



# 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

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



# CADENCE

Cultural ADULT Education and Nyckelharpa Cooperation in Europe  
Teaching music to adults with special emphasis on the nyckelharpa

## Report on the CADENCE Partnership 2009 – 2011

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All articles by Karsten Evers, Håkan Larsson, Esbjörn Hogmark and Marco Bartolini – unless otherwise indicated. Annotations to the musical repertoire by the composers or arrangers.

All photos by Per-Ulf Allmo, Esbjörn Hogmark and Karsten Evers – unless otherwise indicated. Page 39: Poeta Magica, page 35: Boris Koller

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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.



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Report on the CADENCE Partnership 2009 – 2011

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## Introduction

Supported by the European Commission, the three institutes for adult education “Eric Sahlström Institutet” in Sweden, “Academy BURG FÜRSTENECK” in Germany and “Scuola di Musica Popolare di Forlimpopoli” in Italy established the CADENCE co-operation as “Grundtvig Learning Partnership”.

An international study-group, 18 permanent participants plus guests, visited the three institutes between January and October 2010 to exchange their ideas and experiences of the organisation, methods and activities of adult education with emphasis on musical education. An exceptional common teaching subject of all three partner-institutions is the nyckelharpa. This instrument was therefore used as the example for this study.

### Nyckelharpa (Key Fiddle)

*The nyckelharpa is a string instrument played with a bow, with keys that change the pitch and resonance strings which contribute to its unique sound. In the Late Middle Ages pictures of the nyckelharpa appear along a north-south axis running through the three participating countries Sweden, Germany and Italy. The instrument belongs to a pan-european cultural heritage. Since the Baroque era it has only been played in Sweden as a folklore instrument mainly around Uppland in a continuous tradition. Thanks to some innovative musicians in Sweden, notably August Bohlin (1877-1949) and Eric Sahlström (1912-1986), and a few inspired musicians in Continental Europe starting about 1980, the nyckelharpa is now being rediscovered all over the world and used in increasingly many musical styles.*

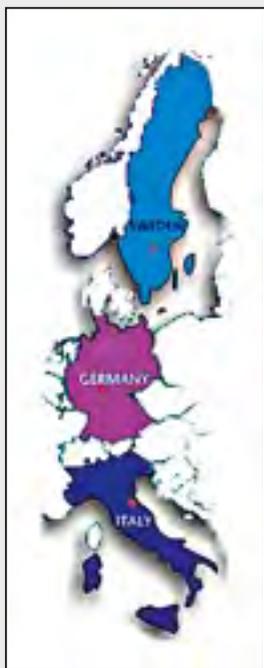


Nyckelharpas built by Eric Sahlström



The study-visits to the three countries, each of 5 to 6 days duration, consisted of detailed presentations of the host institutes and their local specialities, teaching and learning music to discover typical approaches in musical adult education, public conferences and concerts to unveil the project and the nyckelharpa, meetings with local authorities and short historical tourist trips.

The objectives of the partnership were to search for subjects, didactic methods and management of cultural education for adult learners and especially nyckelharpa teaching. In addition, research was done on similarities and peculiarities of musical education in the three countries, on musical and educational approaches and on the history and present use of the nyckelharpa.



The cooperation of the three institutes set off an additional partnership between their respective home municipalities, which on their part supported and supplemented the work of the CADENCE group.

This booklet presents articles on our CADENCE Grundtvig programme, the schools and the participants, the development of the partnership and the music taught and played during the visits and in the CADENCE concerts. Additional articles and sheet music will be published separately and on our website [www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu](http://www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu).





## Einführung

Mit Unterstützung der Europäischen Kommission haben die Bildungseinrichtungen "Eric Sahlström Institutet" in Schweden, „Akademie BURG FÜRSTENECK“ in Deutschland und „Scuola di Musica Popolare di Forlimpopoli“ in Italien die CADENCE-Kooperation als "Grundtvig Lernpartnerschaft" begründet.

Eine multinationale Studiengruppe mit 18 Teilnehmenden (und zusätzlichen Gästen) besuchte zwischen Januar und Oktober 2010 alle drei Institute, um Informationen über Organisation, Methoden und Aktivitäten vor allem in der musikalischen Erwachsenenbildung auszutauschen. Da der Unterricht auf der Nyckelharpa das herausragende, verbindende Element der Partnereinrichtungen ist, wurde dieses Instrument exemplarisch für die gemeinsamen Studien genutzt.

