartiger als ich es mir je vorgestellt hatte. Unser Unterricht in Musikgeschichte widmete sich ganz und gar der abendländischen Kunstmusik, ebenso wie die Theorie und aller Instrumental- und Methodikunterricht außer Oles Lektionen.



Aber damals wie heute war die Musikhochschule ein Treffpunkt für Musiker im gleichen Alter und mit gleichen Interessen. Man suchte mehr oder weniger bewusst Anschluss an die gleichen speziellen Typen, wie zum Beispiel an die sich ebenfalls in der Minderzahl befindenden Jazzmusiker, für die sich die Hochschule genau zur gleichen Zeit wie für uns geöffnet hatte. Einige von ihnen waren neugierig auf uns Volksmusiker und das eröffnete Möglichkeiten für neue Formen des Zusammenspiels. Ich begann unter anderem mit dem Pianisten Arne Forsén zu spielen, und mit der Zeit bildeten wir zusammen mit der Sängerin Susanne Rosenberg und dem Bassisten Ulf Åkerhielm eine Volksmusikgruppe namens Kvickrot. Genau in dieser Zeit, um 1980, geschah das an vielen Orten in Schweden. Oft waren gerade die akademischen Musikausbildungen ein Ort für solche Treffen. Ein anderes Beispiel für eine solche Gruppe, die heute noch existiert und in entsprechenden Kreisen in Göteborg hochkam, ist Groupa.

### Unterwegs zu einer Ausbildung in Volksmusik

Allmählich begannen wir Studenten, die anfangs der 1980er Jahre auf die Musikhochschule gingen, eine Reflexion über unsere eigene Musik zu fordern. Um überhaupt einen Zusammenhang für das, was wir in der Ausbildung spielten, zu bekommen, fingen wir an, uns in unserer Freizeit zu treffen und zusammen zu spielen. Wir reagierten auch darauf, dass in vielen gemeinsamen Seminaren innerhalb der Musikhochschule die Volksmusik nicht vorkam. (Man muss sagen, dass wir dabei von unserem Lehrer und Mentor Ole Hjort Rückendeckung erhielten.)

Das Fass zum Überlaufen brachte schließlich ein Seminar in Musikgeschichte oder Musik und Gesellschaft. Was wir daraufhin diskutierten, war auch Thema der OMUS-Reform. Dieses Seminar beschäftigte sich damals zwei ganze Studienjahre hindurch mit der Entwicklung der abendländischen Kunstmu-



sik zwischen ca. 1900 und 1920 mit dem Schwerpunkt auf der Entwicklung der so genannten Zwölftonmusik. An und für sich ein interessantes Thema, aber zum einen Teil fühlten wir uns fast betrogen um das, was wir eigentlich erwarteten, nämlich dass dieses Seminar uns einen Überblick über die Musikgeschichte vermitteln würde. Zum anderen Teil fühlten wir uns total an den Rand gedrängt, weil „unsere“ Musik vollkommen ignoriert wurde. Wenn die Volksmusik doch einmal auftauchte, so war dies jedenfalls nicht der Rede wert.

Das war der Auslöser für einen Prozess, in dem wir anfangen, den Inhalt vieler Seminare in Frage zu stellen, und Kurse forderten, die einen Bezug zu der Musik hatten, mit der wir uns beschäftigten. Wir wollten Seminare, die unsere Musik und unser Musizieren unter einem pädagogischen, reflektierenden Gesichtspunkt betrachteten, um das, was wir lernten, in eine Verbindung mit unserer eigenen Musik und unserem Spielen bringen zu können.

Als sich durch Oles Arbeit eine Möglichkeit entwickelte, eine Instrumental- und Ensemblelehrausbildung mit Volksmusikausrichtung neu aufzubauen, nahm Ole uns Studenten zu Hilfe, um gemeinsam für eine Vertiefungsphase des Studiums einen Ausbildungsplan mit einem größeren Anteil an Themen, die für die Volksmusik wichtig sind, zu entwerfen.

In der Folgezeit wurde ein neuer Ansatz in der universitären Volksmusikausbildung formuliert. Die Ausrichtung der Seminare sollte von den Erfahrungen und dem musikalischen Profil der Studenten ausgehen. Die Herangehensweise sollte eine volksmusikalische sein.

Wir gingen von der Frage aus, welche Bedürfnisse man als zukünftiger Lehrer in einer volksmusikalischen Umgebung hat und formulierten die Studieninhalte unter diesem Gesichtspunkt um. Wir dachten darüber nach, was aus Volksmusikern Fächern wie zum Beispiel Satzlehre, musikalischem Handwerk, Formenlehre entsprechen konnte.



Aus Satzlehre wurde Traditionskunde und Volksmusiktheorie, als Vertiefung innerhalb des Fachs Musik und Gesellschaft schlugen wir Volksmusik- und Volkstanzgeschichte vor. Außerdem schlugen wir vor, dass man in seinem Hauptfach auch bei Musikern außerhalb der Musikhochschule studieren können solle und dass man als praktische Übungen Volksmusikkonzerte veranstalten solle.

Auf diese Weise wurde eine Ausbildung entworfen, die als Zielgruppe die jüngeren Volksmusiker hatte, die ja vor allem diejenigen waren, die die damals kürzere Lehrerausbildung anstrebten; eine Ausbildung, die erlaubte, dass man sich während seines Studiums als Volksmusiker profilieren konnte, entsprechend dem, was auch die klassisch ausgerichtete Instrumentallehrerausbildung vorsieht. Das bedeutete auch, dass man die Ausbildung über die Geige hinaus für andere Instrumente öffnete. Jetzt konnte man auch Volksmusik studieren, wenn man Sänger/in oder Nyckelharpaspieler/in war.

So konzipiert wurde es gewissermaßen eine Ausbildung in Volksmusik, nicht nur eine Ausbildung für Volksmusiker, was etwas völlig Neues in Schweden war. Das grundlegende Konzept war immer noch, dass man sich die Volksmusik am besten in der lokalen Tradition „draußen im Land“ aneignete. Es sah vor, dass die Studenten während eines Teils ihres Studiums von einem Volksmusiker außerhalb der Hochschule unterrichtet werden.

Die Ausbildungsmöglichkeiten an der KMH veränderten sich ein wenig im Laufe der Zeit. Es wurde möglich, ein individuell zugeschnittenes Studium zum Musiker zu absolvieren, eine Möglichkeit, die vor allem von Jazzmusikern wahrgenommen wurde. Damit öffnete sich auch für uns andere die Tür zu einem solchen Studium einen Spalt breit. Als erste Volksmusikerin nutzte diese Chance die Sängerin Marie Selander, die sich neben der Volksmusik der frei improvisierten Musik widmete. Ich selbst hatte nach der Musiklehrerausbildung Lust bekommen, mich auf meinem Instrument weiterzuentwickeln und kam als erster Instrumentalist 1982 in diese individuelle



Ausbildung. Hier handelte es sich darum, das Angebot an der Musikhochschule zu nützen, und in meinem Fall waren das vor allem Seminare in Richtung Jazz und Klassik. Ich studierte klassische Geige bei Ole Hjort und gleichzeitig durfte ich meine Volksmusikkennntnisse mit meinem alten Lehrer Anton Jernberg vertiefen. Dadurch wurde dieser Teilzeitdozent an der Musikhochschule, worauf er mächtig stolz war.

Das individuell zugeschnittene Studium zum Musiker war in vieler Hinsicht ganz phantastisch – ein riesiges Büfett der Möglichkeiten! Damals gab es, was Unterrichtsmittel betrifft, noch nicht die ökonomischen Einschränkungen, wie wir sie heute haben. Es war jedoch eine sehr anspruchsvolle und anstrengende Ausbildung, und es war etwas, für das ich ganz und gar selbstverantwortlich war, denn es gab eigentlich niemanden, der sich darum kümmerte, dass etwas Vernünftiges aus meinem Studium wurde, keinen, der danach fragte, ob ich geübt hatte oder nicht. Außerdem war ich fast überall ein fremder Vogel, was gleichzeitig frustrierend und anregend war. Ich befand mich ständig auf unbekanntem Terrain und in allen Seminaren (außer denen mit Anton) wurden Kenntnisse in anderen Musikrichtungen als meiner eigenen vorausgesetzt. Ich studierte Jazzharmonie, arabische Kunstmusik, traditionellen Kontrapunkt, freitonale Gehörbildung, moderne Komposition, klassische Violine usw. Gerade was das Geigenspiel angeht, war es eine unglaublich lehrreiche und interessante Reise. Mein Ziel war von Anfang an, Geigentechnik von Ole Hjort zu lernen. Ich war nicht besonders daran interessiert, klassische Musik spielen zu lernen, wollte aber meine Technik so weit wie möglich entwickeln.

Schon nach wenigen Monaten Studium bei Ole war dieser kurz davor, mich hochkant aus dem Unterricht werfen, da ich mich hartnäckig weigerte, mir das Vibrato anzueignen. Ich hatte eine Heidenangst, dass das Vibrato meine Volksmusik ruinieren würde. Er trieb mich argumentativ in die Enge und fragte, was ich täte, wenn jemand daherkäme und sagte, er wolle Volksmusik lernen, sich aber weigern würde, einen Triller zu spielen. Das brachte mich zum Nachdenken. Mir ging auf, dass



fast jede Instrumentaltechnik eng mit einem musikalischen Ausdruck verbunden ist. Es geht viel leichter, Bogentechniken wie Sautillé, Spiccato und Staccato zu erlernen, wenn man eine Vorstellung davon hat, wie etwas klingen soll, wenn man mit der Musik etwas ausdrücken will und wenn die Technik dann Mittel zum musikalischen Ausdruck ist. Andernfalls bleibt sie ein kompliziertes Bewegungsmuster ohne musikalischen Zweck, eine Art unmusikalische Gymnastik.

Sie wird auch nicht richtig klar oder anwendbar, ungefähr wie bei einem Turner oder Wasserspringer, der kein Gefühl für den Ausdruck in der Bewegung hat, kein Gefühl für das Ganze. Oder wie wenn jemand versucht, sich das Gehen beizubringen, indem er einzelne Schritte aneinanderreicht, eckig und unsicher. Genauso wie man oft einen geübten Turner schon an einem einzigen Sprung erkennen kann oder einen Hipp-Hopp-Tänzer nur durch eine einzige Geste oder Körperhaltung, so kann man oft den musikalischen Stil oder Ausdruck schon daran erkennen, wie ein einziger Ton gebildet wird.

Es war faszinierend in die verschiedenen Ausdrucksweisen der klassischen Musik einzutauchen, und es brachte mich persönlich weiter, dass ich gezwungen war, mich beispielsweise in einen gefühlvoll romantischen Ausdruck einzufühlen, was mir immer sehr schwer fiel. Aber es bewirkte auch, dass das Bedürfnis, sich den eigenen Stil bewusst zu machen, deutlicher wurde. Die Terminologie der Kunstmusik war nicht besonders geeignet, den speziellen Spielstil, den ich von Anton gelernt hatte, zu beschreiben. Eine dem Spielstil eigene Terminologie widerspiegelt am direktesten, was genau die Qualitäten dieses Stils sind. Deshalb begannen Ole und ich das Projekt, eine Beschreibung der Spielweisen der Volksmusiker zu finden. Sie sollte stilübergreifend sein und das Handwerkszeug dazu liefern, genau das zu beschreiben, was in unserer Musik wichtig ist. Es wurde ein spannendes Unternehmen, das mich teilweise in die Forschung führte und das so etwas wie ein Ausgangspunkt der heutigen Entwicklung an der Musikhochschule Stockholm wurde.



## Eine neue Volksmusik in Schweden – die Folkmusiker kommen

Anfang der 1980er Jahre waren eine Zeit, in der die Volksmusikbewegung von einer Modeerscheinung und einem künstlerischen Ausdruck einer politischen Bewegung im Rousseau'schen Sinne zu etwas Eigenem wurde. Die Volksmusikwelle und ebenso ihre grüne Schwester, die Zurück-zur-Natur-Bewegung, ebften ab, und die davon getragen wurden, begannen nach etwas Neuem zu suchen. Jetzt waren wir, die wir in der Volksmusik verwurzelt waren, diejenigen, die die Entwicklung voranbrachten.

Als ich 1979 nach Stockholm kam, war die Studienkreis-Aktivität auf dem Höhepunkt. Es gab ein unersättlich erscheinendes Bedürfnis nach Studienkreisen zum Spielen traditioneller Melodien auf der Geige und zeitweise leiteten ich und viele andere mehrere solcher Kreise pro Woche. Landauf landab baute man Nyckelharpas in den Werkräumen von Schulen. Außerdem gab es Volksmusikorchester und Volkstanzkreise, in denen man sich weiterbilden konnte. Das war natürlich ein Arbeitsmarkt für Volksmusiker mit pädagogischer Ausbildung. Bald wurden auch an Akademien für Erwachsenenbildung (Folkhögskola) Seminare für Volksmusik eingerichtet. Es waren die ersten Absolventen der Volksmusiklehrer-Ausbildung am KMH, Kalle Almlöf und Jonny Soling, die den ersten derartigen Kurs in Mälung aufzogen. Allmählich folgten andere diesem Beispiel.

Nach ungarischem Vorbild hatte man auch Ende der 1970er Jahre damit begonnen, überall im Land so genannte Tanzhäuser zu organisieren. Durch die Volksmusikvereine, die diese betrieben, begannen sich die Tanzhäuser Anfang der 1980er Jahre zu Podien zu entwickeln, in denen man sowohl Konzerte gab als auch zum Tanz aufspielte, oft beides an einem Abend. Dadurch wurden wir zu so etwas wie dem Gegenstück im Volksmusikbereich zu den Jazzclubs und den Kammermusikvereinen – lokale Konzertveranstalter, hinter denen gemeinnützige Vereine stehen.



In diesen Volksmusikclubs traten oft sowohl kleinere Gruppen von Volksmusikern auf als auch der neue Typ Folkmusikgruppe wie z.B. Filarfolket, Groupa, Burträskara, Gunnfjauns kapell, meine Gruppe Kvickrot und viele andere, die sich in der Nachfolge von Pioniergruppen wie zum Beispiel Folk & Rackare und Norrlåtar um 1980 gebildet hatten. Viele der Mitglieder in diesen Gruppen hatten die Musikhochschule besucht. Neu im Vergleich zu früher war, dass oft Volksmusiker oder Volkssänger die führenden Köpfe dieser Gruppen waren. Diese Gruppen unterschieden sich von traditionellen Volksmusikgruppen dadurch, dass einige der Mitglieder auch Instrumente spielten, die man nicht zu den traditionellen Volksmusikinstrumenten zählt. Plötzlich war eine neue Gattung geboren: die Folkmusiker. Das war nicht ganz unumstritten in traditionellen schwedischen Volksmusikkreisen. Bei einem Jahrestreffen des schwedischen Volksmusikerverbandes drückte mich ein älteres Vorstandsmitglied buchstäblich an die Wand und fuhr mich an: „Professionelle Volksmusiker – nur über meine Leiche!“

Trotz der Debatte über die Professionalisierung der Volksmusikbewegung kam es nicht zu einer vollständigen Zweiteilung der Volksmusikszene. Stattdessen fanden wir Gemeinsamkeiten. Es war ja auch schwer, Folkmusikern, wie zum Beispiel Mats Edén, Ellika Frisell, Tomas Andersson oder mir selbst, vorzuwerfen, sie seien nicht in der Volksmusik verwurzelt.

Diese neue Volksmusikbewegung hatte keine natürliche Heimat in den traditionellen Volksmusikverbänden. Deshalb gründeten wir eine gemeinsame Organisation für Volksmusik und -tanz, RFoD. Es wurde der Beginn einer musikpolitischen Arbeit, die unter anderem große Bedeutung für der Entwicklung unserer Ausbildungen bekam. Eine treibende Kraft dabei war, damals wie heute, Lars Farago.

Gleich zu Anfang begannen wir die neue Volksmusik in Schweden zu dokumentieren, was 1984 zu dem Buch „Folkmusiken lever“ (Die Volksmusik lebt) führte. Schon die Überschriften der Kapitel geben ein Bild vom dem, worüber wir sprechen wollten.



Alle die wir die RFoD bildeten, sowohl die Musik- und Tanzvereine, als auch die Musiklehrer und die Musiker, die auf deren Veranstaltungen spielten, mussten mit sehr wenig Geld auskommen. Da war es naheliegend, dass man fragte, wie zum Beispiel die Musikerkollegen aus Klassik und Jazz finanziell zu recht kommen. Und siehe da, dort gab es Zuschüsse. Der Staat war ein großer Mäzen. Aber die Situation stellte sich als unerhört ungerecht heraus. Ich nahm mir die Zeit, das staatliche Kultur- und Ausbildungsbudget von 1984 durchzuschauen, und versuchte, zu ermitteln, wie hoch die staatlichen Subventionen für klassische Musiker auf der einen und für Volks- und Folkmusiker auf der anderen Seite waren. Es war eine vielleicht unvollständige und parteiische Zusammenfassung, die aber trotzdem die Situation ziemlich gut widerspiegelt.<sup>3</sup>

Wir begannen uns zu fragen, ob das so sein müsse. War der Staat dafür verantwortlich unsere Kulturform zu unterstützen? Das vom Parlament 1974 angenommene kulturpolitische Ziel schien fast dafür formuliert worden zu sein, genau unsere Kulturform zu unterstützen. Da stand unter anderem, dass die Kulturpolitik sicherstellen soll, dass die Kulturgüter der Vergangenheit am Leben erhalten werden, dass sie künstlerische und kultureller Erneuerung ermöglichen soll. Die Kulturpolitik soll den negativen Auswirkungen des Kommerzialisismus entgegenwirken, die Erfahrungen und Bedürfnisse von benachteiligten Gruppen berücksichtigen und Möglichkeiten zu eigenem schöpferischen Tun geben.. usw.

So begannen wir einen kulturpolitischen Ausgangspunkt für unsere Stilrichtung zu formulieren, was gleichzeitig bedeutete, zu definieren, was es war, womit wir uns beschäftigten. Damit ließen wir den eher beschreibenden Volksmusikbegriff der 1970er Jahre hinter uns und definierten uns eher als eine Musikrichtung unter anderen im Schweden der 1980er Jahre,

<sup>3</sup> 1984: 2 Millionen Kronen für Volksmusik / 431 Millionen Kronen für Klassische Musik, 2005: 8 Millionen Kronen für Volksmusik / 770 Millionen Kronen für Klassische Musik. *Die Zahlen sind im Original auf Seite 42 abgedruckt.*



als eine Musik- und Tanzrichtung mit ihren eigenen Qualitäten, wie zum Beispiel die lokale und historische Verwurzelung, einer engen Verbindung von Musik und Tanz, als eine Musik mit anderen künstlerischen Ausdrucksmöglichkeiten, Qualitäten und Formen als in anderen Stilrichtungen – nicht notwendigerweise besser oder schlechter, sondern anders.

Wir meinten, dass der Staat die Verantwortung hat, die Entwicklung unserer Stilrichtung zu unterstützen – Wir begannen also unseren Teil des Kuchens zu fordern.

Mit Artikeln, Diskussionsveranstaltungen und durch Gespräche mit Politikern versuchten wir, uns Gehör zu verschaffen. Aber diese nach außen gerichteten Aktivität regte auch die Arbeit innerhalb der neuen Folkmusikbewegung an – zu einer Bestandsaufnahme unserer Möglichkeiten und Visionen. Es wurde eine sehr kreative und umfassende Arbeit, die in einem Zukunftsseminar gipfelte, das 1985 vom RFoD in der Akademie Skinskatteberg veranstaltet wurde. Daran nahmen sehr viele aktive Folkmusiker, Tänzer und Folkmusikarrangeure und einige wenige Forscher und Politiker teil. Es wurde ein spannender Erfahrungsaustausch und eine Ideenwerkstatt. Wir fragten uns, was wir können, was wir wollen, was wir brauchen und wie wir weiter vorgehen sollten.

Unsere Vision lässt sich vielleicht so zusammenfassen: wir wollten, dass die Volksmusik ein selbstverständlicher und lebender Teil des schwedischen Musiklebens sein sollte, und zwar in vielen unterschiedlichen Formen, als Profi- und als Laienmusik, als Kunstform und als Betätigung von jedermann, in traditioneller und neuer Form, wie an vielen anderen Orten auf der Welt in einer Symbiose sowohl mit Pop – als auch mit Kunstmusik. Wir wollten, dass unsere Kunstform die Anerkennung bekommen sollte, die sie verdiente, sowohl was die Aufmerksamkeit als auch was das Geld angeht, und wir wollten, dass die Allgemeinheit erfährt, dass es diese Volksmusik gibt mit all der künstlerischen Kraft, die von ihr ausgeht.



Was wurde aus unseren Visionen? Nicht zuletzt wurde daraus fesselnde neue Musik. Eine ungeheuer große Menge an verschiedenen Musikgruppen und neuen Stilen innerhalb der Volksmusik entstanden innerhalb der 10 bis 15 Jahre nach diesem Zukunftsseminar.

Aber es entstanden auch neue Strukturen, die diese kreative Entwicklung beeinflussten. Schon ein Jahr nach dem Seminar fand zum ersten Mal das Falun Folkmusik Festival (FFF) statt (sicher angeregt durch das Folkmusikfestival in Kaustinen), ein Festival, bei dem sich traditionelle Volksmusiker und neue Folkmusikgruppen, Folkmusiklehrer, -arrangeure, schwedische Musik und solche der Einwanderer trafen und mischten. Das FFF wurde in jener Zeit zu einer ungeheuer wichtigen Arena für die künstlerische Entwicklung innerhalb der Volksmusik, aber auch eine Arena für Musikströmungen, die aus dem Zusammentreffen unterschiedlicher Traditionen entstanden und die später Weltmusik genannt wurden.

Es entwickelten sich auch neue Ausbildungen. Ein paar Jahre nach dem Zukunftsseminar scharte Ale Möller einige Musiker, die sich für neue Formen des Zusammenspiels in der Volksmusik interessierten, zu einem Kurs in der Akademie Skinnskatteberg um sich. Dieser Kurs wurde zur Experimentierwerkstatt für Gruppenspiel auf der Basis der schwedischen Volksmusik. Das wiederum übte einen großen Einfluss auf das Volkserzähltheater aus, der zum ersten Mal in einem gigantischen Experiment, der Inszenierung des Epos' „Den stora vreden“ unter der Regie von Peter Oskarsson 1988 – 1990 zum Tragen kam. Darin entwickelte die Gruppe Hedningarna eine völlig neue Musik aus den Klängen eines mittelalterlichen Volksinstrumentariums kombiniert mit der Ästhetik der Rockmusik, Susanne Rosenberg eine neue Art der volksmusikalischen Tonsprache im erzählenden Gesang, Leif Stinnerbom eine neue Weise, Bewegungsmuster als theatralischen Ausdruck in den Volkstanz zu integrieren usw. Man probierte gemeinsam eine neue Herangehensweise aus, bei der Musik, Gesang und Tanz



ganz in das erzählende Theater integriert waren. Das entwickelte sich in der Folgezeit in anderen Inszenierungen weiter, bei denen zum Beispiel Ellika Frisell, Ale Möller und einige andere an der Entwicklung dieses theatralischen Ausdrucks mitwirkten. Nicht zuletzt dank Leif Stinnerboms Arbeit mit dem Västana-Theater (in Sunne/Värmland – die Übersetzerin) wurde das Volkserzähltheater seither zu einer der wichtigsten Plattformen für neue Volksmusik.

Die kulturpolitische Arbeit des RFoD führte unter anderem dazu, dass Folkmusikberater und -produzenten in das reformierte Rikskonserter<sup>4</sup> und die Länsmusik (regionale staatliche Institutionen zur Förderung des Musiklebens – die Übersetzerin) Einzug hielten. Wir konnten auch fast sämtliche politischen Parteien dazu bewegen, 1990 zum Jahr der Volksmusik und des Volkstanzes zu erklären. Das bedeutete sowohl auf Reichs- als auch auf Provinzebene große Bemühungen um die Volksmusik, und es war eine große Werbung für die neuen Folkmusikgruppen. Aber da auch manche der wichtigsten Vertreter der traditionellen Musik bei dieser Entwicklung dabei waren, gab es nie eine Spaltung der Bewegung. Die traditionelle Musik stand weiterhin stark Seite an Seite mit der Folkmusik.

Als in den 1990er Jahren Gruppen wie Hedningarna und Nordman ein großer kommerzieller Durchbruch gelang, führte das dazu, dass viele sich der traditionellen Musik zuwandten. Dass die sehr beliebte Popgruppe Nordman von einer Folkmusikgruppe wie Väsen begleitet wurde, bewirkte, dass vielen jungen Leuten die Augen für die traditionelle Musik geöffnet wurden. Die Folkmusik wuchs gleichzeitig mit der Schallplattenindustrie. Einige auf Folkmusik spezialisierte Schallplattenverlage entstanden und die Musik begann sich auch außerhalb Schwedens zu verbreiten.

<sup>4</sup> Staatliche Stiftung zur Förderung einer lebendigen Musikszene in Schweden, die Ende 2010 aufgelöst wurde. Sie organisierte pro Jahr ca. 40 Touren und 700 Konzerte vor allem im Bereich Klassik, Jazz und Volksmusik. Seit 2011 wurde ihre Aufgabe von Statens Musikverk übernommen. (Anm. der Übersetzerin)



Gleichzeitig wurden Folkmusikerinnen wie z.B. Lena Willemark und Susanne Rosenberg auch als Interpreten neuer Kunstmusik bekannt, vor allem durch die Musik der Komponistin Karin Rehnqvists. Der Folkmusiker wurde ein Musiker, den man ebenso gut wie einen anderen Musiker engagieren konnte. Eine volksmusikalische Ausdrucksweise konnte man auch außerhalb des Rahmens der Volksmusik verwenden.

Man kann sagen, dass die Professionalisierung in der Volksmusik, die in den 1980er Jahren aufkeimte, sich in den 1990er Jahren festigte. Nun war Folkmusiker ein selbstverständlicher Begriff neben den anderen Kategorien von Musikern. Es gab auch einen, wenn auch kleinen Markt, für den man ausbilden konnte.

### Das Volksmusikinstitut entstand!

Die Entwicklung der neuen Folkmusikbewegung bekam damit auch eine Bedeutung für die Entwicklung an den Musikhochschulen. Weil es plötzlich selbstverständlicher war, dass man Folkmusiker sein konnte, wie andere klassische oder Jazz-Musiker waren, wurde es auch selbstverständlicher, dass es dafür Ausbildungsmöglichkeiten geben müsse.

Als die Volksmusikerin und Musikwissenschaftlerin Eva Saether (die auch Redakteurin von „Folkmusiken lever“ war) zusammen mit Mats Edén eine Volksmusikwoche an der Musikhochschule Malmö organisierte, gab es fast eine Invasion der neuen Folkmusikbewegung auf die Musikhochschule. Es wurde der Startschuss für einen Volksmusikzweig in der Musiklehrerbildung in Malmö, sowohl in der Ausbildung für Lehrer an allgemeinbildenden Schulen (das war neu) als auch in der für Instrumental- und Ensemblelehrer.

Dadurch angeregt veranstalten wir 1994 eine entsprechende Volksmusikwoche an der Königlichen Musikhochschule Stockholm. Es wurde ein unglaublicher Erfolg mit gut besuchten Konzerten, in denen viele der Musiklehrerstudenten ein ganz



neues Bild von Volksmusik bekamen. Es wurde auch von Bedeutung für die Neuorganisation der KMH, die genau zu diesem Zeitpunkt geschah, und nach vielem Hin und Her gelang es uns, sowohl ein eigenes Institut als auch einen Leiter für die Volksmusikausbildungen zu bekommen. Ein wichtiges Vorbild war hier die Volksmusikabteilung der Sibeliusakademie in Helsinki. Ole Hjort hatte in all den Jahren als Leiter der Volksmusikausbildungen nicht einmal ein eigenes Arbeitszimmer bekommen, geschweige denn einen eigenen Schulraum. Er musste sich mit einem Schrank auf dem Flur begnügen. Nun gab es wenigstens einen eigenen Seminarraum für die Volksmusik.

Gleichzeitig wurde der alte Studiengang umgestaltet und unterteilt in zwei Profile: afroamerikanische Musik und schwedische Volksmusik. Das war eine natürliche Konsequenz aus dem, was mit der Ausbildung geschehen war, und spiegelte auch die erhöhte Bedeutung, die die Volksmusik in jener Zeit bekam.

Ich selbst hatte zehn Jahre nach meinem Examen angefangen als Teilzeitdozent an der Musikhochschule zu unterrichten. Anfang der 1990er Jahre war ich auch Gastdozent in der Volksmusikausbildung der Sibeliusakademie in Hälsingfors, was mir eine große Inspiration war. Dort gab es eine ganze Abteilung, ein ganzes Stockwerk voller Volksmusik, freies Experimentieren und spannende Vertiefung in die Tradition. Gleichzeitig erlebte ich, dass wir ja hier in Stockholm eine ältere Tradition der Volksmusikausbildung hatten. Warum konnten wir da nicht vergleichbare Möglichkeiten haben? Während der Ausbildungsgang in Finnland eingerichtet wurde, ohne dass ein entsprechender Arbeitsmarkt existierte, gab es hier in Schweden eine große Vorsicht, um nicht zu sagen Zimperlichkeit – wie sollten die Volksmusiker Arbeitsstellen bekommen?

Als das Volksmusikinstitut an der KMH gebildet war, entschied sich Ole Hjort dafür, das Ruder anderen zu überlassen. Er näherte sich dem Pensionsalter und wollte den Boden für eine



Weiterführung des Betriebs bereiten. Das ist übrigens typisch für Ole. Während andere Pioniere im Laufe der Zeit oft an ihren Projekten kleben und es ihnen schwerfällt, zwischen sich und ihrem Werk zu unterscheiden, war es für Ole klar, dass die Ausbildung sich in neuen Zeiten und mit neuen Menschen verändern muss. Man musste jemand die Zeit geben, eigene Kompetenz aufzubauen. Ole sorgte dafür, dass für die Institutsleitung eine volle Dozentenstelle eingerichtet wurde anstelle der halben Studienratsstelle, die er selbst hatte.

Ich bewarb mich um die Stelle und bekam sie. In der Praxis war ich ja schon davor eingebunden in die Arbeit des Instituts. Als Verwaltungsassistent für Ole war ich Leiter der Ausbildung. Ich erinnere mich sehr gut an das erste Mal, als die Studienplätze für die neue Musikerausbildung in Volksmusik angeboten wurden. Es gab damals elf Bewerber für alle Zweige, und ich glaube, dass wir vier davon für die Musiker- und vier für die Musiklehrerausbildung annahmen. Es war eine neue Generation von Volksmusikern, die mit der neuen Folkmusikbewegung aufgewachsen war, eine Generation, die beim Festival in Falun war und die alle Gruppen gehört hatte.

Die neue Musikerausbildung und die neue Arbeitsstelle boten Anlass, über Ausbildungsinhalt und -gestaltung nachzudenken. Früher war man davon ausgegangen, dass das Studium mit einer Grundausbildung durch Seminare in europäischer Musiktheorie, Repertoire, mit einer Verbreiterung der technischen und stilistischen Fertigkeiten auf dem Instrument usw. beginnen sollte, um dann in den längeren Ausbildungsgängen eventuell eine Vertiefung in die Volksmusik zu ermöglichen. Aber von Seiten der Studenten gab es eine zunehmende Nachfrage nach genau dieser Volksmusikvertiefung. Das hatte zum Teil damit zu tun, dass unter den Studienbewerbern nicht mehr ausschließlich Volksmusiker waren, die in traditionellen Volksmusikkreisen aufgewachsen waren, sondern auch neu an Folkmusik Interessierte, die schon eine vorbereitende Musikausbildung zum Beispiel an den Akademien für Erwachsenenbildung (Folkhögskola) absolviert hatten.



So entwickelten ich und meine Kollegen im Institut ein Ausbildungskonzept, dass davon ausging, dass Form- oder Stilwissen eine Form ist, innerhalb der man seine Musikalität ausdrückt. So gesehen konnte die Volksmusik sowohl am Anfang als auch am Ende der Studien stehen.

Wie z.B. ein Student in der klassischen Musikausbildung die Möglichkeit bekommt, als Musiker zu wachsen, und dabei von seinem klassischen Idiom ausgehen kann, so musste man Möglichkeiten finden, dass Volksmusiker eine Berufsausbildung machen können, bei der sie mit ihrem Idiom einsteigen können. Dass man die Hochschule als Arena dafür ansah, war eine natürliche Folge der gesellschaftlichen Veränderung, die es mit sich brachte, dass die Vereine und lokalen Milieus diesen Bedarf nicht befriedigenden konnten. Der Bedarf an Folkmusikern mit Hochschulbildung war ebenso gewachsen. Es handelte sich also nicht mehr primär darum, dass man Volksmusikern ein allgemeines Musikwissen gab, sondern man musste ihnen die Möglichkeit zu bieten, als Musiker auf ihrem Gebiet zu wachsen. Folkmusik wurde also als gleichwertige Ausdrucksform neben „Jazz/Afro“ und europäische Kunstmusik gestellt.

Es handelt sich also genauer betrachtet um die Sichtweise auf Musikausbildung und Musikformen. Der Musikstil ist natürlich kein Selbstzweck, volksmusikalische Stile sind weder besser noch schlechter als andere Ausdrucksmittel, sondern nur anders. Der Stil ist nicht die Musik selbst. Ein Stil fungiert vielmehr als Sprache oder Ausdrucksform, als ein Sprungbrett für den musikalischen Ausdruck, die Erzählung und die Kommunikation, das sowohl den subtilen Ausdruck als auch den ungestümen Bruch mit der Tradition ermöglicht. Wenn es das Ziel einer Musikausbildung an der Hochschule ist, die Gesellschaft zu einem vielfältigen Musikleben anzuregen, dann muss es wichtig sein, Ausbildungsgänge in verschiedenen musikalischen Stilen anzubieten und ebenso verschiedene Stile als Ausgangspunkt einer Ausbildung zu nehmen und damit die Voraussetzung für eine Berufstätigkeit in allen Musikrichtungen zu schaffen. Das Problem ist, dass das Bewusstsein, dass



man eigentlich immer innerhalb eines Stils ausbildet, sowohl bei den politischen Entscheidungsträgern als auch bei den Ausbildern zum Beispiel in der klassischen Musik sehr gering ist. Noch immer wird die Musikausbildung in vielerlei Hinsicht von unausgesprochenen Vorstellungen über musikalische Bildung und Unbildung beherrscht.

Dass man die Volksmusik als Ausgangspunkt für die Ausbildung ansah, hatte weitreichende Konsequenzen: wir veränderten die Aufnahmeprüfung zur Ausbildung. Ausgehend von der selbstverständlichen Erkenntnis, dass das Noten lesen und schreiben eng mit einem Musikstil verbunden ist, so dass man sich damit leichter tut, wenn es im vertrauten Stil geschieht, konzipierten wir beispielsweise Volksmusikversionen der schriftlichen theoretischen Aufnahmeprüfung. Die heutige theoretische Aufnahmeprüfung prüft die Fähigkeit

- Volksmusik zu notieren,
- Volksmusiknoten zu lesen, wie sie zum Beispiel oft in der Sammlung „Svenska Låtar“ aufgeschrieben sind
- Harmonien, die in der Volksmusik im zweistimmigen oder im Begleitspiel üblich sind, beschreiben und anwenden zu können
- die Kenntnis des Notationsbegriff der Volksmusik usw.

Ebenso gingen wir in allen Fächern von einem volksmusikalischen Ansatz aus, dem Lernen nach Gehör. Das wurde die Arbeitsmethode, egal ob es sich um Instrumentalstudien, Gesang, Klavier, Theorie, Ensemblespiel oder Methodik handelte. Es bedeutete auch, dass wir von der typisch volksmusikalischen Sicht von „Werk“ und „Interpret“ ausgingen,

- wo der, der singt oder spielt, selbstverständlich Neu- oder Mitschöpfer der Musik ist, und wo es oft weder eine Originalaufnahme noch eine notierte Komposition gibt, von der man ausgehen könnte, sondern nur eine Menge Versionen und einen stilistischen Ausdruck
- wo die Musikkompetenz eher darin besteht, etwas aus der Musik zu machen, wozu man tanzen kann, als darin, so zu spielen „wie es in den Noten steht“



- wo die Fähigkeit, zu variieren, sich musikalisch innerhalb eines Stils auszudrücken, wie zum Beispiel zu verzieren und Variationen zu schaffen, über der allgemeinen instrumentaltechnischen Fertigkeit steht, über dem, „alles x-Beliebige“ spielen zu können.

Das bedeutete, dass man Musik vor allem dadurch studierte, dass man die Versionen anderer und verschiedene Arten zu singen und zu spielen studierte, dass man zuhörte, nachspielte und eigene Interpretationen schuf, und das alles ausgehend von Vorgespieltem, Aufnahmen und Noten. Wir gingen damit von einem ästhetischen Grundsatz aus, der spezifisch für die Volksmusik ist.

Mit diesen Ausgangspunkten konnten wir ein gemeinsames Grundmaterial in allen Fächern anwenden: es bestand aus Aufnahmen und schriftlichen Aufzeichnungen, die wir als Quellen verwenden konnten, egal ob für Geigenspiel, Gesang, Theorie oder Arrangement. Wir konnten eine gemeinsame musiktheoretische Werkzeugkiste verwenden, die vom Lernen nach Gehör ausging und wo es bei den Notenkenntnissen zuallererst darum ging, die Geheimnisse der klingenden Musik zu begreifen. Wir konnten diese Arbeitsweise im Ensemblespiel und Arrangieren anwenden, das vom Arrangieren nach Gehör und von Zusammenspielweisen ausging, wie sie in der Volksmusik üblich sind.

Im unserem Entwicklungsplan für das Institut fassten wir einen Teil unserer neuen Visionen in Worte. Wir beschrieben das Volksmusikinstitut an der Königlichen Musikhochschule als einen Ort der volksmusikalischen Entwicklung, ein lebendes Volksmusikmilieu und ein Zentrum zur Entwicklung des Wissens in der Volksmusik. Eine Hochschule ist nicht einzig und allein ein Ort, wo man schon vorgekauft Wissen serviert. Eine der zentralen Aufgaben der Hochschulen und Universitäten ist es ja, neues Wissen zu entwickeln, zu untersuchen und weiterzuführen. Praktisches musikalischen Wissen wird durch musikalische Studien entwickelt: spielen, lernen, neues schaffen, über Musik nachdenken und darüber sprechen. Wir betrachteten es als eine der wichtigsten Funktionen des Instituts für Volksmu-



sik, eine solche Plattform zu schaffen für die Entwicklung innerhalb der Volksmusik, einen Raum für Volksmusikstudenten und Lehrer, der Inspiration und musikalische Begegnungen ermöglicht. Wir fanden es auch wichtig, neue Musik und neues Wissen durch Veröffentlichungen, Konzerte, Konferenzen usw. in unserer Umgebung zu erfassen und zu vermitteln und durch Fortbildungen und dergleichen eine enge Verbindung zum Musikleben außerhalb der Hochschule zu pflegen.

Im Entwicklungsplan zählten wir verschiedene Voraussetzungen auf, damit wir dieses kreative Milieu, das wir uns wünschten, anbieten können, dieses Zentrum für Ausbildung und Wissensentwicklung in der Volksmusik. Dafür forderten wir vor allem mehr Ausbildungsplätze. Wir forderten fürs erste Ausbildungsmöglichkeiten für Volksmusiker, die denen in den Bereichen Klassik und Jazz entsprachen. Das bedeutete unter anderem, dass wir beantragten, einen Diplomstudiengang für Volksmusik einzurichten. Wir brauchten auch mehr festangestellte Lehrer, um ein Kollegium mit dauerhaftem Engagement für die Ausbildung zu schaffen. Wir schlugen vor, statt einiger Vollzeit- lieber mehrere Teilzeitstellen zu schaffen. Das sollte es den Dozenten erleichtern, ihre freiberufliche Arbeit weiterzuführen und gute Verbindungen zum Arbeitsleben außerhalb der KMH aufrechtzuerhalten.

Ein weiterer Vorschlag von uns war, dass man für Volksmusiker mit anderer Tradition als der schwedischen entsprechende Ausbildungsvarianten eröffnen solle. Dabei dachten wir vor allem an die eingewanderten Volksmusiker und Volksmusiktraditionen. Die Absicht dabei war dieselbe wie die, die zur Ausbildung in schwedischer Volksmusik führte: Möglichkeiten für diese Art von Musikern zu schaffen, dass sie beruflich als Musiker oder Musiklehrer im schwedischen Musikleben arbeiten konnten. Es gab hier viele eingewanderte Musiker mit einem hohen musikalischen Niveau, denen aber der Zugang zu den Arbeitsplätzen im Musikleben versperrt oder nicht zu den selben Bedingungen möglich war wie den einheimischen Musikern.