### Nyckelharpa oder Schlüsselfidel

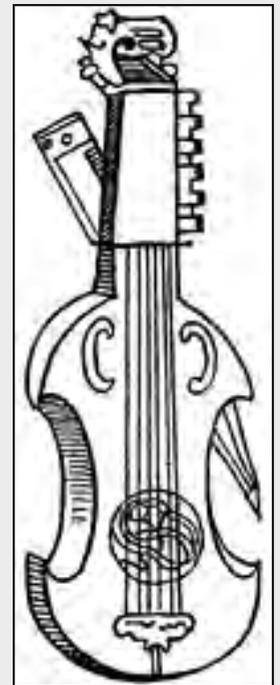
*Die Nyckelharpa ist ein Saiteninstrument. Die Saiten werden mit einem Bogen gestrichen, und die Tonhöhe wird mit einer Tastatur (den „Schlüsseln“) verändert. Resonanzsaiten tragen zu dem besonderen Klang bei. Seit dem späten Mittelalter sind Abbildungen und Beschreibungen der Schlüsselfidel in einer Nord-Süd-Achse genau in den drei teilnehmenden Ländern, Schweden, Italien und Deutschland nachweisbar. Sie gehört damit zu dem gemeinsamen kulturellen Erbe Europas. Aber seit der Barockzeit wurde die Nyckelharpa nur noch in Schweden vor allem in der Region Uppland in einer ungebrochenen Tradition als Volksmusikinstrument*



*strument gespielt. Dank innovativer Musiker in Schweden, insbesondere August Bohlin (1877-1949) und Eric Sahlström (1912-1986), und einiger begeisterter Musiker in Kontinentaleuropa, die das Instrument seit etwa 1980 entdeckten, wird die Nyckelharpa nun weltweit wieder belebt und in immer mehr musikalischen Stilrichtungen verwendet.*

Die Studienbesuche in den drei Ländern dauerten zwischen fünf und sechs Tagen. Das Programm bestand jeweils aus einer detaillierten Präsentation der einladenden Bildungstätte mit ihren lokalen Besonderheiten, aus Musikunterricht, um die je typischen Methoden der musikalischen Erwachsenenbildung zu erfahren, aus öffentlichen Konferenzen und Konzerten, um das Projekt und die Nyckelharpa vorzustellen, sowie aus Treffen mit den örtlichen Bürgermeistern und kleinen touristisch-historischen Ausflügen.

Ziel der Partnerschaft war es, Themen, didaktische Methoden und Management kultureller Erwachsenenbildung zu vergleichen. Insbesondere wurden musikalische und musikpädagogische Ansätze, Bau- und Spielweise der Nyckelharpa sowie Besonderheiten der allgemeinen Musikausbildung in den drei Ländern untersucht. Die erfolgreichen Studiengänge für Folkmusik und Nyckelharpa an der Königlichen Musikhochschule in Stockholm erweckten dabei besonderes Interesse.





Die Nyckelharpa-Kooperation gab den Anstoß zu einer ergänzenden Partnerschaft der drei Gemeinden Forlimpopoli, Eiterfeld und Tierp, auf deren Territorium die Bildungseinrichtungen beheimatet sind. Die Kommunen ihrerseits unterstützten wiederum das CADENCE-Projekt.

Dieses Heft präsentiert Berichte über unser CADENCE-Grundtvig-Programm, über die Entstehung unserer Partnerschaft, die Musik, die während der Besuche gelehrt und in den Konzerten gespielt wurde, sowie Hinweise auf weitere Artikel und Noten, die gesondert und auf unserer Webseite [www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu](http://www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu) veröffentlicht werden.



Session at BURG FÜRSTENECK, October 2010



## Inledning

De tre institutionerna "Eric Sahlström Institutet" i Sverige, "Academy BURG FÜRSTENECK" i Tyskland och "Scuola di Musica Popolare di Forlimpopoli" i Italien har med stöd av den Europeiska kommissionen etablerat samarbetsprojektet CADENCE som ett Grundtvig partnerskap inom vuxenundervisning.

Projektgruppen bestod av 18 deltagare som mellan januari och oktober 2010 sammanstrålade under 5-6 dagar vid de tre institutionerna för att utbyta erfarenheter om organisationerna samt metoder och aktiviteter inom vuxenundervisning med tonvikt på musikundervisning. Dessutom deltog ett antal gäster vid de tre sammankomsterna. Nyckelharpsundervisning är den gemensamma nämnaren för de tre institutionerna och kom att stå i centrum projektet.

### Nyckelharpa

*Nyckelharpa är ett stränginstrument som spelas med stråke och är försedd med lek, en mekanism med tangenter kallade nycklar. På nycklarna sitter trästift, löv, vilka trycks mot strängen och avgör tonhöjden. Den moderna nyckelharpan har fyra spelsträngar och tolv resonanssträngar som ger instrumentet en speciell klang. Avbildningar av nyckelharpor från senmedeltid finns i många kyrkor i Uppland och i enstaka fall även i Tyskland och Italien, vilket antyder ett gemensamt europeiskt kulturarv. Men endast i Uppland kom nyckelharpan att överleva och har där spelats i obruten tradition sedan åtminstone 1600-talet. Utan spelmännen och nyckelharpsbyggarna August Bohlin (1877-1949) och*

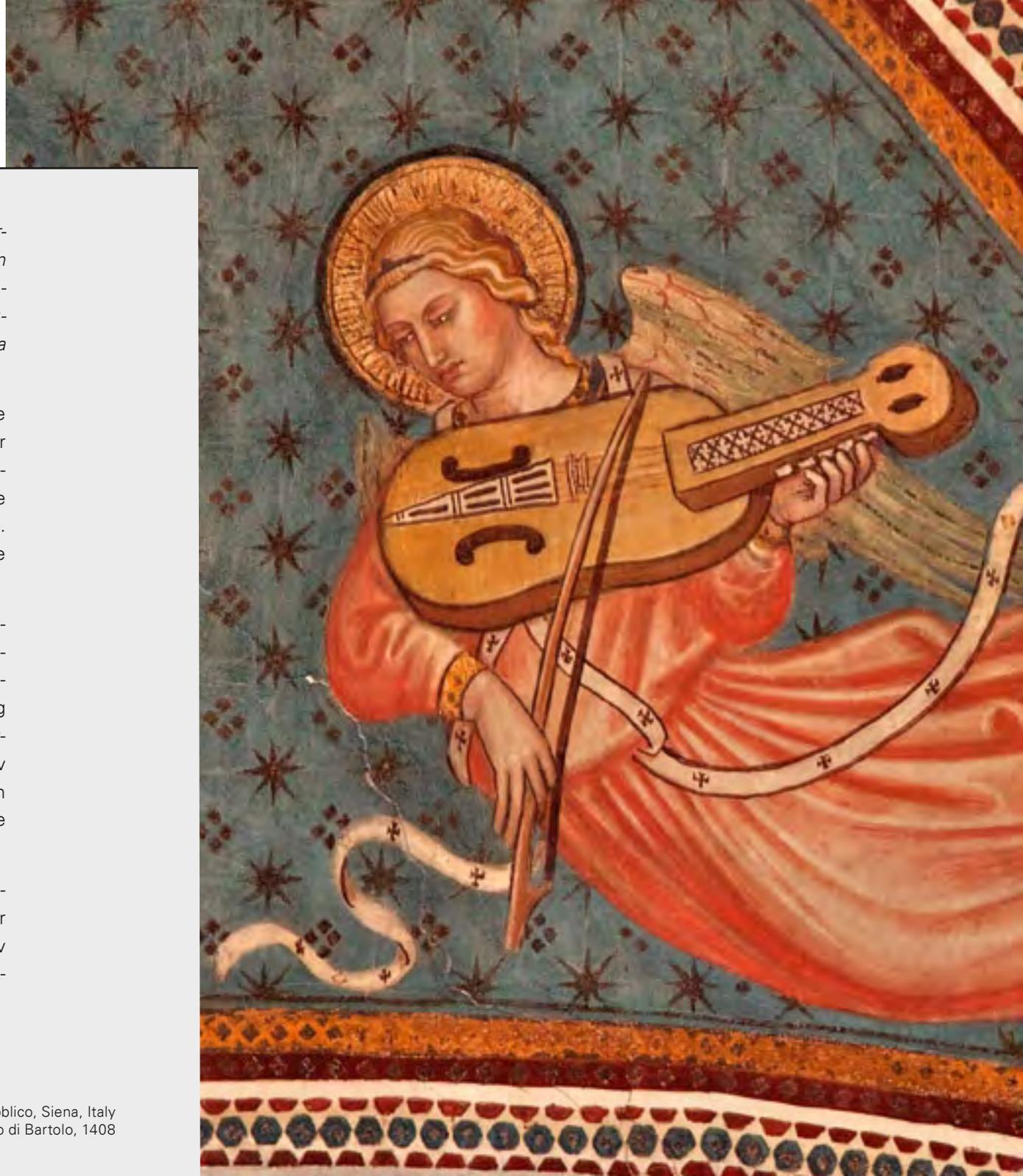


*Eric Sahlström (1912-1986) hade nyckelharptraditionen förmodligen inte varit levande idag. Efter att Eric Sahlström från mitten av 1900-talet uppmärksammades för sitt briljanta spel på egenhändigt tillverkade nyckelharpor har instrumentet spritts över världen och tagits upp inom många olika genrer.*

Studiebesöken inom CADENCE-projektet bestod i detaljerade presentationer av värdinstitutionerna och vad som utmärker dem, undervisning med tonvikt lagd på metoder för vuxenundervisning, öppna seminarier och konserter för att tillkännage projektet och introducera nyckelharpan i Tyskland och Italien. Dessutom möten med lokala myndighetspersoner i de tre länderna samt en utflykt till sevärdheter i regionen.

Målet med projektet har varit att kartlägga och diskutera ämnen, pedagogiska metoder och ledning av utbildning inom kultur för vuxna med inriktning på nyckelharpsundervisning. Dessutom undersöktes likheter och skillnader inom undervisning i de tre länderna med avseende på val av musik och undervisningssätt samt den historiska och nutida användningen av nyckelharpan. Projektet har fått stöd och kompletterats av en överenskommelse mellan de tre kommuner där de deltagande institutionerna är belägna.