Viele von diesen Wünschen sind heute zum großen Teil erfüllt. Wir haben noch nicht ganz die Zahl an Ausbildungsplätzen, die wir uns wünschen, aber sind nicht weit davon entfernt: die Anzahl der Studenten in unserer Ausbildung hat sich von acht auf ca. 35 erhöht. Wir haben mehr festangestellte Lehrer als früher. Zur Zeit sind es sieben. Wir haben im Prinzip die gleichen Ausbildungsmöglichkeiten für Volksmusiker wie zum Beispiel für klassische oder Jazz-Musiker. Wir haben Räume und technische Möglichkeiten, von denen wir früher nicht zu träumen wagten. Vor allem durch die Arbeit der damaligen Ausbildungsleiterin und heutigen Vizeleiterin des Instituts Ellika Frisell gelang es uns, dass sich Ausbildungsmöglichkeiten in der Volksmusik anderer Kulturen öffneten, wie es sie für schwedische Volksmusik seit 2000 gab. Das wurde sofort ein Erfolg, der bewirkte, dass manche, die sonst niemals daran gedacht hätten, sich an einer schwedischen Musikhochschule zu bewerben, genau das taten. Diese Studenten bereichern das Institut mit ihren Erfahrungen, die ganz anders sind als die der Studenten aus dem schwedischen Volksmusikmilieu.

Vor allem war tatsächlich das dynamische und lebendige Volksmusikmilieu, das wir uns wünschten, entstanden. Das merkt man auch außerhalb der KMH vor allem dadurch, dass seit den 1990er Jahren viele unserer ehemaligen Studenten, die während ihrer Studienzzeit einen persönlichen Stil und eine hohe musikalische Kompetenz entwickelt hatten, deutliche Spuren im schwedischen Musikleben hinterlassen. Es drückt sich auch darin aus, dass sich die Anzahl der Studienbewerber für alle Zweige der Volksmusikausbildung in meiner Zeit als Institutsleiter von anfänglichen 10-20 auf 100-150 seit dem Jahr 2000 erhöhte. Vor allem aber bemerkt man es an der interessanten musikalischen und pädagogischen Arbeit der Studenten und Lehrer des Instituts, die bei dessen jährlichen Veranstaltungen wie dem Weihnachtskonzert und dem Låt!-Festival auf großes öffentliches Interesse stößt.

Gerade das Låt!-Festival war das erste, was ich als frischgebakener Institutsleiter auf den Weg brachte. Die Idee dazu kam



ursprünglich wie so oft von meiner Kollegin und Ehefrau Susanne Rosenberg. Wir beide brachten Erfahrungen unter anderem von unserer Lehrtätigkeit an der Volksmusikabteilung der Sibeliusakademie mit, und wir meinten, dass wir eine Menge von den Erfahrungen der Ausbildung dort und anderswo lernen können. Wir sahen auch einen großen Wert darin, dass Studenten schon während ihrer Studienzzeit Erfahrungen damit sammeln, ein Festival mit allem was dazugehört, mit Werbung, Tontechnik und Logistik, zu organisieren. Das Festival konnte sowohl als Schaufenster für die Studenten als Künstler dienen, als ihnen auch Erfahrungen als Konzertveranstalter vermitteln, so dass sie für die Anforderungen des Musiklebens gut gerüstet sein würden.

Das erste Låt!-Festival wurde ein voller Erfolg. Die Diskussionen über Arbeitsmarkt, pädagogische Modelle, Wissensaustausch usw., die wir damals mit unseren skandinavischen Kollegen begannen, haben uns seither begleitet. Die Konferenz, das Festival und das nordische Netzwerk, das daraus erwuchs, wurden auch zur Inspirationsquelle für neue Ausbildungen in Nordeuropa und andernorts. Außerdem entstanden daraus eine jährliche Konferenz und ein Festival für das skandinavische Netzwerk, die während der letzten zehn Jahre reihum an verschiedenen Orten im Norden stattfanden. Aber wir behielten auch das Festival und einen Arrangementkurs hier bei uns.

Insgesamt können wir also auf eine dynamische Entwicklung seit dem ersten Låt!-Festival zurückblicken, die wirklich das Ergebnis eines gemeinsamen Einsatzes aller Lehrer und Studenten unseres Instituts ist. Besonders einige Leute waren sehr an der Entwicklung des Instituts beteiligt, allen voran Ellika Frisell, Ole Hjort und Susanne Rosenberg, die alle auch wichtige Verwaltungsaufgaben während meiner Zeit als Leiter hatten. Ich will auch die aktive Unterstützung betonen, die wir sowohl vom früheren Direktor der KMH, Göran Malmgren, als auch von der jetzigen Direktorin, Gunilla von Bahr, erhielten. Beide haben oft im Streit gegen herkömmliche Auffassungen das Volksmusikinstitut unterstützt und seine Entwicklung gefördert.



## Die Herausforderungen der Gegenwart

Trotz der positiven Entwicklung seit dem Beginn der Volksmusikausbildung bleibt natürlich noch viel zu tun. Die Volksmusikausbildung hat noch immer weniger und weniger gut bezahlte Stellen als andere Ausbildungsgänge an der KMH. Unsere Arbeit ist noch immer verhältnismäßig unbekannt innerhalb der Hochschule.

Aber dieses Ungleichgewicht innerhalb der KMH ist nichts im Vergleich mit dem Ungleichgewicht im Musikleben als Ganzem. Trotz des Einsatzes in der Ausbildung vor allem während der letzten zehn Jahre hat sich an der gesellschaftlichen Unterstützung für professionelle Volksmusiker nichts verbessert. Während es einige tausend Stellen für Musiker im Bereich Klassik, und hier vor allem für Orchestermusiker gibt, gibt es keine echten Stellen für Volksmusiker. Selbst wenn wir uns nicht unbedingt feste Stellen für Musiker wünschen, ist es interessant, dass selbst wenn man die Unterstützung für freiberufliche Musiker einrechnet, sich die gesamte staatliche Unterstützung für Volksmusik in einstelligen Millionen Zahlen (in schwedischen Kronen; 9 SEK = 1 Euro – Anm. der Übersetzerin) bewegt, während die Förderung für klassische europäische Kunstmusik im 100-Millionen-Bereich liegt. Diese schwache gesellschaftliche Unterstützung für diese bedeutende Musikrichtung ist unverständlich, wenn man die Ziele der staatlichen Kulturpolitik vor Augen hat. Das hängt wiederum damit zusammen, dass Politiker und Entscheidungsträger unsere Stilrichtung und den Reichtum, den die lebendige Volksmusiktradition in Schweden darstellt, nicht kennen.

Unsere Arbeit, unsere Musik, unsere Ansätze und unsere Bedürfnisse außerhalb der Hochschule bekannt zu machen, darin liegt, neben den ewigen pädagogischen und künstlerischen Herausforderungen, eine der großen Herausforderungen für die Volksmusikausbildung in unserer Zeit. Die Herausforderung, die im Antrag des ersten Låt!-Festivals formuliert wurde, gilt auch heute noch in gleicher Weise:



„Die grundlegende Kernfrage ist, wie wir in einer immer globaleren Musikwelt mit unserer eigenen Tradition umgehen.“

Dafür gilt, was unser früherer Student Mamadou Sene so treffend formulierte: „Der Musikbaum wächst nicht, wenn man nur die Blätter gießt, man muss auch die Wurzeln gießen.“

## Sven Ahlbäck, Schweden

Geigenspieler und -lehrer

Riksspelman

Dr. phil. der Musikwissenschaft

Professor für schwedische Volksmusik

an der Königlichen Musikhochschule

in Stockholm (KMH)

Mitglied der Königlichen Akademie für Musik in Schweden

[web.me.com/svenahlback/svenahlback](http://web.me.com/svenahlback/svenahlback)

Ergänzende Abbildungen finden sich in der Festschrift von 2009 und in der schwedischen Version dieses Artikels. ([www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu](http://www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu))

The swedish version of this article  
you can find at

[www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu](http://www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu)

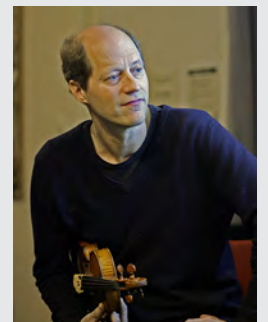


Photo: Esbjörn Hogmark



## Swedish Schools for Music and Arts

*by Dag Krafft*

This article by Dag Krafft is from the web site of SMoK (Swedish Council of Schools for Music and the Arts) <http://www.smok.se/in-english>, as it was 2011-02-06. /Ditte Andersson. The article is published with the kind permission of the author.

The Swedish schools for music and arts started in a modest extent in some local areas during the nineteenforties. There was a strong growth in the sixties when the local music schools became more frequent. Before the growth of the local music schools youths could only get instrumental lessons from military musicians, through local bands or through the church. Private lessons were a chance for those who could afford it.

The common purpose with a local music school was to give all youths the possibility to develop knowledge in instrument playing or singing within the independence of economic, cultural or social background. The long Swedish tradition with adult education, which means educational efforts for all people to confirm the possibilities to influence your own conditions of living and to confirm and change conditions in society, also reached the music education.

The ambition to create a positive leisure time for youths was a central part on the birth of the local music schools and the economical conditions in the local communities seemed to be good. Later there was another dimension, meaning that the local music school should be an important condition for the local musical life.

The Swedish schools for music and arts is local (i.e. run by the local authorities – Kommune/Comune; Dittes remark), which means that it is ruled by local decisions and run by local means. In Sweden there are 290 local communities and it is



easy to understand that the purpose and directions varies from different parts of Sweden. There are no national means and regulations involved in the local schools for music and arts. Sweden has schools for music and arts in 278 out of 290 local communities and that is counted as a strong position. Sweden is also an outstanding country with music exports and the schools of music and arts is meant to be one of many explanations to that phenomenon.

At the end of the nineteen eighties there was a development of the Swedish local music school also to include other forms of artistic activities. The development from a local school for music to a school of all kind of arts went on during the nineties and still continues. Of the total of 278 schools, 153 are developed to schools of arts that consist of at least three branches of arts.

The Swedish local school for music and arts is briefly an activity for all, on all instruments and singing at a reasonable price. Out of the population of nine million people the schools have 363.000 pupils. This makes Sweden top of Europe, after Lichtenstein. The fees\* are on average 1300 SEK (130 €) per year and consists of individual lessons as well as group lessons and ensembles and choirs. The local communities invest all together 1770 million SEK (172 million €) per year and the schools themselves get 338 million SEK (33 million €) via fees. The receipts will thus be 2108 million SEK (205 million €). The length of a lesson is rather limited to about 20 minutes per week. Time for ensembles is not included (in those 20 minutes, but you don't pay extra; Dittes remark). The local schools have all, from the beginning, had a wide offer that has resulted in a rich professional and amateur culture life. The Swedish music wonder – the music industry- is very successful.

The schools for music and arts of today is not a joint activity but has developed in many directions during the last years as it is governed by the local authorities. A brief summary of the aims of the Swedish schools for music and arts of today will give the following:



- Give knowledge in music and develop the child's skill so that the child itself could develop a personal happy practising of music, either the aim is to be a professional or amateur or not.
- Make a contribution to local growth and development.
- Make the local art activities stronger.
- Make a contribution to the development of the compulsory school by strengthen aesthetical teaching processes.

Most of the music schools offer lessons on almost all instruments, solo singing and choirs. Further more the new technique has resulted in new subjects, such as key-board and piano in studios, and composition with a computer program. Lessons will also be given in sound and lightning recording technique and conducting. In the arts schools lessons in dancing, drama/theatre, drawing and media are frequent but there are also lessons such subjects as circus, rhythmic and acrobatics.

The most common form of education is that a child will be given one lesson privately or in a group every week. Playing in an ensemble will be extra once or twice a week after school. The teachers normally go to the compulsory schools to give lessons where the children stay in the daytime (this is not entirely true – it happens more in the countryside, but in towns the pupils usually come to the music school's premises after school; Dittes remark). Due to the fact that Sweden is a sparsely populated country all children nevertheless get the option to get in contact with the local music and arts school.

Sveriges Musik- och Kulturskoleråd, SMoK (Swedish Council of Schools for Music and the Arts) is the Swedish national organisation for music and arts schools. The Swedish municipalities, through their music and arts schools, are members of the organisation and it works among others with moulding of public opinion, contacts with media and collection of facts. SMoK also provides courses, conferences and training.



### Facts:

- In the 290 municipalities in Sweden there are 125 music schools and 153 arts schools. (Municipalities = Kommune/comune; "arts schools" includes music too; Dittes remarks.)
- Twelve municipalities have no music school.
- The local government (Kommune/comune; Dittes remark) rules the activity. No national regulation or laws rule the activities.
- 363 000 children/youths will be reached by the local music and arts schools every week.
- The fee per semester is on average 642 SEK (64 €)
- The schools have about 5.000 teachers.
- 62 % girls, 38 % boys

*(Here ends the SMOk article.)*

\* (Example of costs from the music school in Upsala: below 20 years of age 1.200 SEK per term but never more than 2.100 SEK per family if you have more than one child in the music school; over 20 years of age 2.300 SEK per term. /Ditte's remark.)

### Additional statistics provided by Håkan Larsson, ESI:

36 music schools (of the municipal 278 ones) claims, via their web sites and in other ways, to offer nyckelharpa tuition.



## Musical Education in Germany

Musikerziehung in Deutschland – Educazione musicale  
in Germania – Musikutbildning i Tyskland

*by Angelika Maier*

This article gives a short overview of most kinds of musical education in Germany. It includes the musical education of children at pre-school age, in general public schools and institutions that train professional and non-professional musicians of all ages.

### Content:

1. Introduction
2. Musical education in the family
3. Musical education in pre-school institutions
4. Musical education in schools for general education
5. Musical education in Hochschulen (colleges)
6. Musical education in Konservatorien (conservatoires)
7. Musical education in Musikschulen (music schools)
8. Musical education in music organisations, orchestras, music academies
9. Summary

### 1. Introduction

One of the purposes in the CADENCE project was to understand and compare the musical education in the three schools that participated. Doing this, obviously questions about the schools' background and the musical education in the respective states arose. This article tries to answer some of these questions for Germany.



When talking about education in Germany, there is something important you should always keep in mind: Germany is a federation of 16 states. Education is part of the field “culture”, and the federal constitution says that each of the 16 states is sovereign in that domain. That means for example that Germany has 16 different educational systems! But it’s not as bad and confusing as it sounds in theory. In reality many things are organised quite similarly within the different states. I will restrict most of this article to a description of the musical education in my state, Baden-Württemberg, Germany’s most south-western state with 11 million inhabitants.

Links to all 16 ministries responsible for culture and education in the German states can be found under the following:

<http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kultusministerium>

It’s not always possible to translate names of school types and institutions into a foreign language because the institutions themselves don’t always have exact equivalents in other countries. Therefore you will find some names in this article in German.

## 2. Musical education in the family

Of course the differences between families can be tremendous. If you ask someone on which occasions his family would sing or play music, the most common answer will be: “At Christmas.” But the rest of the year?

Since the sixties there has been a decline in singing within the family. The lullaby went completely out of fashion and was replaced by the sandman on TV. For many years, music teachers in schools say that less and less children are able to sing. Yet, I don’t know if any research has been carried out to verify this.



## 3. Musical education in pre-school institutions

The most important pre-school institutes are the Kindergartens for children aged 3-6 years. It is optional for parents to send their children there. Kindergartens are run by communes, churches, private enterprises, and organisations. In Baden-Württemberg there was no curriculum for them in the past, but since 2009 there are mandatory guidelines (Orientierungsplan). Yet they are very general and thus leave a lot of freedom to the Kindergartens.

In the Kindergarten all kind of abilities of the child should be developed. One of these is to express oneself in different ways. To sing, move, dance, paint, and speak are ways to do this and all these activities should be encouraged and practised in the Kindergarten. The guidelines underline that there should be musical education in the Kindergarten. They ask that the educators should sing a lot with the children and they talk about the hope that this might inspire families to do the same.

In many Kindergartens the educators sing with the children daily (sometimes this is connected with dancing). But, depending on the staff, there are also Kindergartens where this happens only rarely.

Music lessons are a part of the professional training of educators at the Fachschulen für Sozialpädagogik. But it’s left to the educators’ will, taste, and abilities as to how much they do in the field of music in their work.

## 4. Musical education in schools for general education

It is compulsory for everybody to attend these schools for 9 years (some states: 10 years) from the age of 6.

According to their performance at primary school and to the forecast of their performance the students continue at one type of secondary school.



Hauptschule is the least demanding, Gymnasium the most demanding school type for students.

This is an overview of the German schools of general education:

	Primarstufe (primary school)	Sekundarstufe 1 (secondary school)	Sekundarstufe 2 (grammar school, high school)
Name of school type	Grundschule	Hauptschule Realschule Gymnasium	Gymnasium
General age of students that attend it (years)	From 6 to 10 (From 6 to 12)	From 10 to 16	16 to 18 (19)
Years of attendance	4 (6)	6 Hauptschule 9-10	2 (or 3)
possible final qualification		Hauptschulabschluss  Realschulabschluss (also called „Mittlere Reife“)	Abitur

#### 4.1. Musical education in primary school

Music is a part of the “subject pool” “Mensch, Natur und Kultur” (in Baden-Württemberg). The curriculum states that the pupils should learn to express themselves, to experience how they act on others. They should become self confident and get a positive idea of their abilities. To achieve these aims, artistic activities, for example music and dance, should be used. The curriculum names a list of songs and a list of song types that each pupil should be taught at primary school.



Most (all?) primary schools have a set of musical instruments, mostly the Orff instruments, and one room equipped with a piano. In some primary schools the pupils can opt for additional music activities, for example a school choir.

Teachers at primary school have studied at the Pädagogische Hochschule. There they can choose music as one of their subjects.

A new trend at some primary schools is “Jeki” = jedem Kind ein Instrument (an instrument for each child). The idea started some years ago in Nordrhein-Westfalen. Since 2007 in the Jeki schools all children have the possibility to learn an instrument. They can get music lessons at a quite cheap price and the instruments are provided by the schools. They are taught in groups of approximately 5 pupils. In addition to that they play together in the classes and in school orchestras.

Other German states have picked up this idea and have started with Jeki.

[www.jedemkind.de/programm/home.php](http://www.jedemkind.de/programm/home.php)

[www.tagesspiegel.de/meinung/kommentare/jedem-kind-ein-instrument/1719628.html](http://www.tagesspiegel.de/meinung/kommentare/jedem-kind-ein-instrument/1719628.html)

Some Jeki schools stopped this project after some time because it became too expensive or the sponsoring for it was limited in time.

#### 4.2. Musical education in secondary schools (Baden-Württemberg)

##### 4.2.1. Gymnasium:

At the Gymnasium the timetable includes 8-9 weekly music lessons in the first 6 years. This is an average of 1,5 music lessons a week. (1 lesson = 45 min.) The curriculum distinguishes three approaches to music: to create music, to listen to music and to understand it, and, the last one, to reflect on music. Ac-



cording to the curriculum, music lessons should include a lot of music making, theory should always start with practical doing. The curriculum includes music theory, such as the system of the notes, aural training, the basics of harmonics, knowledge of musical forms and music history.

Each Gymnasium has at least one music room which is equipped with a (grand) piano and various other instruments, sheet music for choir singing, and, of course, audio equipment like cd players, cds, and computer.

Usually the students can benefit from optional activities like choirs, classical orchestras, big bands, and other music ensembles.

At some Gymnasiums students can choose music as a main subject (Musikprofil). In all Gymnasiums music can be a main subject in Sekundarstufe 2, which means that it is taught 4 lessons a week. Some Gymnasiums have "Bläserklassen" (wood wind instrument player classes), "Streicherklassen" (bowed string instrument classes), "Gesangsklassen" (singing classes) during the first and second and sometimes third year. In these classes the students get also instrument lessons at school.

The Gymnasium teachers have been trained at a Musikhochschule (see 5.)

#### 4.2.2. Realschule

In the first four years all students have two music lessons a week. In the final two years the students opt either for music or for art (painting etc.) The programme for the Realschule includes singing and playing music, also in several voices, accompanying and arranging tunes, learning about music notation, rhythm, modes, dynamics, musical forms, musical instruments, eras and styles of music history.

Most Realschulen organise a choir and/or an orchestra for interested students. Some of them also offer Bläserklassen (wind instrument classes), Streicherklassen (string instrument classes), etc.



#### 4.2.3. Hauptschule

At the Hauptschule music is a part of the "subject pool" "Musik – Sport – Gestalten" (music – sport – creation). Again the approach to arts is: to perceive, to reflect, to create.

With the help of some musical instruments the pupils learn some music theory. They play simple accompaniments to short tunes and get to know some eras, artists, and composers in music history.

### 5. Musical education in Hochschulen (colleges)

The Musikhochschulen offer training for future professional musicians. There you can get the highest level of musical education in public institutions.

The Musikhochschulen teach mainly classical European music, most of them also teach jazz music, some of them pop music, and one (?) of them includes traditional music in its fields of study, the Hochschule für Musik und Theater, München.

[http://website.musikhochschule-muenchen.de/de/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=749&Itemid=761](http://website.musikhochschule-muenchen.de/de/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=749&Itemid=761)

### 6. Musical education in Konservatorien (conservatoires)

Some conservatoires offer training for professional musicians, some offer musical education for everybody (and in this case they are the same as a music school in spite of their different name), some do both.

### 7. Musical education in Musikschulen (music schools)

Music schools offer musical education for everybody. They are either run by a commune or by an organisation. If an organisation runs it, one or several communes can be associated in it (like the organisation of "BURG FÜRSTENECK"). They all vary in size and in what they offer.



Usually the music schools are subsidised by the communes. This aid varies a lot according to the commune. The students pay most of the costs for their lessons. An average fee for a weekly individual lesson of 30 minutes is about 60 €/month at the moment.

Most of the music schools are members of an umbrella organisation called Verband deutscher Musikschulen (VDM) [www.musikschulen.de](http://www.musikschulen.de), which assembles 909 music schools, teaching in 4000 places, more than 1 million students, by 35 000 teachers. The music schools are an important agent in musical education in Germany.

Here you find the statistics of members in the umbrella organisation VDM since 1952, which certainly reflects the development of music schools in Germany in general:

[www.musikschulen.de/musikschulen/fakten/vdm-musikschulen](http://www.musikschulen.de/musikschulen/fakten/vdm-musikschulen)

This is a link to a diagram, that shows the proportions of the different age groups of the students at music schools

[www.musikschulen.de/musikschulen/fakten/schuelerzahl-altersverteilung](http://www.musikschulen.de/musikschulen/fakten/schuelerzahl-altersverteilung)

... and it informs about their favourite instruments over the last 34 years.

[www.musikschulen.de/musikschulen/fakten/die-beliebtesten-instrumente](http://www.musikschulen.de/musikschulen/fakten/die-beliebtesten-instrumente)

The VDM has developed curricula and standards for music teaching, but they are mere recommendations and mostly the music school teachers are free to teach what they think is appropriate to their students.

Most music schools provide lessons for very young children up to 4 years (called for ex. "Zwergenmusik", "Musikgarten") and for pre-school children (called musikalische Grundausbildung and Rhythmik). For children and adults of any age they offer les-



sons for a variety of instruments. Teaching is mostly structured as weekly lessons of 30-60 minutes. The pupils are taught individually or in small groups. They also have the possibility to play in ensembles organised by the music school.

To get an idea what is taught in the music schools I will use the one in my home town as an example. At the moment it is structured in the following sections: wind instruments, bowed string instruments, plucked string instruments, pop and jazz music, piano, voice, recorder. They also offer Zwergenmusik, Rhythmik and musikalische Grundausbildung.

Besides the so called public music schools there are countless private music schools of many sorts.

## 8. Musical education in music organisations, orchestras, music academies

Many orchestras organise music lessons for their members, especially for young people, to train them for their ensembles. You find lots of different types of orchestras for non-professional musicians: brass bands, big bands, classical orchestras [www.bdlo.de](http://www.bdlo.de), string orchestras, zither orchestras, mandolin orchestras, accordion clubs, choirs, fife and drum bands,...

These orchestras are allied to umbrella organisations that often run music schools (often called academies) to train their conductors, group leaders, and teachers. Some of those umbrella organisations have set up a system of qualifications for the musicians in their member orchestras. The musicians receive training in instrument playing and music theory in preparation for those exams.

There are also academies that are not tied to one umbrella organisation. They offer for example further musical education for school teachers, and orchestras and choirs can book their houses (often former castles or monasteries) for weekend rehearsals etc. Examples in Baden-Württemberg:

[www.kultusportal-bw.de/servlet/PB/menu/1188514/](http://www.kultusportal-bw.de/servlet/PB/menu/1188514/)



## Summary

To describe musical education in Germany can be a never-ending task. I could continue by mentioning the many private music teachers and the many individuals, folk clubs, Volkshochschulen, Familienbildungsstätten, etc. that organise workshops and courses regularly or every now and then. But too much information and details don't make things clearer.

I hope you were able to get an impression of musical education in Germany and also some ideas, catch words, and links to find out more about it yourself if you wish.



## Angelika Maier, Germany

Angelika Maier comes from Southern Germany. She started playing music as a child. Her first instrument was the recorder. Later she had guitar and flute lessons and taught herself to play the mandolin and hammered dulcimer.

She has always loved folk music and has always had a soft spot for instruments which produce lots of harmonics. Therefore, it was prob-

Photo: Heidrun Fischer

ably inevitable that some day she would be charmed by the nyckelharpa and tempted to play it. Although she was slightly hesitant to learn a new instrument at the age of fifty, she decided to give it a try. That was six years ago and she has never regretted this decision.

Besides being a nyckelharpa player she teaches flute and recorder.



## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Harald Odenkirchen, Hariolf Maier, Felicitas Oetinger, Katja Schmieg, and Heidi Zink for their helpful information and Norma Huss for the competent proofreading.

## More sources and further information:

The Kindergarten guidelines:  
Ministerium für Kultus, Jugend und Sport Baden-Württemberg  
Orientierungsplan für Bildung und Erziehung für die baden-württembergischen Kindergärten, Beltz Verlag, Weinheim und Basel, 2006

or

[www.kultusportal-bw.de/servlet/PB/show/1215793/oplan\\_bw.pdf](http://www.kultusportal-bw.de/servlet/PB/show/1215793/oplan_bw.pdf)

Curricula for all schools for general education in Baden-Württemberg

[www.bildung-staerkt-menschen.de/service/downloads/Bildungsplaene](http://www.bildung-staerkt-menschen.de/service/downloads/Bildungsplaene)

Curricula for all schools for general education in Germany

[www.bildungsserver.de/zeigen.html?seite=400](http://www.bildungsserver.de/zeigen.html?seite=400)

Lists of Musikhochschulen in Germany:

[www.studentenpilot.de/studium/hochschulen/musikhochschulen.htm](http://www.studentenpilot.de/studium/hochschulen/musikhochschulen.htm)

[http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liste\\_der\\_Musikhochschulen\\_und\\_Konservatorien\\_in\\_Deutschland](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liste_der_Musikhochschulen_und_Konservatorien_in_Deutschland)

[www.die-deutschen-musikhochschulen.de/ueber-uns](http://www.die-deutschen-musikhochschulen.de/ueber-uns)



Jule Bauer and Marco Ambrosini, Tobo, January 2010, photo: Karsten Evers



## Overview of the Italian Music School System

*By Gioele Sindona*

*Translation by Valentina Bucchi*

### Historical introduction

Musical education has mostly taken place in conservatoires in Italy. The word comes from latin verb 'conservare' which means 'to save or to preserve'. In fact the most ancient institutions of this kind were founded in Naples by the end of the XVI century: they were charities which would welcome orphans or poor kids and give them an education, grooming them for a career.

When in the XVII century, the demand for artists in courts grew, a transformation began in these schools.

Initially, the main figures were the *magister musicae* and *il magister lyrae*. Conservatoires became increasingly important during this period, as to include new subjects such as music theory, composition, dramatic art and the teaching of various musical instruments.

The courses structure, as it is nowadays, can be dated back to 1918 (D.Lgt. 5 maggio 1918, n. 1852) with a set of laws which was successively integrated with minor regulations. This law claimed that musical training for pupils in conservatoires was to take place under the guidance of one teacher only.

Nowadays a reform which will gradually adapt old and traditional studies to more modern European teaching standards is taking place.



In the XIX century, also musical secondary schools were flourishing, while other kinds of schools which were not only linked to classical music were born in the second half of the XX century.

### Types of schools

- State schools, that is to say conservatoires;
- Educational institutions for music:

They are those schools, such as musical secondary schools which sometimes are linked to city councils, provinces or regions, which can now be considered equals to state conservatoires, after going through a supervision process carried out by the Ministry. The study offered thus depends on the regulation mentioned above and all exams taking place in these institutions are recognised by the state;

- City Councils' music schools:

These schools depend directly on the City Council and mainly offer a range of studies in the classical field. However these courses are not regulated by the state, therefore students will also have to give exams in the conservatoires in order to have their path of studies properly recognised;

- Private schools and academies:

These schools can choose their own orientations: classical, modern or ethnic. They can count on renowned teachers and they're aiming for excellence. Some of them also offer a very wide range of courses, such as for example courses for kids, adults, listening guides, workshops and master classes. Some also give great importance to their students' specialization and early career. Tuition fees are much higher in these schools, in comparison to the state's;

- Schools which are linked to cultural associations:



Also these schools choose their own orientations: classical, modern (jazz, pop, rock), ethnic or folk. They are characterised by the strong ability to interact with the local community, thanks to the organisation of events, festivals and concerts. These schools aim to bring people together through music and dance. They frequently support ensemble projects. The Forlì-popoli School of Folk Music can be featured in this category.

### The reform process of conservatoires

The reform process in conservatoires was born after the Bologna process in 1999, where 46 countries have signed an agreement aiming to create by 2010 a European space for higher education. It was a great convergence effort between different education systems, in order to guarantee a common structure of study paths, their transparency and clarity and the possibility to globally enhance the attractiveness of European-based higher education.

The need to modernize the organisation of musical studies in Italy had been felt for a long time, thus the law 508 in 1999 was considered the first step to take in order to do so. In the old system, education in conservatoires was based on the steady presence of one teacher only, who could be supported by secondary figures teaching complementary subjects, ensemble classes, choral and orchestral work and musical theory.

The law mentioned above set that conservatoires should be now considered as universities (under the Ministry for Education, University and Research) thus the study path has been divided into a three-year section followed by a two-year section for specialisation. 60 credits are awarded every year to those students who pass all exams and notes are now expressed in a scale of thirty.

There are many more theoretical subjects and the teaching of foreign languages, computer science, psychology and other topics was introduced.



Some conservatoires also offer a two-year specialisation path in jazz, ethnic music and ancient music, some other also have preparatory music classes designed for young kids, or important master classes with famous musicians who are not normally part of the teaching staff.

So far, the two systems, the old and the new one, have coexisted, but from next year (2011/12) Decreto Ministeriale n.124 of 30<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2009 will become effective: this means that students won't be able to sign up for the old path anymore and that basic music education will only be given in new music high schools, where music will be taught together with other classical subjects. Conservatoires will be open to those students only after attending those schools, like all other universities. Each region or territory will have one new music high school, like in the case with Emilia-Romagna.

### Gioele Sindona, Italy

Gioele Sindona graduated in violin in 2006 and recently at the Conservatory "B. Maderna" in Cesena. He has got a lot of experience in orchestral, symphonic and chamber music and since a number of years he is dealing with ethnic and traditional music. He is playing with the group Khorakhanè. Since 2007, he works as a teacher and assistant with Bardh Jakova in a laboratory ensemble, mostly playing traditional music of the Balkans.



## Tre modelli di insegnamento della nyckelharpa

### Comparison of three models of teaching nyckelharpa

*Gioele Sindona*

I am comparing three models of teaching nyckelharpa I have experienced by Ditte Andersson, Didier François and Marco Ambrosini. The three differ in holding the instrument, tuning, repertoire and teaching approach, but also have much in common. Observations of the Swedish method are more extended as I attended more lessons at the Eric Sahlström Institute and as there is a real tradition like a "school of teaching" in an abstract sense, in Sweden, contrary to Italy or Germany.

I tre differiscono per tenuta dello strumento, accordatura, repertorio, approccio didattico; ma hanno anche molti elementi in comune.

Lo scopo di questa relazione è esporre dal mio punto di vista tre modelli di insegnamento della nyckelharpa. Le persone alle quali farò riferimento sono Ditte Andersson (Svezia), Didier François (Belgio) e Marco Ambrosini (Italia). Le osservazioni sulla scuola svedese saranno più ampie, perché ho avuto modo di assistere a varie lezioni all' Eric Sahlström Institutet e anche perché esiste una vera e propria tradizione di scuola in senso astratto. Gli altri si possono definire invece capi scuola di una nuova linea apertasi nel continente. Non si può invece dire che esista una tradizione di scuola tedesca né italiana, perché i corsi di nyckelharpa di queste due sono basati sulla presenza di tutti e tre gli insegnanti, più Annette Osann che è l'insegnante di musica antica (barocca) e che io considero sulla linea di inse-



gnamento dell'Ambrosini. I tre differiscono per la tenuta dello strumento, l'accordatura, il repertorio e hanno ovviamente il loro personale approccio didattico, ma hanno molti elementi in comune dei quali parlerò strada facendo.

## La Scuola Svedese

La scuola svedese è per me il risultato del raggruppamento di un corpus didattico formato da musicisti colti che hanno subito il fascino della tradizione musicale. Si può certamente individuare nella figura di Eric Sahlström il capo scuola. Egli fu capace di recuperare la tradizione di questo straordinario strumento, evolverlo attraverso la costruzione di un nuovo modello di tipo cromatico e produrre nuovi brani sullo stile delle danze svedesi, ispirato dalla sua eccezionale dote artistica e dalla sua cultura musicale. Fu inevitabile l'influenza che ebbe sulla sua generazione e su quelle successive di giovani musicisti e studenti, invogliandoli a riappropriarsi di questa ricchezza. Gli insegnanti di oggi sono molto legati a questa esperienza e alcuni di loro hanno cominciato i propri studi musicali dal percorso classico per poi proseguire in quello folk. Altri hanno studiato violino e parallelamente la nyckelharpa trovando in quest'ultima grandi capacità espressive. Un esempio è Ditte Andersson, che ha saputo creare le proprie basi didattiche nell'unione di più conoscenze e modelli, per esempio ispirandosi molto alla metodologia di Paul Rolland (*The teaching of action in string playing*). Prenderò lei in considerazione per spiegare gli aspetti principali che caratterizzano il modello didattico svedese attuale. Elencherò di seguito gli aspetti principali del suo approccio:

- una chiara comunicazione dei concetti, che ha l'obiettivo di non dare niente per scontato;
- la semplicità ed efficacia degli elementi da apprendere per poter suonare senza rigidità, sfruttando la fisiologia del nostro corpo e la natura dei movimenti;



- la consapevolezza corporea, che è un elemento fondamentale della pratica musicale in quanto corrisponde alla percezione e capacità di ascolto del nostro corpo;
- un'organizzazione sistematica del lavoro durante le lezioni;
- il profondo senso analitico generale e relativo alla conoscenza degli elementi musicali che caratterizzano il brano o la danza (ad es. la polska);
- la conoscenza dell'armonia e delle scale che compongono i brani;
- infine la conoscenza dell'origine etnica, storico-geografica della provenienza dei brani e l'insegnamento dei testi delle canzoni.

Alcuni degli ultimi riferimenti svelano il repertorio che la scuola popolare svedese tratta maggiormente, cioè polske, vals e scottish. E' un repertorio molto ricco che richiede tempo e approfondimento per essere ben eseguito e conosciuto. Solo il genere della polska contiene vari sottogruppi che variano a seconda delle caratteristiche ritmiche e compositive, il time di esecuzione e il modo di essere ballate. Ciononostante la maggior parte dei brani è composta da melodie semplici e orecchiabili. Questo consente anche a musicisti poco esperti di poter suonare discretamente e prendere parte agli incontri (spelstemma) dove si suona e si balla, e ciò apporta il beneficio di sentirsi parte integrante della comunità. Questo approccio comincia sin dalle prime lezioni di gruppo che si svolgono lungo tutto il percorso di apprendimento, integrate sempre alle lezioni individuali.

Le lezioni cominciano con esercizi di riscaldamento senza lo strumento, aspetto che come vedremo appartiene con qualche variante a tutte e tre le scuole. Si tratta di un momento, accompagnato a volte da sottofondo musicale, in cui esercizi di ginnastica vengono affiancati a esercizi posturali con il beneficio di sciogliere la muscolatura, prepararsi all'attività fisica che comporta l'atto di suonare e mettere a proprio agio gli studenti.



Poi si passa all'insegnamento della tenuta dello strumento, della tecnica della mano destra e di quella sinistra, che affronteremo successivamente.

L'insegnamento dei brani avviene attraverso l'ascolto del maestro, che dopo un'esecuzione integrale frammenta la melodia in piccole sezioni che gli studenti imparano ad orecchio. Questo sistema stimola l'istinto musicale, la consapevolezza del brano e aiuta lo sviluppo della memoria.

La tradizione orale è però affiancata dall'insegnamento della scrittura e della lettura musicale. Questa pratica evita l'insorgere di una certa dipendenza dallo spartito che spesso molti musicisti "classici" hanno, ed è un vantaggio anche per ricercare una maggiore espressività e capacità di ascolto. D'altra parte c'è però bisogno di sviluppare una buona lettura, che permetta l'indipendenza generale, come nel caso in cui si interagisce con altre prassi musicali. È sempre meglio dare la possibilità all'utilizzo di più linguaggi, poi ognuno può scegliere quanti e quali usare a seconda delle proprie preferenze ed inclinazioni.

Le lezioni di gruppo sono anche importanti, perché gli studenti non si sentano soli con le loro incertezze e limiti tecnici, contribuiscono a creare passo dopo passo la fiducia in loro stessi e negli altri con i quali si può instaurare un rapporto di intensa condivisione.

Nell'approccio con lo strumento è molto importante l'intenzione del pensiero sul movimento. Per fare questo si insegna a cantare dentro di sé la musica e muoversi con gli accenti dei tempi di danza. Personalmente la considero una cosa bella, che influenzi molto il modo di suonare. Aiuta ad andare a tempo, a migliorare la bellezza del suono e l'espressività.

Per quanto riguarda l'organizzazione sistematica, prenderò come esempio un modello (cosiddetto piramidale) che Ditte usa per l'insegnamento dei brani tradizionali, elencandoli di seguito in ordine d'importanza: first melody, arcate e swing, ornaments, dubble stops, second melody, accompaniment, improvisation.



### Tenuta dello strumento

Per prima cosa si può tenere in due posizioni: in piedi o seduti, ma in entrambi i casi viene comunque sorretto da una cinghia allacciata all'attaccatura della cordiera e alla paletta. La cintura passa sulle spalle dietro il collo, ad altezza della settima vertebra cervicale (vertebra prominente). La nyckelharpa si trova a questo punto di fronte al nostro busto con la keybox alla nostra sinistra. Si dovrà poi regolare la lunghezza della cintura in modo tale da permetterci di appoggiare il retro braccio, poco prima del gomito, sulla cordiera, passandolo sopra la cintura. Il corpo dello strumento sarà appoggiato tra il braccio e la parte bassa del costato destro, poi si inclina leggermente la testa dello strumento dalla parte sinistra, verso il basso, quanto basta per permettere alla mano sinistra di toccare i tasti, in linea con il gomito abbassato. Infine si ruota leggermente dalla parte esterna a noi, verso la corda più acuta, per intenderci.

La posizione non è mai assoluta, perché dipende dalla forma del nostro corpo oltre che in modo rilevante dalla lunghezza dei nostri arti superiori. La postura invece non dovrà essere rigida ma un poco mobile dalla parte della mano sinistra. Si può infatti all'inizio muovere la nyckelharpa leggermente su e giù, avanti e indietro fino a trovare una posizione comoda, che corrisponda a una giusta posizione del braccio sinistro e di quello destro. Cosa importante è tenere sempre tutte e due le spalle rilassate e ben appoggiate.

La posizione da seduti differisce solo in quanto lo strumento viene appoggiato anche sui muscoli estensori della gamba destra, oltre che sulle spalle e sul busto, e ruotato maggiormente a destra (dalla parte della paletta).