Detta häfte innehåller artiklar om CADENCE-projektet, historien om hur partnerskapet växte fram, musiken spelad under lektioner, framträdanden och konserter samt presentation av deltagarna. Ytterligare artiklar kommer att publiceras på projektets websida [www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu](http://www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu).





Paolo Zoffoli, Mayor of Forlimpopoli, Marco Ambrosini and Marco Bartolini in Tobo, 2008

## Introduzione

Supportati dalla Comunità Europea, i tre Istituti: "Eric Sahlström Institutet" (Svezia), "Akademie BURG FÜRSTENECK" (Germania) e "Scuola di Musica Popolare di Forlimpopoli" (Italia), vocati alla formazione per gli adulti, hanno avviato, nell'ambito dei partenariati di apprendimento "Grundtvig", il progetto di cooperazione CADENCE.

Un gruppo di studio multinazionale composto stabilmente da 18 partecipanti (al quale si sono aggiunti via via altri ospiti) ha visitato, nel periodo Gennaio/Ottobre 2010, le tre Istituzioni, allo scopo di scambiare le diverse esperienze organizzative, didattiche e metodologie con particolare attenzione allo specifico dell'educazione musicale. La nyckelharpa è stata utilizzata come base comune di studio essendo, l'insegnamento di questo strumento, la caratteristica che accomuna le tre Istituzioni nel loro operare.

### La nyckelharpa (viola d'amore a chiavi)

*La nyckelharpa è un cordofono ad arco dotato di una tastiera che, agendo sulle corde, ne modifica l'intonazione. Le corde di risonanza di cui è dotata contribuiscono a generarne l'originale suono. Immagini datate al tardo Medio Evo permettono di riscontrare, fin dall'epoca, una sua diffusione su di un asse geografico nord-sud che corrisponde all'area dei tre paesi partecipanti, Svezia, Germania ed Italia il che la colloca come appartenente di diritto nel novero del patrimonio culturale europeo comune. Tuttavia, a partire dall'epoca barocca, questa, sopravvive come strumento di una ininterrotta tradizione, quasi esclusivamente nella Regione svedese dell'Uppland e nei suoi dintorni. Grazie ad alcuni innovativi musicisti, in particolare August Bohlin (1877-1949) ed Eric Sahlström (1912-1986), in Svezia, ed alcuni ispirati musicisti in Europa continentale, a partire del 1980, la nyckelharpa vive una stagione di riscoperta in tutto il mondo e viene utilizzata in sempre più diversi stili musicali.*

Il programma delle visite di studio nei tre paesi, ciascuna di una durata fra i 5 ed i 6 giorni, constava della presentazione

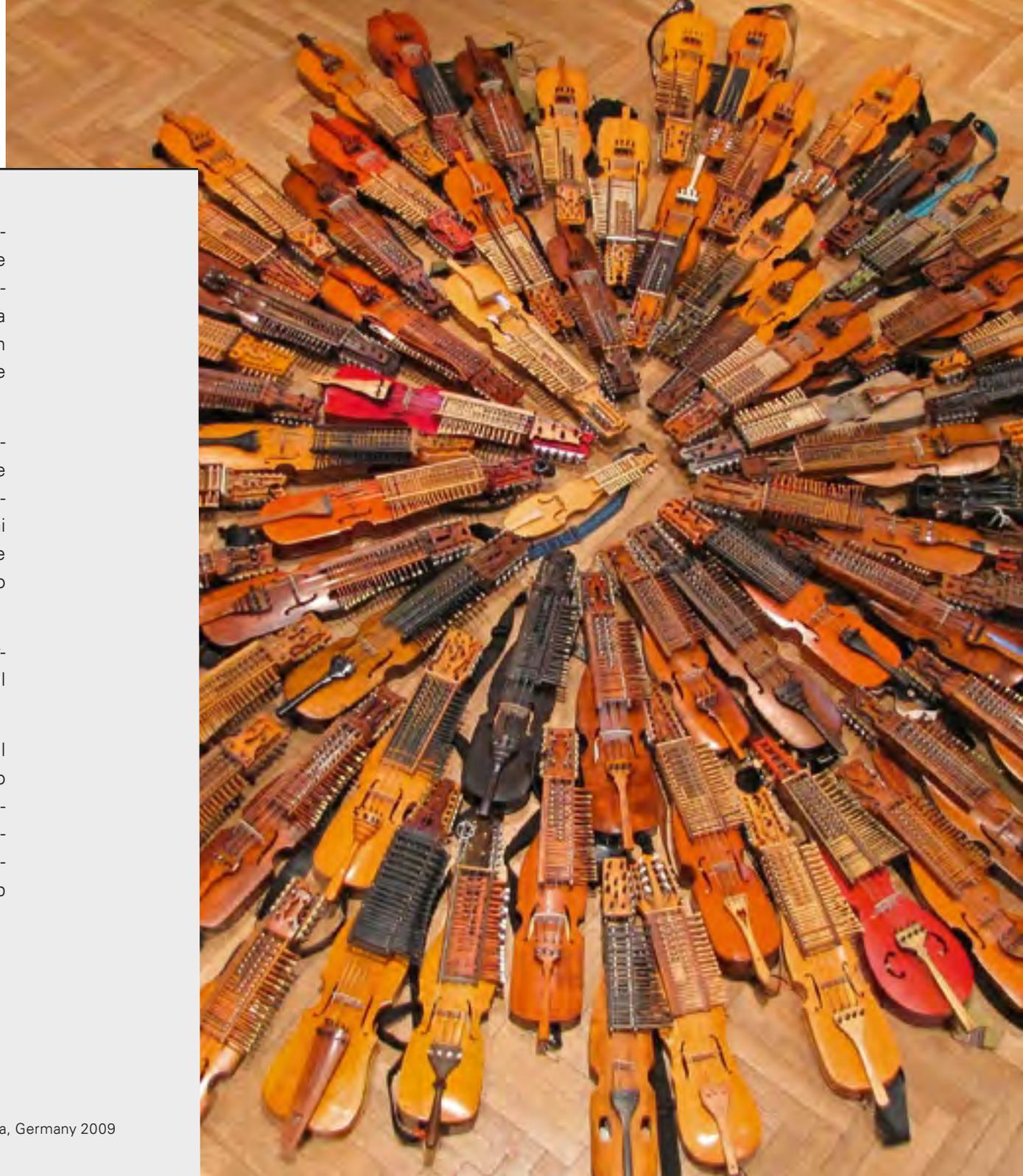


dettagliata dell'Istituto ospitante e delle sue peculiarità, dell'insegnamento e dell'apprendimento musicale atto a mostrare l'approccio locale all'educazione musicale per adulti, dell'organizzazione di conferenze e concerti aperti al pubblico votati a presentare il progetto e la nyckelharpa, nonché di incontri con le autorità locali ed alcune brevi escursioni storico-turistiche volte a presentare il territorio.

Gli obiettivi del partenariato hanno avuto per oggetto metodiche didattiche e di organizzazione relative alla formazione culturale per adulti, specificatamente nell'ambito dell'insegnamento della nyckelharpa. Si sono, inoltre, osservate similitudini e peculiarità presenti nei modelli di educazione musicale dei tre paesi e dei diversi approcci musicali ed educativi nell'utilizzo della nyckelharpa, in passato ed ai giorni nostri.

Il partenariato è stato supportato ed implementato da un accordo di partenariato sottoscritto dalle Amministrazioni Locali sul cui territorio trovano sede i tre Istituti.

Questo opuscolo presenta articoli riguardanti CADENCE, il nostro programma Grundtvig, la storia della nascita e dello sviluppo di questo partenariato, la musica di cui si è parlato e che si è suonata in occasione degli incontri e dei concerti di CADENCE oltre che il riassunto dei contributi scritti che saranno pubblicati separatamente sul nostro sito web [www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu](http://www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu).





## Statement of Prof. Dr. Jan Ling

*In 1967 I finished my dissertation on the Swedish nyckelharpa. Even if the now legendary builder and player Eric Sahlström arranged some courses how to build and play the instrument, I saw no possibility for the instrument to survive in a time of total change of the Swedish society, especially because of the decreasing population in the countryside and a reconstruction of the farming from individual, small, family based enterprises to a modern industry dominated by machinery.*

*Anyhow, I asked the Swedish television to make a film of "the last surviving nyckelharpa players". In the last scene you can see two old fiddlers in their best Sunday-suits wandering out from the Österbybruk manor-house, one of the former centres for the nyckelharpa.*

*Today I can see that my pessimistic forecast for the future was totally wrong. Eric Sahlström's courses were the starting point for a new movement in which the CADENCE project is a wonderful example. However, without Esbjörn Hogmark and enthusiasts around him I am sure my prediction would be fulfilled. Thanks to the strong interest in the instrument and its music in Uppland the instrument 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.*

March 2011

**Jan Ling**

Prof. Emeritus, Science of Musicology  
Former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Gothenburg  
and the first chairman of the Eric Sahlström Institute



Jan Ling 1987 at a seminar held to honour Eric Sahlström. Photo: Per-Ulf Allmo



## The CADENCE Programme – Mobilities

The “Grundtvig learning partnership” focuses on the mobilities of the participants. We centred our partnership to the meetings of the whole CADENCE study group in the three participating institutes.

We decided to travel to Sweden first because of the feeling of several hundred years of nyckelharpa tradition you can get there. We went to Tobo in January as the Swedish winter is the most remarkable season for the visitors from the south of Europe.

Next we went to Italy as it seemed the best place to deal with medieval music and its connection to local popular music. We travelled in June hoping for lovely Italian weather, though it was raining the first days.

For the third and last time we met in Germany in “Golden October” where we studied contemporary music and had the opportunity to meet a lot of other nyckelharpa players during the “International Days of the Nyckelharpa”.