### Posizione del braccio e della mano sinistri

Il braccio è disteso in basso (posizione di rilassamento) con la mano morta. Poi, tenendo il gomito appoggiato al corpo, si porta su la mano rilassata affinché le dita tocchino i tasti e il palmo il manico. Bisogna fare attenzione a tenere la mano in linea con l'avambraccio, senza che il polso stia in fuori o in



dentro. La mano a questo punto può sperimentare tutta la tastiera sfiorando con le dita i tasti e venendo verso la parte alta (il ponte). Il pollice non si dovrà puntare nel manico ma dovrà essere libero, accostato al manico. Le altre dita vanno tenute il più possibile vicino ai tasti e il giusto modo di articolarle sarà un movimento che coinvolga tutto il dito, partendo dalla nocca del metacarpo.

### Tenuta dell'archetto

Nella zona del tallone si appoggiano l'indice, il medio, l'anulare e il mignolo, sopra la bacchetta, mentre il pollice si appoggia con la punta sotto di essa, affianco alla scarpetta e di fronte al medio-anulare. L'indice va appoggiato all'altezza della prima falange, il mignolo con la punta sopra la bacchetta e le altre dita si appoggiano di conseguenza avvolgendola dolcemente dalla parte esterna, compreso la seconda e terza falange del dito indice che sporgono in fuori. È importante che le quattro dita sopra stiano un poco separate le une dalle altre e che tutte si mantengano semidistese, cercando di evitare una presa rigida ed a pinza.

Questo è il modello di presa più moderno e comunemente usato, come vedremo anche dalle altre scuole. Vorrei però riflettere su altri modi di tenere l'arco usati da alcuni nyckelharpisti svedesi ed in particolare da alcuni di matrice più popolare.

Un modo differisce, solo per il fatto di tenere l'anulare al posto del mignolo, appoggiato sopra la bacchetta con la punta. Il mignolo di conseguenza diventa poco importante.

Una pratica in uso più tra i musicisti popolari più anziani (e non solo) consiste nel tenere il pollice della mano destra sotto i crini e le altre dita (con o senza mignolo) sopra. Questo permette di variare la tensione dei crini influenzando a proprio piacimento la sollecitazione della corda. Le prime testimonianze di questo modo le troviamo in alcuni dei primi trattati del seicento sulla pratica degli strumenti ad arco. Era sicuramente in uso in Inghilterra, Francia e Germania. John Playford, compositore ed edi-



tore inglese assai stimato da Purcell, in *Breefe Intoduction to the Skill of Musik* del 1654 prescrive l'appoggio del pollice alla fine dei crini accanto al tallone, mentre tre dita, indice, medio e anulare, si posano sulla bacchetta. Georg Muffat, austriaco, nella sua opera *Suaviores harmoniae instrumentalis florilegium secundum* (Passau 1698), rileva le affinità tra le scuole tedesca e francese e la differenza con la scuola italiana nel modo di tenere l'arco: "La maggior parte dei violinisti tedeschi adotta la presa dell'arco di Lulli quando suonano i violini piccoli in cui essi premono i crini con il pollice e appoggiano le altre dita sulla bacchetta. Gli italiani invece non toccano il crine."

Un'altra pratica in uso tra i nyckelharpisti popolari svedesi che si rileva tra le pratiche antiche è quella di tenere l'arco con tre dita appoggiate sopra e con il mignolo interno accostato. Michelle Corrette, compositore e violinista francese che nella sua opera *"Ecol d'Orphee"* (1738) spiega a proposito della tenuta dell'arco: "Gli Italiani tengono l'arco a tre quarti, posando quattro dita sulla bacchetta, il pollice sotto di essa; i francesi appoggiano 1°, 2° e 3° sulla bacchetta, il pollice sotto ai crini accanto al tallone e il mignolo di costa, sul legno". Nel corso del Settecento la presa dell'arco si uniformò al modo italiano, ma è evidente che nell'ambiente popolare alcune pratiche o parte di esse siano rimaste in uso fino ad oggi, forse perché nel corso del Seicento e Settecento la passione per le danze univa sia gli ambienti colti-signorili che quelli popolari, con a volte una documentata mescolanza di musicisti che li frequentavano entrambi.

### Didier François

Didier François è violinista, nyckelharpista e compositore. Viene dalla scuola violinistica di Arthur Grumiaux. Per quanto riguarda il suo linguaggio musicale si è ispirato molto a Chet Baker. Egli ha adottato sulla nyckelharpa, per primo nel nostro tempo, la postura classica degli altri strumenti ad arco, quindi con il braccio destro completamente libero di muoversi. Questo è in



realtà la postura che si usava nel corso del Quattrocento e del Cinquecento, e in un certo modo si potrebbe definire storica.

La sua didattica è fondata molto sulla libertà di movimento e sulla consapevolezza corporea. Per Didier il corpo deve interagire con naturalezza nel suonare e poter sfruttare le naturali capacità di risonanza dello strumento. Egli pone molta attenzione alla postura e alla fisiologia dei movimenti. Anche lui comincia le lezioni e le sue giornate facendo esercizi di riscaldamento senza strumento. Alcuni esercizi servono per assumere la giusta postura in posizione eretta, altri per sciogliere la muscolatura del collo, gli arti superiori e le spalle. Poi ci sono i massaggi alle mani e alle dita in ciascuna falange. Dopodiché si lavora spesso alla produzione di un buon suono, a corde vuote. Anche lui si dedica molto all'intenzione del pensiero in relazione a quello che ne consegue sul movimento. Il repertorio sul quale si lavora tratta di composizioni originali ispirate al jazz, musica contemporanea, arrangiamenti originali di brani pop e tradizionali, spesso dello stesso Didier. Egli dedica molto tempo all'improvvisazione ed alla sua pratica. Per fare questo è importante conoscere le scale e l'armonia dei brani e fare un buon lavoro sull'ascolto degli altri. In questo senso egli fa fare agli allievi veri e propri esercizi di improvvisazione per imparare a interagire e comunicare con gli altri musicisti e con gli ascoltatori.

### Tenuta dello strumento

La posizione rimane invariata se si suona seduti o in piedi. Si fa sempre uso di una cinghia allacciata tra l'attacco della cordiera e la paletta. Quindi si fa passare la cinghia sulla spalla sinistra e sotto il braccio destro, che rimane completamente libero. Lo strumento si trova sempre di fronte a noi e si inclina leggermente verso sinistra. Bisogna poi scostarlo dal busto per permetterci di suonare più liberamente con l'arco. Si usa per questo motivo una spalliera da viola o violino, facilmente adattabile.



### Posizione del braccio e mano sinistri

Anche Didier considera la posizione della mano in linea con l'avambraccio, che si troveranno quasi orizzontali rispetto al gomito. Il polso non deve stare in fuori né in dentro se non quando si sale verso la zona del ponticello. In questo caso il piegamento della mano è necessario. Le dita stanno semi distese e si procede nel muovere la mano lungo la linea dei tasti sfiorandoli appena. Didier spiega tre posizioni delle dita che riassumono insieme ogni caso e situazione in cui ci troveremo suonando. Una è la posizione con le dita unite, poi con le dita aperte e per ultima la posizione delle dita con mano a ventaglio. La prima si può verificare suonando una successione di note cromatiche, la seconda in successione di note per toni e l'ultima nei casi di allungamento dove si deve sulla stessa fila di tasti prendere un ampio intervallo (per esempio una decima). Il pollice si tiene rilassato e non appoggiato al manico; si lascia sfiorare i tasti dalla parte di sotto.

### La presa dell'arco

E' quasi identica a quella di Ditte e Marco. Si tengono le quattro dita sopra all'arco all'estremità nella zona del tallone. Il mignolo appoggia sopra, quasi verticale, l'indice s'appoggia in prossimità dell'articolazione tra prima e seconda falange e le altre due si appoggiano di conseguenza. Le dita stanno leggermente separate tra di loro. Il pollice in opposizione tocca di sotto la bacchetta con la punta. La mano e le dita mantengono sempre un'attitudine circolare. Rispetto a gli altri due modi nella posizione "Didier" l'arco si muove su dei piani più verticali, quindi viene meno sfruttata la forza di gravità e l'appoggio che ne consegue sulla corda. Si cercherà quindi un approccio morbido e la varietà sonora si trova nella differente velocità del movimento della mano e nello sfruttamento dei diversi punti di contatto sulla corda, tra il ponticello e l'inizio dei tasti. Per questi motivi l'appoggio dell'indice è meno evidente rispetto agli altri due.



## Marco Ambrosini

Marco Ambrosini è violinista, nyckelharpista e compositore. Un aspetto importante della sua didattica è sicuramente il fatto di aver scelto nei suoi corsi la collaborazione con altri didatti e bravi musicisti. È secondo me una scelta vincente, perché gli allievi possono trarre grandi benefici dalla diversità di vedute, di repertori e di approcci sullo strumento. Credo che una sola persona potrebbe insegnare senza difficoltà modi diversi di suonare, ma non sarebbe la stessa cosa. La ricchezza apportata dalle persone e dai loro diversi percorsi trasmette meglio una cosa che la musica insegna, cioè l'ascolto degli altri, la fiducia in se stessi e nella comunità, la condivisione, il linguaggio non verbale e l'amore per la vita.

Nell'insegnamento agli adulti questo ampio spettro di elementi permettono che la musica e l'apprendimento di uno strumento siano una palestra di vita. Le difficoltà e gli ostacoli da superare sono una costante e il modo per affrontarli si trova attraverso i propri sforzi, l'applicazione, l'impegno, l'aiuto degli altri e il superamento del senso di frustrazione. In età giovanile è molto importante, ma lo è altrettanto anche in età adulta, perché mantenere una mentalità flessibile aiuta durante il cammino. Un altro pregio importante di Marco Ambrosini è unire le capacità e i differenti livelli delle persone. Egli sa sfruttare la situazione e incanalare l'energia degli allievi in un buon lavoro d'insieme.

Anche lui dedica parte delle sue lezioni a esercizi di riscaldamento per le mani, ma soprattutto ha un'organizzazione sistematica ricca e varia di esercizi per la presa dell'arco e per la tecnica della mano sinistra. Ad esempio ci sono degli esercizi da eseguire solo con l'arco (es. del passaggio a livello, del brucco, del gattino orizzontale e verticale), che coinvolgono insieme l'avambraccio la mano e le dita e altri che riguardano solo il movimento della mano, poi separatamente quello delle dita. Lo scopo di questi esercizi è acquisire l'indipendenza dei vari movimenti che insieme, in sinergia, si fanno suonando sulle corde. Numerosi sono gli esercizi sulla corda: alcuni servono



per trovare il feeling e trovare il giusto equilibrio di appoggio in relazione al peso, alla velocità con cui si muove l'arco, la lunghezza dell'arco in cui si agisce e la relazione che questi hanno con il punto di contatto. Ambrosini mette molta attenzione nello spiegare la natura circolare dei movimenti che la mano destra svolge suonando le corde nei vari passaggi da una all'altra. Un esempio è il movimento dell'8 rovesciato, cioè il simbolo dell'infinito, che si esegue suonando su due corde di differente altezza, prima una in giù e poi l'altra in su.

Il repertorio che affronta è vario e si può associare generalmente all'area geografica dell'Europa continentale. In senso storico si passa da brani e danze medioevali, composizioni tardo-rinascimentali, barocche, musica popolare tradizionale emiliano – romagnola e composizioni contemporanee anche da lui composte.

## Tenuta dello strumento

Il modo di Ambrosini cambia di poco da quello svedese. Egli lo suona sia da seduto che in piedi. Da seduto egli non usa la cintura ed appoggia la nyckelharpa sulla gamba destra tenendola inclinata a destra verso il basso. Appoggiando il retro braccio destro sulla cordiera e quindi sulla parte finale della cassa armonica, la nyckelharpa si può sostenere facilmente. Tenendo le gambe semiaperte la mano sinistra si mette tra le due sotto il manico e il pollice viene appoggiato di sotto purché rimanga rilassato e mobile senza costituire un elemento di rigidità. In posizione eretta Ambrosini tiene la nyckelharpa come il modo svedese con due differenze: la tiene ruotata più verso destra e quindi ben scostata dal busto e in posizione verticale, cioè di taglio.

## Posizione del braccio sinistro

È identica a quella svedese, se non per il pollice della mano sinistra che come già detto rimane appoggiato al manico.



### Presa dell'arco

È identica a quella di Ditte e Didier per quanto riguarda la posizione delle dita; però le tiene più separate e utilizza maggiormente la pronazione del polso.

Marco Ambrosini ha invece il merito di aver contribuito a un'ulteriore modifica dello strumento insieme al liutaio francese Jean-Claude Condi e Annette Osann. Aggiungono una fila di tasti alla 4° corda, quella più grave. Rispetto agli svedesi cambiano anche l'accordatura che dal modello Do, Sol, Do, La (svedese) diventa come quella della viola, cioè Do, Sol, Re, La. Questo ha da subito portato gli interpreti come Marco Ambrosini, Didier François e Annette Osann a sfruttare lo strumento più nel registro basso, anche in senso melodico. La scuola svedese utilizza la nyckelharpa più nel registro alto sviluppando le melodie sulla prima corda maggiormente che sulle altre.

Negli istituti continentali, non si è ancora trovato equilibrio nella continuità e nella frequenza del lavoro con gli allievi. Gli incontri avvengono ad un mese di distanza gli uni dagli altri e d'estate i corsi si interrompono. Questo si traduce sui progressi degli studenti che possono raggiungere buona padronanza dello strumento solo in tempi lunghi. Spero inoltre che la diffusione della nyckelharpa abbia esiti sempre più positivi. È sicuramente uno strumento tra quelli ad arco che meglio si adatta all'educazione agli adulti. Grazie al sistema dei tasti le difficoltà relative all'intonazione vengono in parte risolte, consentendo un più rapido accesso alla musica d'insieme.

### Gioele Sindona, Italia

*Si è diplomato in violino nel 2006 e si è recentemente laureato al Conservatorio "B. Maderna" di Cesena. Ha effettuato molte esperienze nell'ambito orchestrale sinfonico-lirico e nell'ambito della musica da camera e da diversi anni si occupa di musica etnica e tradizionale. Nel 2004 ha collaborato con il gruppo Bevano Est nella registrazione del disco "Ramango". Dal 2006 suona con il gruppo Khorakhanè con il quale ha inciso un disco ("La ballata di Gino") e ha partecipato al 57° Festival di Sanremo nella sezione giovani, vincendo il secondo premio della critica. Attualmente svolge con il medesimo gruppo attività concertistica in Italia e all'estero (Egitto, Svezia, Germania). Da settembre del 2007 svolge insieme al maestro Bardh Jakova un laboratorio di musica d'insieme dedicato alla musica tradizionale dei balcani, in qualità di docente e assistente.*



## Self-Learning by the Example of Nyckelharpa

*By Jule Bauer*

The confrontation with and the understanding of self-learning is really important for Nyckelharpa players, especially outside of Sweden where there are only a few teachers for the instrument. More and more adults and older adolescents start learning to play the Nyckelharpa by themselves. This article reflects on self-learning in the field of learning culture, shows different models of self-directed learning and discusses the teaching and learning situation for Nyckelharpa players.

### Learning in the field of music

The understanding of learning and the learning opportunities for individuals have changed in our society, even in the musical field, in recent years considerably. These changes are so extensive that one can speak of the need for a new learning culture.

Through modern information and communication techniques, innovative teaching and learning opportunities have opened up. Out of that entirely new learning requirements have developed in both professional and private lives.

The concept of lifelong learning is topic of discussion in today's society and self-organized or self-learning in different areas move more and more to the forefront, and so to the student has more opportunities to put together an individual training program.

Neither a professor nor teacher decides how, where, when, what and what for is to be learnt, but the learners themselves!



Moreover, in the field of music for some particular instruments there is not the possibility of large scale continuous education, so that the learner is even “forced” to resort to forms of self-paced learning.

Learning nyckelharpa-playing is a very good example of self-learning because the nyckelharpa is an instrument “again” which is relatively new, similar to the time of Jimi Hendrix’s electric guitar, a new instrument for which there were no teachers and no teaching material. This is comparable to the current situation of the instrument nyckelharpa. After the Baroque period the instrument was almost entirely extinct worldwide. Only in a small area of Sweden, the instrument has survived until today in the local traditional folk music. This instrument will, as in the early days of pop and rock music was, mostly be learnt by adults and older adolescents, because children generally learn as their first instruments one which they have got to know through the family or at school, and for which there are at school or music school a class offered. This is not the case outside Sweden for nyckelharpa.

### Further development of the instrument nyckelharpa and its consequences

Since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century the re-emergence of a growing interest in the playing of the nyckelharpa have influenced the traditional design and development of the instrument by several instrument makers. Some have added to the former three-row instruments a fourth row of keys, so that the range is extended considerably because the pitches can now be played on the former drone string. In addition, experienced musicians in co-operation with instrument manufacturers have experimented with different tunings and strings.

Through these changes to the instrument in recent decades, the scope of the instrument has been extended. By changing the “traditional Swedish tuning” to viola tuning, a greater use in chamber music is possible and the further development of



the traditional bow shape allowed classical bowing styles and articulations to be played effectively. These changes dictate the need for new innovative playing techniques so as to meet the new requirements, for example being able to play complicated fingerings, or to imitate classical bowing styles on the instrument. Due to the different types of models of the instrument, as well as many types of bows, each player is forced to discover the uniqueness of his instrument and to intensively explore the boundaries of playability himself.

### The current teaching situation for nyckelharpa

The current teaching situation for nyckelharpa is as follows: throughout Europe and the US various weekend workshops are held annually organized by various institutions or private individuals. Various nyckelharpa players teach privately. In addition to the short workshops, the “Eric Sahlström Institutet” in Sweden has offered a full-year course since 1998, which can be visited only once, and a two-year Instrument – Making course. There is also a block course training for 2-3 years at the “Scuola di Musica Popolare di Forlimpopoli” in Italy, which has been offered since 2005 and since 2006 following this model there is also a training course at the Academy BURG FÜRSTENECK in Germany. These three schools cooperate together. The teachers appear as guest teachers in the other schools and students are able through school exchange to gain insight into the work of other schools. At the Royal College in Stockholm, it is possible to study in the folk music department with the main instrument nyckelharpa. In addition, various music schools in Sweden they offer the instrument in their teaching program.

Comparing these learning opportunities in Germany with the great range of courses for other instruments, it is essential for nyckelharpa players to deal with self-directed learning. For comparison, there were, according to the yearbook of the Association of German music schools in 2007 in Germany 924 public music schools<sup>1</sup> as well as many statistically unidentified private music schools. For the professional musical train-

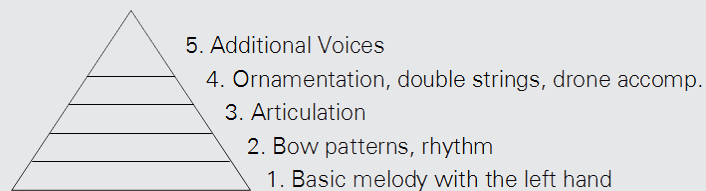
<sup>1</sup> [www.musikschulen-sh.de/download/VdM\\_2006.pdf](http://www.musikschulen-sh.de/download/VdM_2006.pdf)



ing there was in 2008 in Germany 32 music universities, nine conservatories and nine vocational schools for music<sup>2</sup>. In comparison there are currently one music university and three institutes worldwide which offer regular classes in nyckelharpa playing.

In the literature of the new culture of learning, there are many approaches that are useful to apply to the learning and teaching of the nyckelharpa because they help to organize and promote self-directed learning. It is therefore very important for the nyckelharpa student or teacher with both independent learning and the requirements as a possible learning assistant to be aware of them.

For example, Ditte Andersson, a nyckelharpa teacher at the "Eric Sahlström Institutet" in Sweden, has developed a teaching model which is based on the Maslow pyramid of needs.



The justification for this model is that in nyckelharpa courses there are usually very large differences in the playing skills of the students because there are not so many players and courses are limited. Care must be made as a teacher that each student is picked up at his level of ability and gives them the opportunity to further develop their skills.

## Self-learning

Before I get to the idea of self-paced learning models, I would like to define the term "self-teaching" and give some historical evidence of it.

<sup>2</sup> [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liste\\_der\\_Musikhochschulen\\_und\\_Konservatorien\\_in\\_Deutschland](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liste_der_Musikhochschulen_und_Konservatorien_in_Deutschland)



## Definition of "self-teaching"

"A self-taught (*autodidact* from Greek "αὐτός" = *self* and "διδάσκω" = *teach*) person is someone who taught himself appropriated (ie, self-study) an education at a high level. Unlike the dilettante, who can be also self-taught though usually less knowledgeable standard, the self-taught person usually seeks a professional application of his knowledge and sometimes also its social recognition."<sup>3</sup>

For "self-learning" exists, according to Ulrich Müller of the workshop for new learning culture "no single universally accepted term use, but it prevailed a great variety of terminology, such as self-organized, [...] independent learning or self-directed learning."<sup>4</sup> All terms are for learning methods that give the learner a greater degree of self-determination.



Abb. 10.6: Titelblatt der Schrift »Musicus autodidactos«, Erfurt 1738

## Historical evidence of self-teaching

Historically, there have been many famous musicians and composers who have instruments and compositional techniques acquired through self-study. For example, Georg Friedrich Telemann taught himself to play the harpsichord, Anton Bruckner and Modest Mussorgsky to compose, Arnold Schoenberg violin and composition, Jimi Hendrix to play the guitar, etc.

As early as 1738 in Erfurt an anonymous pamphlet appeared called "Musicus autodidactos oder der sich selbst informirende Musicus"<sup>5</sup>. It was a practical guide for independent learning of musical notation and to play a variety of instruments. The pamphlet

does not require any special knowledge. Unfortunately, today is not known how widespread or popular this pamphlet was.

<sup>3</sup> <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Autodidakt>

<sup>4</sup> Ulrich Müller, 2001

<sup>5</sup> Heiner Gembris, 1998



## Models of self-paced learning

Pedagogy has only recently begun to occupy itself with this type of learning style. By the course of the 20th Century emergence of increased interest in popular music, which is now also taught in colleges and universities scientific, led to the necessity of studies that dealt with the learning of these types of music.

In the field of jazz, rock and folk music, the self-directed learning has a high priority. The tradition of oral transmission is very important to the learner so that the student becomes familiar with the right "groove". An experienced jazz musician says: "In jazz, learning 'by ear' is still a crucial part, which goes back to the African roots of jazz. And a lot is also learned from the radio and recordings: copying is the ideal way of learning".<sup>6</sup> In Swedish traditional nyckelharpa music it is the same. To obtain the right "Pol-ska Groove" it is best to internalize the music through listening.

I would like to present here three models of self-paced learning, which were developed in recent years.

In the 1970s Malcolm Knowles first used the term "self-directed learning". He understands a learning process where the learning individuals:

- "take the initiative themselves
- diagnose their own learning needs
- formulate their learning goals
- organize resources
- choose appropriate learning strategies
- evaluate their learning process itself"<sup>7</sup>

A similar definition was given by F. E. Weinert in 1982, when he said, self-directed learning is a form of learning where the learner makes the key decisions on whether, what, when, how, whereupon he learns, which can affect serious and consequential results."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Günter Kleinen, 2006

<sup>7</sup> Malcolm Knowles, 1975

<sup>8</sup> F.E. Weinert, 1982



Ulrich Müller in 2001 came to the conclusion that:

"Self-education learning makes great demands on the learner:

- Awareness of their own (life and) objectives
- Self-awareness as a successful learner
- Openness to learning
- Initiative and independence
- Conscious acceptance of personal responsibility
- Creativity and problem solving skills
- Develop and maintain skills, motivation, concentration and discipline
- Strategies in information retrieval, recording and processing"<sup>9</sup>

## New learning culture in the musical field

### Self-learning in the new learning culture

Educational psychologists arrange the self-taught learning in the learning environment of a new culture of learning and especially in the realm of adult education. A new understanding of learning as an intrinsically active, constructive process is fundamental. The students and teachers must redefine their roles, so that the learner definitely takes more responsibility. The teacher is no longer the "all-determining authority", as in the classical music education was often the case, but instead helps the students to be aware of his learning, his goals and desires and to assist the learner with his own skills. These are new requirements that are imposed on the teacher. The old image of the "infallible" teacher, who gives detailed instructions that must be executed without deviation 100%, no longer exists in this case. It is rather a guidance towards self-help and above all a truly individual approach to each student.

For the student this means a tailor-made tutelage, in which he is actively involved.

Self-education, self-directed learning is a complex approach

<sup>9</sup> Ulrich Müller, 2001



that can be also seen as a diverse range of methods and procedures which are associated with learning. The student is the self-paced learning but not on his own. He gets the authority which would help him, not from outside "imposed" but he selects himself by looking at videos of famous instrumentalists, listening to solos on a CD of his model or hero, or imitate a singing voice, because it reflects his personal ideal. These days there are also much information on the Internet about all instruments. One can direct oneself through the "new media" guide, visit Internet forums, order DVD or video courses participate in weekend workshops, ...

Thus, the learner is in the control of his learning with outside assistance, which need not necessarily originate from a teacher. And even if he has lessons once a week, the learner is able for the rest of the week to self-direct his practice sessions, which in principle makes self-organised learning very important.

The former understanding that an instrument not learned in childhood would not be learnt in adulthood is outdated. Adult education has become a large field in Music education. The "lifelong learning" is a term that is used these days more often. Because of the change in lifestyle over the past 50 years and decrease in the birth rate allowing more time for hobbies, there are many people who dream of learning an instrument or a second instrument as adults, without the desire to pursue a career as a professional musician.

The self-taught learning is at the beginning of the development of an individual musical self-concept that characterizes every musical person. The musical self-concept includes all the music-related attitudes, practices, aesthetic opinions, likes and dislikes, temperament and personality traits of a person.



## Tasks of the learner

In relation to integrative teaching in youth and adult education it makes sense to combine self and other organized forms of learning with mutually supportive forms so as to find an individual learning style each.

A guide that was developed by Ulrich Mueller in 2001 can help the learner to find an optimal form that suits him for learning by himself.

"Short Guide to the planning of self-organized learning projects:

### 1. Objectives

- Formulate your objective. What do you want – in general – to achieve? What tasks do you want to undertake, which situations do you want to handle more competently?
- Specify your objectives. What skills, knowledge, what position do you want to conquer?
- What sub-goals you want to achieve, and which first?

### 2. Motivation

- Get clear about your motivation: Why do you want to achieve this goal?
- What moves you?
- What is your objective in conjunction with other areas of your life? Are there any similarities / conflicts?
- Can you combine your learning with other areas of responsibility and commitment?

### 3. Time required

- How much time can and will you spend on your learning project?
- How can you create the necessary free space?
- At what fixed times can you learn?
- Make a clear timetable.



#### 4. Knowledge / previous experience

- What existing knowledge and experience do you bring with you?
- Where can you build on?

#### 5. Methods / learning strategies

- What methods / learning strategies, you know, what can you use?
- Do you master these techniques?
- Could you optimize them further?
- For which learning goals / tasks are still looking for suitable methods?
- What media forms are there for your learning project? Which media do you want to work with?

#### 6. Learning Partners

- Could you learn together with someone?
- Who could support you as a mentor / guide, advising on learning difficulties?
- Who can give you access to resources, give advice on further sources of learning?

#### 7. Controls

- How do you check whether you have achieved your goals?

This questionnaire can help you consolidate your experience up to now with and your ability to execute self-organized learning.

1. What have you learned so far in a self-organized manner?
2. What successes did you have?
3. What failures did you have?
4. What difficulties and problems did you encounter?
5. What methods and media did you use?
6. Did you learn alone or with others?
7. In which situations / conditions did you learn well? Where and when did you have positive learning experiences?
8. Would you like to have had support / assistance in your learning project? How, why?"<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Ulrich Müller, 2001



Self-organized learning can involve using a wide range of methods (eg grades, learning by ear, instructional videos, personal encounters ,...). The student, apart from searching for suitable media, is often willing to further develop his skills with teachers or learning companions. As I discovered in Section 5 of Nyckelharpa player interviews, all respondents had taken part in a workshop and found the system of workshops good, implying that all had experience in learning from teaching assistants.

#### Tasks of the facilitator

For this reason, self-directed learning often requires an appropriate form of support from professional facilitators and educational institutions. Its mission is to:

- "bring people together with similar interests or problems
- provide rooms / facilities, etc.
- provide organizational and administrative assistance
- consult about learning materials, advice on the selection
- provide learning consulting
- facilitate discussions
- provide its own expert assistance
- arrange experts
- develop learning media"<sup>11</sup>

#### Examples of self-paced learning on the nyckelharpa

As stated above, the nyckelharpa player is automatically faced with the high demands of self-paced learning because of the current teaching situation for the instrument, and so themselves must / may develop their own approach to learning. As already mentioned, there are worldwide only a very limited number of training opportunities and the teaching material is not very extensive.

To get an insight into the learning of different musical approach of nyckelharpa players, I visited a nyckelharpa workshop at the

<sup>11</sup> Ulrich Müller, 2001



Academy BURG FÜRSTENECK and interviewed four students and the tutor in the first week of January 2007. I was also able to interview another player 2 days later and 1 month later, in private, two other nyckelharpa players. In the following I would like to cite my interview questions and, following a summary of interviewees answers. The eight interviewees were 21-43 years old.

### Interview questions and explanations of these

#### 1. When did you start playing Nyckelharpa?

This question I put to my interviewees, as the teaching situation for the instrument Nyckelharpa in the last 15 years has changed much, and so the starting point to learn Nyckelharpa playing for each interviewee was probably very different.

#### 2. Why did you start playing nyckelharpa, what was your motivation and why no other instrument?

As Ulrich Müller 2001 and Malcolm Knowles in 1975 (above) cited in their studies of independent learning, the motivation for being self-taught is an essential issue.

#### 3. Have you taught yourself to play the nyckelharpa, or did you start in a course?

With this question I wanted to find out what the procedure was at the beginning of learning from the respondents.

#### 4. Did you previously play a different instrument, and did you learn it this self-taught or by a teacher?

What interests me here is whether the approach to learning of the individuals changed if they have previously learned an instrument or not.

#### 4a. Was / is much music made in your home as a child?

It would be interesting to see whether the musical habits of the parents have a direct influence on the choice of instru-



ments and musical learning or not (unfortunately I have only asked 2 of my interview partners this question).

#### 5. In what area do you use the nyckelharpa and what are your goals on the instrument? (Alone or in ensemble, private or in public)

In order to move forward in learning it is very important to set goals. I want to find out with this question whether and to what extent the interviewees have made thought about goals on the instrument ever or not.

#### 6. What is your approach to practice, are you using a set practice scheme?

Two requirements that Ulrich Müller 2001 provides (so) to the learner are creativity and problem solving skills. To learn how the interviewees demonstrate these, I asked the question about the problem of the how to practice. Do you follow a system?

#### 7. Can you read music and can you play by ear or reading or both?

With this question I wanted to find out how the interviewees make music. Do they all have the ability to use written music?

#### 8. Do you play a specific repertoire / style or are you do not set in this?

Hereby I wanted to document the range of styles used on the instrument.

#### 9. Do you learn better self-taught in combination with visiting a single course or would you find it good if it would be a popular instrument taught at music schools?

This question was to find out whether the interviewees would find it good if there was a greater range of nyckelharpa lessons available, or whether they find the current situation suitable.



## Presentation of the results

### Summary of responses:

1. Interviewees were playing at the time of the interview, between 3 months and 11 years nyckelharpa. Two-three months, two for 1 year, one for 3 years, two for 10 years and 11 years.

2. All of them said that they started to learn the instrument because they liked the sound. They had either heard it in concerts or recordings on CD. One interviewee, who has been playing for 11 years, heard the instrument on a Scandinavian holiday and then bought one in Sweden. One interviewee who has been playing the nyckelharpa for 10 years, discovered the instrument while studying at the Violin-Making School in Mittenwald and it was not only the beautiful sound of the instrument, but also the design and structure that interested her both professionally and as a result, she has become a very successful nyckelharpa builder. Another musician said that she wanted to learn a string instrument and thought violin would be difficult to learn self-taught, so she chose the key fiddle, because of its keys, and she already could play a keyboard instrument (accordion). All interviewees were greatly motivated at the beginning to learn the instrument. Especially for those who play for some time, it was not easy to buy an instrument (in the case of the violin maker to build one) because there were not so many instruments in circulation in Germany.

3. Five of the eight musicians began learning nyckelharpa by themselves, the other three went to a workshop. Two of those who have learned first alone, attended of their first course after about 3 months because they did not feel they could get ahead alone.

4. All but one of the interviewees had previously played at least one instrument (this one, however, taught himself a song on the piano as a teenager). Three interviewees had learnt their instruments through self-study (with some later course visits and teachers) and four had learnt their instruments in the usual



way with a teacher (usually in childhood). One interviewee indicated that she would take a few lessons from a violin teacher in the absence of a nyckelharpa teacher nearby.

4.a The two nyckelharpa players that I interviewed later, reported to my question that music was not and would not be made in the home. The other interviewees were unfortunately not asked this question. Therefore I can not draw any conclusions whether the musical habits of the family home has an influence or not.

5. Two interviewees play exclusively privately, and do want to perform outside the home. Three of the other six interviewees play professionally in various ensembles, including one who in addition teaches the nyckelharpa as a lecturer. The remaining three interviewees currently play semi-professionally, and want to expand in the professional field of music with the nyckelharpa. The goal was primarily to play better on the instrument. A nyckelharpa player stated that when she is past the beginner stage she would like to make music with her family, but exclusively in private. Another interviewee said, his goal for the future would be "to produce a more beautiful sound". One of the nyckelharpa players stated that other than enhancing his own sound, his goal is "to enthuse others for the instrument".

6. Seven of the interviewees said they have a practice plan, and many parallels could be seen to exercise regimens that come from the classical teaching. A mixture of technical exercises and repertoire in a continually repeated way were used. I found it amazing that there were so many similarities in the way of practice. Maybe it was because all interviewees had already participated in music education in some form. Only one interviewee indicated that she does not use an practice plan. Sometimes she would only practice technical exercises for two hours, another time by just playing repertoire.

7. Four of the eight musicians could read music very badly, but want to practice it in order to play pieces from sight. Four



can read music but also want to play by ear so as to train their musical ear. Thus, all the interviewees have the opportunity to use written music, even if it is difficult for some interviewees to use it to learn.

8. One of the interviewees plays almost exclusively Baroque music, all the others play folk and early music, however, four of which tend in the direction of baroque or classical music. Everyone is open to try new or different types of music such as tango, jazz, etc. on the instrument. All are open-minded to other types of music which are different from their normal listening and playing habits.

9. Six participants of the interview said it would be good if the nyckelharpa would be a popular instrument at music schools, two said it was not so important, because they prefer to learn self-taught and would not use the services anyway. All stated that they have visited at least one nyckelharpa workshop and it would be nice if there were more opportunities to learn the instrument, such as textbooks, video courses or more workshops.

### Analysis of the interviews

From the individual interviews, one can draw the conclusion that all the musicians are very dedicated to their instrument. They operate with great effort to learn this, for example, they drive hundreds of kilometres to a course, or have been waiting for some 1 ½ years for their instrument from the instrument maker. So one can say that all interviewees were very capable to meet the demands required by learning in this form, such as to take initiative, have high motivation, work-discipline and problem solving skills as stated by Knowles, Weinert and Müller.

The motivation is often very high in self-taught learning, so that much effort and enthusiasm is shown. One interviewee said, for example, "you alone must be aware of more things than



when you have a teacher." And another said: "I can decide when and how much I practice, the pressure from a teacher would stop me. With accordion, I stopped because the teacher did not have the same pace. "

However, by purely self-taught interviewees there is often a lack of technical proficiency on the instrument because an external feedback is missing.

A statement by an interviewee was: "Without teachers one can not progress as is needed." All were of the opinion that sooner or later, lessons with a teacher are needed if you want to progress on the instrument (the survey mainly took place on a weekend course and all interviewees had participated in at least one nyckelharpa workshop).

### Situation for nyckelharpa players

For the growing number of nyckelharpa players the learning and teaching situation in recent years has changed dramatically. That the three institutions ("Eric Sahlström Institute", "Scuola di Musica Popolare di Forlimpopoli" and "Academy BURG FÜRSTENECK) offer lessons on the nyckelharpa and cooperate with each other, it has become much easier to create your own learning concept. The lecturers or teaching assistants teach using different styles and teaching strategies based on their different countries of origin and education. Due to the cooperation of the institutions these styles and strategies are linked to each other and exchanged.

With the growing number of interest in the nyckelharpa there is now more material available about and for the instrument. First, the number of videos for and about nyckelharpa (eg [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)), have increased and there are now more and more composers who compose for nyckelharpa (eg Boris Koller, Marco Ambrosini, Johan Hedin, Lisma Project, ...). Through the amount of courses a common standard repertoire is being created which is passed on largely by rote.



Obviously, the motivation of the players is absolutely crucial, and through this the melodies are spread and access is made for a greater audience. It is evident that the ways and means mentioned in the new culture of learning, such as the use of Internet or weekend workshops are very important for nyckelharpa players and are used frequently.

Finally, I hope I could give an insight into different models of self-paced learning and make helpful suggestions in the new learning culture of the musical field for nyckelharpa players and teachers that can be used in their daily musical lives.

### Interviews:

- Interviews 02.01.2007 with:  
Gabi Dreher, Andrea Hilbert, Gunter Kopf, Ute Meyer, Annette Osann
- Interview 04.01.2007 with:  
Tilman Teuscher
- Interviews 23.01.2007 with:  
Dirk Kilian, Silvia Lehmeier
- Interview 23.01.2009 with:  
Ditte Andersson

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[www.nyckelharpa.org](http://www.nyckelharpa.org)  
[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)



Photo: Mike Lörler

### Jule Bauer, Germany

Vocal studies (main focus on medieval music) with Diane Severson and Franziska Schäfer-Vondru (Frankfurt). Master courses in singing with Cornelius Reid and Carol Baggett-Forte at Dr. Hoch's conservatory of music (Frankfurt) and with Montserrat Figueras at the academy of music Trossingen. Study of nyckelharpa at the Scuola di Musica Popolare di Forlimpopoli (Italy). First graduate of the "European Nyckelharpa training".

Study of musicology and music pedagogy at the J.W. Goethe University Frankfurt am Main.

Since 1995 she has been performing international concerts and recordings with the ensembles Helut, Sava, Triskilian, Asfur and Oni Wytars. Since 2003 she has been teaching at different courses for early music (medieval music), traditional music and world music. Since 2009 teacher for nyckelharpa at the Academy BURG FÜRSTENECK (Germany) and the Scuola di Musica Popolare di Forlimpopoli (Italy).

[www.triskilian.de](http://www.triskilian.de)



Jule Bauer at BURG FÜRSTENECK, photo Karsten Evers



## Using the Nyckelharpa as a Bowed String Instrument in Rudimentary Music Education

Experiential Reports on the Use of the Nyckelharpa in  
Teaching Music at Pre-school and Primary-school Levels

*By Susanne Brameshuber*

*Translated into English by Anne Marcodes*

Teaching music at the pre-school and primary-school levels involving children aged 4 to 8 offers them a platform to gain experience in the areas of music and dance. The Orff instrument plays a decisive role, among other things, due to its easy handling. Using the nyckelharpa in music education creates new and interesting possibilities.

How can the nyckelharpa as such be integrated in music education? Why use the nyckelharpa and not another bowed string instrument? What is a children's nyckelharpa? How do children respond to the interaction with this instrument? Which methods and possibilities exist to playfully use this instrument? Is the nyckelharpa an ideal complement to rudimentary music education?

### Index

Prolog	2
1. The Instrument	3
2. Significance of the nyckelharpa in elementary music education	5
3. Song-accompaniment and more; observations and notes on music lessons	6
4. Visions	11





## Prolog

As a music teacher I've been working for about twenty years in the field of elementary musical education with children aged between three and eight years at "Landesmusikschulwerk Oberösterreich". My main instrument is the nyckelharpa.

Giving information about all sorts of instruments is one of the major aims of my work. Various instruments are introduced in lessons, sensitive experience of different types, their specific sounds, playing techniques...

Bowed string instruments like violin, viola, cello and double bass are one option, but can only be used as 'drone' instruments. There isn't enough time for practising precise fingering and intonation, moreover it would contradict my main aim: to impart basic musical experiences. So the nyckelharpa with its keyboard, which enables the player to produce music in an easy way, seems to be ideal.

Whereas it requires years of practising to produce precise intonation on violin or 'cello the nyckelharpa beginner will succeed almost immediately: pressing the key shortens the string and changes the tone.

This makes playing more effortless and encourages playing melodies.

Annette Osann, maker of my nyckelharpa, made a children's instrument for her then three year old daughter. Fascinated by its sight and sound I had the vision to work with this instrument in elementary music lessons.

But is the nyckelharpa really suitable as an elementary musical instrument?

I commissioned two children's nyckelharpas, which I use regularly in my lessons at "Landesmusikschule Thalheim" since March 2011.

This is a documentary of the significant developments.