### Eric Sahlström Institute, Tobo, Sweden

The first visit led us to the Eric Sahlström Institute in Tobo. The ESI resides in a manor house from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, a lovely building with a marvellous atmosphere. Tobo belongs to the municipality of Tierp in the district of Uppland, the area in Sweden where the nyckelharpa has continuously been played for at least 3-4 centuries.

The first goal was to form a group of 18 individuals, most of whom were meeting for the first time. It worked better than one could expect. Being connected by a mutual special interest in the nyckelharpa helped all to feel familiar with each other quite quickly.



One specific feature of the ESI is that they offer one-year full-time courses for playing and dancing. The CADENCE group had the chance of observing several lessons with Ditte Andersson, Sonia Sahlström, and Olov Johansson, and of talking, playing, and dancing with their students. Traditionally Swedish nyckelharpa music is taught by ear. This method was also used in the lessons dealing with Swedish polskas that Ditte Andersson gave to the CADENCE members. As a special impression they were also invited to a dance lesson with Andreas Berchtold to get a first glimpse of dancing polska and of his fundamental ideas of teaching to dance.



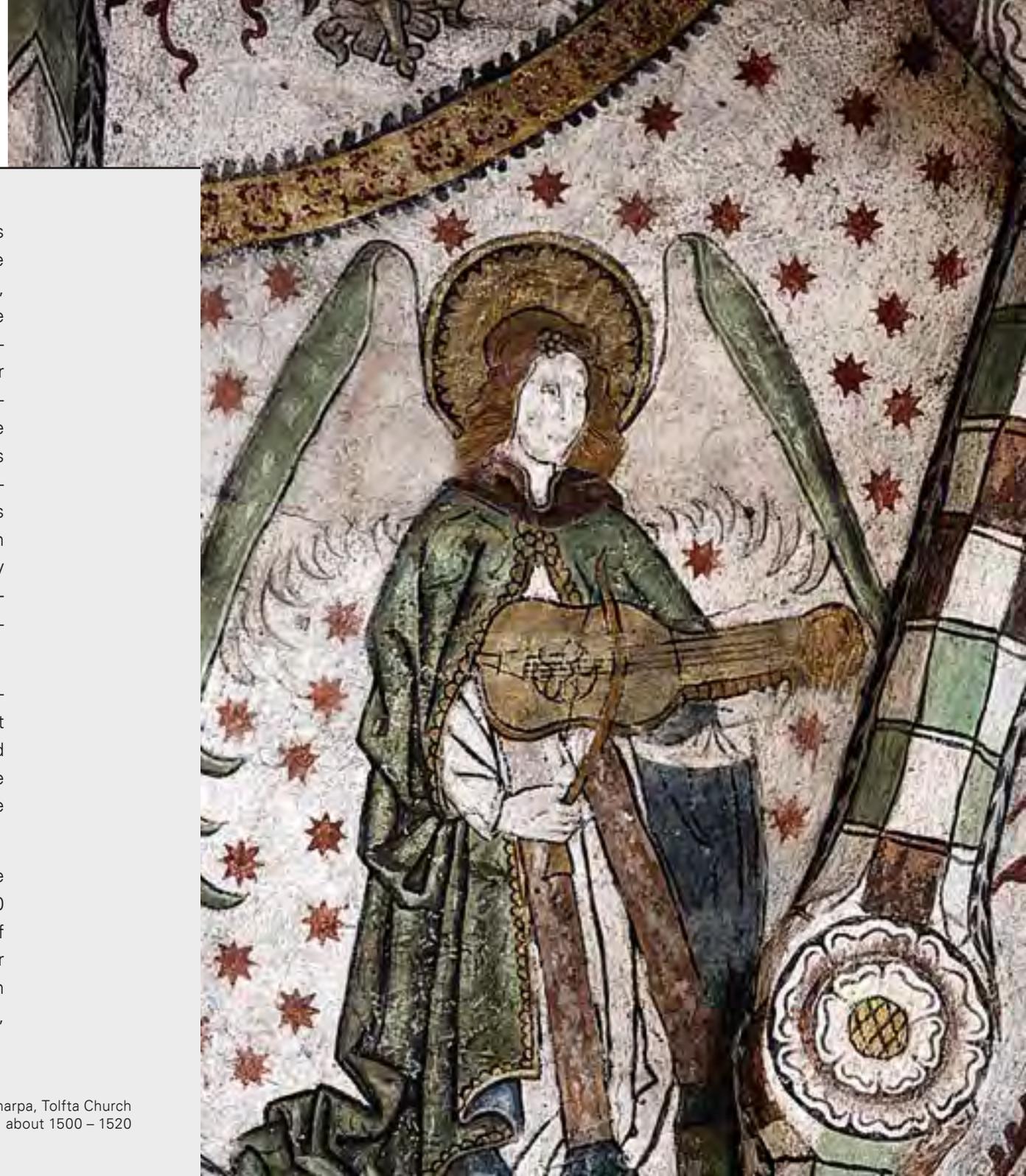
A public seminar with the former and the present professors for folk music at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm, Ole Hjorth and Sven Ahlbäck, was very exiting for the participants from the continent because in their home countries traditional music and dance are usually not regarded as academic university subjects. But in Sweden this university education is on a high level and very successful. The graduates generally get jobs quite easily. At this occasion Bo S Englund, the mayor of Tierp, also welcomed the group.



Ole Hjorth and Sven Ahlbäck

We joined "Tobotorsdag", a periodic event every other Thursday from October until April. These evenings start with a short concert by a local folk music group. About 30 musicians and 20 dancers from the neighbourhood meet and have a whole evening of dancing and playing nyckelharpa and fiddle. There you can get a feeling of how a living tradition works.

In a trip to the countryside, we visited Tolfta church where two ceiling frescos of medieval nyckelharpas from about 1500 can be found, which gave us an impression of 500 years of tradition. We continued the trip to view sites of the former Swedish-Wallone steel production, which happened to be in the same region where the nyckelharpa used to be popular, and still is.



Angel with nyckelharpa, Tolfta Church  
Fresco by "Eghil, Master of the Alphabet" about 1500 – 1520



### Scuola di Musica Popolare, Forlimpopoli, Italy

Forlimpopoli is a small town that surrounds a castle in the centre. It belongs to the district Emilia-Romagna and has a really long history. The Scuola di Musica Popolare is a democratically self-governed association by its teachers and students. It has no building of its own, but uses exclusively suitable municipal rooms in the castle and in a former convent, now a primary school. Our group was quartered in the local hotel close to the centre. Coming in June we could experience the Festa Artusiana, when the whole town and thousands of visitors enjoy excellent cooking and cultivated eating. We too enjoyed this and contributed a public CADENCE concert to the festival.



Musically Marco Ambrosini introduced the group to teaching early and modern sheet music. The tunes were chosen exemplarily to follow the influence of medieval music on folk music of the region and on modern pop music. We could observe private lessons given to students of the European Nyckelharpa Training and hear a concert of one of the ensembles of the Scuola di Musica Popolare.

From Sweden two additional guests travelled with us: Michael Näslund, director of the ESI, and Sonia Sahlström, daughter of Eric





Sahlström and musician herself honoured as “golden riksspelman”. Being together with almost all people responsible for the international nyckelharpa cooperation we used the opportunity to meet delegations from Belgium (Henri Vandenberghe and Dianne Leenders) and Spain (Ana Alcaide) interested in joining future projects. We also met Paolo Zoffoli, the mayor of Forlimpopoli, who introduced the CADENCE concert to the public.

Working together we also started to collect and discuss ideas for a final report, additional publications and the personal contributions of each participant. A touristic trip led us to one of the oldest but still working salines with its salt museum and to the Adriatic Sea.



## BURG FÜRSTENECK

### Eiterfeld, Germany

BURG FÜRSTENECK is a medieval castle, completely maintained and carefully renewed during the last few years. It is located in the centre of Germany but far away from big cities.

Since 1953 it has been used as an institute for adult education. It surpasses the two other institutes in size of the building, in number of students, and in the scope of educational subjects.

When we came to BURG FÜRSTENECK in October it was to be the last meeting of the whole group. Earlier in summer we de-

ecided to meet an extra day than originally planned. Thus we had two days before the “International Days of the Nyckelharpa” and the “European Nyckelharpa Training” joined in. The last day almost 100 nyckelharpa players from 12 nations stayed at the castle.

Thus a lot of exchange happened officially by observing lessons and informally by playing and talking together. We also met additional guests who had already joined us in Tobo and Forlimpopoli. The musical work of the CADENCE group was focussed by Didier François on teaching methods for improvisation and contemporary music. Beside this some rehearsal was done to prepare a public concert recorded and broadcasted by the national German radio “Deutschlandfunk”.





The mayor of Eiterfeld, Hermann-Joseph Scheich, opened this concert. He also invited us for dinner to another castle in his community. On our way there we saw two more castles, and even got a little private organ concert by Matthias Steinmacher in a lovely fortified church. Near BURG FÜRSTENECK the former East and West border ran through Germany. We visited it together with Anita Heller. She had been living there with the border dividing her family's farm into two parts. Her story gave us a lasting impression of the life in times of the Cold War.



Annette Osann with a children's nyckelharpa

The last day of our stay we discussed the experience of the CADENCE project. We all agreed that it was worth all the effort but that we would have liked to have more time for it. We collected the ideas for the publications and made clear agreements on the further work. We are glad to say, they were kept nearly hundred percent. The managers of the schools met with the Swedish publisher Per-Ulf Allmo (Tongång) and the German publisher Michael Hofmann (Verlag der Spielleute) to prepare the editing of the results.



Per-Ulf Allmo, also very engaged in research on nyckelharpa history and Olle Plahn, professional nyckelharpa builder from Sweden, have been accompanying our cooperation for many years.