## 1. The Instrument



### Measures:

longitude: ca. 63 cm

latitude: ca. 14cm

weight: ca. 600g

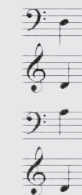
### Strings:

small D: drone string

D1: resonant string

small A: drone string

D1: main string



**The keyboard** is set chromatically; it's got one octave (D1-D2) and 12 keys.

### Bow:

length: 27 cm,

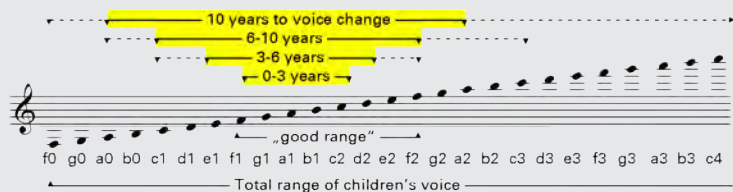
stringing: 22 cm.



### 1.1 Thoughts on the tuning

The 'scale' of the nyckelharpa should correspond the 'scale' of the children's voice and it should be possible to combine it with the mallet instruments, which are mainly tuned in the key of C major.

The below given table shows the ideal 'range' of the children's voice (three-six years, the average age of my pupils): from e1 as the lowest tone up to e2. The task was to find a compromise. Also considering instrument-making aspects, we decided to go for a tuning in D major.



(Andreas Mohr: „Die Kinderstimme“ – Funktion und Pflege,  
Einführungsreferat, <http://www.kinderstimm-bildung.eu/funktionundpflege.pdf>)



Elisabeth (4J-11M)



Jonas (4J-8M)



Raphael (4J-10M)



## 2. Significance of the nyckelharpa in elementary music education

### 2.1. The passive role

In my lessons I offer a various number of different instruments.

They always sit in a certain place: percussion instruments on a black blanket,, mallet instruments and nyckelharpas in a corner of the room, nyckelharpas visible in an open case. Not all of the instruments are in constant use, depending on the children's preferences and the individual course of lessons. In such a case the nyckelharpa should be just usually perceived. The passive contact encourages valuable sensations as:

*'There's another instrument, it sits in a case, it comes with a little stick, it looks a bit like a guitar.'*

There might come up questions like:

*'How does it sound? – How do you play it? – Is it noisy? – Heavy or light? – I'd like to give it a try!...'*

### 2.2. The active role

#### 2.2.1. Introduction of the instrument:

The case is closed. The children have to guess what might be in it, the flaps are opened, the lid is lifted, the cover removed... what an exciting 'birth'!

Usually everyone is keen on trying the instrument. Often they want to see me playing it. By watching me they learn about the correct handling of the instrument before they give it a try. First we try different ways to hold the instrument. The entire group is asked to help the pupil, if necessary. Very soon we can hear a sound: a beaming smile – another try – next one, please.



### 2.2.2. Games with the nyckelharpa

**'Loud mail':** each pupil is choosing an instrument and starting in a specific rhythm. This rhythm is taken up and repeated by the next child, the next one, the next one. When everyone's finished, the next pupil starts a new (should the nyckelharpa be part of the game, we can try different bow strokes, different strings). Variation: swap the instruments.

**'Marching tunes':** each pupil with the instrument of his choice. Each step is accompanied by a specific sound (nyckelharpa: coordination of steps and bow strokes). Variation: just one pupil walks and plays, while the others stand still. If the musician files up behind the back of another child it's his turn.

**Solo/tutti:** All pupils march and play. As soon as one child climbs on a chair, everyone is mute and stands still, just the child on the chair plays a solo. As soon as the soloist finishes, everyone starts to move again.

## 3. Song-accompaniment and more; observations and notes on music lessons

### 3.1. Documentation / March 2010 Landesmusikschule Thalheim / first contacts

#### Reflection

- The oldest child was six years, seven months old, the youngest four years, nine months.
- All children showed great interest (apart from one, 23 children wanted to play).
- All of them managed to produce a nice sound by bowing the strings. The preferred strings differed from child to child.
- The size of the instrument was ideal in most cases, only Catharina's (four years, ten months) arms were slightly too short.
- Most children managed to play with a very relaxed and 'natural' bow hold.



Magnus (4J-9M)



Catharina (4J-10M)



Alban (5J-4M)



Elias (5J-8M)




Lisa (6J)



### 3.2. Documentation / January 2011

#### Landesmusikschule Thalheim / Song-accompaniment

Song: „Beim verfallnen Geisterschloß“ (Gerda Bächli)<sup>1</sup>

Pattern of accompaniment: arpeggio ⇒ 



Lisa (7J-2M)



Elias (6J-6M)

#### Reflection

- All children were ten months older.
- They still showed increasing interest in playing the instrument.
- Jonas tried fingering with the left hand and discovered various notes.
- Playing arpeggios went down well.

### 3.3. Documentation March 2011 /

<sup>1</sup> Gerda Bächli is a famous Swiss composer of songs and music for children. Unfortunately, we did not achieve the permission from the editor to print her tunes here



### 3rd year elementary music education

Transcript of a lesson, March, 28th, 5.00-6.40 p.m.

Group of six children: third year elementary musical education („music workshop“): Lisa, Fabian, Magdalena, Elias, Ruth, Lea,

aged: between six and seven.

We've been regularly working with the nyckelharpas for about one year now.

#### 3.3.1. Wellcome Rondo: „Jetzt beginnts, wir fangen an“<sup>2</sup> (by Werner Beidinger)

Proceedings of a lesson:

##### Jetzt beginnts

(Werner Beidinger)



Jetzt be-ginnts, wir fan-gen an! Je-der spielt bei uns gleich mit so gut er kann!

Sin - gen, tan - zen, mu - si - zern! Und man-ches Neu-e, aus-pro-biern!

Each child chooses an instrument to improvise the verses of the song; some minutes to experiment in advance. After finishing the song all children gather in a circle in the centre of the room.

The chorus of the song goes: "Jetzt beginnt's" (as given above)

**Instruments on offer:** guiro, small drums, castagnettes, alto xylophones, two children's nyckelharpas.

<sup>2</sup> With kind permission of Werner Beidinger



### Choice of instruments:

- Magdalena and Fabian: nyckelharpas,
- Elias: xylophone,
- Lea, Lisa and Ruth: percussion instruments.

### Observations:

- *Magdalena* uses all strings of the instrument. Her bow strokes are fluent with regular up- and down bows. she also plays notes of different length for about half a minute. Her way of playing is inventive, full of relish, commitment and rhythmical improvisation.
- *Fabian's* performance was shorter, choosing the notes considerably, fluent bow strokes, up- and down bows.
- *Both* children played exclusively open strings.

### 3.3.2.. Song-accompaniment ("Geisterschloss"<sup>3</sup>)

**Line up:** nyckelharpas and mallet instruments:

*Elias* and *Lisa* go for the nyckelharpas. They want to play this instrument at our public performance on May 20th. Today we're practising the accompaniment for the second time: that's a rhythmical pattern on the D drone.

First part:

Second part:





and nyckelharpa

Mallet Instruments	Children's Nyckelharpa
<b>Visual aspect:</b> Visual invitation to playing: most children take up the mallets immediately and are very keen on giving it a try.	<b>Visual aspect:</b> Visual invitation to playing: the sight provokes awe, curiosity, joy. One can sense, that most children are charmed by the instrument. They see the nyckelharpa as a highlight, a climax and an enrichment of their music lessons.
<b>Tuning:</b> Constant tuning – they hardly ever are out of tune.	<b>Tuning:</b> Strings can 'drop' – they have to be tuned.
<b>Acoustic aspect:</b> The hearing is trained in the tonal system (tones and semi tones). Tones which lie 'in between' cannot be experienced. The quality of the sound is gained by the stroke of the mallets.	<b>Acoustic aspect:</b> Hearing abilities are developed and trained through the tuning experience. The quality of the sound is gained by bowing the strings. New valuable sensitive experiences through new sound effects and sound colours.
<b>Emotional aspect:</b> Playing with mallets is quite attractive, motivating and challenging.	<b>Emotional aspect:</b> Producing sounds by stroking a bow makes curious and gives way to valuable new experiences. Motivating in a highly emotional way.
<b>Cognitive aspect:</b> Stimulation of both hemispheres of the brain and training in coordination by use of both hands.	<b>Cognitive aspect:</b> Coordination between both hemispheres of the brain is more extensively trained and activated through different activities of the left (fingering) and the right (bowing) hand.
<b>Technical aspect:</b> The correct hold and use of the mallet has to be trained.	<b>Technical aspect:</b> Correct bowhold and positioning of the instrument has to be trained and that takes some time. Individual holds and positions are possible.

#### 4.1.2. A comparison between violin and nyckelharpa



Violin	Children's Nyckelharpa
<b>Strings:</b> Four strings: small G, D1, A1, E2	<b>Strings:</b> Four strings: small D (drone string), D1 (resonant string), small A, D1
<b>Size of the instrument:</b> Different sizes, suitable for all age groups, even for very young children.	<b>Size of the instrument:</b> Suitable for young children. (Different models for older children and adults available.)
<b>Producing of tones:</b> A sequence of tones through fingering. This requires constant practising, well-trained hearing abilities and expertise. In elementary music education the violin should be used only as a drone instrument.	<b>Producing of tones:</b> A sequence of tones through pressing the keys. It is possible to hit the right note without a properly trained hearing. Practising and expertise are necessary. The keyboard is the huge advantage of the nyckelharpa: in elementary music education it can be used as a drone instrument as well as a melody instrument.
<b>Position:</b> The correct position is very important and has to be trained very precisely.	<b>Position:</b> Individual position, no time-consuming training. Each child finds his own position
<b>Bow stroke:</b> Producing of tones with a relatively long bow. Correct bowing techniques require a very long time of practising.	<b>Bow stroke:</b> Individual bow hold through experience while playing.

#### 4.1.3. Aims of the curriculum of elementary music education



(Conference of the music schools of Austria) encourage the use of this instrument

- Basic playing on traditional instruments.
- Experiencing different ways to produce tones.
- Deriving pleasure from playing music, the sound of the voice, the body movements.
- Getting to know material and different sounds.
- Learning to treat the instruments carefully.
- Getting to know different types of instruments. Trying and describing them, filing them into different groups.
- Song-accompaniment.
- Correct handling of mallet instrument s and other basic percussion instruments (use of mallets) – learning how to produce various sounds and dynamics.
- Finding differentiating ways of expression with voice, body, instruments and other objects.
- Discovering and experiencing , recognizing of musical phenomena through playful acting with material, objects and instruments.

#### 4.2. Vision 2: The nyckelharpa as a new instrument in music schools

A wish? A vision? Future prospects? Anyway – there are a lot of tasks and challenges waiting to be tackled.

In “Landesmusikschule Thalheim” I found a lot of support and encouragement in using the nyckelharpa in elementary music education.

So would it be possible to install the subject nyckelharpa in Austria?

#### 4.3. Vision 3: The nyckelharpa as a subject taught at music college

A post-graduate course for trained music teachers would be helpful to popularize the instrument and support developing professional standards of playing.



#### 4.4. Vision 4: The nyckelharpa as an orchestra-instrument

The nyckelharpa in viola/violin tuning is well suitable to be played in an orchestra. It's sound mingles nicely with other bowed string instruments.

The idea of a nyckelharpa-orchestra would be exciting – this should also be the right setting for the use of the bass-nyckelharpa ('cello-tuning).

#### 4.5. Vision 5: The nyckelharpa as a suitable instrument for adult beginners

Experience shows that this instrument can be learned properly in a relatively short time. This fact makes it also interesting for adult beginners. The 'nyckelharpa-virus' has been spreading very fast in Austria. Five aficionados in my circle of friends already bought an instrument, which they now play regularly and enthusiastically!

That's why – in my opinion – the future looks bright for the nyckelharpa. It might find it's place in music education.

5 July 2011

*Susanne Brameshuber*

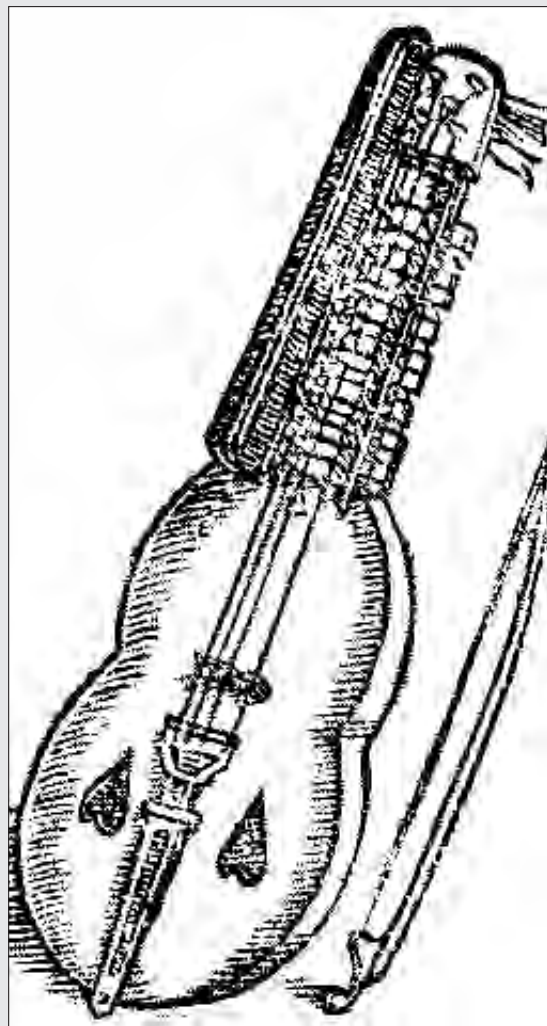
#### Susanne Brameshuber (Austria)

Elementary music teacher (EMP), a musician for nyckelharpa, teaching at several music schools in the province of Upper Austria and in adult education (training for nursery school pedagogues) in the subject EMP.



All photos: Susanne Brameshuber

Photo: Hans Brameshuber



## The Search for a Methodology in Devising Exercises Suitable for Different Types of Nyckelharpa, of Repertoire and Modes of Execution

*By Marco Ambrosini*

This article is a short dissertation on the difficulties teachers can encounter in the compilation of exercises suitable for different types of nyckelharpas and tunings, especially in the educational reality of Continental Europe, where so called “Swedish” and “Continental” versions happily co-exist, and on possible solutions to such hurdles.

The nyckelharpa (seen not as a specific instrument following construction, aesthetic and sound-ideal schemes as in use at the time of Eric Sahlström, but rather as a large family of stringed instruments equipped with mechanical keyboard), for historical and cultural reasons and, indeed, for reasons strictly related to a certain type of musical repertoire, is presented today in many forms, extensions and tunings.

Such reality baffles every player coming in touch for the first time with the instrument, and represents a considerable challenge for those who are active in its teaching. This is especially true in the educational reality of continental Europe, where so-called “Swedish” and “Continental” versions happily coexist, without forgetting some imaginative experiments in recent years, whereby some instrument makers are making more or less efficient changes, both aesthetic and structural all the way to futuristic proposals for electrification and MIDI implementation into the nyckelharpa.

So here’s a brief (as simplistic) overview of the instruments which we are usually faced with, in our dealings with students:



1. Instruments with an extension of contralto (mainly from Sweden),  
tuned I = A, II = C, III = G, IV = C (sixth, fourth, fifth)  
with three rows of keys on the first three strings.
2. Instruments with an extension of contralto (mainly from Sweden),  
tuned I = A, II = D, III = G, IV = C (fifth, fifth, fifth)  
with three rows of keys on the first three strings.
3. Instruments with an extension of contralto (mainly of continental origin),  
tuned I = A, II = C, III = G, IV = C (sixth, fourth, fifth)  
with four rows of keys.
4. Instruments with an extension of contralto (mainly of continental origin),  
tuned I = A, II = D, III = G, IV = C (fifth, fifth, fifth)  
with four rows of keys.
5. Instruments with an extension of soprano  
tuned I = E, II = A, III = D, IV = G (fifth, fifth, fifth)  
with three rows of keys on the first three strings.
6. Instruments with an extension of soprano  
tuned I = E, II = A, III = D, IV = G (fifth, fifth, fifth)  
with four rows of keys.

Here follows a summary table of the 6 types of the afore mentioned types of nyckelharpa:

Instrument	I (1 <sup>st</sup> string)	II (2 <sup>nd</sup> string)	III (3 <sup>rd</sup> string)	IV (4 <sup>th</sup> string)	Rows of keys
<b>Contralto with three rows of keys</b>					
#1	A (la)	C (do)	G (sol)	C (do)	3
#2	A (la)	D (re)	G (sol)	C (do)	3
<b>Contralto with four rows of keys</b>					
#3	A (la)	C (do)	G (sol)	C (do)	4
#4	A (la)	D (re)	G (sol)	C (do)	4
<b>Soprano with „violin“ tuning</b>					
#5	E (mi)	A (la)	D (re)	G (sol)	3
#6	E (mi)	A (la)	D (re)	G (sol)	4



The problems confronting a teacher, when he has to manage several different instruments in the same school class, are evident. In fact we are talking about instruments belonging to the same family, but maybe so different from each other as a violin may be from a viola, or a viola da gamba from a modern double-bass.

The key issue is to understand in what manner this heterogeneity could be a problem or might rather be a chance for the teacher and for the student, whether he has been previously practicing another string instrument, or even if he approaches the nyckelharpa from scratch and without a great knowledge of music theory or practice.

Indeed, I think that the different features in design and tuning go deeper than we might think at first.

On one hand we have the so-called “Swedish” tuning (sixth-fourth-fifth), which is usually with instruments sounding very bright and with a certain predominance of resonance on the first string, on the other hand the so-called “Continental” tuning (fifth-fifth-fifth), which instead is mainly used on instruments of continental manufacture, favours a greater balance between all melody strings, with no preference for a particular register.

The instruments of the first type will certainly be more appropriate to perform a typical Scandinavian repertoire of “nyckelharpaesque” music, often focused on a performance accompanied by “empty” strings used as drones. An instrument with a fourth-fifth ratio in the three lower strings (so with an interval of octave between the II and IV string) will still have a strong and beautiful resonance, with a sound at the same time open and bright in the melody and warm and mellow in the lower strings. This effect is often enhanced by the use of solid metal for the first string.

By contrast, a nyckelharpa built strictly for to be tuned in fifths will normally be better suited to perform other types of repertoire, which can range from medieval music to contemporary avant-garde.



One big difference – certainly due to historical reasons, but also to the different tuning system of the instruments, and consequently to the allocation of the notes to the various keys – is the preference (which I observed) of the players who mainly use the first type of instrument, to relate to the keyboard in a free manner, without being constrained by classical violin-type positions. One such approach is more like a practical piano fingering, functional and not strictly related to the “classical” positions of the left hand, but rather to its practical and logistical function, related to the development of the melodic line.

Musicians who prefer a fifth tuning will usually be more inclined to consider their instrument the same way as a “semi-mechanical” viola and so try to use the left hand in a position-related modality, in fact using more or less consciously solmization parameters in search of suitable positions to perform a particular melody.

I think both methods have their advantages and their faults: in the case of nyckelharpa we are confronted with a very particular instrument that transcends the usual “forma mentis” that we normally (and, unfortunately, automatically) assume when approaching a classical musical instrument.

Let us briefly consider the pros and cons of the two different approaches:

- First method (approach to the keyboard with a piano style): the students learn their repertoire memorizing hand positions and sometimes highly complicated fingerings in relation to a particular tune. The implementation of these fingerings is absolutely perfect and beautifully functional to the performance of an already mastered repertoire, attaining very high levels of executive perfection in a relatively short time.



Perhaps the only disadvantage (of this method) is the difficulty in reading scores “a prima vista” and the performance of unusual melodic phrases, chords and arpeggios.

- Second method (approach to the keyboard with a “violin” style): the students organize the various fingering solutions according to the classical positions used on other stringed instruments. The ease of transposition resulting from the tuning in fifths, associated with the practice of position shifting, allow for a quick mastery of “prima vista” reading, and possibly even a quick and easy exchange of voices between the musicians. But beware: unfortunately, musicians who only follow this method, will be less likely to achieve a blind control of the keyboard (always seen in relation to a given melody) than students who mainly follow the “piano style”.

From these considerations came the desire to find, compile and test different types of combined exercises (involving both the left and right hand), possibly suitable to almost any type of nyckelharpa, and therefore convenient for their use in mixed classes – encouraging (and maybe even forcing) students to become accustomed using both methods in daily practice or, even better, to find their personal synthesis between the two.

Also very important, it would be good to encourage students, through these exercises, to tune their instrument in different ways, thus achieving a high flexibility, both mental and executive.

At this point, I will introduce some examples of exercises designed in exactly this perspective, written for contralto nyckelharpa using both tunings (which for simplicity will be called simply “Swedish” and “Continental”, i.e. respectively the sixth-fourth-fifth and the fifth-fifth-fifth tuning) with the aim to encourage the player to experiment and assess for themselves the possibilities offered by both fingering techniques.



First, an example of a simple exercise especially written for practicing string changes, conceived for the “Continental” tuning:

The same exercise for the “Swedish” tuning:

The differences are perhaps more substantial than might seem at first sight.

Note for example in bar 7 of the first exercise the unison interval on two strings. This is lacking in the second version, since the characteristic of the coincidence in tone between a lower fingered (4th finger) and a higher open string is typical of tuning in fifths and not for a sixth-fourth-fifth system.

A good opportunity to implement a unison interval playing on two strings comes again a couple of bars later, here again first for the “Continental” tuning:



In this case, we can easily compile the exercise for the “Swedish” tuning:

If our attention is limited to string changes, using only open strings, it is much easier to translate the exercises from one tuning system into the other.

First again the “Continental” tuning:



And then the “Swedish”:

Another issue that arises in writing exercises for different instruments of the nyckelharpa family is the musical key used in the scores. It is in this case a relatively recent debate, mostly unnoticed in the Scandinavian milieu, due to the wider dissemination on the continent of instruments with four rows of keys.

The Swedish instrument, with its tuning, the three rows of keys and the use of the fourth string as a drone, does not require writing notes below the third open string (G). For this reason the Swedish repertoire is normally written in the treble clef.

The case of four-rows-keyboard nyckelharpa is clearly different. How to write down the notes made possible by the keys on the fourth string? In this case we can find (coexisting!) a few different ways of writing.

The most frequently used keys are four:

1. treble clef (G clef)
2. treble clef octave lower (G clef)
3. bass clef (F clef)
4. Alto clef (C clef)



Let's take for example a simple melody with an extension on all four strings:

We see how in the third and fourth bar there are several notes under the staff, which are not very comfortable to read. To overcome this problem some authors prefer to insert an appropriate lower-octave treble clef, often even in the midst of a bar:

Other writers prefer to use for this purpose the inclusion of the bass clef:

A practice from some composers of contemporary music seems to be the use of the alto key in their compositions. This, because of the incorrect assumption that – having the instrument an extension similar to that of the viola – most musicians will be quite used to read in the typical key of this instrument.

This would appear to facilitate the reading of the melody, without changing key in the middle of its progress .



In reality, the advantages afforded us by the use of this key are not obvious (as I believe, they have never been evident, if not for historical reasons, even in its use for the viola da braccio). Most contemporary musicians prefer to read music in the treble or in the bass key – see how the same melody would look, when written entirely in lower-octave treble clef:



The small difference of a line or a space between a key and the other does not justify in my opinion the use of the alto key, except in the case when the usual instrument of the performer is the viola.

Another peculiarity of the nyckelharpa is certainly the use of the short bow typical for of this instrument.

Its length, much shorter than bows made for other string instruments, both traditional and classic, requires a differential use of this tool. While this would seem to pose problems, for example in playing long notes or legato, on the other hand it will offer a higher manoeuvrability, because of its tension, weight and nervation.

This type of bow can be used almost like a percussion instrument, allowing the performer to play easily very sharp, defined accents and rhythmic patterns – in a way which is almost unknown or at least very difficult to attain on other string instruments.

Exercises should absolutely take account of this fact as well, offering the student help in overcoming difficulties but at the same time also highlighting the particularity of our nyckelharpa bow.

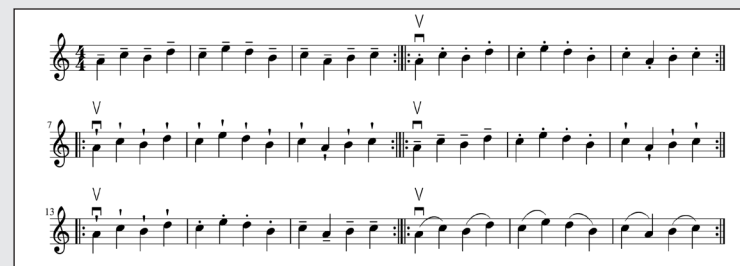
An exercise written especially for the right hand should not therefore include big difficulties for the left hand, so we can



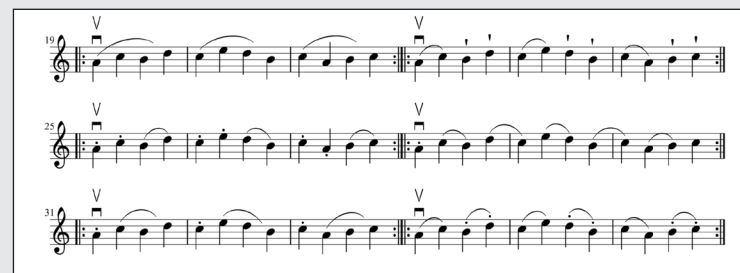
focus all our attention on the bow. In my opinion, however, the use of a little melodic phrase is in this case more effective than practicing the same exercise on open strings.

From this consideration comes the idea to combine different articulations with a small, easy melodic line. In this exercise, from bar 1 to 9, every “cycle” of 3 bars has its own articulation.

Starting from bar 10 we find a different articulation for every bar, and from bar 16 the first legato strokes.



Proceeding in this exercise we'll discover the same melodic line, but this time accompanied by various alternating articulations and legato combinations, aimed at improving flexibility and mastery of each previously learned bow technique.





The exercise continues with the addition of accent-independent bow changes, sometimes downward, sometimes upward. Starting from bar 44 there are also different accents within the same bow stroke.

Another example follows, that uses the same simple melodic line but in this case transposed down a fifth. Now the frequent changes of articulation and the accents at each bow change are joined at bar 12 by three-tones-legato phrases (asynchronous, relative to the binary rhythm of the melody and so a short

anticipation of more poly-rhythmic exercises):

If we have the possibility to involve more performers, we can combine articulations with dynamics and play the tune as a 2- or 3- voices canon, using again the same melodic line:



Concerning the use of the bow as a rhythmic instrument, we have the uncomplicated possibility to “import” several good exercises originally construed for percussion instruments, even in this case using the same (or another) easy melody:



The task of the teacher is, in my opinion, to motivate a beginner and clarify from his first approach that, in the case of nyckelharpa, we are confronted with an instrument which only partially can be compared with traditional and classical bowed string instruments, and not necessarily for the single reason that it is fitted with a mechanical keyboard.

Our instrument has many very different features, not only due to the different tunings and to its special structural properties, but also because of the particular position of the instrument during the performance, the presence of sympathetic strings and the characteristics of the bow.

It is therefore a matter of helping the student to approach the nyckelharpa with an open mind, by encouraging the practice of reading in various keys, in of experimenting with different positions, tunings and techniques of both hands, applying – especially in the case of the left hand – both the traditional Swedish and the classical method.

In this way we will have soon a generation of performers open to any musical experience and repertoire, be it traditional or belonging to the field of early music or avant-garde.

Certainly a desirable goal, for an instrument that has managed to survive, largely thanks to countless (and often unnamed) Swedish musicians and instrument makers, from the late Middle Ages to the present day.

An exciting musical adventure, and surely worthy of note, which I hope will continue for at least as many centuries in the future.



## Marco Ambrosini, Germany/Italy

Marco Ambrosini studied violin and composition at the Musical Institute “G.B.Pergolesi” in Ancona and at the Conservatory “G. Rossini” in Pesaro, Italy. His eminent tutor was Adrio Casagrande.

Ambrosini discovered the nyckelharpa in the 80’s, and immediately fell in love with its beautiful form and its marvellous sound. He started using this instrument in concerts in the 90’s and very quickly shifted his attention from the violin to the nyckelharpa. He performs as soloist and in several orchestras and ensembles for early and contemporary music, at various venues, from Vancouver to Moscow.

He is also active as a composer and often writes for nyckelharpa, especially for nyckelharpa ensembles.

Ambrosini works as a teacher for early music and nyckelharpa at the “Academy BURG FÜRSTENECK” (D) and at the “Scuola di Musica Popolare di Forlimpopoli” (I), both birthplaces of the European Nyckelharpa Training.

He is presently writing a book of daily exercises for advanced nyckelharpa players.

[www.ambrosini.de](http://www.ambrosini.de)

(English language revision by Gerard Vespignani)

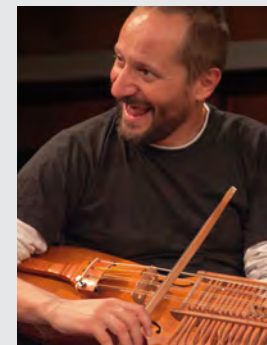


Photo: Hermann Kurz



## Body, Instrument and Swing, one Unit

*By Josefina Paulson*

When the music is moving  
 When movement is music  
 Where the beat becomes an impulse to dance  
 Where every note is a word in a story

In this article I want to draw attention to the connection between what we hear, what we see and what we emotionally experience when we listen to or play music. Is the music a result of the movement in the body or is the movement a reflection of the music that is played? Is a tapping foot an engine or a bi-product of the music? And how can we use this in learning methods and adult education?

I have chosen to look at the importance of bringing the movement into the musician's body as a musical expression, from both a musical and an ergonomic perspective.

### Music and Dancing

In many cultures there is no difference between dancing and making music. The two words go under the same definition because they are considered to be that closely connected. No music, no dancing and why music if there is no dancing to it. That might seem like an extreme way of simplifying the subject, when there are many ways to experience and enjoy music, but it also shows us how obviously connected these two matters are, music and movement, to some people.

In Swedish traditional (folk) music, most of the repertoire for the nyckelharpa is used for dancing. In the Swedish history of



playing this music, there is no percussionist in tradition, the nyckelharpa player needed to have a strong feeling for groove and speed to create a party mood for the dancers asking for the music at weddings, birthdays and different occasions. With this as a background, it is important for me as a musician to have the groove in focus. In my opinion, the groove, the speed and the character of the music is so much easier to understand if you first put it into your body and let your actual body become a part of your instrument.

### One Unit

Just like singers carry their instrument in the body, I think all instrumentalists would gain from looking at their body as a part of the actual instrument. The body and the instrument as one unit, where the musician's body is just an extension of the instrument. In the case of the nyckelharpa this could mean to keep a posture that gives the instrument the best way to resonate and to optimise the possibilities for vibrations in the body of the instrument. It might also mean a good way of using the bow hand and the right arm, by placing the elbow as a light and flexible weight over the string holder. Using the right arm in this way, leaves the left hand totally free to run over the keys with ease. A relaxed neck and back, where only the needed muscles in the torso are activated, gives a breathing pattern that puts the body in a calm state. This helps with everything from handling nerves in the moment of action, to an effective and relaxed way of learning, where many students often forget to breathe during a state of high concentration. A well tuned body is as important as a well tuned instrument for creating good music. The better tuned, the more possible it is to express yourself freely in your musical story.

There are different ways of receiving information, some prefer the visual way, others are more kinesthetic-orientated and



some auditory. This means that in the meeting with the audience, from a scenic perspective, the visual way of playing might be of high importance to some of the listeners' way of experiencing the music, that might "hear" the music with their eyes. By using this understanding in your performance you are adding another dimension to your music. That might mean a dancer moving to the music, but it might also be the musician moving, the line of the bow arm, the tapping of feet, or just the pulse reflected in the movement of the body. A movement that is directly connected to the musical experience. A tapping foot, a grooving body, the precision of the muscles in the bowing hand all give detailed information on the same story that the music is telling, when communicated with a responsive audience.

As well as adding another dimension to the music, placing the music in the body by using the movement also creates a sustainable musicianship from an ergonomic point of view. There are lots of keys to achieving this, one is by using the tools from mental training. To try to describe this we use the terms, "the body's fundamental tension", (only the muscular tension that is needed for the actual situation) adding the "tension of the situation" (the additional tension that takes place for example in a nervous situation) gives the "current tension for this specific situation" When movement is allowed in the musicians body, locked joints, static muscular tension are automatically avoided. By doing this scanning of your body, you gain the knowledge of this actual situation and that makes it possible to know what to work with.

In my work as a musician, with my background in mental training and as a yoga instructor, I see how many aspects and tools from these subjects would be of great importance to add in learning methods for adults, such as the importance of physical and mental strength and also the awareness of breathing patterns.



## Mental Training

One of the tools that is used in mental training is how different aspects are directly connected to each other, and therefore you can influence one area in your life, by working through another. "THOUGHT" "IMAGE" "ACTION" and "FEELING" are all connected and influenced by each other.

### Thought

It is said that 90% of what we think of everyday is routine, a habit, just to facilitate our everyday life. When we understand this, we can choose, and make sure that this pattern of thoughts, that goes through our mind every day, is positive and works in the direction we wish. Awareness gives control that gives freedom. We can create a positive circle as well as a negative.

### Image

Our mind works with pictures. That is shown in the way we create thoughts in the mind, more or less consciously. A good example of this aspect is how ineffective the use of negations is in teaching and learning. Because the word "no" cannot translate into a picture, it will instead give us the opposite picture, by excluding the word "not" and create a picture out of the definite. If I ask you NOT to think of taking a big bite of a juicy lemon, I am sure that is exactly what you are going to think of. Just the thought might even start a physical reaction, start producing saliva and result in a chill. This reaction is triggered, even though you know that in real life you did not bite into a lemon. That is how strongly the thought and the images impact on our physical reactions. This is possible to use even in a situation of learning.

To connect an image, or a feeling to every tune or a musical story you want to tell, makes it easier to put the body into the right emotional state/mood, to express yourself in music.



## Action and Breathing

Breathing and posture have a great impact on our health and are directly connected to the chemical processes in the body. A stressed breathing pattern, that is located high up in the chest, will stimulate the body producing and releasing adrenaline and prepares the body for a "flight or fight" mood, which is not ideal for example in a learning situation.

A deeper breathing pattern, that activates the diaphragm, uses the whole chest for breathing, and therefore calms it down and gives a signal to the body to produce endogenous calming endorphins, that set the body into a relaxed and receiving state. The breathing controls our mental and physical reactions. You can put the body into different states of mind and emotions just by learning how to control the breathing patterns.

### Feeling

We can affect our feeling by consciously choosing patterns of behaviour. As well as it is hard to say yes and shake your head as a no, it is hard to say you are in deep sorrow and smile. The thought, the feeling and the body are closely connected in behaviour patterns. The same comes to expressing music. It is easier to musically express a rhythmical experience if you first express it with your body, in a movement. You could say that the body speaks for itself or leads us into different ways of making music.

When it comes to learning methods for adults, I think mental training and its way of working with self-confidence is of great importance. Many students carry a feeling of inadequacy in a new learning situation that works against effective learning. More often than kids, adults struggle with the inner critic, that is possible to change with tools from mental training.

The link between what we can hear, what we can see and what we emotionally experience when we listen to or make music ourselves, might in many ways be movement. The movement



of the musician's body and instrument, the movement we experience when we groove to the music, or even the emotional element in the music, that moves us.

Where every note is a word in a story  
Where the beat becomes an impulse to dance  
When the music is moving  
When movement is music

### Josefina Paulson (Sweden)

Nyckelharpist, Lic Mental trainer and yoga instructor.

A modern musician with tradition, where the keyed fiddle sounds like nyckelharpa and brings an earthy taste into genres other than the traditional music. Josefina Paulson embraces the instrument's many possibilities, from the roots of the Uppland tradition, to its large crown of new influences from other cultures. A musician standing grounded in her own tradition, exploring new territory.

In Delsbo in 2008, Josefina was awarded the title "riksspelman" (national folk musician) by the Zorn Jury with the motivation "for playing the nyckelharpa lively and skillful, in the tradition of Uppland" In Västmanland, in 2009 she received the Cultural Award from VLT on the ground "Josefina IS music" At the moment Josefina is studying at the Royal Academy of Music in Stockholm, bachelor in music, with the keyed fiddle as main instrument.

[www.josefinapaulson.se](http://www.josefinapaulson.se)



Photo: Mia Marin

## The Language of Mind and Body in Playing the Nyckelharpa

*By Corrado Bungaro*

The body is music. In every gesture we make there is a rhythm, a time and a sound whose relationships are coordinated by the brain.

Motor coordination is a human quality which is too often forgotten. Its infinite potential is, in fact, that which enables human beings to make appropriate movements fluidly in order to do everything they want to do, from the most humble and banal activities to the most incredibly complicated ones. Being aware of this quality, caring for it and nurturing it means nourishing the relationship between body and mind: coordination is actually the "meeting" point between gesture and thought, action and concentration. It is also the starting point for quality research.

*My body is more than a body, I don't have a body, I am the body.*

Emmanuel Mornier

Generally in playing an instrument, the development of precise movement awareness, which involves implementing the principles of coordination, is reflected in the quality of a performance, in the freedom of movement and in the avoidance of muscular-skeleton problems.

In the study and the playing of an atypical instrument such as the nyckelharpa, the relationship with the body is especially important due to the following characteristics:



- The atypical shape of the nyckelharpa, which, although being classed as a bowed string instrument, has a keyboard as well as a bow;
- The specific weight of the instrument (almost 2 kilos);
- The reduced length of the bow;
- The presence of 16 strings (4 melody and 12 sympathetic) with the consequently high tension that the body of the instrument has to withstand;
- The richness of the harmonics produced by the vibration of the 12 sympathetic strings.

## Position and posture

The first aspect to consider when taking up the nyckelharpa is the relationship between body and instrument, vital in the understanding of the position to adopt while playing; this is also one of the key areas from a didactic point of view.

In nyckelharpa didactic history and musical praxis, no single position has ever been adopted as being the 'correct' one in either Swedish or continental usage. This is due to the instrument's peculiarities that make it a rare, fascinating and unique member of the large family of bowed string instruments. The player must find a point of balance between the body of the instrument and his own body, aiming at the best possible compromise between body comfort and optimum musical performance. In the personal choice of position the following will be determining factors:

- The length, the shape and the weight of the instrument, given the great variety of models produced
- The anatomy and shape of the player's body

Having said this, I must point out that descriptions of playing positions do exist in the history and in the musical praxis of the nyckelharpa. These have led over time to simplifications of the following kind:



### A) "Seated position" or "Position on a chair"

This position in all of its variants allows a better distribution of the instrument's weight over the whole body and is much more suitable for longer musical sessions. Moreover, it allows the player to see the keyboard and the single buttons during the performance. The possible disadvantages are the unnatural curvature of the player's back and spinal column and the load on the right side of the player's body (shoulder, hand, arm).

### B) "Standing position"

The standing position allows more freedom of movement and of body expression and it favours a better musical performance. It limits the possibility of looking at the keyboard while playing and it has proved itself to be tiring during longer musical sessions due to the load on the player's spinal column and back.

Furthermore, we can also distinguish between:

#### "Aerial position"

In these cases the use of the support belt is fundamental; it passes around the neck to find a point of balance between the right side and left side of the body and allows the instrument to be played in an "aerial" way; in other words, hung from the body with the player either in a sitting or standing position.

NB! The varieties of belts used in playing the nyckelharpa merit a deeper analysis.

#### "Contact position"

In these cases the nyckelharpa is rested on the player's legs and touches the lower part of the body. Consequently there is no need for the support belt.

What is the right position then? Which is the 'most correct'? It is impossible to give a single answer here, as there are multiple factors that influence the choice.

The shape, length, and particularly the nyckelharpa's weight, together with the musician's anatomic structure are the basic elements that will determine the best solution for each person.



The 'right' position has to be the one that is most natural for the individual; that is, one that allows the body to move naturally and expressively, particularly the parts that are called on directly to play, but also one that doesn't inhibit normal breathing.

According to modern theory it is the instrument that must adapt itself to our anthropometric characteristics and not the opposite as used to happen in the past.

Be careful, in any case, of any muscle tension that may build up because of incorrect or prolonged use of the instrument. To avoid this, the indications that come from scientific fields, such as physiologic sciences, physical education and spinal column biomechanics, where the correct relation between posture, load and gravity are studied in depth, may be helpful.

Having said this, it is didactically better to experiment with each of the positions described above in order to try to find 'new' ways to get the best out of the instrument and, when circumstances demand, to be able to change from one position to another with ease.

Care should be taken regarding the relationship between the chosen position of the instrument and the sound quality, because the more of the instrument that is in contact with the body, the more closed the sound, and vice versa. For this reason the position that can allow the greatest freedom for vibration and a vast range of harmonics, is the "violinist" position, especially when a shoulder support is used so that there is no actual body contact with the instrument.

## Stretching:

### Harmonize body and mind before playing

*Musicians doggedly tune their instruments and yet neglect their body. The result is that they play on a well-tuned instrument while their body is decidedly out of tune.*

Dr. Marco Brazzo



Harmonizing body, mind and soul before musical study sessions or performances is vital for being totally ready and prepared in body and spirit, and fundamental in creating limitless quality energy, which only this type of preparation can provide.

How? By doing a series of special 'light gymnastic' exercises taken from the practice of yoga and other relaxation techniques.

#### Example 1

*Starting from the head, do gentle rotations anticlockwise and clockwise, then passing to the shoulders alternating the rotation from left shoulder to right shoulder. Repeat the exercise slowly for a few minutes.*

#### Example 2

*Raise the arms slowly to the sky and let them fall heavily to the ground, alternating the fall between clockwise and anticlockwise movements.*

*Repeat the exercise many times, starting with only the left arm then with the right one and eventually with both. Continue with relaxing exercises for the hands.*

#### Example 3

*Alternate slow clockwise and anticlockwise rotations of the pelvis, first making a small circle then enlarging it to a bigger circle and then back to a smaller one.*

#### Example 4

*With your knees slightly bent and with your hands on your pelvis, push up vertically on your legs.*

*It is important in all these exercises to pay great attention to breathing in a way that movements and breathing are naturally harmonized.*

The exercises can be done in silence or with background music on condition that it is suitable.

Times of exercises minimum 10 minutes, maximum 20 minutes.



### Hand and finger massages

The hand – considered in all of its articulations – is paradoxically one of the parts of the body we take less care of despite the fact that its role is of prime importance in performing music.

#### Example 5

*Through gentle pressure on the palm of the hand, activate little rotations starting from the centre and moving outwards, then moving on to every single finger.*

*Repeat it on the back of the hand and then on the other hand. The massage strengthens muscles and bones and stimulates blood circulation so that every part of the hand is supplied with blood.*

*Times of exercise: minimum 5 minutes, maximum 10 minutes.*

Doing regular stretching exercises has been proved as being fundamental in keeping the musician's body supple and in particular in preventing all kinds of pathologies.

In fact, musicians – particularly professionals – are in many ways similar to top-class athletes. Like athletes, they dedicate several hours a day to extremely specialized motor activities carried out in unnatural (mostly asymmetrical) positions dictated by the instrument (as in the case of the nyckelharpa) and they often suffer injuries similar to athletes' injuries.

Having to take up unnatural positions has led to an increasing number of musicians being afflicted with professional pathologies such as focal dystonia; this is a neurological illness in which the brain sends wrong messages to the fingers which move unintentionally by contracting or stretching. Focal dystonia is one of the most serious pathologies, but it is also common nowadays to see spinal column distortions, muscular tension, tendinopathies, sciatica, back pains, arthrosis and others that can turn into crippling illnesses if not treated properly.



Stretching is useful in preventing injuries and in increasing movement performance quality.

We straighten out the imbalances of muscular tension and avoid the sensation of feeling tired, rigid, and "heavy" through muscular flexibility training.

Unfortunately, even today, western educational systems do not address this important issue: in music schools pupils learn how to play, but they are not taught about how the body is involved in the act of playing an instrument and the risks that can be faced. In some cases young musicians when performing are made to maintain a static, forced position where their only movements are maybe finger movements. To remedy this problem, it would also be useful to teach biomechanics and/or physiopathology to those who choose to train to become musicians and encourage pupils to attend courses that study techniques related to body awareness (such as the "Alexander" and "Feldenkrais" methods and yoga). This trend has only just started in European music teaching establishments.

This fundamental aspect of the teaching of the nyckelharpa is fortunately given considerable importance in the "European Nyckelharpa Training" method, thanks principally to the Swedish approach to the instrument, which has passed on its emphasis on the warming-up phase to the Italian and German schools. This method has been enriched by the valuable contributions of professor Didier François who lays particular stress on the body-instrument-sound relationship and to possible pathologies deriving from an unnatural posture.

What are the main causes of the above-mentioned pathologies? An incorrect posture, for example, and/or an incorrect study method.

Here are some general rules to follow in your daily practice routine that we would define as "good practice":



- Choose an ergonomic space that favours the study activity;
- pay attention to the choice of the background elements (lighting, music stand, chair, etc.);
- do stretching and warm-up phase before starting;
- pay attention to a correct posture;
- find the right balance between practicing time and necessary breaks;
- change activity during breaks and loosen up muscles before starting to practice again.

In “muscular economy”, playing in a relaxed way is equivalent to playing better. You will see the benefits quickly: some conservatories have just started to offer yoga or Feldenkrais courses.

## Exercises and body memory

After the stretching and warming up phase we now analyse a “typical” daily practice session focusing on the body-instrument-sound relationship observed through the consideration of human memory’s fundamental aspect.

### Position of the bow: exercises with the right hand

The bow must be grasped as naturally as possible with the right hand at the heel end. For good control of the bow the middle finger and the ring finger should be close to each other on the frog (nasetto) balanced by the thumb on the opposite side, the little finger circling the end of the stick and the index in front of all the others touching the bow between the first and the second phalanx.

The role of the right hand, and in particular the position of the fingers on the bow, is very important for the necessary fluidity of hand and wrist movements and in achieving a “nice sound”.

It should be said that the nyckelharpa’s already-noted unusualness is again clear in the relationship between posture, position of the bow and the way that the instrument is held.

The small size of the bow (about half the length of a violin bow) requires a position on the string parallel to the bridge but with the



bow slightly angled towards the body, towards the bridge. It is this that enables optimum up-and-down movement by exploiting the whole length of the bow.

The position of the bow along the length of the strings also influences the sound or sound-timbre too. Playing near the bridge produces a harder sound which is full of harmonics and that can become very harsh; playing near the keyboard is more delicate and ethereal.

A point of balance between these two extreme positions can be found by playing at the centre of the string, which produces the best sound and the consequent sympathetic vibrations of the resonance strings.

There are other sound effects that you can produce by working on the position and on the speed of the bow, as well as simply using it percussively.

Let’s now look at some examples of bow exercises, a basic step for beginners, but always useful for musicians of any level.

### Exercise 1 – the worm

*“Climbing” with your hand along the bow from the heel to the point and back down again. Once you have returned to the start point, let the bow slip down to the point, being careful not to let go of the bow completely. Repeat the movement many times.*

### Exercise 2 – pendulum

*Take the point of the bow with your left hand and hold it in a vertical position in the air while your right arm hangs down by the side of your body. With a rapid movement, raise your right hand to take the bow naturally in its right position. At this point relax your left arm so that it hangs back alongside your body. Do different movements and rotations with the bow making sure your wrist is relaxed. Repeat the exercise many times.*

*Variation: alternate the same exercise but starting with the bow in a horizontal position.*



### Exercise 3 – little cat

*Make small movements up and down with the bow in a vertical direction, taking care to move just your fingers and not other parts of your hand or arm. It is useful to keep your right wrist still by holding it gently with the other hand.*

With all the bow exercises described above, you are making a conscious effort to train your fingers to find the correct position automatically. The repetition of finger movements and finger positioning helps muscle memory, or, more generally, body memory. This is true for every exercise for studying the nyckelharpa, those with the right hand on the strings and those with the left hand on the keyboard, where the continuous repetition of each single movement leads to the same result.

Human memory is classified in two types : long term and short term. When any kind of activity is practiced, both are involved: the first one, which is in the hippocampus and in the frontal anterior left lobe, organizes the knowledge and the abilities acquired during childhood and studies and transmits them to the technical abilities area that involve the motor system and the cerebellum.

At the moment of action everything is transferred to the recent memory area (situated in the frontal external cortex) so that anyone can do something and remember having done it.

In the field of music other kinds of memory come into play, such as tactile memory that enables the performer to place his/her fingers in the right way and to remember the correct positions for certain passages and their exact sequence, auditive memory for what concerns the melody, visual memory to remember the score, semantic memory for the harmony and, in the case of sung music, also verbal and emotional memory to remember the words and their meaning.

All these kinds of memory are involved in the execution of a musical piece. Often memory goes on by itself, hands follow their path automatically as if a part of memory resides inside them so that they know how to move on the instrument.



The ability to memorize and repeat a musical phrase or an entire piece is a common thing that anybody can do without making a big effort.

Our memory supports and helps us at every moment of our lives and it is the same thing for music; we can recall our favourite piece of music easily and we can sing it whenever we want without really thinking about it.

At other times our memory activates unconsciously so that we remember things or events we have not learnt consciously, but that have remained embedded on our minds for some unknown reason.

### Scales

Scales are part of any musician's background; they are exercises that have multiple uses in performing music from the beginnings up to professional level.

With bowed instruments scales are not appreciated by musicians especially in the first few years of study because they are generally considered as just warm-up exercises.

In many cases expert musicians stop practicing scales during study sessions considering them no longer of any use. This is certainly a mistake, as scales, when practiced correctly, are fundamental exercises which help the musician continue to improve.

In the case of the nyckelharpa, scales have a particular importance (given the small size of the bow) in helping to learn to use the bow to its full potential.

Didactically, it is important to convince the pupil of the great utility of scales by explaining all the possible reasons for practicing them, such as:

- Paying particular attention to the intonation and to the pressure you are giving to the keys on the strings;
- Understanding harmony, major and minor modes and their variants;



- Monitoring your posture, left hand, right hand and the relation bow-instrument;
- Learning how to measure the bowing and improving all possible techniques;
- Trying to produce a good sound;
- Experimenting the different types of bow effects (on the bridge, on the keyboard, etc.)
- Training musical memory in every aspect
- Monitoring and testing the fluidity of movement and the absence of tension;
- Developing a sense of rhythm.

We could go on because there are innumerable positive functions of this practice or discipline.

One of the most frequent mistakes is that of doing the exercise mechanically, without really considering the above points and with little real attention.

In years of violin teaching I have tried to make playing scales as creative as possible by introducing a series of variants; for example, by asking the pupils to invent some new scales with the aim of changing mental attitude towards them and of making the scales themselves an enjoyable exercise, but without losing sight of didactic basics and universal rules which have been passed on in time.

One of these experiment is one which involves playing a scale and coordinating the movement of the bow with your breathing: it is very simple action that can bring unexpected results if practiced correctly.

#### Example

*Play a scale of three octaves starting with an up bow. At the same time as playing the first note, breathe in deeply. Play the following note of the scale with a down bow at the same time as breathing out, and so on for the whole scale. Perform the scale slowly and trying to utilize the complete length of the bow, taking particular care over producing a good, clear sound.*



*Your breathing should follow the whole movement of the bow. Repeat the scale inverting the bow direction.*

NB: There are many other variations of this exercise that are possible, changing, for example, the breathing, the speed of the bow, etc.

In the traditional teaching of string instruments, even less attention is dedicated to the matter of breathing, and this is such an important issue that it should not be missed out.

Breathing is the only physiological body action that is controlled both unconsciously by our vegetative system and consciously by our will. It is one of the most important basic functions and is in close relationship with the other vital functions. Thank to this peculiarity, it is a sensitive instrument that reacts to both external and internal influences.

*"Let our breath come, let it go and wait for it to return by itself"* it is the key phrase with which the breathing experience is described by Ilse Middendorf, one of the greatest experts on the subject.

Being aware of our breathing movements when playing music brings great benefits and a new consciousness:

- The player's movement now comes as a consequence of his breathing;
- Such movement is the authentic expression of who shows it up and is feels free from any convention.

Such an aim is attainable through the simple exercise explained in example 1, which over time helps us to be aware of, and understand:

- The presence of the three breathing spaces (inferior, superior, middle);
- Ascending and descending exhalation;
- The influence of our hands and fingertips on breathing;
- Breathing activity that works on our spinal column, on our joints and on our vital organs.



## Body, Mind and Musical Performance

Performing on the nyckelharpa always involves assuming one or more specific postures. Often these postures provoke unconscious imbalances of the body and create disharmonies that alter the correct physical equilibrium.

Those who play this instrument know very well how these alterations can influence a performance negatively and cause other physical problems that have already been discussed. Optimizing every aspect that can affect a performance will lead to little improvements that will contribute to an improved musical performance, such as an improvement in the sound quality, in the sense of well-being with the instrument and in the state of concentration during a performance.

By working carefully and consciously on corporeal perception, it is possible to focus our attention on ourselves and on the physical sensations that are emerging from our bodies.

This will bring about an awakening of the real capabilities of each of us, causing automatic readjustments and creating interior tone and strength at tissue level which will favour sharper concentration on what we are doing.

One of the most avant-garde methods regarding body, mind and musical performance is the Ressèguier method (see bibliography). Its application concentrates on the adjustment:

- of posture and coordination and movement fluidity;
- of contraction phases that must be followed by integration phases so that each exercise can be learnt properly;
- of the muscle-bone-articulation structure of the spinal column and particularly of chest-abdominal dynamics;
- of total harmonization of the body during performances.

During performances artists tend to transfer a musical idea into a gestural state, albeit subconsciously. Through the act of performing, musicians show the relationships that are established inside this idea. Such acts are also the direct cause both of the expres-



sive quality and sound quality. The execution is the result of an interaction between a thought phase (what we want to get to) and a flexible system of gestural planning (with the aim of obtaining it). Thanks to this reciprocity the artist can make adjustments in real time to his expression by choosing when and how to control his own performance.

When we play, we use our whole body to interact constantly with the instrument, and in particular, in the case of the nyckelharpa, we can see how the hands and the rest of the body cooperate in the production and reception of musical sound, simultaneously hearing / feeling and reacting.

In a performance, there are movements to produce the actual sounds and also accompanying gestures involving the whole body that, in spite of seeming less important, are actually functional to the resulting sound. These gestures include posture, facial expressions and all those micro gestures that apparently do not have a musical result. Thanks to these physical factors, expressive content can be analysed through indicators actually observable during live performances.

Let's now look at some examples of good practice to be followed during individual or group study.

### Example 1 – the mirror

*Do the individual study session in front of a mirror, paying attention to posture, positioning, correct use of the bow, and correct every anomaly to try to obtain a harmonic, natural balance between body and brain in making music.*

### Example 1 – stop and go

*During an individual study session try stopping unexpectedly at random and try to maintain the exact position you are in at that precise instant, checking and correcting every anomaly to obtain a harmonic, natural balance between body and brain in the musical act.*



In example 1 we have a conscious self-evaluation where the brain clearly has explicit control of the body. In example 2 it is interesting to see how the unexpected act of stopping has the merit of anticipating the movement of the body ahead of the thought that governs it.

Generally all exercises where we can anticipate our thoughts are beneficial.

### Example 3 – group monitoring

*During a group lesson, simulate a musical performance by arranging the classroom as a concert hall would be. Everybody should take turns at performing. When not performing, the other members of the class sit facing the performer as the audience, taking note of every detail regarding the body-mind-sound relationship displayed by the performer. At the end of the performance, a feedback session should be done to provide advice for how to improve this aspect. At this point the same player should play the same piece again but concentrate on correcting his/her previous faults, followed by a comparative analysis between the first and second performances. At the end of all the performances the teacher can summarize the good and bad practices.*

Example 3 concerns another fundamental relationship: that between player and listener.

Imagine the scene of a concert: the lights go down, silence falls in the room, the orchestra conductor comes in. There is applause and then silence again. He lifts an arm and breathes in ... and at that precise moment we, too, are holding our breath for a split second until the music begins.

Why does the listener feel all this? And why doesn't this happen only to the performers?

Recent studies say that gesture and language are involved in a single coherent system. In fact, gesture precedes the development of language and acquires a specific value in the act of imitation, which represents the first form of sharing with others.



Studies of mirror neurons in our brain have explained the existence of a neural mechanism that directly maps the actions of others as a motor representation of the same actions in the observer's brain. Evidence from the data collected shows that we are able to enter in empathy with actions carried out by other people because our mirror neurons are not only activated when we do an action ourselves, but also when we see someone else doing an action. This mirroring mechanism demonstrates that we can see also with our motor system. Such mechanisms are important in music not only in terms of imitation, when, for example, we are learning specific technical elements like fingering or articulation, but also during the performance of a piece when the listener becomes an active part of the sound process.

It is fair to suppose that an expressive language exists in which the player and the listener agree. The idea expressed in sound by the interpreter takes place not only on an auditory level but also on a gestural level, reinforcing the expressive idea.

Through the act of performing the musician makes the relationships that are established within a musical idea readable. The performance is therefore the result of the interaction between thought and a flexible system of gestural programming.

### Interior sound, audiation and the silent strength of what is invisible

*You must not only know your pieces with your fingers but you must know how to sing them inside yourself, without the keyboard. You must sharpen your imagination until you can fix in your memory not just the melody of a composition, but also its harmony.*

Robert Schumann 1848

The musical gesture of the performer is always preceded by silence and immobility that leaves space for a invisible preparatory act requiring contemplation. That silence has the same value as sound because it doesn't stop any movement or any rhythm but it



interrupts their sound just for an instant. Straight after that silence but before the first played sound, the performer makes a little movement: he breathes in, or moves the bow or places his fingers on the keyboard.

Moquereu defines these gestures as “ars muta”, the maximum expression of which is probably to be found in an orchestral conductor preparing to raise his baton to bring the orchestra in.

This localized movement substitutes what is missing in the auditory sensation through the internal rhythm that lives inside us.

A pupil's study of music and learning an instrumental should simultaneously allow him to develop the “sense” and the “sensory” of making music.

What enables some musicians to play his/her own instrument in a musical, free way and to improvise is the capacity of audiation which is a true “interior instrument”.

Audiation is the ability to hear in our minds and understand sounds that do not physically exist. It is the basis of the ability to anticipate sounds before playing them on the instrument, the basis of the ability to understand their sense in a musical syntax and pre-hear the ones to be played with consequent benefits for intonation, phrasing, clarity of production and ensemble playing. It is also a fundamental requisite for improvisation. In other words it represents in music what a thought represents in language; it is a cognitive process through which the brain organizes musical sounds and it is acquired through a sequential process that takes time.

It is the same thing when we use other terms such as “ internal ear”, “ internal audition”, “ mental representation”, “auditive imagination”.

Musical memory is a subject that interests us particularly in this essay, and it is linked to audiation. With audiation it is possible to see a piece for the first time and be able to hear it and understand it without actually playing it.



Let's make a comparison: to sing a song by imitating it is like copying a picture using tracing paper; doing it with audiation is like imagining a picture and then painting it.

In my personal experience, every time a pupil has expressed difficulty in playing without printed music, I have always given this example: if each one of us is able to sing any song we like using our voice, it means that it is possible to do the same thing with a musical instrument.

There are many exercises that can help the passage from musical thought to musical action.

### Example 1 – back to back

*Teacher and pupil sit back to back with their own instruments. The teacher plays a combination of three or more notes and pupil must reproduce them as quickly as possible. If easier, the pupil can sing them first and then play it on their instrument.*

To understand the syntax of a musical piece it is necessary to recognize the structure and the organization by means of audiation. Generally we have audiation when we understand :

1. the direction of the sounds;
2. the key note;
3. the time, the note patterns and note lengths;

There are different phases of audiation as its inventor Edward E. Gordon explains:

1. the sound is heard and mentally retained;
2. the same sound gets organized in a series of tonal and rhythmic patterns while a tonal centre is established together with the main beats;
3. musical syntax, mode and meter, on which the tonal and rhythmical patterns are based, are individuated;
4. these patterns are retained in audiation;
5. these patterns are compared with other similar patterns that belong to songs that have already been heard and analysed
6. anticipations of patterns are made.



The development of these abilities forms the basis of certain musical competencies generally referred as “musicality”. As well as being abilities necessary for good ensemble playing, they are essential skills for improvising.

Gordon’s method includes ideas for improving pupils’ audiation skills concerning:

- The ability to pre-hear notes to improve intonation, clarity of sounds and musical phrases and ensemble playing;
- The development of the ability to improvise;
- The development of musical memory based on audiation;
- The knowledge of modern pedagogic issues inspired by “ Music learning theory” by E.E. Gordon applied to the study of an instrument;
- The knowledge and the experience of practicing solfeggio by E.E. Gordon.

This improved ability to transfer a musical thought into a physical gesture could constitute the basis of a new method of instrumental teaching in which the musical knowledge or skills of an individual, synthesized in an idea, find the most appropriate gesture to render it in sound. It is all about creating a form of instrumental teaching that builds on an individual’s own musicality and the individual himself, making sure that reality is never lost sight of. It is some sort of mirroring or interior resonance that welcomes a state of being present, in constant connection and consonance with one’s own self, one’s instrument and music.

A final exercise I would like to suggest is: playing with an invisible instrument, to refine the training of interior musical thought development so that all of the concepts expressed in this essay can find expression through mysterious invisible forces.

#### Example 2 – the invisible instrument

*The exercise must be taken seriously, simulating every single movement of the hands with precision as if we were actually playing our instrument. It works well with any musical selection, with a song known by heart or with a song that must be read from sheet music, with scales and arpeggios and also improvisation.*



NB!“ Invisible practice” can be extended to every single exercise of the hands or of the use of the bow.

John Sloboda defines audiation as “internal abstract or symbolic representation of music”. Music is brought to the instrument and the instrument is just a physical extension of the person who plays it.

As stated before, audiation is an interior instrument which can provide those who use it properly with a very rich musical vocabulary that enables us to think and play the music even if there is no music.

*If you try to build up a melody with a piano, it is a nice thing; but if one day those melodies come to your mind on their own without the need of a piano, enjoy it, because it means that the sense of music lives in you. Your fingers must do what your brain wants, not the opposite.*

Robert Schumann, 1848

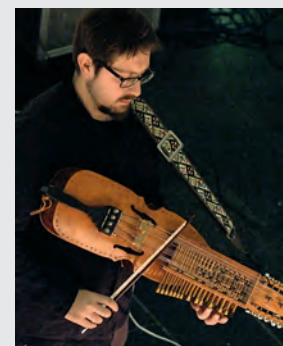


Photo: Giorgio Moser

#### Corrado Bungaro, Italy

Corrado Bungaro was born 1969 in Trento where he still lives. He began the violin’s study when he was four and studied in the Conservatoire of Trento.

He is also graduated in law, specialized in international law, he worked for a few years abroad as an expert in human rights.

His love for violin and music made him come back to Italy and he started to dedicate himself totally to the music experience, that he considers the most powerful instrument to communicate with the world.

[www.myspace.com/corradobungaro](http://www.myspace.com/corradobungaro)



He is a violin teacher and a musician that dedicates himself professionally to the creation, organization and the direction of cultural events.

He performs in Italy and abroad taking part in various musical projects spacing from jazz, popular, classical and world music up experimental contemporary music.

He has furthered in the years his theatrical, dancing and video tapping language, collaborating with international artists and curing the production of his own shows.

His short movie "IlluminAction" has received national and international awards and was selected to represent Italy at the "World One Minute Exhibition" which is an international tour in the contemporary videoart circuite organized by the Amsterdam's "The One Minutes" (TOM) foundation.

Corrado Bungaro is enrolled as author (music, videos, lyrics) in the Italian Society of Authors and Editors. He writes original musics for theatre, dance, video and movies production and soundtracks spaces.

[www.arte20.eu](http://www.arte20.eu)

[www.myspace.com/corradobungaro](http://www.myspace.com/corradobungaro)

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## Playing in a Relaxed Way to Avoid Tendonitis

By Didier François

*Translated into English by Susan Quinlan*

Today, tendonitis is a well known phenomenon. Schools, ensembles, orchestras, all count many amongst their number who complain about tendonitis or muscle problems. Why? Is it an epidemic, or has it always been this way but nobody ever talked about it?

I have struggled for many years with this problem and have never had so much pain! Painkillers had no effect and doctors couldn't help me as I was constantly repeating the same unnatural movements. My body, which was not used to functioning in this way, responded by sounding the alarm bell to show that I was doing wrong. I was very close to quitting, what is for me, a lifelong passion.

The technique of the world famous violinist Arthur Grumiaux saved me. I started playing all over again but this time with the aim of eliminating all unnecessary tensions. I discovered that a relaxed way of playing is the only way to get rid of the pain.

The nyckelharpa is a string instrument that is closely related to the violin and in my opinion, believe that both instruments can be used in the same way. I have, with some adjustments, tried to use the Grumiaux technique with the Swedish key fiddle. I have created my own position (holding the instrument) for the bow technique and have also fine tuned the left hand position.

In this essay I would like to reach out a hand to all players who may also face the same problem. I will attempt to do this by combining technical explanations with examples of movements we use in everyday life.



**"It's not hard to do what is right.  
It's hard to know what is right.  
But once we know, it's hard not to do!"**

On one hand there's much to tell and on the other very little. The whole playing technique for the nyckelharpa can be traced back to some natural laws. It seems at first sight to be so simple but at the same time very difficult. Like many other disciplines such as sports and dance, it requires the utmost dedication and can be a life's work. Firstly, one learns much about oneself on the long road of practice every day and secondly, there is the kind of progress one personally makes towards a knowledge of the instrument.

If the nyckelharpa could hang in the air and play itself it would sound perfect! In other words, many inaccuracies are often due to unnatural movements, tensions and frictions caused by the player himself. The musician is trying to control the instrument but often forgets to feel how the nyckelharpa itself reacts. The principle is very simple for everyone to understand but some difficulties may occur as the term "understand" is very relative.

You can only really understand when you know and you can only know when you "feel". It's very difficult to learn when you cannot "feel" because you do not know and therefore cannot understand!

To explain this in simple terms, everyone knows how to hold a glass in order to drink for example. We don't think about it, we sense the distance, faultlessly seize the glass and aim it towards the mouth. We've done this for years instinctively but have forgotten how hard it was to learn this as a child. If we could apply the same technique to the bow perhaps it could help us to compare? We might say, "If I can hold a glass in a relaxed way then maybe I can do the same with my bow?" Of course if it was so easy then this essay would be a very short one!



Sometimes we look for difficulties, we are stuck with years of bad habits and we fear the unknown even if it could become paradise.

The problem is that when tensions become too high it can lead to muscle inflammation and lot of pain. This in turn can create a love-hate relationship between the player and his instrument. There's no choice, either something needs to change or we stop playing..., too bad!

### **What does it mean to play in a relaxed way?**

There is a great deal of misunderstanding regarding relaxation. Most musicians have the wrong idea, criticizing it with arguments like: relaxed playing gives a weak, spineless and faint musical interpretation. This is not always true: a smooth relaxed movement is a "normal" movement, the same as we use in daily life. We eat, drink and walk in a normal, smooth way.

However, this requires the activation of the muscles but these are usually used in the correct amount, we do not force it. Except when we are stressed or earn our living by running of course! With the nyckelharpa we can do the same: the right dosage of muscle tension is just enough to play, we need to avoid all unnecessary forced movement. In sport we find many stories of muscle problems, tennis elbow etc. I learned a lot by reading and talking to sports people and it always came back to the same story: a certain movement with too much repetition and tension gave problems. Another aspect of using less of the muscles is also a law in physics, speed increases power.

For example, we can throw a ball further by giving a big swing of the arm. A karate kick can break a brick by the speed of its movement. A heavy stationary car can try to push over a wall with all its strength and fail, but a Mini Cooper with a speed of 130 km/h will completely destroy it.



This principle is also applicable to the bow movement of the left hand. We should not push on the bow to play loudly, it suffices to place the bow on the right spot on the strings and with a smooth, loose movement let it do its work. If we want to play louder it is enough to accelerate the movement and maybe choose the right tension by going a little closer to the bridge. I Will come back to this subject later on.

The left hand can be used with less force by increasing the speed of the movement. But I will return to this subject later.

A further aspect is finding the right position: the way we stand or sit can overload the back! How can we solve that? Sports or yoga exercises can definitely help as when our bodies are in shape we can deal much better with the weight. For example, a ballerina takes care of her body all day, every day, in order to dance lightly and smoothly.

And finally, there is the danger of blocking everything by too much analysing. Too much attention and endless preparation before we ever start playing. We block everything instead of unblocking!

This is because we search very slowly for the eventual fluidity of movement which keeps us in balance. It is good to analyse a movement but we must move as quickly as possible in order to keep to a natural, fluid movement. Therefore it can be convenient to do our exercises without the instrument first.

Like the "air guitar" we can imagine ourselves doing a single movement (without the bow) and only when we are convinced of its comfort by repeating it many times can we finally involve the instrument itself in order to seek the same feeling. Though it is really important that while doing this we don't forget to have the instrument in mind so that we do more or less the same movement without it than with!





## The attitude of the Nyckelharpa

Firstly, the movement of the bow is the purpose of our position. With the instrument hanging around our neck like a guitar and the right arm passing under it, we create a natural position for the release of the movement of the right forearm, as with the violin. So I can, without too much trouble, make all the technical violin bow strokes such as spicato, staccato, marcato, balzato and arpeggios etc.



Photo: Ronald Rietman

The second goal is to reduce the load on the back. We should not bend over as in the traditional posture but the back should remain straight as we stand in position. And thirdly, our goal is the freedom of the left hand. If we are in the traditional position with the instrument on our leg it

is not always possible to get all the way to the top of the 'A' string. A disadvantage some students cite is that they can no longer see the keys! I think we have far more supports than our sense of sight. If we are desperate, we miss the note (despite being able to see the keys) but if we are relaxed we are more likely to succeed and hit the proper key.

Some instruments (Osann, Condi & Janssens) have the advantage that the buttons on the back side protrude. So we can still look if we want to.



## The Left Hand

The left hand is fairly simple as compared to the bow. The principle of speed also works well here. As an additional support we can use a psychometer element analysis: what happens to our reactions when we speak the word "PAF" out loud then compare it with our reaction to the word "BOF"? It's a totally different attitude with a totally different outcome. With "PAF" we are much more alert than with the word "BOF". Everything we do is programmed by the brain and how we control this is important.

In simple terms, we can say our mind is fast, alert and sharp but with a flowing, relaxed action. This seems at first sight to be a contradiction in terms but I like to quote the famous Belgian rally driver Jacky Ickx as a clarification. „The faster I drive the slower my mind goes.”

Whilst playing it is not enough to merely relax the muscles because there should be a certain amount of force used to keep your finger on the key. That force (as explained above) can be replaced by speed. A movement of only about 2 or 3mm is made. Once there the finger can be relaxed while still continuing to play. If we do not relax the finger on the key we use a lot of effort to get it away again. This is a pity because you need twice as much effort than if you'd just let your finger fall from the key using gravity.

This technique will help you to be more precise with your position changes, particularly when the notes are far apart, when you make difficult double stop changes or even very difficult polyphonic lines on two or three strings at the same time when playing a fugue and ultimately to play without sight of the keyboard, which is very important when we play double notes or chords.

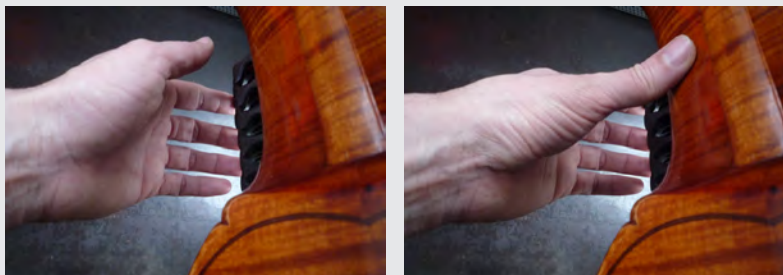
**Exercise:** Place the third finger on the A string and play the D. Hit the key fast but play a long slow note. Whilst playing, relax the finger until the sound goes away, and changes to a decayed note instead of a clear note. Then increase again just



a little bit more until the note comes back. This is the amount of pressure you need and no more. You can ask yourself the question « Am I more relaxed than before? » If you do this exercise 1000 times on each note you will be amazed at the result you get when you play double stops or fast notes.

### The attitude of the left hand

A question I often get asked is “What about the thumb?” First of all, the thumb can be completely forgotten! It’s a illusion to think that we have to hold it on the instrument so we can be safe knowing where we are to hit the right key. By fixing the left hand thumb we will block automatically the left arm, elbow and shoulder because they are related.



The second common question is “Should we leave our fingers on the keys?” The only reason sometimes cited for leaving the fingers on the keys is so that we are immediately ready to play it again after an other one. I do not think that the advantage outweighs the disadvantage: that is, if the fingers remain we are making more stress than if we remove them.

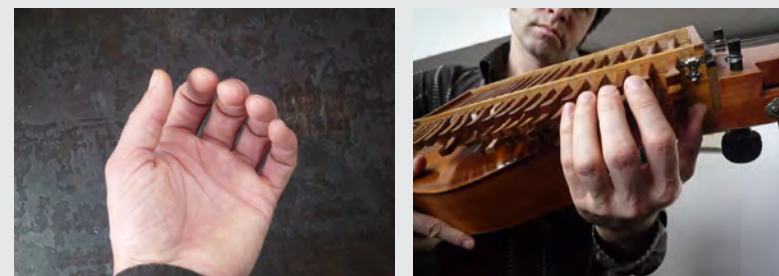
With a simple melody it is perhaps not so noticeable but try it once playing a sonata by J.S.Bach up tempo, or a very fast polska! Believe me you’ll not be able to do it! I’ve tried it and it’s just lost time with a risk of major injuries. There’s no warning, you can spend hours playing cramped up and then you reach your limit and CRACK... result, weeks of rehabilitation.



### The two positions of the left hand

#### Open and closed hand

The **closed hand** is used when the notes are close together as in semitones. The hand is completely relaxed with the fingers close together. A support for this playing attitude is to think of a small, circular sponge ball in our hand and squeezing it lightly with our fingers.



Closed hand

The **open hand** is used when the notes are farther apart as in quarts, octaves and arpeggios. In these instances it becomes difficult for the fingers to stretch using the closed hand attitude. Hence using the open hand attitude which bridges the distance and brings us back to playing in a natural manner.

(The palm faces up with the fingers open, which automatically allows us to move from one to the other without difficulty).

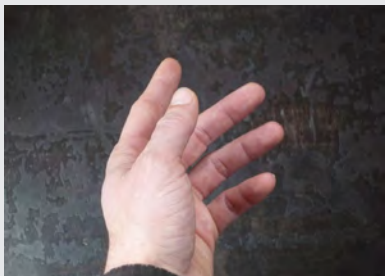
This attitude (second open hand) is also useful for switching positions without jumping. What is very important is to let go of the idea that the fingers always hit the keys in the same way. If we use the open hand we touch the key with the point of the finger, this can then move on to the second or even third phalanx of the finger.



Two kind of open hand:



1<sup>st</sup> open hand position



2<sup>nd</sup> open hand position



## The Bow

It would be possible for me to write an entire book on this subject alone! The soul of the instrument, the personal interpretation of the music, the groove, tone, grain, everything is in the right hand (and of course, the bow).

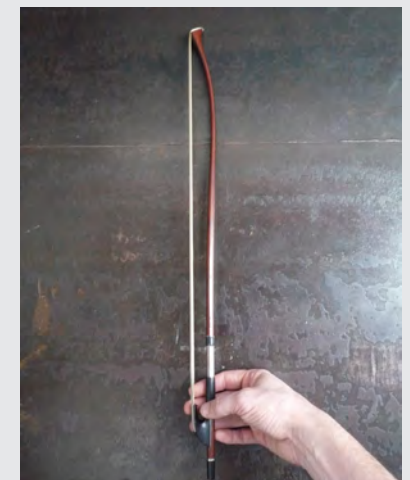
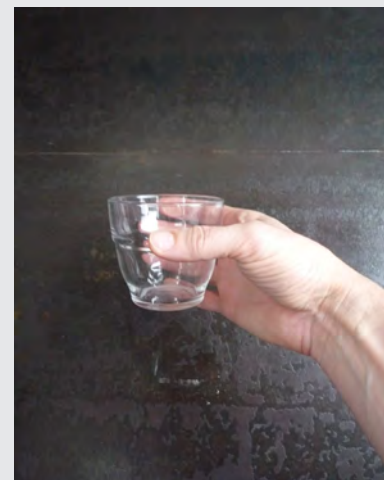
If someone else plays a melody with identical notes what makes the difference between us is the way we play the notes. I'm not speaking here about ornamentation or vibrato. When I play on my nyckelharpa, my bow sounds different than when someone else plays. The sound is directly related to the manner in which we move, stand or even our mind set.



In other words, if I'm tired it sounds different to when I'm alert. This is true even if I'm happy or sad or have been arguing with my girlfriend. My body reacts differently if I've been swimming, walking, or dancing all night than first thing after I get up in the morning, bright and lively. All these differences are very subtle and we should give 99% of our attention to it.

## The attitude of the bow

What should be the correct attitude of the bow is another frequent question from students, with many answers and many an outcome which differs from the teachers. Let's make a comparison between an attitude and a movement we know well. If we take a plastic cup if we were going to drink and now replace it by the bow without making any change in the attitude of the hands or fingers. Now just close the fingers slightly as the diameter of the bow is thinner than that of the cup. The pressure can also be compared to the fact that by pinching too hard the cup will break and without enough pressure the bow will fall to the ground. A cup we hold our very lives, attitudes and feelings around is known. Therefore I think it's a good support.





## What makes the sound?

Sound quality is very subjective. A blues guitar player does not play with the same sound as a jazz guitarist. The blues player with his groove to the forefront, the sound rough and noisy combined with a singing voice drawn from years of smoking and alcohol use. On the other hand a jazz guitarist has a different approach. In the Swedish tradition, the "kontrabasharpa" or "moraharpa" is a little similar.

Firstly we'll look at the bow up close: an absolute miracle without the aid of modern, advanced technology! Just a piece of wood with some horsehair. Everything depends on the quality of the wood (usually pernambouc) the thickness of the bow at the last bend and the balance of the bow, which is sometimes entwined with silver wire. The rest is a secret that almost every builder takes in part to his grave. It is therefore not surprising that the price of a good bow can sometimes rise out of all proportion. Looking at the horsehair under a microscope, we can see small tubes with tiny little pins and scales. It is these, along with the addition of some pine resin which allows the strings to "roll". If we push hard on these scales and crush them it reduces efficiency. Most people think that more pressure on the string is the only way to play louder. I would like to show that it is not.

If we look at the string under a magnifying glass we will see that it vibrates quite a lot as we quietly "stroke" and much more as we make fast and large movements. The result is linear: a little vibration to give a quiet sound and vice versa.

The trick is to move all your body parts in a way as to allow the bow on the string total freedom. It is an illusion the think we can



fully control the bow. I think that we should go on being respectful that talented builders produce something approaching perfection. One must use the bow as you would use a sharp knife to cut!

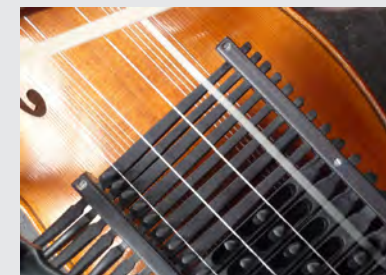
My neighbour once taught me that there was no need to push hard on my chainsaw after I had to sharpen it for the third time! "The machine is perfectly made for it's purpose" he said. Indeed, I noticed that it was no use to saw like a lunatic as it didn't go any faster and just made the saw blunt again. I learned to "feel" that by "doing nothing" the saw cut quicker through the wood.

## Pressing the first finger

Look at how the string reacts by pressing and not pressing, the wideness changes



Pressing on the 1<sup>st</sup> finger



Without pressing on 1<sup>st</sup> finger

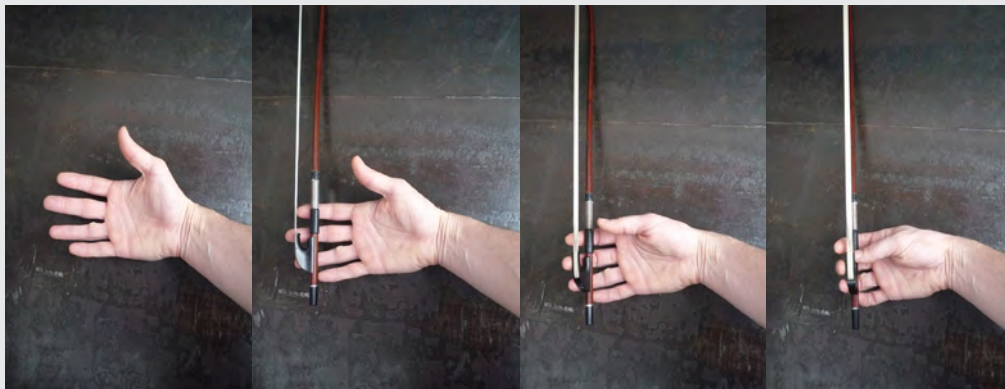
Usually the tension is on the first finger, therefore causing the wrist to be blocked and the forearm to lose fluency. It is very difficult to convince players that it is really not necessary to press with the index finger. When the wrist is completely loose, and this can only happen when the thumb doesn't press on the bow, then the forearm can make the sound by letting the bow do all the work. The position of the bow in relation to the bridge is naturally of great importance as the strings do not have the same tension close to the bridge than further toward the keys, therefore the bow will react differently. As I said earlier the speed will increase the sound.



### Exercise: The attitude of the bow

A glass has already helped us with the attitude of the bow approach and the following exercise allows an additional support.

Bring your right hand horizontal, palm up. Take the bow with your other hand and place your fingers diagonally at roughly the height of the second phalanx and the tip of the little finger on the bow. Next bend the fingers so that the bow is brought to the thumb. Warning! This is not to be performed the other way around. When we bring the thumb to the fingers the muscles exert an excessive force and completely alter the wrist from its neutral position.



Now we have fixed the position of the bow, we must still make our horizontal attitude into a vertical one. This can be done with the forearm if we make a 180 degree turn. Concentrate on what you feel in your hand while you are turning. If the bow is horizontal you should be feeling weight, especially on the little finger (the one that remains on the bow). If the bow is vertical then you should be feeling much less weight. The trick is to always do this in as normal a manner as possible. Think for example, that you are holding a glass and filling it from a bottle.



You can make use of this exercise to improve tone quality. The less you squeeze the bow the warmer the sound will be. In summary, we should not hold the bow firmly, we should support it.

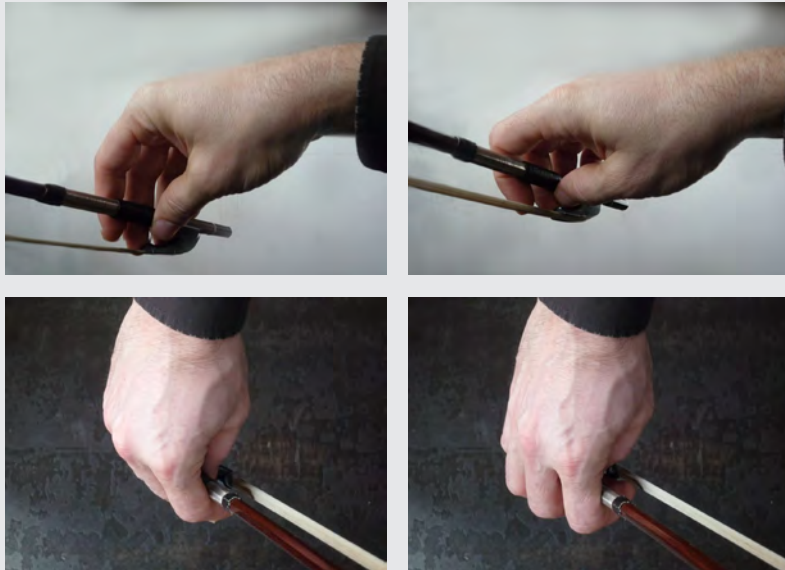
### Folding & unfolding the fingers during playing

The fingers also have an important role to play in this unconventional attitude of the bow. When the fingers are bent then they can absorb any jerks and allow the thumb to run smoothly. If we compare this to skiing, bent knees produce a cushioning effect on the bumps. I actually wouldn't want to ski on the slopes with straight legs! Obviously with the bow there are no big bumps as on a ski slope but small strokes often allow the strings to become free or loose: this doesn't only happen with the "spicato" but also with many minor phrasings and accents (sfz, fp, etc). In our vernacular we constantly place accents, for example, to emphasize something. There are languages that are musically more rhythmic than others but these can have a monotone sound a bit like a robot!

This is one of the important points in music and the bent or folded fingers have a big function in this.



For large or long bow strokes I bend the fingers less than for short bow strokes, for example, when you are playing fast.



**Exercise:** Put your fingers on a table with a relaxed hand, wrist +/- 5 cm higher. Go down with your hand by folding the fingers and keep the fingertip on the table.



### Allowing the bow to do its work

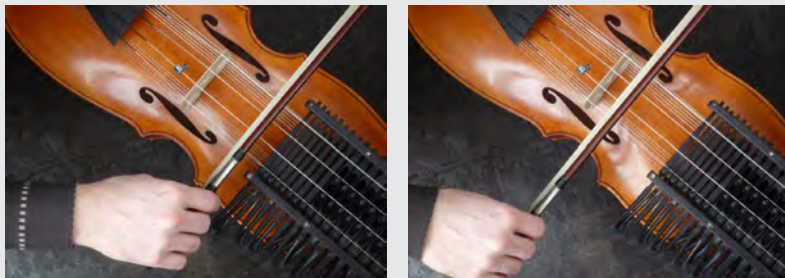
Once the bow is on the string then gravity will help us with the tone without pressing. The weight of the bow alone is sufficient to produce a quiet sound. Let the bow caress the strings. As explained earlier, the strength of the first finger causes pressure on the small pins or scales of the horsehair of the bow, consequently we lose sound and think that we still have to push in order to make more. This gives an oppressive sound without flair. A good comparison here is to play the Crystal Glass Organ: you know, a dozen glasses filled with water, each tuned to a pitch by the volume of water. You can then play melodies with your fingers. Make your fingertips damp and lightly spin the fingertip on the edge of the glass to make a sound. When you push the finger it's impossible for the glass to vibrate.

**Exercise:** Put your nyckelharpa on a table and see that the keys remain free of the strings. Put your bow onto the strings. Hold the bow balanced on the strings without pressing it. Only the weight of the bow will make the sound. Next draw your bow back and forth and listen to the result. How does it sound? How loud or quiet is it?





You can now vary the speed. Listen to how the sound changes when you move faster or slower. You can also change the position of the bow on the strings. Use this exercise as a sound laboratory. You will never really play in this manner but it can give you proof of what you can do and what result can be obtained with this technique. Now on the other hand, push the bow. What happens to the sound?



**Exercise:** Once we have analysed the tones we can now try the same technique with the nyckelharpa in a playing position. Hold the instrument in the manner you're used to playing in. The first step is to lay the bow around the middle of the strings but hold it with your left hand. Let your right arm hang at your side in order to have a completely relaxed attitude. Then bring your arm up to the bow. Then with the identical movement move up and down the bow lightly (actually the bow is not moving, the hand is moving slightly above the bow). In this way you can see what happens to your arm, fingers, elbow and shoulder, while you remain in a completely relaxed posture.



The second step is looking at the sweeping movement of the arm, suddenly bringing the bow to make a stroke. The purpose of this exercise is to try to do exactly the same with or without the bow. You will need to put aside all your old habits and accept that the way you hold the bow might be different to the way you are used to. Once your arm feels comfortable try checking in a mirror to see what you are doing.

Another good test for all exercises is filming! It is hard as the sound is often not so good but at least you can see clearly all your errors! You are, as it were, your own teacher. The purpose is to go forward constructively and gradually improve into *"somewhat better than yesterday and slightly worse than tomorrow!"*.

You can also look deeper in order to better understand the principles of the bow. An analysis of the structure of the arm helps but there is always the danger of thinking too much when you play afterwards. It is thus important to act almost like a scientist and leave these things behind you when you are playing.

### The mechanism of the right arm

In order to find the correct movement for the right arm we must first look at how it moves without the bow.

**Exercise: The thumb.** Let your arm hang down by the side of your body, the thumb pointing downwards. Now move your arm up into the air vertically, thumb pointing upwards. The thumb is thus at a 180 degree angle.



Try now to do this same movement with the bow.

We can now make the same movement with the bow. Place the bow on the nyckelharpa somewhere in the centre of the bow. Look at the position of the bow, which is slanted downwards. Now we can try to copy the position of the thumb. It is important not to hold the bow tightly. We should hold the bow as we would normally stroke.

Next we slide gently above the bow, moving softly from the heel to the point.

Note well the position the thumb takes on the bow. It is important therefore to consider whether it is actually necessary for the thumb (as it is explained in many techniques) to sit fast on the heel and particularly not to be free.



Fixed thumb



Thumb in a relaxed position

Most tendonitis comes from the fact that the thumb is not free and thus blocks the wrist! If we go on to play the strings it is very important to allow the thumb to turn. Thanks to the bending and stretching of the fingers we notice that we play the point with the tip of outstretched fingers and the heel with more bent fingers.



## The Index Finger

In order to eliminate misunderstandings it is important to specify the task of the index finger. We should not be pushing with it. We know that the sound becomes pinched when we push with the index finger. However its job is very important.



**Exercise:** Place the bow on the string. What happens if we let go lightly from the index, middle and ring finger? It slides across the face of the strings. The task of the index finger is to bring the bow back towards the bridge. Earlier I said that the sound is different closer to the keys or nearer to the bridge. To check our sound we use the index finger.



Allow me to show you a little trick in order to prove I don't really need to play with my first finger and also without with the thumb. Its strange but it works if you try it please do it above your bed or sofa!



## The Wrist

The wrist is the key to success in sound quality. There is a misconception over the driving power of the bow; most concentrate on the wrist to make the sound. The problem is that in everyday life the wrist does not fulfil this function and it can overload the strings. The engine sits in the elbow, the forearm moves and the wrist just follows.

**Exercise:** Grab something light, for example, your keys from the table. This movement is made from the elbow, right? If you compare this with a horse and cart, the horse is the elbow and the cart is the wrist. You steer the wrist with the arm muscles. Applied to the bow, this means you move the bow with the forearm. A locked wrist means that the bow is no longer free to move across the strings. The sound is dull and different bow strokes like spicato, arpeggios and secondments etc are difficult.

## The Forearm

The fluidity of the sound has to do with how smoothly the forearm moves. If we use force against the inside of the elbow then we hinder the fluidity of the movement of the bow. On one side we want movement but on the other side we stop it. It is as if we want to cycle but at the same time brake. This creates a forced sound.

## The upper arm & biceps in the shoulder joint

The pivot point of the elbow works in one direction only. If we first touch our shoulder with our finger and then the navel, this movement is only possible because the arm turn from the shoulder.



**Exercise:** Stand with your arm held up vertically. Your hand is raised. Bring your elbow up and let your hand drop while you hold the elbow at the same height. Watch what happens to the shoulder whilst making this movement.



So when we use our index finger during bowing or stroking, we make a downwards movement, which in turn raises the elbow.



That makes it compulsory for the shoulder to move diagonally during bowing. If we do not push with the index finger then the elbow will remain pointing downwards. Thus the diagonal direction comes from the forearm.

In normal daily activity we never do so, ex. When you scratch your head you never do it with your elbow raised, do you?



**Exercise:** Lower your arm across your body, then touch your nose with your index finger. Watch your elbow, which is pointing downwards. We must try to keep the shoulder fully loose.

## The Shoulders

The collarbone is the key that opens the door to the quality of and "open sound". As I have mentioned earlier it is very important to keep the shoulder in a completely neutral position. This includes the attached muscles, the large muscle that is activated if we, for example, hold a book under our arm and also the muscles we use to move our shoulder up and down.

Tension in the shoulders gives a direct tension to the thumb and conversely the thumb and shoulders are directly in contact. (This is one of the known assertions of alternative medicines such as osteopathy or acupuncture.)

Here we can already see, what at first sight appears unconnected, a link with the violin that shows all the features are perfectly in tune. In other words, everything is linked. And if there is something not quite right in one place then it affects other places too. For example, as with an old mechanical watch, if one small tooth or wheel from a thousand different elements of gearing is broken or at fault then the whole watch is faulty.



**Exercise:** Take your instrument in the playing position, let your arms hang beside your body. Feel your shoulders!



Now put your left hand on the keys and try not to alter your shoulder position. Do the same with the right arm. Now play a simple melody. Stop somewhere in the middle and remain still like a statue. Then gently relax your shoulders one at a time. Were they very tense or just a little?

It is important to make these small tests in your study time and stop on occasion to relax. You will see that how difficult what you play is relative to how tense you will be. This you should try to limit. You will see that this can double your study time before getting tired and also doubles your chance of playing difficult passages too!

To understand this system, compare it to when you work on your computer and the mouse is constantly busy: you will stiff-



en your shoulders! After a while you will notice some tension in your wrist. Well, the concentration will stiffen your shoulders and it will also stiffen the wrist giving you tendonitis in the same way!

**Exercise: "Wham"** This last exercise is a synthesis of the whole theory about the sound of the nyckelharpa. The word « wham » illustrates the movement of a plane that lands or takes off.

Prepare yourself in a relaxed way as explained earlier and play an open A string. Try to imagine the movement of a plane that is landing. Listen very carefully to the sound that is being created and don't play too loud. Play for two or three strokes and « take off » (like a plane) the bow and listen to the sustain of your sound! It's important not to play too long, as your old habits can easily come back! When we analyse this way of playing we can see that the bow is landing on the string in a smooth way, caressing the string and landing bit by bit using its own weight. A little « turbo » will activate the string and a round note will be created.

This is the opposite of putting the bow on the string in a vertical way, pushing on the bow and only after this, playing. The result of this will be an aggressive approach which gives a forced sound. Of course I don't want to sound too negative about this second way of playing, it can be beautiful in a kind of groovy blues-bluegrass way of playing but it's just not the way I like to play. But I can certainly enjoy listening to it.

In closing, I would like to thank you for your interest and the time you've taken to read this essay. I do hope that it proves useful to you and I wish you many years of happy and successful playing.

**Didier François**



## Didier François, Belgium

For about 20 years now I teach and play the nyckelharpa and I have the chance to make a living out of it! I like to do researches on sound, technique, groove, musical expression ...

In this instrument I also found a good partner to express my creativity in many compositions and improvisations. More and more I specialize in playing in a polyphonic way.



Photo: Per-Ulf Allmo

About 15 years ago Marco Ambrosini and I met at a festival in France. We talked a lot about our passion for the nyckelharpa and a nice cooperation started, both attracted by the fact that we were doing, in a certain way, the same thing.

We thought it was rather strange and a pity there were not so much links in between all that was happening around this strange unknown key fiddle. Many people around the world are playing, working, searching, teaching, composing, without really or easily knowing about each other. Something had to be done!

And today I am happy other people thought similarly! I am more than thankful about the CADENCE project. We finally had the chance to share ideas, music and different points of view with people from five European countries.

I hope this will be only a starting point for the spreading and the evolution of a very old string instrument that still has so much mysteries to be discovered.

[www.didierfrancois.be](http://www.didierfrancois.be)  
[www.myspace.com/didierfrancois](http://www.myspace.com/didierfrancois)

## The Motion in Bowing

*By David Eriksson*

The aim of this article is to have nyckelharpa players to pay more attention to the bowing technique in order to improve the quality of their music.

Before we start looking into the motion of the bow arm, let's take a look at motion in general. A motion is a physical transaction of energy that we use to interact and alter our environment in an endless number of ways every moment of our lives. Motion is everything our bodies do, and nothing is accomplished without it.

A good motion is carried out in the same way whether it is performed by an athlete running, a musician playing or someone sitting down eating dinner. So what is a good motion and what is not?

I would define a good motion as the perfect mix of control and relaxation, with all the muscles doing exactly what they need to do, nothing more nothing less. To accomplish this, it is important to be able to detect counterproductive tension and stop doing it!

### Why is a good bowing technique important, and how does it affect the music?

I would like to compare the bow with the brush of a painter. Just like a painter draws landscapes, we create soundscapes with the bow as our brush. The better the bow technique the finer the details.

Another reason to strive for a good bowing technique is to avoid destructive and tense patterns that will lead to fatigue and possible injury.



### If I am tense, how do I get rid of it?

Tension, as we all know is not only confined to playing an instrument, it is something that we might experience every day in a number of different situations. The thing that every situation has in common is unnecessary and counterproductive muscle activity. I am not a medical doctor and for that reason cannot claim to have the answers on how to get rid of all the strange things our bodies do when we don't pay attention. But I will go as far as to say that the first thing you have to do is become aware of the problem.

I will mention two terms that are very important to know the difference between, and those are tension and muscle tone. Muscle tone is the continuous and passive partial contraction of a muscle that allows you to contract or extend, and helps maintain posture. Tension is a continuous muscle contraction that won't allow you to contract further and therefore inhibits you from having full control. It also prevents blood flow to the muscle.

Ask yourself, and try to answer these questions:

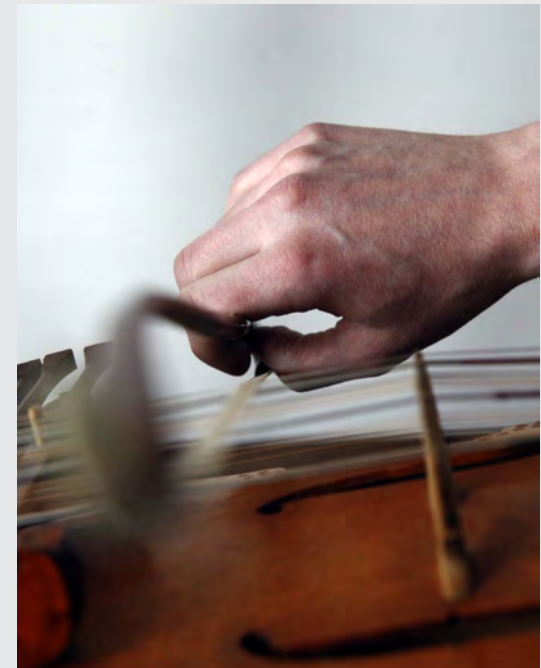
1. What does tension feel like?
2. What does relaxation feel like?
3. What does controlled muscle tone feel like? (This can be experienced by gently picking up an object like a glass)
4. Do I experience fatigue and / or pains when I play, and if so, where and why?

I have limited this text to revolve around how to find the way to a healthier and better sounding way of bowing.



### The bow hand

If you relax your hand you will see that your fingers curve naturally. This state of the hand is also what to strive for when holding the bow. This is true with the exception of the thumb that should be slightly curved when holding the bow.



Here you can see the curvature of the thumb and fingers.

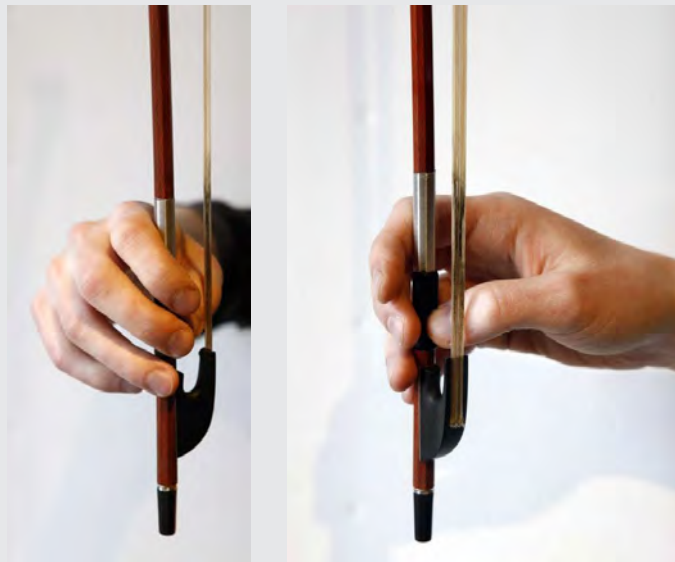
If one or more fingers are straight when placed on the bow, there is harmful tension that will affect you and the sound in a negative way.

But just being relaxed doesn't create a good sound. You have to place your fingers in such a way that the weight from the arm is transmitted through the hand and the fingers down to the bow and finally the strings.



Let's start by looking at two very important fingers: the thumb and the index finger.

When picking up a small object from a surface, most people use the opposition of the thumb and the index finger. This opposite force is also important in bowing, but not in the pinching sense. When holding the bow the thumb should line up with the middle finger instead of the index finger. This creates a distance between the thumb and the index finger; this is the yin and yang of bowing. When applying pressure to the string through the index finger, the thumb acts as the opposite force that stops the bow from dropping down. If the thumb and index finger are lined up, this balance is impossible. It is like using a seesaw with no one at the other end ... not fun at all!



Here you can see where the bow rod should be placed on the index finger and how the thumb and long finger should line up. Also note the position of the little finger.



The little finger plays a smaller role when playing the nyckelharpa. Because of the position of the arm and the hand, the little finger is more elevated than in the violin way of holding the bow. The nyckelharpa bow is also much shorter than the violin bow, which means that the required counter weight to maintain balance is less. So if your little finger has to be straight in order to reach the bow rod, just let it be in its relaxed state close to the ring finger. The little finger comes in handy when wanting more balance when playing close to the frog.

The bow rod should be placed on or behind the index finger's first joint. That's because you want to use as little effort as possible when applying weight from the arm.

If you have the bow rod in front of this joint you have to stiffen the finger so it won't flex upwards. This creates tension and the need to forcefully hold the bow instead of having it balanced in the hand. This happens, when you create this pressure with unnecessary muscle force and the ability to control the bow in a relaxed way gets lost.

### The joints in relation to the arm

If any of the joints in your arm, wrist or fingers are in a position such that you can't flex them equally in all directions; there is tension, because being in that position requires muscle activation. You should always strive to be in the middle of the joints moving boundaries so you can flex equally in all the required directions. This is what I call the starting position. From here you will have a good start with a minimum of counterproductive muscle tension.

Never work against your body when playing. It should feel as relaxed as holding a fork or picking up a glass.

### The arm

I would like to start by saying that the violin bowing technique is not directly transferable to the nyckelharpa. The holding of the two instruments is quite different and therefore also the physical parameters.



When holding the bow parallel with the bridge close to the frog, you should be able to see the upper and lower arm forming a 90-degree angle. If it doesn't, you should check the elbow joint and make sure that it is placed just underneath the string holder (tail piece). If it still doesn't work, you have to adjust how you hold the instrument. Try slightly different positions by tilting and rolling the instrument until it feels comfortable. When doing this it is also important to check the bow grip and make sure that the wrist joint is aligned with the direction of the arm, and that the bow is somewhat parallel with the bridge.



Here you can see how the positioning of the elbow, forearm and hand line up when holding the bow close to the frog.

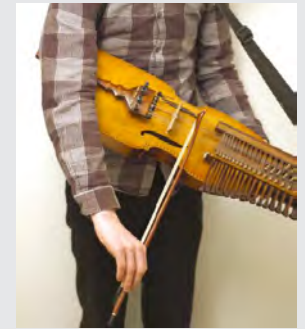
When the bow is playing the strings near the bow tip, there will be a slight angle away from parallel due to the forearm's natural radius from the elbow. This is perfectly normal and in my opinion much better than trying to keep the bow parallel with the bridge at all times. If you try to keep the bow parallel to the bridge in this lower position, you have to move the right shoulder forward and straighten the fingers, which means tension and therefore loss of control. I don't recommend the par-



allel bow path be integrated into your technique in the hope of getting a better tone, because it doesn't really affect it. If it doesn't affect the tone, in my opinion, it's an unnecessary effort.



The bow's direction when following the radius of the forearm.  
(Recommended)



The bow being parallel with the bridge when at the bow tip (not recommended)

## Remember!

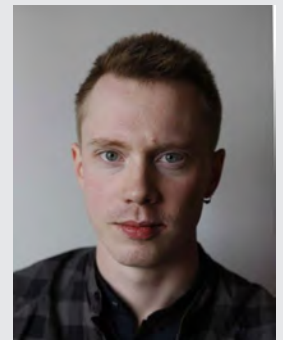
If it hurts, you're doing it wrong! If it sounds bad, you are doing it wrong, and the two often go hand in hand.

*Thanks for your attention  
David Eriksson*

## David Eriksson, Sweden

He comes from the region Västerbotten in the northern parts of Sweden and has been playing the nyckelharpa since 1997. He attended the one year nyckelharpa course at Eric Sahlström Institute 2000-2001. Currently he is studying folk music and nyckelharpa at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm.

[www.myspace.com/lyyfolk](http://www.myspace.com/lyyfolk)





Boris Koller, BURG FÜRSTENECK 2010, photo: Per-Ulf Allmo



## Anhemitonische Heptatonik auf traditionsmusikalischer Basis in Hinblick auf die Nyckelharpa

*Boris Koller*

Die Auffassung von Tonalität, den „richtigen“ Tonhöhen, ist eine Frage der Gewohnheit und beruht – entgegen anderslautender Behauptungen – auf keinem Naturgesetz. Die Nyckelharpa heutigen Zuschnitts ist – wie es scheint – vollkommen ausgestattet mit 12 Halbtönen pro Oktave. Und doch: eingebettet in ein Restmilieu von anderen tonalen Auffassungen gab es Versuche, auch diese Halbtöne aufzubrechen. Warum?

Auf der Basis norwegischer Arbeiten wird die Thematik der angeblichen „Vierteltöne“ kurz umrissen und auf Nyckelharpakonstruktionen, die die Problematik berücksichtigen, Bezug genommen.

### Vorwort

„Anhemitonische Heptatonik“ ist ein Begriff, mit dem man Viele verwirren kann, besonders im akademischen Milieu. Viel beliebter ist da das Wort „Mikrotonalität“. Das klingt so feinsinnig, so komplex, als ob es ein langes, schwieriges Thema wäre, nur für Eingeweihte, oder allenfalls für manche unreflektierte Eingeborene, die ihr Leben einem musikalischen Dialekt widmen, den nur der Studierende rational begreift; man verdient sich manchen Professorentitel, wenn man akademischen Kreisen zeigt, wie kompliziert doch alles sei.



„Anhemitonische Heptatonik“ ist ein Zauberwort, auf das viele gewartet haben, denn es erspart eigentlich die nun folgende Abhandlung, der Begriff erklärt sich selbst. Er ist allerdings eine Neuschöpfung: die manchmal auftretende Bezeichnung „halbtonfrei“ in norwegischer Literatur hat der Verfasser in „anhemitonisch“ übertragen. Sonst bleibt alles beim Alten. Dem Akademiker wird er zwar noch einige Zeit Schrecken einjagen (denn der hört den Begriff sofort auf Pentatonik um, aber diese ist ja auch die theoretische Grundlage). Dieses Zauberwort fällt auf ganz norwegische Art mit der Tür ins Haus, es verliert keine Zeit. Und das ist auch ganz die eigentliche Absicht dieses kleinen Aufsatzes: der ausführende Musiker, der Komponist, soll ein Werkzeug in die Hand bekommen, vorher noch unlösbar dastehende Aufgaben mit Leichtigkeit in kürzester Zeit bewältigen zu können.

Die gleichstufige Zwölftonskala ist kein Naturgesetz. Sie ist vielmehr eine Sackgasse, in der man sich erst vor kurzem so gemütlich zur Ruhe gesetzt hat. Der barocke Theoretiker war da in seinen Diskussionsvorschlägen so viel vorsichtiger! Erst die Popmusik kontinentalen Zuschnitts hat dem ein Ende gemacht. Wie viel liegt darin! Wer die Geschichte der „historischen Aufführungspraxis“ überblickt, sieht, wie sehr das frühe 20. Jahrhundert mit seinen Ressentiments gegenüber „unfeinen“ Gebräuchen die Vorstellung von alter Musik geprägt hat. Noch heute flüchtet so mancher Musiker aus der „zeitgenössischen“ Musik in „alte Musik“ und den Jazz. Wo sonst noch kann man populär sein und gleichzeitig als intellektuell gelten? Das Festival „Resonanzen“ in Wien gibt hier alljährlich ein deutliches Bild. Die zeitgenössische Musik ist schon lange vom Publikum verlassen, in der „alten“ Musik dagegen fiebern tausende neuen Ersteinspielungen entgegen. Was aber ist die Hörgewohnheit dieser Massen? Wie sehr will man von Seiten der Musiker sich selbst und anderen eine heile Welt – eine „gute alte Zeit“ – vorgaukeln? Es ist eine dreiste Behauptung, aber wer will widerlegen, dass die gesamte heutige „alte Musik“ auf tönernen Füßen steht? Sämtliche Peripherien



Europas haben sich in der Traditionsmusik unbeirrt und von akademischen Kreisen unbeleckt andere Auffassungen von Tonalität bewahrt, als die, welche in Zentraleuropa als „alt“ gelten. Dabei gibt es auch aus dem Bereich der Alpen Untersuchungen (Walter Wiora, 1949:61), ebenso aus Mähren (Dusan Holy, 1969:126), die (angeblich) zu denselben Schlüssen wie die Skandinavier kommen.

Keine Zeit ist zu verlieren. Alle Einspielungen „mittelalterlicher“ Musik sind gründlich zu revidieren. Die vorliegende Abhandlung bietet rasche Hilfe. Der Verfasser wird sich damit keine Meriten verdienen, denn er hat nichts erfunden, und auch nichts verschleiert. Alles liegt offen da und wird genau so weitergegeben. Jede Form von Verbreitung, auch auszugsweise, ist ausdrücklich erwünscht. Zu beachten ist, dass Material aus anderen Werken benutzt werden musste. Der Verfasser empfiehlt die Anschaffung der zitierten Werke auf das wärmste. Nur durch den Kauf dieser Arbeiten kann auf längere Sicht gewährleistet werden, dass neue Arbeiten entstehen.

Dieser Aufsatz soll etwas von dem Glück zurückgeben, das skandinavische Traditionsmusik dem Verfasser bislang bereitet hat. Ziel ist das Experiment und die Spielfreude für jeden, der Lust hat, auszubrechen aus gewohntem Schritt und Tritt.

Lykke til!

*Boris Koller*

*Rødvik Gård, Stavern/Norge, am 20.1.2010*



## Anhemitonische Heptatonik auf traditions- musikalischer Basis in Hinblick auf die Nyckelharpa

### Warum und warum nicht?

*„Das temperierte System war ein Notbehelf; ein genialer Notbehelf, denn die Not war arg und die Hilfe groß. Es war eine geniale Vereinfachung, aber es war ein Notbehelf. [...] Man hätte nie vergessen dürfen, dass das temperierte System nur ein Waffenstillstand war, der nicht länger währen darf, als die Unvollkommenheit unserer Instrumente ihn nötig macht.“ (Schönberg 1911, 350-351)*

Das temperierte System der Skalenauffassung überschattet nun gut 300 Jahre der Musik höherer Stände, und diese spät-barocke Tonalitätsauffassung greift nun spät, aber umfassend durch die Verbreitung von Tonträgern und durch Berieselung über den Rundfunk. Was heute oft als Naturgesetz aufgefasst wird, ist aber das Ergebnis eines willentlich schaffenden Prozesses, es brauchte dazu viel Anstrengung bis hin zu politischen Ausmaßen, wie die Geschichte des Psalmmodikons zeigt. Selbst die Beschäftigung mit grundlegend anderen Skalen wird nun durch den Begriff der Mikrotonalität überschattet. Es würde sich aber lohnen, diese Problematik der Tonalität nicht als „Mikroproblem“ aufzufassen. Die Geschichte der Auflehnung gegen die 12-Tonskala ist nun schon so alt wie die Geschichte der Propagierung derselben. Die temperierten Systeme wurden ursprünglich ausschließlich für Tasteninstrumente entwickelt, besonders für den Sonderfall der Orgel. Alle anderen Instrumente mit Tastatur im Bereich der Musik höherer Stände beruhen auf perkussiver Tongenerierung. Im Zusammenspiel hat hier die exakte Stimmung eines Tones nicht so große Auswirkungen, wie bei anhaltenden Tönen, z.B. bei den Streichern. Genau die bundlosen Entwicklungen der Violenfamilien aber haben durch ihre Flexibilität bei der Einführung der heute in der westlichen Welt üblichen Skalen ihre äußere Form bewahren können, während andere Instrumente für die neuen Skalen neu gebaut werden mussten. Dies geschah z. B. bei



den Varianten des Langeleiks in Norwegen, das Langspel auf Island starb schon vorher aus.

Die vorliegende kurze Abhandlung versucht, dieses Problem über ein heute wieder verbreitetes Instrument zu lösen, das zwar gestrichen wird, aber auch eine vorerst chromatische Tastatur besitzt: die Nyckelharpa. Die Drehleier, gespielt in fast allen Zusammenhängen als Borduninstrument (außer der böhmischen Variante), muss hier deshalb ausgenommen werden, ihr liegt eine kleine Reihe von Grundtönen zugrunde, weshalb sie unvollständig chromatisch gestimmt werden kann. Lösungsvorschläge für die Gambenfamilie mit ihren verschiebbaren Bündeln bieten sich aber an.

Die Skalenauffassung im europäischen Raum wird wohl – wie auch im asiatischen noch heute – einmal die pentatonische gewesen sein. Auch hier können unterschiedliche Modi, abhängig vom Grundton, verwendet werden. Während die um das Mittelmeer verbreitete Auffassung eine grundsätzlich anhemitonische ist, wurden im Gegensatz in Asien dazu hemitonische Modelle entwickelt. Alle diese pentatonischen Modi können auch heptatonischen Skalen zugrunde gelegt werden. Wenn auch hier die historischen Ursachen im Dunkel liegen<sup>1</sup>, so können doch heute noch im nordeuropäischen Raum verwendete Skalen als Quelle dienen. Diese Skalen wurden nur in den seltensten Fällen als Tonleitern gespielt. Jan Ling weist ebenso darauf hin, dass die ihm bekannten Traditionsspieler auf der Nyckelharpa nicht immer in der Lage waren, Tonleitern oder gar chromatische Skalen auszuführen. Melodiegestaltung und die damit verbundene Motorik basieren in der Traditionsmusik auf „formelrichtigen“ Tonabfolgen. Norwegische Analysten sprechen hier bei der vanlig fele und der hardingfele, beides bundlose Instrumente, lieber von „svevande toner“ =

<sup>1</sup> Es mag Spekulation sein, aber wenn man die gezupfte Leier/Lyra als pentatonisch gestimmtes Begleitinstrument zu Gesang betrachtet, so ist die vokale Ausführung der zur Heptatonik fehlenden Töne sinn- und reizvoll. Zu wenig wurde in Analysen beachtet, dass die verbreitetste musikalische Betätigung wohl immer der Gesang war. Schmal wird deshalb das messbare Quellenmaterial zu früher Tonalität bleiben.



„schwebende Töne“, und bei genauerer Betrachtung von „beweglichen Tönen“ als von „kvarstoner“, also Vierteltönen, da die in Frage stehenden Töne abhängig ihrer formalen Funktion unterschiedliche Höhen haben können (dies ist insbesondere bei Neukonstruktionen von Tastaturen zu berücksichtigen).

Ausgehend von Überlegungen, die auf der Philologie basieren, ist es ebenso möglich, die Tonalitäten skandinavischer Traditionsmusik als Relikt früher heptatonischer Skalenauffassung zu studieren.

### Theoretische Grundlagen anhemitonischer Heptatonik

Basis sind die anhemitonischen, also einiger rein auf Quinten basierenden pentatonischen Modi. Ausgehend von der C-Dur-Tonleiter wäre das in fünf Modi vom Grundton C aus:

C D E G A (C-Dur-Pentatonik, auf der Tonika)  
 D E G A C (neutrale Pentatonik)  
 E G A C D (Mollpentatonik)  
 G A C D E (neutrale Pentatonik)  
 A C D E G (Mollpentatonik)

die fünf Modi

F G A C D (F-Dur-Pentatonik, auf der Subdominante)  
 G A C D F (neutrale Pentatonik)  
 A C D F G (Mollpentatonik)  
 C D F G A (neutrale Pentatonik)  
 D F G A C (Mollpentatonik)

und

G A H D E (G-Dur-Pentatonik, auf der Dominante)  
 A H D E G (neutrale Pentatonik)  
 H D E G A (Mollpentatonik)  
 D E G A H (neutrale Pentatonik)  
 E G A H D (Mollpentatonik)



Alle diese pentatonischen Modi können zu anhemitonischen Siebentonskalen entwickelt werden, indem der in Frage kommende Tonschritt, der einen Halbton ergeben würde, so gelegt wird, dass die 3 offenen Halbtöne durch 2 in etwa 3/4 Töne überbrückt werden. ( Ein Ganzton liegt hier bei ca. 190 Cent, ein 3/4 Ton bei ca. 155 Cent.)

Dies ergäbe für die Durpentatonik auf C:

C D E F/Fis G A B/H C

also in Intervallen abstrahiert:

1 1 3/4 3/4 1 3/4 3/4 (norwegische Bezeichnung heute: „lys“ = „hell“, oder „repetert naturskala“ = „repetierte Naturskala“)

Für die Mollpentatonik auf A (dem 5.Modus):

A B/H C D E F/Fis G A

in Intervallen abstrahiert:

3/4 3/4 1 1 3/4 3/4 1 (norwegische Bezeichnung „repetert prydskala“ = „repetierte Zierskala“)

Für den 2. Modus (neutrale Pentatonik, hier auf D):

D E F/Fis G A B/H C D

abstrahiert:

1 3/4 3/4 1 3/4 3/4 1 (norwegische Bezeichnung „mörk“ = „dunkel“)

Dies sind die Skalen mit dem geringstem Gebrauch von Tönen außerhalb der heute gebräuchlichen Tonleitern.

Wie wir gesehen haben, und wie weiter ausgeführt werden soll, werden pro Oktave nie mehr als vier 3/4 Intervalle verwendet. Weitere Skalenbildungen nach diesem Prinzip sind zwar möglich, aber über anhemitonische Pentatonik nicht mehr grundlegend zu erklären.



### Weitere Konstruktionen halbtonefreier Siebentonskalen

Das Prinzip bleibt hier, dass weiterhin vier  $3/4$  Intervalle in der Oktave vorkommen, diese aber so gereiht werden können, dass mehr als 2 „Vierteltöne“ pro Oktave entstehen. Teile einer Obertonreihe lassen sich z.B. so darstellen. Die Nachbildung eines Abschnittes ab dem 8. Oberton unter Auslassung von Ton 15 (er würde einen Halbton ergeben) könnte abstrahiert wie folgt aussehen:

1 1  $3/4$   $3/4$   $3/4$   $3/4$  1

Weitere Bildungen nach diesem Muster sind also möglich. Zu überprüfen wäre bei ihrem Gebrauch allenfalls, ob sie auch historisch verwendet wurden. Nicht, um gezwungenermaßen auf der traditionellen Seite zu bleiben, sondern weil historischer Gebrauch ein gutes Zeugnis über die Anwendbarkeit in der Praxis ausstellt. Keinesfalls soll hier gegen Flexibilität in Hinblick auf melodische (und harmonische) Erfordernisse gesprochen werden.

Wahrscheinlich war es der Gebrauch von fele und hardingfele, der Ursache für eine weitere Form der Umbildung der genannten Skalen ist. Geht man davon aus, dass der Spielmann bestrebt ist, die Lage der linken Hand beizubehalten, und dass er lose Saiten gerne als wechselnden Bordun benützt, ergibt sich eine Teilung der Skala an der Quinte in zwei Abschnitte, die unter den Skalen kombiniert werden können. Dies sieht abstrahiert so aus:

„Lys“:

[ 1 1  $3/4$   $3/4$  ][ 1  $3/4$   $3/4$  ]

„Mørk“:

[ 1  $3/4$   $3/4$  1 ][  $3/4$   $3/4$  1 ]

„Blandet“ (= „gemischt“, nicht auf der anhemitonischen Pentatonik basierend):

[ 1  $3/4$  1  $3/4$  ][  $3/4$  1  $3/4$  ]



„Repetert Prydskala“:

[  $3/4$   $3/4$  1 1 ][  $3/4$   $3/4$  1 ]

„Naturskala“:

[ 1 1  $3/4$   $3/4$  ][  $3/4$   $3/4$  1 ]

Deutlich wird hier auch eine weitere Struktur. In jedem dieser Abschnitte ergeben sich zwei  $3/4$  Tonschritte. Zu bemerken ist nur, dass die Verwendung von Skordaturen früher bei weitem häufiger war als heute. Die offenen Saiten lagen dadurch nicht immer im Quintabstand. Dies erfordert größere Flexibilität in der Skalenbildung. Dass aber alle diese auch rekombinierten Varianten auch auf anderen Instrumenten mit Melodiespiel auf nur einer Saite in Gebrauch waren, wird später noch einmal erwähnt. Wenn man einen A-Bordun annimmt, eine Auffassung, die auch auf der fele und der hardingfele die häufigste ist (die Stimmung „oppstillt bas“, bei der die G-Saite auf A hinaufgestimmt wird, ist heute oft die eigentliche „Normalstimmung“), sind folgende Vierteltöne zu erwarten:

Für den Grundton A:

„lys“: D/Dis und G/Gis

„mørk“: C/Cis und F/Fis

„blandet“: C/Cis, D/Dis, F/Fis und G/Gis

„repetert prydskala“: B/H und F/Fis

„naturskala“: D/Dis und F/Fis

Auffallend ist hier, dass alle diese Skalen die Quinte E respektieren. Zu bemerken ist, dass im Hardingfelerepertoire der häufigste bewegliche Ton G/Gis ist, gefolgt von C/Cis und F/Fis, D/Dis ist selten. Dies könnte ein Hinweis auf den Respekt vor der Quarte sein. Sukzessive wird deswegen die „blandet skala“ in diesen Betrachtungen vernachlässigt werden, aber der Vollständigkeit halber noch angeführt. Denn verstümmelt, also mit der klaren Quarte, ist auch diese Skala reizvoll.



Die Tonarten, die auf Bordunen gespielt werden, können erst durch die Quinte und die Quarte festgemacht werden. Daraus ergibt sich das Denken in Bordunpaaren, also z.B. A/E und A/D. So folgen die Skalen auf E und D:

Grundton E:

„lys“: G/Gis und D/Dis  
 „mørk“: G/Gis und C/Cis  
 „blandet“: G/Gis, A/Ais, C/Cis und D/Dis  
 „repetert prydskala“: F/Fis und C/Cis  
 „naturskala“: G/Gis und C/Cis

Grundton D:

„lys“: G/Gis und C/Cis  
 „mørk“: F/Fis und B/H  
 „blandet“: F/Fis, G/Gis, B/H und C/Cis  
 „repetert prydskala“: Dis/E und F/Fis  
 „naturskala“: G/Gis und B/H

Für den Bordun G ergeben sich dazu noch die Skalen auf G und C:

Grundton G:

„lys“: C/Cis und F/Fis  
 „mørk“: B/H und Dis/E  
 „blandet“: B/H, C/Cis, Dis/E und F/Fis  
 „repetert prydskala“: Gis/A und Dis/E  
 „naturskala“: C/Cis und Dis/E

Grundton C:

„lys“: F/Fis und B/H  
 „mørk“: Dis/E und Gis/A  
 „blandet“: Dis/E, F/Fis, Gis/A und B/H  
 „repetert prydskala“: Cis/D und Dis/E  
 „naturskala“: F/Fis und Gis/A



Daraus ergäben sich also folgende Vierteltöne:

Für den A-Bordun:

C/Cis, D/Dis, F/Fis, G/Gis, A/Ais und B/H

Für den G-Bordun:

C/Cis, Dis/E, F/Fis, G/Gis, Gis/A und B/H

Wenn man diesen Vorrat mit den heute in der Praxis verwendeten Vierteltönen vergleicht, ist auffällig, dass tendenziell Töne (und dazu gehören auch die entsprechenden Skalen), die ein erhöhter Ton mit Vorzeichen wären (B ist wohl den vorzeichenfreien Tönen zuzuordnen), auf der fele in der Regel ungebräuchlich sind. Zwar könnte man sich diese Töne auch als erniedrigte vorzeichenfreie Töne vorstellen, doch scheint es diese Vorstellung zu sein, die wohl vermieden wird, auch wenn neuere Zeichen in der Notenschrift diese fordern können. Häufig wird dieses Zeichen allerdings nur beim Ton B/H verwendet, wohl, um die Lesbarkeit zu erleichtern.

Eines ist hier wichtig zu erwähnen: Es gibt sie eigentlich nicht, die Vierteltöne. Jeder dieser „svevande toner“ ist einem Ton der modalen Skala zugehörig. Er liegt also nicht in der Mitte der kleinen Terz, sondern näher dem „vorzeichenfreien Ton“, und dies ebenso nicht stabil. Bei Bewegung der Linie nach oben wird der Ton höher sitzen, als bei einer Bewegung nach unten. Diese Überlegung kann so weit führen, das im Treffen von Abschnitten sogar Halbtöne entstehen. Trotzdem sind oben stehende Tabellen eben genau für dieses abzuhandelnde Thema relevant. Der Gebrauch der Nyckelharpa ist auch in heutiger Praxis selten vollchromatisch, noch weniger bei Gebrauch formelrichtiger Skalen. Grovens Vorschlag von 36 Tönen für eine Oktave ist instrumentenbauerisch nicht durchzuführen, und auch spieltechnisch nicht umzusetzen. Sehr wohl aber lässt sich für die bevorzugten Tonarten die Hilfsvorstellung von Vierteltönen in der Praxis differenzieren. Der Druck auf die Taste erhöht den



Ton, der Druck des Bogens erniedrigt ihn, und die Tangenten lassen sich in weitem Umfang von vornherein stimmen.

Die Stimmung der Melodiesaiten der Kontrabasharpa liegt unabhängig vom Bordun beim Quintenpaar  $d'/a'$ . Zu diskutieren wäre, ob bei der Beschränkung auf zwei Saiten der Grundton einer Skala mit der tiefen Melodiesaite gleichzusetzen sein muss, denn die Ausführung des Leittones ist so nicht möglich. Oft ist gerade der Leitton allerdings erhöht, dies würde bei Enkelharpor einer Verschiebung der ganzen Tastatur bedürfen, um die leere Saite den erhöhten Leitton werden zu lassen (eine bei Drehleiern heute durchaus geübte Praxis ist es, die offene Saite auf den Leitton zu stimmen). Jan Lings noch anzuführende Tafeln mit ihren Tonzuordnungen beruhen bei den älteren harpor auf Rekonstruktionen und anderen Annahmen, die unter Umständen revidiert werden müssten.

Die bis jetzt vorliegenden Mensurmessungen bei Nyckelharpor scheinen zu uneinheitlich und zu undeutlich zu sein, um zum vorliegende Thema ohne Umschweife beitragen zu können. Allerdings ließe sich eine andere grundlegende Voraussetzung anhand der Tabellen studieren: die eventuelle Bevorzugung bestimmter Intonationen.

### Vielfältige Lösungsvorschläge zum Problem des syntonischen Kommas

*„...dieses dumme Wort von der Irrelevanz des syntonischen Kommas...“ (Eivind Groven)*

Pythagoras (582 – 496 v.u.Z.) bestand auf der Oktave als dem besten Zahlenverhältnis. Diese Auffassung führte zu der kaum zu überschauenden Anzahl von Versuchen, eine 12-teilige Skala in einer Oktave unterzubringen. Persische Modi widersprechen dieser Überlegung bis heute, formelrichtige Verwendung des Tonvorrats einer Skala bewegt sich da im Raum von zwei



Oktaven. Mensurmessungen auf historischen Exemplaren des norwegischen langeleiks zeigen Relikte ähnlicher Auffassung in skandinavischen Raum.

Unzählige Versuche wurden über die Zeit unternommen, Quintenreihen mit der Oktave in Übereinstimmung zu bringen, ohne letztendlich zum Erfolg zu führen. Die gleichschwebende Stimmung baut auf der Schichtung von 12 Quinten, die alle von 585 Millioktaven auf 583  $1/3$  Millioktaven gestaucht werden. Die Durterz ist in diesem System 11 (!) Millioktaven zu hoch (im Vergleich dazu ist die Pythagoräische Terz 18 Millioktaven zu groß).

Dies führte unter anderem zum geradezu verzweifelten Versuch, Skalen auf reinen Terzen aufzubauen (Adrian Fokkers 31-stufige Orgel von 1950 hat zwei Manuale mit je 11 Tastenreihen, ein 5-reihiges Pedal, 31 Terzen werden benötigt, um zum Ausgangspunkt zurückzukehren, trotzdem wird keine einzige reine Quinte erreicht). Harry Partch (1901-1974) entwickelte ein 43-stufiges Tonsystem auf Basis der Naturtonreihe, sein Zoomoozophone hat einen Tonvorrat von 31 Tönen. Zu nennen wären noch das Bosanquet-Harmonium von 1876 mit 53 Tönen/Oktave und Kotschys Ekmelische Orgel von 1976 am Salzburger Mozarteum mit ganzen 72 (sic) Tönen/Oktave.

Eivind Groven (1901-1977) entwickelte das überzeugendste Modell, sowohl theoretisch, als auch in der Praxis des Orgelbaus. Groven war selbst Spieler der seljefløyte und der hardingfele, sammelte volksmusikalisches Material im Feld und war Komponist groß angelegter Orchestermusik. Sein System basiert auf 8 Quinten von F bis Cis. Der Abstand Cis-F liegt da bei 320 Millioktaven, die reine Terz Des-F ist 322 Millioktaven groß (2 Millioktaven liegen deutlich unter der Hörgrenze). Die Einteilung liegt bei 36 Tönen pro Oktave, bei seinen Orgeln praktikabel durch automatische Relais angesprochen, womit die gewohnte Klaviatur beibehalten werden kann.



Grovens System ist das deutlichste Beispiel dafür, dass sowohl die temperierte Stimmung, als auch die Vorstellung von „Vierteltönen“ in der Praxis zu grob sind, um zu einem befriedigenden Ergebnis zu kommen. Für die Nyckelharpa bieten sich, da die Tastatur aus Platzgründen und Gründen der Spielbarkeit nicht beliebig erweitert werden kann, nur Lösungsvorschläge in engen chromatischen Grenzen an. Durch Tastendruck veränderte Tonhöhen, wie auch bei der Drehleier, kann dieser Aktionsraum allerdings etwas erweitert werden, ebenfalls durch Bogendruck, der den Ton deutlich senkt.

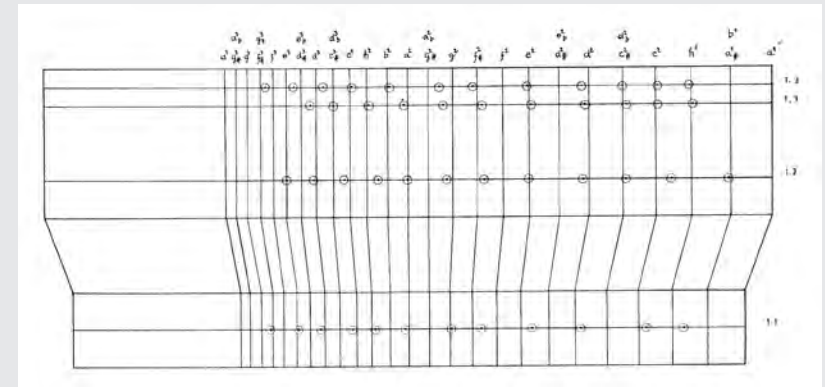
### Mensurmessungen auf historischen Instrumenten

Viele der oben stehenden Analysen basieren auf Mensurmessungen an historischen Exemplaren des langeleiks. Diese Arbeiten werden allerdings von heutigen Autoren zum Teil mit Skepsis betrachtet, da sich kein einheitliches System, sondern ein kaum einzuordnender Formenreichtum darbot, besonders, was die häufige Unterschiedlichkeit der unteren und der oberen Oktave auf ein und demselben Instrument betrifft. Wie bei den historischen Formen der Nyckelharpa wird auf einer Melodiesaite über Bordunen gespielt, der Skalenaufbau hat also wenig mit den Prinzipien der fele mit ihren wechselnden Bordunen und Bezugstönen zu tun.

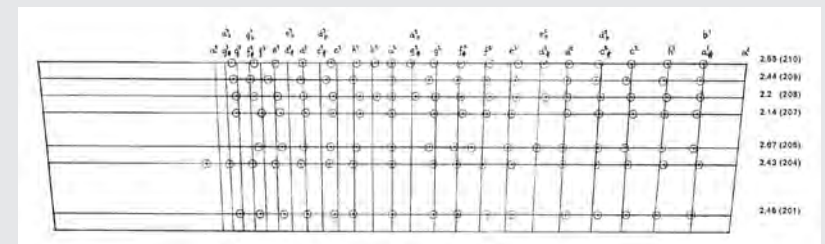
Jan Ling legte in seiner Doktorarbeit Mensurmessungen auf historischen Nyckelharpor vor. Zu bedenken ist, dass alle diese harpor eine frühestens barocke Tonalitätsauffassung dokumentieren, und dass Uppland in der schwedischen Geschichte durchaus eine Sonderstellung hat. Kontakte nach England, Deutschland und Polen haben dort sicher glättend auf die musikalische Tätigkeit gewirkt. Trotzdem sind in den abgebildeten Tafeln oft deutliche Abweichungen von der temperierten Stimmung zu erkennen, die unter Umständen nicht nur auf ungenaue Arbeit der Instrumentenbauer – oft in Personalunion mit den Spielmännern – zurückzuführen sein müssen.



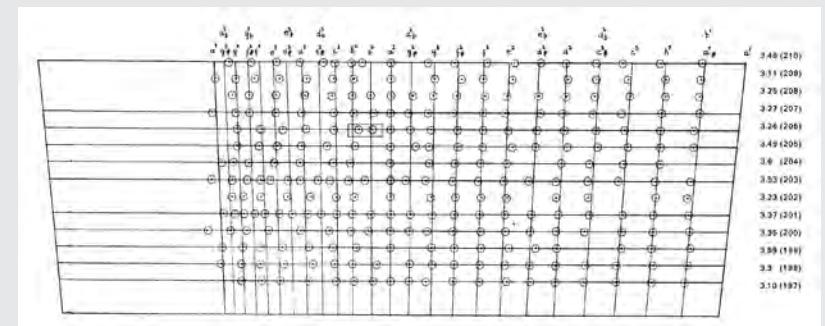
Jan Ling: Messplan 5. Fähnchenstellung von Nyckelharpor ohne Resonanzsaiten.



Jan Ling: Messplan 1. Fähnchenstellung von Enkelharpor.

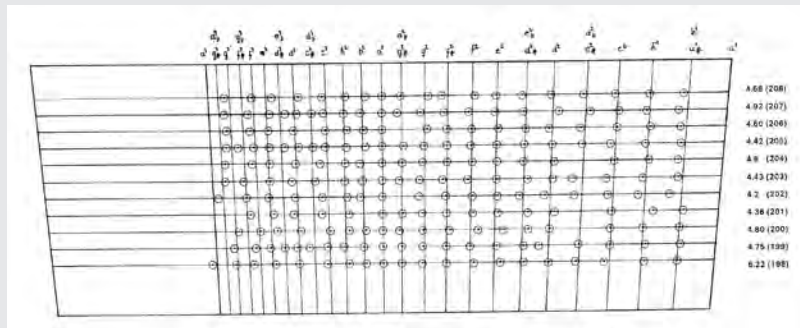


Jan Ling: Messplan 2. Fähnchenstellungen von Kontrabasharpor.

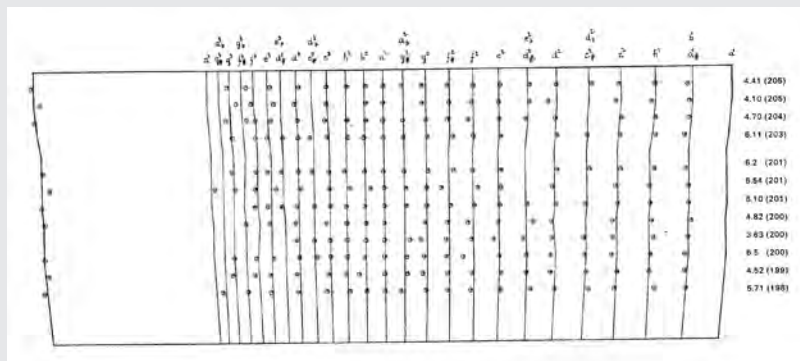




Jan Ling: Messplan 3. Fähnchenstellungen von Silverbasharp und Kontrabasharp mit Dubbellek.



Jan Ling: Messplan 4. Fähnchenstellungen auf Nyckelharpor von zu seiner Zeit tätigen Spielmännern.



Verbalisiert hat das Musikmuseum in Stockholm Interpretationen der Messungen an vier harpor auf seiner Netzseite ausgelegt (Stand 2008):

#### Kontrabasharpa N2760:

$a^1$ ,  $h^1$  (↓),  $c^2$ ,  $c^2\#/d^2b$  (↑),  $d^2$ ,  $e^2$  (↓),  $f^2$ ,  $f^2\#$ ,  $g^2$  (↑),  $a^2$ ,  $h^2$  (↑),  $c^3$  (↑),  $d^3$  (↑),  $e^3$  (↑),  $f\#$  (↑↑),  $g$  (↑↑),  $a^3$  (↓)

#### Kontrabasharpa N217631:

$a^1$ ,  $b^1/a^1\#$  (↑),  $h^1$ ,  $c^2$  (↑),  $c^2\#/d^2b$ ,  $d^2$ ,  $d^2\#/e^2b$  (↓),  $e^2$  (↓),  $f^2$ ,  $f^2\#$ ,  $g^2$  (↑),  $g^2\#/a^2b$ ,  $a^2$ ,  $b^2$  (↓),  $h^2$  (↓↓),  $c^3$  (↑),  $d^3$  (↓),  $d\#^3$  (↑↑),  $f^3$ ,  $g^3$

#### Enkelharpa M2508:

$a$ ,  $b^1/a^1\#$ ,  $h^1$ ,  $c^2$ ,  $c^2\#/d^2b$  (↑),  $d^2$  (↓),  $d^2\#/e^2b$  (↓),  $e^2$  (↓↓),  $f^2$  (↓),  $f^2\#$  (↓),  $g^2$  (↑),  $g^2\#/a^2b$ ,  $a^2$ ,  $b^2$ ,  $h^2$  (↓),  $c^3$ ,  $d^3$ ,  $e^3$ ,  $f\#$  (↓),  $g/g\#$  (↑)

#### Enkelharpa N171567:

$a^1$ ,  $b^1/a^1\#$  (↑),  $h^1$ ,  $c^2$  (↓),  $c^2\#/d^2b$ ,  $d^2$  (↓),  $e^2$  (↓),  $f^2$ ,  $f^2\#$ ,  $g^2$ ,  $a^2$ ,  $h^2$  (↓),  $c^3$  (↑),  $d^3$ ,  $e^3$  (↓),  $f$ ,  $g$  (↑)

(↑) = der Tonplatz ist etwas höher als der angegebene Tonplatz, (↓) = der Tonplatz ist etwas tiefer als der angegebene Tonplatz, (↑↑) = der Tonplatz liegt etwa in der Mitte des angegebenen Tonplatzes und des Halbtones darüber, (↓↓) = der Tonplatz liegt etwa in der Mitte des angegebenen Tonplatzes und des Halbtones darunter.

Absichtliche „Vierteltöne“ sind kaum auszumachen, wahrscheinlich ist eine Tendenz zur gleichschwebenden Stimmung. Interessant ist allerdings das niedrige e bei der Enkelharpa M2508, das könnte in Rest sein. Nach der persönlichen Auskunft von Leif Eriksson, dem Spezialisten in Nachbauten der „Moraharpa“ darf er seine Messungen allerdings in Nachbauten nicht umsetzen, da die Skala für den heutigen Gebrauch völlig unbrauchbar wäre. Ich empfehle aus diesem Grund eine völlig neue Vermessung aller noch bekannten gammalharpor von der Bauart der Enkel- und der Kontrabasharpa. Jan Lings Vorarbeit, die auch das Musikmuseum noch verwendet, wie es aussieht, wäre gründlich zu revidieren!



Gründliche Vorarbeit wurde bei anderen Instrumentengruppen geleistet; gründlicher vielleicht auch deswegen, weil diese Instrumenten – in diesem Fall das norwegische Langeleik und die schwedische Hummel – eine leichter zu überschauende Grundlage als Voraussetzung.

„Die schwedische Hummel“ von Stig Walin, 1953 von Nordiska Museet Stockholm auf deutsch (!) herausgegeben, ist eine umfassende Arbeit, die konsequent Mensurmessungen der untersuchten Instrumente beinhaltet. Die Hummel ist ein – zumeist gezupftes – Monochord, das im 19. Jahrhundert vom gestrichenen Psalmodikon verdrängt wurde.<sup>2</sup> In Kurzfassung lässt sich kaum eine Konklusion ziehen, außer, dass die Prinzipien den obenstehenden Tabellen in vielem nahestehen. Erstaunlich für Walin, und auch für mich heraushebenswert, ist die Feststellung (eine Instrumentengruppe, die VG-Instrumente betreffend): „dass die reine Quarte, 3/4, in diesem Material das einzige allgemein „nachgestrebte“ theoretische Intervall ist, dass sie allein (sic!) den fraglichen Instrumentenmachern als gemeinsames Ideal vorgeschwebt hat.“

In der Folge sind Walins Ausführungen zwar oft kritisiert worden, nach eigener Überprüfung aber durchaus zu Unrecht. Das gesammelte Material ist deutlich, ebenso wie die Deutung differenziert. Für den kontinentalen Leser wird besonders ein kleiner Ausflug zu einer Darstellung bei Prætorius von Interesse sein. Zwar hat Per-Ulf Allmo in einer noch nicht veröffentlichten Arbeit deutlich gemacht, dass man davon Abstand nehmen sollte, die dort dargestellte „Schlüssselfidel“ als Dokument eines damals existierenden Instrumentes zu betrachten.

<sup>2</sup> Walin zitiert hier auch den früheren Bauern Karl Axelsson, Neverstad, Kville, Bohuslän, geboren etwa 1880 in Kvillen mit einer Aussage von 1947: „Karl Axelsson brachte hier die bekannte Tatsache zur Sprache, dass die Priester des westlichen Schwedens am Ende des vorigen Jahrhunderts verordneten, dass man die Musikinstrumente, vor allem die Geigen zerstören sollte.“ Eine Geschichte macht in Uppland noch immer die Runde, denn auch dort wurden im Zuge der Erweckungsbewegung fleißig Nyckelharpor vernichtet. An einem Seil von einem Pferd nachgeschleppt zerschlug ein solches Instrument unter Gejohle.



Deutlich enthusiastischer geht Walin auf eine Darstellung ein: „Das Intervallmaterial dieses nur abgebildeten Scheitholts wird von denselben Hauptzügen charakterisiert, die wir schon von der VG-Gruppe her kennen. Die meisten Halbtöne sind größer als der diatonische Halbton, die meisten Ganztöne kleiner als der pythagoreische aber größer als der kleine Ganzton, die meisten kleinen Terzen kleiner als die natürliche aber größer als die pythagoreische, die meisten grossen Terzen kleiner als sowohl die pythagoreische wie die natürliche Terz, die Quartan verteilen sich gleichmäßiger um den theoretisch „richtigen“ Wert herum und die meisten Quinten und Oktaven sind kleiner als die reinen Quinten bzw. Oktaven. [...] Die Zeichnungen bei Prætorius sind nicht willkürlich gemacht worden, sondern maßstäblich. Sie bilden wirkliche Instrumente ab.“

Ergänzend muss erwähnt werden, dass immer wieder die „dekorative“ Bundeinteilung in der Literatur erwähnt wird. Dekorativ insofern, dass die Skalentöne gleichmäßig in die Zwischenräume von Grundintervallen (in häufigem Fall eben die Quart) verteilt wurden. Das Ergebnis ist oft ein ähnliches wie bei den anderen theoretischen Betrachtungen. Wichtig bleibt aber immer die Feststellung, dass Instrumente mit Bünden zwar Relikte historischer Tonalitätsauffassungen sind, aber sicher zu ihrer Zeit diese nicht bestimmt haben! Was Groven mit der seljefløy versucht hat, nämlich Tonalitätsentwicklungen ursächlich auf Instrumente zurückzuführen, ist bei genauerer Untersuchung nie haltbar. Der Gesang allein kann die Vorstellung von Tonalität abbilden, und der historische Gesang ging verloren. Trotzdem werde ich ihm ein kleines Kapitel im Anhang widmen müssen.



## Diatonische Überlegungen zur Stimmung der traditionellen Tastatur

Historische Orgelstimmungen gibt es in Tabellen zu Hauff, wenige sind profiliert genug, um zum Verständnis des Melodienspiels ohne harmonische Struktur beizutragen.

Einige Beispiele können trotzdem die Spannweite der unterschiedlichen barocken Auffassungen verbildlichen. Links stehen die Tonnamen nach bevorzugten Grundtönen verschoben, rechts die Abweichungen von der gleichstufigen Stimmung in Cent.

Grundton g	Grundton a	Grundton c	Grundton d	Gleichschwebend	Valotti 1732	Valotti 1754	Neidhardt Für ein Dorf	Ohlssonstimmung auf d
g	a	c	d	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
gs	b	cs	ds	-24,0	-5,9	-5,9	-5,9	+2,0
a	h	d	e	-6,8	-2,0	-3,9	-3,9	-4,0
b	c	ds	f	10,3	-3,9	-2,0	-3,9	+6,0
h	cs	e	fs	-13,7	-9,8	-7,8	-7,8	-4,0
c	d	f	g	3,4	-2,0	2,0	-2,0	2,0
cs	ds	fs	gs	-20,5	-7,8	-7,8	-3,9	0,0
d	e	g	a	3,4	0,0	-2,0	-5,9	-2,0
ds	f	gs	b	27,4	-5,9	-3,9	-3,9	+4,0
e	fs	a	h	-10,3	-5,9	-5,9	-5,9	-6,0
f	g	b	c	6,8	-2,0	0,0	-3,9	4,0
fs	gs	h	cs	-17,1	-7,8	-9,8	-7,8	-2,0



Auffallend ist in dieser parallel geführten Tabelle die deutliche Abweichung bestimmter Töne der unterschiedlichen Systeme. Die vorliegenden Messungen könnten auch unterschiedliche Hörgewohnheiten der Spielleute bedeuten, nicht nur „Unge-nauigkeit“. Nyckelharpor sind allerdings ein deutliches Dokument für die „fortgeschrittenen“ Hörgewohnheiten des Raumes Uppland/Stockholm schon in barocken Zeiten. Die Arbeit, die Tonalität, die in anderen Landschaften noch Jahrhunderte später lebendig war, auszulöschen, war augenscheinlich im politischen Machtzentrum schon mindestens 70 Jahre vor den dokumentierten Umschulungen abgeschlossen. In diesem Licht ist die königlich unterstützte Arbeit von Dillner zu verstehen, die eher einem Modernisierungsversuch entspricht, mit dem Ziel fortgesetzter Reichseinigung.

## Johan Dillner und das Psalmodikon

Johan Dillner (1785-1862), Priester, Psalmenverfasser, und Weiterentwickler des Monochordes mit Griffbrett, war ein rühriger Vereinheitlicher des Kirchengesanges in ärmeren Gebieten des Reiches. Der Psalmengesang wurde wiederholt „erneuert“, immer wieder hatte die Bevölkerung darauf die Tendenz, die Melodien ihrer musikalischen Auffassung anzupassen. Der „Syllabische Stil“ – ein Wort liegt auf einem Viertel, wurde stets aufgebrochen, Diminution scheint aber nicht das Prinzip gewesen zu sein. (Moberg, der in Jan Lings „Svensk folkmusik“ von 1964 zitiert wird, hat die Auffassung vertreten, dass Kujningstechniken und die Ornamentation von vallåtar strukturend waren.) Johan Dillner wurde zwar in Medelpad im Kirchspiel Selånger geboren, galt aber zeitlebens als Upplandspriester, war Regimentspriester des Jämtlandregimentes im Norwegenfeldzug. In engem Kontakt mit der Herrschaft und einer offensichtlichen Identifikation mit einer der Herrschaft nahestehenden Region versuchte er, das Werk der Orgel in Gemeinden zu vollenden, die sich keine Orgel leisten konnten. Diese Arbeit fand allerhöchste Unterstützung. Das Psalmodikon ist nicht mehr als ein Kasten aus Holz, der ein



Griffbrett besitzt, dem Bünde ausgeschnitzt sind. Meist auf den Tisch oder die Knie gelegt, werden die Saiten gezupft oder gestrichen, um eine Ziffernschrift auszuführen, die die melodische Form bezeichnet. Unterschiedliche Größen des Instrumentes waren den Stimmlagen angepasst. Das Konzept war ein leicht zugängliches Instrument zu gewinnen, das im Heimstudium Verwendung finden kann, und dem Gemeindegesang Vereinheitlichung schafft. Nicht das Instrument war das Ziel, nicht der Tanz und die Belustigung, sondern die gemeinschaftliche Ausführung neuer Psalmenbücher. So fand das Psalmodikon zu vielen Ausformungen. Es wurden Tastaturen wie bei der Nyckelharpa entwickelt, auch gambenähnliches Spiel. Ziel und Effekt war die Vereinheitlichung der Intonation, das Ausmerzen von Ornamentik, und wahrscheinlich damit auch die Vergrößerung des Abstandes zu nichtkirchlicher Musik. Pietistische Bewegungen, die in norwegischen Landstrichen zum Verbot von Tanzveranstaltungen und zur verordneten Vernichtung aller Instrumente führten, die nicht dem Gottesdienst dienten, griffen auch in Schweden. Politisches Ziel Dillners war allerdings ein nationales, er war Abgeordneter im Götiska förbundet, einer Organisation in Opposition zu Napoleons antinationaler Zielsetzung. In diesem Verbund sang er für gewöhnlich Geijers sänger (Geijer war ein Adelsgeschlecht, das sich auf österreichische Adelige (Geyer) gründete, die Anfang des 17. Jahrhunderts eingewandert waren).



Erik Gustaf Geijer  
(1783 - 1847)  
Quelle: wikipedia.org

Erik Gustav Geijer (1783-1847) war Poet, Philosoph, Komponist, und Gründer der Geschichtswissenschaft in Schweden. Nationalismus war also nach ihm eine Bewegung des Liberalismus, Konservatismus und eine Bewegung der Vereinheitlichung, alles im Lichte hyperboreischer Auffassung.



Jan Lings Buch „Nyckelharpan“ von 1967 steht in Großdruck ein Blatt mit bloß diesem Text voran: „Nyckelharpan, musikinstrumentet med både stråke och tangenter, har uppmärksamats av historiker alltsedan Olof Rudbecks d. ä. dagar. Det egendomliga allmogeinstrumentet satte fantasin i rörelse: Rudbeck ansåg att man spelade nyckelharpa redan „Baldur til ära uti hans Saal“ och långt fram under 1800-talet räknades nyckelharpan av forntidsforskare och musikhistoriker till vikingarnas instrumentarium.“ („Die Nyckelharpa, das Instrument mit sowohl Bogen als auch Tasten, wurde von Historikern schon seit Olof Rudbecks des Älteren Tagen ins Auge gefasst. Das eigentümliche Gemeininstrument setzte die Phantasie in Bewegung: Rudbeck nahm an, dass man schon „Baldur zur Ehre vor seinem Saal“ Nyckelharpa spielte, und bis weit in das 19. Jahrhundert hinein wurde die Nyckelharpa von Vorzeitforschern und Musikhistorikern zum Instrumentarium der Wikinger gerechnet.“)



Olof Rudbeck d. ä.  
(1630 - 1702),  
Gemälde von Martin  
Mijtens d.ä. (1696);  
Quelle: wikipedia.org

Rudbeck war mit dem Werk „Atland eller Manheim“ der Begründer götizistischer Auffassung.

Kann es sein, dass man versucht hat, die auf der Nyckelharpa in ihrer Neuform gefundene Tonalität durch das Medium Psalmodikon als angenommene „alte Tonalität“ zu verbreiten?

Was wäre der Nyckelharpa widerfahren, wäre sie nicht ständig der herrschenden Tonalitätsauffassung angepasst worden?



„Natürlich gehören Vierteltonmusiker, die jüdischen Atonalen, die musikfremden Akustiker usw. erst recht zu den Zersetzungerscheinungen.“ (Berhard Nennstiel in: *Deutsches Bildungswesen*, 1936)

Das frühe 20. Jahrhundert ist in vielen Dingen Ausführungsorgan des 19. gewesen. Fehlende Bildung wurde oft Grundlage zur Vorstellung vom Naturgesetz (vormals Gott), Unverständliches zum Anschlag darauf. Die Kontinuität ist heute eigentlich deutlich, war aber den Ausführenden oft nicht klar. Noch heute glauben viele an die Unumstößlichkeit des Machtanspruches eingeführter Konvention, an eine Vorzeit in Barbarei. Hegels Entwicklungsgedanke ist da ein Grundpfeiler des neuzeitlichen Zerstörungswahns, Kants kategorischer Imperativ das Werkzeug des Übergriffs. Gesetze des 19. Jahrhunderts, im Barock noch zaghaft als Diskussionsbeitrag vorgestellt, wurden nun rückwirkend angewandt.

„Eins haben Atonalisten, Neutöner, Vierteltonmenschen usw., soweit sie Juden sind, für sich: sie gehorchen einem Gesetz der Rasse, indem sie die harmonische Mehrstimmigkeit, die ihnen urfremd ist, folgerichtig zu zerstören suchen. [...] Ebenso bedeutet die Einführung von Vierteltonen oder anderen Unterteilungen für vorderasiatische Menschen Rückkehr zu ihrer art-eigenen Tonkunst; für nordische würde es lediglich ein Rückfall in längst überwundene Barbarei sein.“ (Richard Eichenauer: *Musik und Rasse*, München 1937, Quelle: *Musik im Dritten Reich*, Gütersloh, 1963)

Oft wird versucht, die traditionsmusikalische Inkompatibilität mit der heutigen vorherrschenden Vorstellung von Halbtönen dieser verschämt anzupassen – schon Schubert hatte keine andere Wahl (oh, diese Leittöne). Die Praxis heutiger „Originalklangmusiker“, in einer Nische Musik zu schaffen, die sowohl von intellektuell als auch populär sein kann, führt dazu, sich besser nicht mit Tonalitätsfragen zu beschäftigen. Hat man bloß Angst vor leeren Sälen? Oder will man es besser nicht besser wissen? Allein schon im Lichte der obenstehenden Zitate wären Selbstreflexionen einen Versuch wert.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Der Verfasser ist sich mit Seufzen dessen bewusst, dass er in vorliegender Arbeit auch Werke und Autoren zitiert, die mit



## Der Weg zum Musikwillen

Ein Musiker hat zuerst einen Musikwillen, die Musik entsteht aus dem Menschen, das Instrument ist ein Werkzeug. Ein Instrument ist demnach ein materielles Dokument von Bewusstwerdung. Nützliche Entwicklungen bei Instrumenten entstehen immer aus einer Not, das Werkzeug wird dem Menschen angepasst. Die Nyckelharpa im besonderen hat immer nur deshalb überlebt, weil sie den jeweils persönlichen Musikwillen auch umsetzen konnte.

Seit die Nyckelharpa ihrem regionalen Biotop entwachsen ist, und sich die Anpassung an den Musikwillen der 1940er konsolidiert hat, wurden Versuche gewagt, das Instrument flexibler zu gestalten, in der Tugend der Tonalitätsgebundenheit auch eine Not zu sehen.

## Die Minneapolisarpa

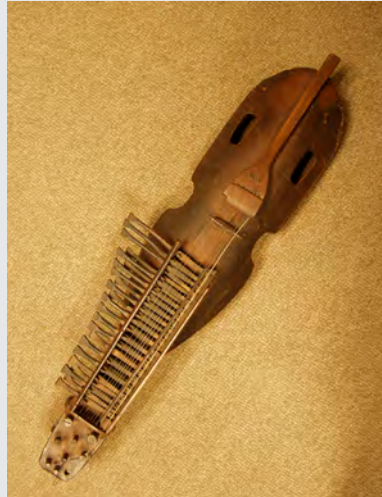
Ein einziges Instrument älteren Datums mit Vierteltonastern ist bis jetzt bekannt geworden. Bisher liegt noch keine genauere Analyse vor, außer dem Gerücht, dass diese Kontrabasharpa aus der Region Östhammar nach den USA verbracht worden ist. Der Nyckelharpabauer Esbjörn Hogmark hat dankenswerterweise einige seiner Fotografien zur Verfügung gestellt.

Das Instrument stammt von einem sichtlich geübten Nyckelharpabauer. Auffallend sind die ungewöhnlich vielen Bohrungen für Fähnchen auf der d-Saite. Zwei Vierteltonastern sind zu erkennen.

Die erste – dem Sattel nahe – Vierteltonaste entspricht den Erwartungen, die zweite lässt sich schwer eingliedern. Kann sie etwa ein Indiz dafür sein, dass der Bordun manchmal in eine Scordatur gebracht wurde?

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fraglicher Zeit verbunden sind. Zu bedenken ist aber immer, dass bloßes Stehen auf der „richtigen“ politischen Seite noch keinen wissenschaftlichen Wert für sich hat. Deshalb ist es immer wichtig und richtig, fachlich nur Zitate zu verwenden, die mit redlichen Absichten erstellt wurden, in ebenfalls redlicher Absicht.



„Minneapolisharpa“ (Photos: Esbjörn Hogmark)

## Neuentwicklungen

Hasse Gille hat einen Typus von Kontrabasharpa auf den Markt gebracht, der zwei Tasten für „Vierteltöne“ aufweist, also vier solche Fähnchen. Olov Johansson spielt eine solche. Auf dieser Basis wird seit Jahren gearbeitet. Olle Plahn hat die bislang größte Erweiterung in diese Richtung gebaut. Die Tasten sind bei ihm in eine zweite Reihe versetzt.

Eine Tabelle soll die Tastenanordnung veranschaulichen:

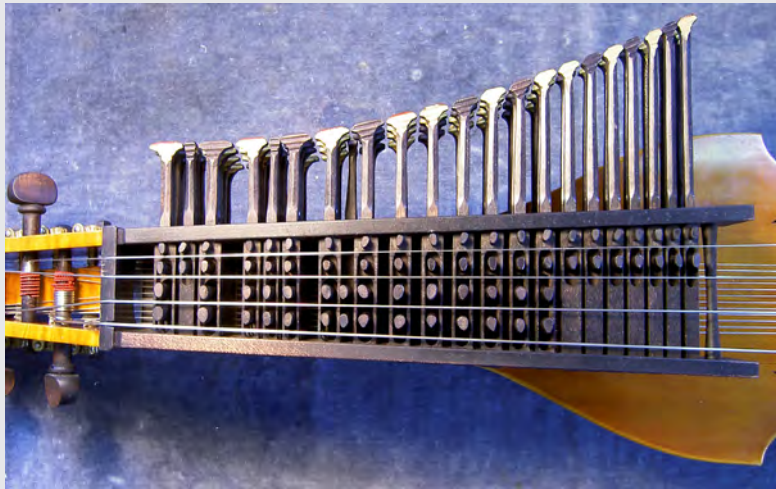
d	a
dis	ais
kvartston	kvartston
e	h
f	c
kvartston	kvartston
fis	cis
g	d



kvartston	kvartston
gis	dis
kvartston	kvartston
a	e
ais	f
kvartston	kvartston
h	fis
c	g
kvartston	kvartston
cis	gis
	kvartston
d	a
	ais
	h



Kontrabasharpa von Olle Plahn; (Photo: Boris Koller)



„Tenorharpa“ von Peder Källman ([www.pederkallman.se](http://www.pederkallman.se)); Quelle: Peder Källman

Peder Källman hat Zeichnungen von Johan Hedin ausgeführt, die Vierteltontasten sitzen in der jeweiligen Reihe:

Annette Osann hat eine Konstruktion entwickelt, die einige „Vierteltöne“ möglich macht: Es ist möglich, diese Konstruktion auch nachträglich auf eine gewöhnliche Tastatur aufzusetzen.



## Der Sinn

Über die Sinnhaftigkeit solcher Konstruktionen mag man streiten. Da aber die Wirkungskreise einzelner Musiker über Einspielungen bei weitem größer sind, als sie früher sein konnten, wird die Hörgewohnheit und die Erwartung der Öffentlichkeit nach und nach verändert. Entwicklungen sind kein Muss, aber sie entstehen aus der Not einzelner. Heute sind Hasse Gilles Vierteltontasten Standard bei der Kontrabasharpa, auch in anderen Korpusformen. Anhemitonische Heptatonik wird nach anfänglichen Widerständen auch in Schweden nach und nach als Möglichkeit etabliert. Die „historische Aufführungspraxis“ zeigt sich noch unberührt. Wie lange?

Links unten und oben: Details der Tastatur der Harpa des Autors, gebaut von Annette Osann



## Anhang

### Notation

Es ist vielleicht ein zu bedeutendes Thema, um im Anhang gebracht zu werden. Allerdings sind die Auffassungen bis jetzt noch immer zu gegensätzlich, um sie in einen allgemeinen Artikel einbinden zu können. Viele Notierungsmethoden finden sich in der Literatur; die meisten sind zu „feinsinnig“ und den mikrotonalen Überlegungen zu sehr verhaftet, um in der Praxis zu leicht zu lesenden Lösungen führen zu können. Der Verfasser benützt zum Beispiel mit Vergnügen das Notationsprogramm Sibelius 6, aber konnte sich bisher nicht dazu durchringen, die vorgeschlagenen Vorzeichensysteme auch zu benutzen.

### Jesus din søte forening

trad. etter Ragnar Vigdal

Je - sus, din sø - te for - e - ning å sma - ke len - ges og  
 6 tren - ges mitt her - te e og sinn. Lös meg fra alt - e det som  
 11 hol - der e til - ba - ke, drag meg i deg min be -  
 15 gyn - nel - se inn! Vis meg rett klar - lig min jam - mer og  
 20 møy - e, vis meg for - der vel - sens av - grunn i  
 24 meg, så at e na - tur en til dø - den må boy - e,  
 29 ån - den a - le - ne må le - ve for deg!



Zur Aufzeichnung norwegischen Slåttmaterials hat sich die aus Sicht des Verfassers klügste – weil einfachste – Methode durchgesetzt. Ein ´ vor dem Ton zeigt, dass der Ton etwas höher sein soll, als angegeben, ein ` dagegen, dass er etwas tiefer sein soll. Dies ergibt in der Praxis ein einfach zu lesendes Notenbild, und diese Vorzeichen sind auch leicht mit den konventionellen zu kombinieren.

Links das Beispiel eines Psalms im Notensatz des Autors.

## Der Gesang im Wort

In Skandinavien gibt es in den letzten Jahren wieder Säger, die die alten Tonalitäten in ihrer Arbeit aufleben lassen. Die so genannte mittelalterliche Ballade wurde in Schweden zum Beispiel vorbildlich aufgearbeitet, Norwegen folgt auf dem Fuß. Untersuchungen diesbezüglich würden den Umfang vorliegender Arbeit sprengen, trotzdem möchte ich ein kleines Beispiel geben, wie sprachbasierte Überlegungen Eingang in die vorliegende Diskussion finden könnten. Willemarks Einspielung der Ballade „Josef från Arimatea“ macht es deutlich, dass Worte mit oft schmerzlichen Gewicht (wie z.B. das Wort „grav“ („Grab“)) wie zufällig auf Skalenpositionen Platz finden, die schwebende Töne ergeben können.

Als kleinen Ausflug in die deutsche Ballade könnte man beispielsweise zu „Deutsche Volkslieder mit ihren Melodien“ (Deutsches Volksliedarchiv, 1935, W. de Gruyter) greifen, und den „Bremberger“ aufschlagen. In d-moll aufgezeichnet ergäben sich die Halbtöne zwischen A und B, und zwischen E und F, ausgeglichen werden könne diese durch Erhöhung der Töne F und B. Erste und die zweite Textzeile enden genau auf diesen Tönen: strukturell trieben diese Töne, betont durch eine Fermate, die Melodie besonders weiter. Die damit besonders ausgesungenen Wörter wären demnach: nacht, gebracht, weiß, fleiß, mär, wer, jar, grau, tisch, fisch, sein, wein, mundt, grundt, sang, genant, versteh, wee, sein, pein. Die Endung der dritten Zeile wird durch einen Viertelton eingeleitet, aber aufge-



löst: schneweißen, seyn, thurn, verblichen, zu essen, darauff  
trincken, der wende, misselungen, sein leben, abgescheiden.  
Parallel dazu das Ende der Vierten Zeile: Helde, er, hart, lieben,  
schwarzen, mir, seligs, Bulen, Hell, himelischen.

Zu meinem Vergnügen, und zu Schrecken anderer, habe ich die  
Ballade oft vorgetragen, mit den Vierteltönen, versteht sich.  
Der innere Zusammenhang der Worte mit der Melodie war mir  
deutlich. Ich bin mir sicher, dass sich weiteres Material dieser  
Art finden lässt. (Ja, natürlich kann man unken, dass man den  
gesamten Text beliebig zitieren könnte, aber für mich ist der  
Zusammenhang mehr als ein Indiz.)

Ich habe gewacht eine Winterlange **nacht**  
dazu hatt mich ein schon Jungfreulein **gebracht**  
mit ihren schneweißen brusten,  
dass mußte dem **Helde** gelusten.

Die Frau war schön, ihr hendt die waren **weiß**  
darauf legt der knab seinen **fleiß**  
sein hertz und all **seyn** sinne  
mit jr wolt **er** von hinne.

Dem Frewlein kamen leydige **mär**  
wie das jr bul gefangen **wer**,  
in einen thurn **geworfen**,  
darinnen gar **hart** beschlossen.

Darinn lag er wol siben **jar**  
sein Barht wardt weiß, sein har wardt **grau**  
sein mun was im **verblichen**,  
von der **lieben** abgewichen.

Mann legt den Bremberger auff ein **tisch**  
schneid jn zu ryemen wie ein **fisch**,  
sein hertz gab mann **zu** essen  
der Frauen in einem **schwarzen** pfeffer.

Hab ich hie gessen das Junge hertze **sein**



so schencket mir ein den külen **wein**  
ond lasst mich **darauff** trincken,  
Mein hertz wil **mir** versinken

Den Becher satzt sie ann den **mundt**  
sie tranck ihn auß biß an den **grundt**,  
neyget sich gegen **der** wende  
nam gar ein **seligs** ende.

Der uns das Lied von newen **sang**  
Ein Reuttersman was er **genant**,  
dann im hat misselungen  
ist om seyn **Bulen** kummen.

Du junger knab, mich recht **versteh**,  
von Bulschafft kumbt groß Ach unnd **wee**  
bringt manchen umb **sein** leben,  
sein Seel der **Hell** wird geben.

Da muss sie bey den Teuffeln **sein**  
unnd Ewig leyden schwere **pein**,  
Ist von Gott abgescheiden,  
von **himelischen** frewden.

### "Der Bremberger" - Melodie

trad.





## Literatur

Eine unvollständige Liste, beinhaltend Grundlagen dieser Arbeit ebenso wie weiterführende Schriften. Der Verfasser verspricht, hier nicht einfach seine Bibliothek anzuführen. (Diese so oft geübte Praxis ist meist unredlich.) Hier stehen nur Werke, die auch verwendet wurden, und nur Kaufempfehlungen.

**Bjørn Aksdal og Sven Nyhus:** *Fanitullen, Innføring i norsk og samisk Folkemusikk*, Universitetsforlaget AS 1993, 2. opplag 1998, ISBN 82-00-21692-6

DAS Buch, nicht nur zu diesem Thema. Norwegisch muss man halt können. Einige Abschnitte wenden sich dem Thema der Tonalität und der Geschichte ihrer Untersuchung zu. Das Kapitel „Theoretische Grundlagen anhemitonischer Heptatonik“ vorliegender Arbeit baut zum größten Teil auf diesem Buch.

**Jan Ling:** *Nyckelharpan. Studier i ett folkligt musikinstrument*, P.A. Norstedt & Söners förlag, Stockholm 1967

DIE Doktorarbeit über die Nyckelharpa. Nur noch antiquarisch zu bekommen, wenn überhaupt. Eine kleine Schallplatte liegt bei. in Abschnitten ist dieses Buch auch auf Englisch übersetzt.

**Per-Ulf Allmo:** *Den gäckande nyckelharpan*. Stockholms universitet 2004

Eine Abhandlung über die Vorgeschichte der Nyckelharpa. Hätte eine Doktorarbeit sein sollen, aber akademische Kreise sind auch in Schweden eifersüchtig. DIE Schrift für alle, die die Nyckelharpa der „alten Musik“ einverleiben wollen. Im Anhang auch eine Zusammenfassung auf Englisch.

**Stig Walin:** *Die schwedische Hummel*, Nordiska Museet/Stockholm 1952

Ja, auf Deutsch, der Sprache der Wissenschaft in Skandinavien bis kurz nach 1945. Wissenschaftlich und unterhaltsam.

**Reinhard Amon:** *Lexikon der Harmonielehre*, Doblinger/Metzler, Wien/München 2005

In Österreich weit verbreitet. Anschaffen! So gründlich ist noch selten aufgeräumt worden!

**Arne BJØRNEDAL, Truls Ørpen, Eivind Groven, O.M. Sandvik, Olav Gurvin, Reidar Sevåg, Sven Nyhus, Jan-Petter Blom:** *Norsk folkemusikk: Hardingfeleslåtter*, Universitetsforlaget, Oslo 1954-1981,

Sieben Bände, DIE umfassende Dokumentation.



**Sven Nyhus, Olav Sæta:** *Slåtter for vanlig fele*, Universitetsforlaget, Oslo  
Vier Bände, betreffend die Tradition für gewöhnliche Geige. Dieses Material ist nun auch vollständig über das Netz zugänglich. Trotzdem kaufen!

**Sven Nyhus:** *Lyarlåttene i Valdres*, Musikkhuset, Oslo 1996

Eine Notensammlung von Musik, die nicht für den Tanz, sondern für das Anhören zwischen den Tänzen bestimmt war; es gibt also keinen klaren Taktschlag. Eine Fundgrube, auch wenn es sich nur um ein schmales Bändchen handelt. Eine Doppel-CD mit Feldaufnahmen ist ebenfalls dazu erschienen. Nach Auffassung des Verfassers die wahrscheinlich beste Musik der Geschichte. Nach Bach kann man sich bloß noch so etwas anhören....

**Anne Jorunn Kydland Lysdahl:** *Eivind Grovens arbeid med det renstemte orgelet i historisk perspektiv*, Universitetet i Oslo, 1996

Dieser Artikel liegt auch im Netz aus, und ist eine ausnehmend lohnende Lektüre, die den hohen und unterhaltsamen Stand wissenschaftlicher Arbeit in Norwegen beweist.

Der Dank des Verfassers geht besonders an Per-Ulf Allmo (er hat sofort uneigennützig Walins Arbeit über die Hummel zugesendet), Esbjørn Hogmark für die Photos der Minneapolisarpa, Olle Plahn für geduldige Instrumentenbauerschaft auch in langen Entwicklungsphasen, Annette Osann für ihre Entwicklung wider Willen, und Turid Spildo für ihre geduldige Einführung in manche norwegische musikalische Dialekte. Ein besonderer Dank gilt allen Musikanten, die gegen größte Widerstände eine Welt haben weiterleben lassen. Freiheit!

## Boris Koller, Österreich

(\*1969) ist Kitschmaler (Diplom der Meisterschule A. Brauer in Wien), hat 1994/95 in Stockholm studiert, und dort bei einem Straßenmusiker die Kontrabasharpa kennen gelernt. Das neue Jahrtausend begann für ihn mit einer eigenen Nyckelharpa.

Als Komponist schreibt er gerne große Orchestrierungen, manche wurden in Wien auch



Photo: Per-Ulf Allmo



aufgeführt (Konzerthaus, Musikverein...). Zu einem Kompositionsstudium ist es glücklicherweise nie gekommen. (Jazztheorie und Zwölftonharmonik hätten ihm das Gehirn wahrscheinlich zu früh ausgeblasen.)

Mehrjährige Aufenthalte (auch als Bergsteiger) in Norwegen.

Boris Koller war der erste, der die europäische Nyckelharpa-Fortbildung (European Nyckelharpa Training) der Akademie BURG FÜRSTENECK abgeschlossen hat.

[www.boriskoller.com](http://www.boriskoller.com)

Kontrabas harpa by Hasse Gille, photos: Per-Ulf Allmo



## Arranging a Rock-Tune for Nyckelharpa Ensemble

*by Davide Castiglia*

Here we had planned to publish an article about the rock tune "Traccia II" of the Italian rock band "Banco del Mutuo Soccorso" and its arrangement for a nyckelharpa ensemble by Davide Castiglia. Unfortunately the rights were refused by the management of "Banco del Mutuo Soccorso" without reading the article or the arrangement. We would have loved to honour this song! Sorry.

### Davide Castiglia, Italy

Despite the impression gained by attending the academy and studying classical music, Davide Castiglia's attention soon moved to popular music. Since 1981, he is violinist of the group Morigan's Wake, which offers a repertoire of traditional Celtic music. In 1991, he founded the group Bevano East, with which broadens their experience on the musical traditions of the Mediterranean and Eastern Europe. He is collaborating with the Sabbatriò, Gianluca Lo Presti and many others. Since about seven years, he is the responsible musical project director for Orchestrona, the orchestra of the Scuola di Musica Popolare di Forlìmpopoli, where he had taught in the past also violine, and where he is a member of the board.

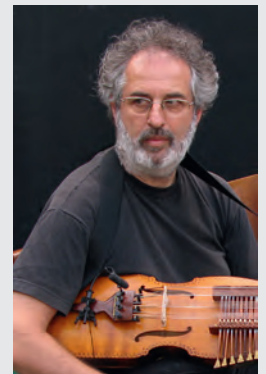


Photo: Esbjörn Hogmark



## Analysis of a Contemporary Tune

By Lorenzo Ruggiero

Translation: Valentina Bucchi

### LA MUSA DANZANTE

This tune is a "beguine"<sup>1</sup> written for a nyckelharpa quartet.

It features an accompaniment in F, another one in F with an obstinate syncopated arpeggio in pizzicato style (because the tonic accent is placed on the upbeat), a third part in G, with the same characteristics as before but with bichords and the melody written in G.

### Analysis

The tune is developed in 12 bars and it is divided in 3 section with 4 bars in each.

The first section, which we'll call A, goes from the first to the fifth bar with the following chord scheme: II V I; II V I



The second and third section, which we'll call B1 and B2, go from the sixth to the ninth bars and from the bar ten to thirteen with the following harmonic structure II V VI-II V I.



<sup>1</sup> The beguine is a dance and a music form, similar to a slow rumba.



## Melody analysis

The melodic theme, which is developed in 4 bars, begins with an "anacrusi" (uplifting) and it is repeated 3 times within the tune.

In the second and third repetition (2° and 3° section) the theme is substantially modified in terms of harmony, with the introduction VI° at the seventh bar – and in terms of melody, with the introduction of some passages, to the extent that it deserves a new classification: B1, B2.

B2, that is to say the third repetition, can be considered as a further variation with because of an increase in notes and the use of new rhythms like the triplet, for a wider and more developed melodic arch.

There are some special melodic features, such as the methodical use of superior and inferior "appoggiatura" on the third, fourth and fifth bars (3-4-5). You can note a long "appoggiatura" on the last bar (E).

On the forth and octave bar (4-8), on the forth octave we have a G note that could be interpreted as a note "scappata" or an accent (typical diminution of the baroque period). It is also interesting to note how the use the tonality of Dm produces a characteristic dissonance of seconda eccedente between the sixth note min (Bb) and "sensibile" of the tonic note (C# ) which we can find on bar number ten.

Finally the use of G# with the harmony A works to smooth the tone and gives a harmonic tension to the melodic piece.

## Analysis of solo

My personal choice was to think of a playable solo guided by inspiration and emotion. Therefore a solo which would be perceived as a variation of single internal variations. These variations are not written on the bases of premade models, but they



were inspired by a deep listening of the musical performance, of the sound and of the rhythmic ostinato, through a concentration and a creative sympathy which, abandoning any sort of tensions, will let a new melody emerge. Of course this process also had to respect the harmonic constrains which were previously mentioned.

If you listen carefully, you will then notice melodic variations which were obtained using arpeggio-figures or melodic enrichment devices such as the use of appoggiatura, dissonances and chromatisms as well as new passages or decreases. Some variations are instead brand new melodies.

In conclusion, it should also be noted how the use of variation is, within the quartet, characteristic of jazz bands in the Bebop period, that is to say that the opening theme is followed by some solos which are played by all instruments, one at the time, concluding with the final reprise of the theme which maybe slightly varied. It goes without saying that this very use and distribution of the solo have important implications in formal terms, determining the musical shape of the tune.

## Thanks to

Above all thanks to everyone who has helped me to produce this work. Researching music manuals, speaking to qualified friends at the conservatory and to music teachers in order to put everything together in an understandable and cohesive manner. The final result gives me pleasure beyond my initial expectations.

Examining a tune through a theoretical almost mathematical approach tends to distract from the emotional viewpoint. However it was a useful exercise that needs to be frequently practiced. Yet I must admit that, in my opinion, composition should just be the result of a flow of emotions, just like a poem.



## Lorenzo Ruggiero (Italy)

Since long time I'm involved in studies and researches of musical repertory going from middle age times to nowadays passing through Italian and Mediterranean popular traditions, playing in different musical bands and touring with them in Italy and abroad.



Photo: Per-Ulf Allmo

I started my musical journey on the end of the 80s studying jazz techniques and improvisation on bass guitar. At the same time I attends classes at DAMS (art school) in Bologna, very lively city regarding cultural activities in the social squatted centres, in such places I experienced my first musical activities that will leave an enduring mark into my artistic career.

Later I'm focus my attention and interest on different instruments coming from different geographical areas -from the Mediterranean basin to north-central Europe, studying specifically repertory and techniques of those ancient instruments: hurdy gurdy (France), santur (Iran), nyckelharpa (Sweden).

In the year 2005 I found a course of nyckelharpa with Marco Ambrosini at the "Scuola di Musica Popolare di Forlimpopoli".

At the moment I write my music for my string trio "ArKitèsi" (violin, nyckelharpa, contrabass) and preparing to record a CD with them.



Esbjörn Hogmark  
Per-Ulf Allmo  
Olle Plahn

## Running a Learning Partnership Aspects of Project-Management

*By Karsten Evers*

From an organisational point of view I want to describe in this article some steps and methods that helped us to run the CADENCE project successfully as a "Grundtvig Learning Partnership", part of the "Lifelong Learning Programme" and supported by the European Commission. Honoured to coordinate the cooperation, it was primarily my job to write the application, make necessary arrangements, track the progress of the work (or to initiate it whenever necessary), ensure the communication between all stakeholders (especially in the periods between visits), and patiently but diligently remind participants of agreed tasks. Fulfilling this function was only possible with the reliable support of my management colleagues in Italy and Sweden – Marco Bartolini, Esbjörn Hogmark and Håkan Larsson – and the close cooperation with those in charge for the musical part of our work – Marco Ambrosini, Ditte Andersson and Didier François.

Our three educational institutes in Sweden, Germany and Italy came in contact some years ago due to our common interest in teaching the musical instrument known as the "nyckelharpa". Outside Sweden a structured long-term training for the nyckelharpa only exists in the Scuola di Musica Popolare di Forlimpopoli in Italy and in the Academy BURG FÜRSTENECK in Germany. And in Sweden the Eric Sahlström Institute holds a very prominent position in teaching nyckelharpa as a national institute.

Once some people from all three institutes got to know each other, it became clear that a common challenge would be useful for intensifying the exchange. We searched for options to





involve more people, moving them from one country to the others and raising additional money for financing these mobilities and, in January 2008, we begun discussing the formation of a European project.

We decided not to make a quick application, but to take a year for groundwork preparation, searching existing EU-programs and elaborating our plans to see if they could fit to any such framework. We compared the different programs from both their printed materials and impact on the web, and visited several briefing events of our national agencies responsible for those EU-programs, comparing the information we got in the different countries. Finally we decided that a learning partnership within the Grundtvig programme would suit our goals perfectly while remaining manageable. Because of our existing manpower and other commitments we refrained from applying for other extended programs which may have provided even more money.

We had an official preparation visit to substantiate our plans at BURG FÜRSTENECK in Autumn 2008. Afterwards we asked the boards of our schools' countries to support an application. We involved the local municipalities in our plans through the founding of an additional informal partnership between the communes of Tierp, Eiterfeld and Forlimpopoli. This insured a marked improvement in the cooperation between the schools and their home community, on top of the learning partnership.

After the main guideline of the project had been agreed upon, the application was written in January 2009 in Germany with support from Italy and Sweden, sent to the partner institutes, corrected and completed there, and finally sent to a native English speaker for final linguistic corrections. The application process was finished at a second, informal preparatory group-meeting held in Forlimpopoli in February 2009. During this meeting, the three mayors of Tierp, Eiterfeld and Forlimpopoli publically signed their cooperation agreement.



  CADENCE - Cultural Adult Education and Nyckelharpa Cooperation in Europe <span style="float: right;">1/8</span>					
Time – Tasks – Results					
Approx. starting date	Planned activity data	Activity/Mobility description (See part 6.1 (black) and 6.3 (red) of the application)	Results	Destination	Which partners involved
2009/02/17		PREPARATORY VISIT, SIGNING OF AGREEMENT, PUBLIC LECTURE (Though before official start of the program and without financial support by Grundtvig.) Meeting in Forlimpopoli. Signing the agreement about the cooperation between the three communes by the three mayors. (see 5.2 CONTEXT) Public lecture on European history of the nyckelharpa (by Swedish experts). Meeting about steps and tasks of the cooperation. Observing lessons in Italy. Participants: Mayors, managers, some teachers, learners from Italy, one musical researcher from Sweden. <i>Agreement of cooperation between the three municipalities is signed by the three mayors.</i>	Done: February 17 – 19, 2009 Agreement of cooperation is ratified by the three local parliaments during the following weeks.	ITALY	BF SMP ESI
2009/02/17		DISSEMINATION Spreading information on the (planned) project already started. It will get more comprehensive throughout the project's time and must not end by the end of the project. The teams at home will be informed about the progress of the project continuously. <i>Information about the nyckelharpa and the planned Grundtvig CADENCE-project is disseminated by a public lecture on the history of the nyckelharpa in Forlimpopoli.</i>	Done: See examples of public dissemination on <a href="http://www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu/home/public-relations">www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu/home/public-relations</a>		BF SMP ESI
2009/08/01		START OF PROGRAM (Exact date according to the decision by the EU) Welcome of the partners and suggesting of an agenda for the next steps. <i>Detailed plan for the first steps is sent to the partners.</i>	Done		BF
2009/08/01		SETUP OF COMMUNICATION STRUCTURES BASED ON THE INTERNET			BF

We tried being as precise as possible in every part of the application. This turned out to be very helpful during the whole period of our cooperation. Having decided at the very beginning what to do and when to do it in order to achieve our goals, our agreements kept us in check during the entire process of our work. For example, for each defined “planned activity” (asked for in part 6.1 of the application form) we specified a corresponding “expected result” in part 6.3. By fitting these two parts together into one “Time – Tasks – Results” table, we had a precise timetable in place for the project, which specified responsibilities, but could also be used as a check list for the progress of the partnership. Indeed, only minor modifications had to be made to this plan.





**CADENCE questionnaire for the visit in TOBO**  
Evaluation might help us to do things better and is necessary to document to the EU what we have done.

☐ I am "participant" ☐ I am "teacher" ☐ I am "manager" My name:

**1. Organisation - Preparation**

**1.1. Did you get enough information beforehand about the CADENCE-project?**  
You can award 1 to 7 points. 1 point means "very poor", 4 points means "medium", 7 points means "excellent".  
poor-----medium-----excellent  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Optimum is 7)

a) What was missing?

b) What was helpful?

c) What was annoying?

**1.2. Was the travel to Tobo well organized?**  
You can award 1 to 7 points. 1 point means "very poor", 4 points means "medium", 7 points means "excellent".  
poor-----medium-----excellent  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ☐ I organized the travel myself, so this question does not affect me.

a) What was missing?

b) What was helpful?

**1.3. Did you have enough information beforehand about Sweden and the ESIT?**  
You can award 1 to 7 points. 1 point means "very poor", 4 points means "medium", 7 points means "excellent".  
poor-----medium-----excellent  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

a) What was missing?

b) What was helpful?

**1.4. Did you have enough information how to prepare yourself?**

a) musically ☐ yes ☐ no a) remarks

b) in other ways ☐ yes ☐ no b) remarks

tasks for students and administration, sheet music, schedules, protocols, and evaluation of meetings held as well as ideas for the further work. All participants were able to contribute to the content of this wiki. While evaluations of the project were gathered during the visits, we also sent questionnaires after each meeting to all participants, which included standardised as well as open questions. This feedback was very valuable in planning

the next visits and making them even better. To publicise the project to non-participants a freely accessible website was set up, which got updated with new content after each meeting.

The whole group of 18 participants met three times in 2010: January in Sweden, June Italy and October in Germany. Each mobility had a duration of 5 – 6 days. In each visit, the programme consisted of a presentation by the host institute, including information about the management of adult education, practical and theoretical attitudes with the teaching of music (especially the nyckelharpa) to adults, project working-time in which new ideas were gathered and the direction of progress was agreed upon, a little touristic trip, a meeting with the local mayor and of course some free time in the evening to talk and



play sessions. In addition we had a public conference in Sweden with speakers from the Department of Folk Music at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm and concert rehearsals in Italy and Germany.

Dissemination of the ideas and outcomes of the project has been one of our goals. Several activities were planned in addition to normal public relation work in the application. Having a project with musicians, we had the chance to play public concerts. With the participants gradually forming a unified group, a larger range of outside audiences could be reached. Thus, we met local musicians and dancers during the first trip in Sweden, played a public concert on a marketplace during the second meeting in Italy, and were recorded for nationwide radio broadcast by the German "Deutschlandfunk" during the BURG FÜRSTENECK visit.

From the second meeting of the entire group in Forlimpopoli, Italy, we talked as one main theme about the idea of final reports. Subsequently, ideas for a personal contribution from every participant were collected. These ideas were visually presented and polished during the next visit in Eiterfeld, Germany. Thus, we could transform the expected reports from a chore into an opportunity, making participants more involved. On top of the actual contents of the contributions – which hopefully will be valuable for many people – we are convinced that a structured and involved presentation of project results will help the participants to remember the project fondly as a great series of events, and be proud to have taken part in it.





### Karsten Evers, Germany

Karsten was the coordinator of this CADENCE partnership. He has been a part of the folk revival in Germany since the 1970s. Later he studied music and science of cultural education after being an architect before. Since 1984, he has been responsible for cultural adult education at BURG FÜRSTENECK.

## CADENCE SHEET MUSIK



# Saltarello

Anonymous, Italy, 14th century (British Library Add. 29987)

Arrangement for nyckelharpa:  
Marco Ambrosini, 2010

prima pars

6 aperto

12 chiuso

secunda pars

18 aperto

24 chiuso

terza pars

30

2

36 aperto

42 chiuso

quarta pars

49

54

61 aperto

chiuso

# La musa danzante

Renzo Ruggiero, 2010



Measures 1-3 of the musical score. The score is in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The melody is in the treble clef, and the accompaniment is in the bass clef. The melody starts with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note Bb4, and a quarter note A4. The accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a steady eighth-note pattern in the left hand.



Measures 4-5 of the musical score. The melody continues with a quarter note G#4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note Bb4, and a quarter note A4. The accompaniment continues with the same eighth-note pattern.



Measures 6-7 of the musical score. The melody continues with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note Bb4, and a quarter note A4. The accompaniment continues with the same eighth-note pattern.

2



Measures 8-9 of the musical score. The melody continues with a quarter note G#4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note Bb4, and a quarter note A4. The accompaniment continues with the same eighth-note pattern.



Measures 10-11 of the musical score. The melody continues with a quarter note G#4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note Bb4, and a quarter note A4. The accompaniment continues with the same eighth-note pattern.



Measures 12-13 of the musical score. The melody continues with a quarter note G#4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note Bb4, and a quarter note A4. The accompaniment continues with the same eighth-note pattern.

# A Todeschina

Marco Uccellini, 17th century, Forlimpopoli (Italy)

Arrangement for nyckelharpa:  
Marco Ambrosini, 2010

Viola a chiavi prima

Viola a chiavi seconda ad Lib.

Viola a chiavi terza ad Lib.

Viola a chiavi tenore



# Sa démarche chaloupée et provocante

Didier François



# La rosa enflorece

Sephardic romance

Arrangement: Jule Bauer

Voice

Oktavharpa

La ro - sa en - flo - re - - ce, o

en el mez de may, mi

al - ma s'es - cu - re - ce, suf - rien - do

del a - mor mi mor.



# Fantasia in sol minore

per viola a chiavi - nyckelharpa

Marco Ambrosini, 2010

Andante

8

12

18

22

27

31

35

39

43 Più lento



49

1. 2.

1. 2.

1. 2.

1. 2.

1. 2.

1. 2.

1. 2.

1. 2.

1. 2.

A tempo

rall.....

1. 2.

1. 2.

1. 2.

1. 2.

1. 2.

1. 2.

1. 2.

1. 2.

1. 2.

rall.....

# Polska efter Sven Donat

trad. Sweden  
Arr.: Emilia Amper 2010


♩ = 95

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello



4



8



12



2 16



20



24



28



32

3

System 32-35: Four staves (treble, alto, tenor, bass) in D major. The melody is in the treble staff, featuring eighth and sixteenth notes. The bass line is in the bass staff, featuring eighth notes. The tenor and alto staves have accompaniment with eighth and sixteenth notes.

36

System 36-39: Continuation of the previous system, maintaining the same melodic and harmonic structure.

40

System 40-43: Continuation of the previous system, maintaining the same melodic and harmonic structure.

44

System 44-47: Continuation of the previous system, maintaining the same melodic and harmonic structure.

48

System 48-51: Continuation of the previous system, maintaining the same melodic and harmonic structure.

52

System 52-55: Continuation of the previous system, maintaining the same melodic and harmonic structure.

57

System 57-60: Continuation of the previous system, maintaining the same melodic and harmonic structure.

61

System 61-64: Continuation of the previous system, maintaining the same melodic and harmonic structure.

66

5

System 66-70: Treble and bass staves with a 12-string harp accompaniment. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes in the treble, while the bass line is simpler, mostly eighth notes. The harp accompaniment consists of chords and arpeggios.

71

System 71-75: Continuation of the musical score. The treble staff has more complex rhythmic patterns, including some beamed sixteenth notes. The bass staff continues with eighth notes. The harp accompaniment remains consistent with the previous system.

76

System 76-80: Continuation of the musical score. The treble staff features a melodic line with some grace notes. The bass staff has a steady eighth-note pattern. The harp accompaniment provides harmonic support with chords and arpeggios.

81

System 81-85: Continuation of the musical score. The treble staff has a more active melodic line. The bass staff continues with eighth notes. The harp accompaniment features more frequent arpeggiated figures.

6 85

System 85-89: Continuation of the musical score. The treble staff has a melodic line with some grace notes. The bass staff continues with eighth notes. The harp accompaniment provides harmonic support with chords and arpeggios.

90

System 90-93: Continuation of the musical score. The treble staff has a melodic line with some grace notes. The bass staff continues with eighth notes. The harp accompaniment provides harmonic support with chords and arpeggios.

94

System 94-97: Continuation of the musical score. The treble staff has a melodic line with some grace notes. The bass staff continues with eighth notes. The harp accompaniment provides harmonic support with chords and arpeggios.

98

System 98-101: Continuation of the musical score. The treble staff has a melodic line with some grace notes. The bass staff continues with eighth notes. The harp accompaniment provides harmonic support with chords and arpeggios.

102 7

106

110

114

8 <sup>120</sup>

124

# Barockpolskan

Trad./arr. Boris Koller

♩ = 95

Nyckelharpa solo  
 Nyckelharpa 1  
 Nyckelharpa 2  
 Nyckelharpa 3  
 Nyckelharpa 4

Solo  
 Nh.1  
 Nh.2  
 Nh.3  
 Nh.4

Solo  
 Nh.1  
 Nh.2  
 Nh.3  
 Nh.4

2

Solo  
 Nh.1  
 Nh.2  
 Nh.3  
 Nh.4

Solo  
 Nh.1  
 Nh.2  
 Nh.3  
 Nh.4

Solo  
 Nh.1  
 Nh.2  
 Nh.3  
 Nh.4

27

Solo

Nh.1

Nh.2

Nh.3

Nh.4

♩ = 105

31

Solo

Nh.1

Nh.2

Nh.3

Nh.4

35

Solo

Nh.1

Nh.2

Nh.3

Nh.4

39

Solo

Nh.1

Nh.2

Nh.3

Nh.4

43

Solo

Nh.1

Nh.2

Nh.3

Nh.4

46

Solo

Nh.1

Nh.2

Nh.3

Nh.4

49

Solo

Nh.1

Nh.2

Nh.3

Nh.4

53

Solo

Nh.1

Nh.2

Nh.3

Nh.4

57

Solo

Nh.1

Nh.2

Nh.3

Nh.4

61

Solo

Nh.1

Nh.2

Nh.3

Nh.4

64

Solo

Nh.1

Nh.2

Nh.3

Nh.4

68

Solo

Nh.1

Nh.2

Nh.3

Nh.4

72

Solo

Nh.1

Nh.2

Nh.3

Nh.4

75

Solo

Nh.1

Nh.2

Nh.3

Nh.4

78

Solo

Nh.1

Nh.2

Nh.3

Nh.4

81

Solo

Nh.1

Nh.2

Nh.3

Nh.4

85

Solo

Nh.1

Nh.2

Nh.3

Nh.4

# Kapad

2

128 bpm Emilia Amper

rock n' roll

Nyckelharpa

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Violoncello

Double Bass

*f*

*f*

*f*

5

Nh.

Vln.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

3

9

Nh.

Vln.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

13

Nh.

Vln.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

3

17

Nh.

Vln.1 *rock n' roll*

Vln.2 *f rock n' roll*

Vla. *f rock n' roll*

Vc. *f*

Db.

21

Nh.

Vln.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

25

Nh.

Vln.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

29

Nh.

Vln.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

33 funky, laid back

Nh. *mf*

Vln.1 *mp* pizz

Vln.2 *mp* pizz

Vla. *mp* pizz

Vc. *mp* pizz

Db. *mp* pizz

37

Nh.

Vln.1 arco

Vln.2 arco

Vla. arco

Vc. arco

Db. arco

41

Nh.

Vln.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Vc. pizz

Db. pizz

45

Nh.

Vln.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Vc. arco

Db. arco

49

Nh.

Vln.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

*f*

53

Nh.

Vln.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

57

Nh.

Vln.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

61

Nh.

Vln.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

65

Nh. *mf*

Vln.1 *mf*

Vln.2 *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*  
pizz

Db. *mf*

69

Nh.

Vln.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

73

Nh.

Vln.1 NB!

Vln.2 NB!

Vla. NB!

Vc. NB!

Db. NB!  
NB!

77

Nh.

Vln.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Vc.

Db. arco



97

Nh. *f*

Vln.1 *f*

Vln.2 *f*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f*

Db. *f*

101

Nh.

Vln.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

105

Nh.

Vln.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

109

Nh.

Vln.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Vc.

Db.


# Saltarello romagnolo

Trad. Emilia-Romagna  
 Transcription: Paolo Giacomoni  
 Arr.: Marco Ambrosini, 2010

113



117

5



10



14



18



22



## CADENCE

Emilia Amper - Didier François, 2011

Nyckelharpa 1

Nyckelharpa 2

$\text{♩} = 90$

1

2/A

1/A

4/D

4/D

4/A

2/A

1/A

3

10

14

18

$\text{♩} = 120$

24

30

36

## Du är så vacker för mina ögon

Trad. aus Åland (Finnland)

Arr.: Angelika Maier

Dm B Dm Gm Dm

6 A B F Gm A Dm

11 A B F Gm A Dm

## Laridé vannetais à huit temps

Trad. aus dem Vannetais

(Bretagne/FranKreich)

Arr.: Angelika Maier

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 120$

15 Dm B $\flat$  C Dm C Dm B $\flat$  C Dm C Am Dm

19 Dm B $\flat$  C Dm B $\flat$  C Dm

# Polska fra Hoffsmýran

Emilia Amper, 2006

$\text{♩} = 90$

Score for the first system (measures 1-6) of "Polska fra Hoffsmýran". The instruments are Nyckelharpa, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass. The tempo is marked  $\text{♩} = 90$ . The Nyckelharpa, Violin I, and Violoncello parts are marked *p* (piano).

Score for the second system (measures 7-13) of "Polska fra Hoffsmýran". The instruments are Nyckelharpa, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass. The tempo is marked  $\text{♩} = 90$ .

2

Score for the third system (measures 14-20) of "Polska fra Hoffsmýran". The instruments are Nyckelharpa, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass. The tempo is marked  $\text{♩} = 90$ .

Score for the fourth system (measures 21-27) of "Polska fra Hoffsmýran". The instruments are Nyckelharpa, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass. The tempo is marked  $\text{♩} = 85$ . The Nyckelharpa part includes a triplet and a doublet.

24

30

27

33

37

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

44

*f* *ff*

*f* *ff*

*f* *ff*

*f* *ff*

*f* *ff*

41

47

*p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

51

7

mf  $\text{mf}$   $\text{mf}$   $\text{mf}$   $\text{mf}$

$\text{p}$   $\text{p}$   $\text{p}$   $\text{p}$   $\text{p}$

59

8

ppp  $\text{ppp}$   $\text{ppp}$   $\text{ppp}$   $\text{ppp}$

$\text{p}$   $\text{p}$   $\text{p}$   $\text{p}$   $\text{p}$

55

2 3 3 3

63

rubato

$\text{mf}$   $\text{f}$   $\text{p}$

$\text{mf}$   $\text{f}$   $\text{p}$

$\text{mf}$   $\text{f}$   $\text{p}$

$\text{mf}$   $\text{f}$   $\text{p}$

$\text{mf}$   $\text{f}$   $\text{p}$

# Manfrina romagnola

Arrangement for nyckelharpa ensemble:  
Davide Castiglia, 2011










## Andante

Johann Sebastian Bach  
Arr. Didier François

Nyckelharpa

♩ = 40

\* (baré con "mi")

po = pollice ( thumb)

1-2 = switching finger by sliding on the same note (key) from ex. first finger to second finger

## Luiza

Antonio Carlos Jobim  
Arr. Didier François

Nyckelharpa

♩ = 70

# Grossienne

Erik Satie  
Arr. Didier François

Nyckelharpa

$\text{♩} = 60$



## CADENCE

Cultural Adult Education and Nyckelharpa Cooperation in Europe  
Teaching music to adults with special emphasis on the nyckelharpa

Grundtvig learning partnership supported by the European Commission.

A brochure on the CADENCE partnership with audio CD is available.  
See:

[www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu](http://www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu)

**Akademie BURG FÜRSTENECK**, Germany

[www.burg-fuersteneck.de](http://www.burg-fuersteneck.de)

**Eric Sahlström Institutet**, Sweden

[www.esitobo.org](http://www.esitobo.org)

**Scuola di Musica Popolare di Forlimpopoli**, Italy

[www.musicapopolare.net](http://www.musicapopolare.net)

**European Nyckelharpa Training**

[www.nyckelharpa.eu](http://www.nyckelharpa.eu)

## CADENCE

Cultural ADult Education and Nyckelharpa Cooperation in Europe

## CADENCE

*The Nyckelharpa – "... is no longer a disappearing relict from a small region of Sweden but a living force in the choir of music from different parts of the world, voices which together create good hope for the future of mankind."* Jan Ling, 2011

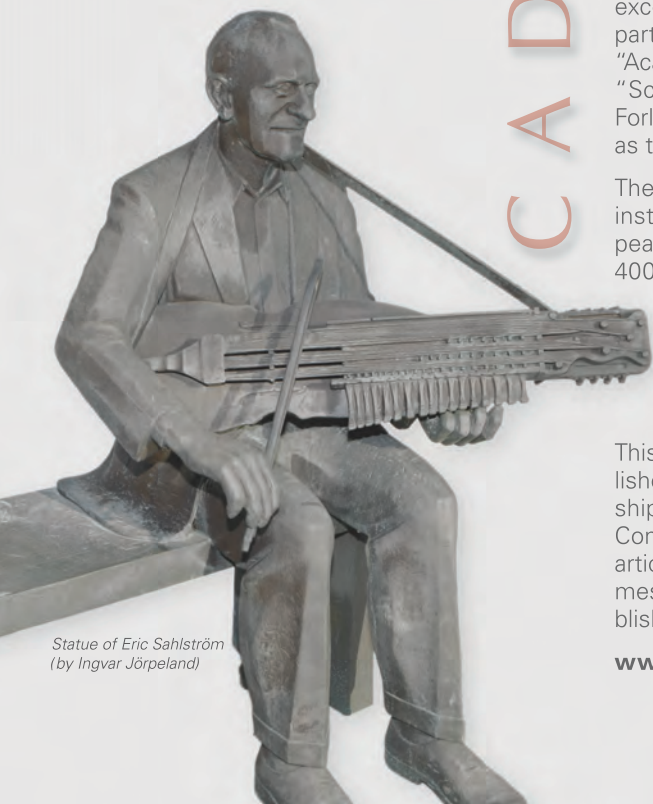
Between January and October 2010, a multinational study group visited three institutes for adult education in Sweden, Germany and Italy to exchange ideas and experiences about organisation, methods and activities of musical education.

As nyckelharpa teaching was the exceptional unifying subject of the partners "Eric Sahlström Institute", "Academy BURG FÜRSTENECK" and "Scuola di Musica Popolare di Forlimpopoli", this instrument was used as the basis for the common studies.

The nyckelharpa is a bowed string instrument, part of the Medieval European heritage, but during the last 400 years has only been played in the Swedish area of Uppland. Nowadays the interest in playing the nyckelharpa has increased worldwide and in many differing musical styles.

This CADENCE co-operation was established as a "Grundtvig Learning Partnership" and supported by the European Commission in 2009 – 2011. Additional articles and sheet music that are outcomes of the CADENCE project will be published on the website

[www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu](http://www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu)



Statue of Eric Sahlström  
(by Ingvar Jörpeland)



## NYCKELHARPA

## NYCKELHARPA



## CADENCE

CULTURAL ADULT EDUCATION AND  
NYCKELHARPA COOPERATION IN EUROPE

## Articles and Sheet Music

- Eric Sahlström Institutet
- Akademie BURG FÜRSTENECK
- Scuola di Musica Popolare di Forlimpopoli