Right top: former Est and West border, with Anita Heller  
Right: Mayor H.-J. Scheich (left) in front of Schloss Buchenau





## Statement of Per-Ulf Allmo

*Neither the importance of the nyckelharpa for the CADENCE project nor the relevance of the CADENCE project for the worldwide musical standing of the nyckelharpa can be over-estimated. In Sweden the nyckelharpa formerly existed as a traditional instrument not commonly known outside the county of Uppland. In Europe the nyckelharpa of today has rarely been seen as one of primarily Swedish folk instruments but has been used as a musical tool among all others. It has been found that the nyckelharpa works for a wide variety of music genres like for instance: local folk music as in England, Ireland, Scotland and France, Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque music in Italy, Germany and Spain, contemporary art music in Belgium and Italy, i.e. "World Music".*



Per-Ulf Allmo, Photo Esbjörn Hogmark

*My hope is that the Cadence spirit will live on in order to show good examples of how well the nyckelharpa fits into any kind of music. By furnishing sheet music and CDs, support for musicians, exchange programmes between artists and groups in different countries. I see CADENCE as embryonic for a world wide nyckelharpa network. The nyckelharpa is worth it.*

April 2011

**Per-Ulf Allmo**

Publisher (Tongång), writer and photographer to be found in numerous magazines, books and other publications. His on-going extensive work about the nyckelharpa has led to PhD studies over its earliest history. A devoted folk dancer since having made the acquaintance of Eric Sahlström in the 60s.

## A Unique Musical Instrument Connects Europeans

### Sweden and the Roots of the Nyckelharpa

The initiative to apply to the EU for a nyckelharpa project was taken by the Academy BURG FÜRSTENECK and the Scuola di Musica Popolare. But part of the mission of the Eric Sahlström Institute is to work continuously for creating networks for both the nyckelharpa players and the makers and since its start in 1998 the institute has had the aim to establish a World Centre for the nyckelharpa. An EU-project involving the instrument nyckelharpa would definitely be welcomed and is entirely consistent with Eric Sahlström Institute's mission.

In Sweden, probably more than 1000 adults have started to play nyckelharpa after the folk music wave in the 1970s. Education in advanced nyckelharpa playing is given at the Eric Sahlström Institute and the Royal College of Music in Stockholm and also some other places in Sweden. Therefore one can easily understand that Sweden has a lot to contribute to a project about nyckelharpa teaching for adults. In addition, Sweden has a several-hundred-year-long history of the instrument. Along with the change of the traditional music the construction of the instrument was adapted to the music played at the time.



Part of a nyckelharpa exhibition, Poeta Magica



In Sweden, for a long time, the nyckelharpa was considered a Swedish instrument and regarded by a lot of people as the country's national instrument. Several churches in Sweden and in Southern Europe have paintings which, however, suggest that in former times the instrument existed also outside Sweden. In Uppland, the nyckelharpa has been played in an unbroken tradition of about 350 years, but in the 1950s and 1960s the interest in the instrument almost died out completely. In 1967, Jan Ling, later professor for musicology and the first chairman of the ESI, published his doctoral thesis, which is still the most comprehensive book about the nyckelharpa.

#### **Eric Sahlström and the Eric Sahlström Institute**

Eric Sahlström (1912-1986) was the most important person for the resurgence of the instrument in the 1970s. Already in the 1930s, together with another fiddler, August Bohlin he changed the old type of nyckelharpa, today called silver bass nyckelharpa, which was suited to the music played at that time. They constructed the three-row chromatic nyckelharpa, which has become the archetype for most nyckelharpas since then. Through his skill as instrument builder and due to his outstanding musicianship and virtuosity on the instrument Eric Sahlström came to fascinate everyone who made contact with his music.

The wave of folk music and folk dance started to roll over Sweden in the late 1960s. It was followed a few years later by a nyckelharpa movement, with its centre in Österbybruk in Uppland. Eric Sahlström was the obvious choice to engage both as teacher of building and playing nyckelharpa at countless weekly, weekend and evening courses. Then, from the



Eric Sahlström 1967, Photo: Per-Ulf Allmo



beginning of the 1970s, the interest to build and play nyckelharpa was spread in wider circles, and in the 1980s the instrument had a nationwide distribution in Sweden. Every fiddler knew and wanted to play with Eric Sahlström whose playing as well as his instrument building inspired both young and old.

After Eric Sahlström's death in 1986, Esbjörn Hogmark and another fiddler friend of Sahlström, Gösta Sandström, formed the Eric Sahlström Memorial Foundation. Over the years it has worked in different ways for spreading the nyckelharpa music of the Sahlström tradition. To date, the most evident result of the foundation's activities is the creation of the folk music institute in Tobo, the Eric Sahlström Institute.

The Institute is now well established as a national centre for folk music and folk dancing. There are year-long residential courses in nyckelharpa and violin playing and folk dancing held there. There is also emphasized distance learning where students work at home and regularly present their work at the institute. In addition courses and

seminars of various kinds are held. For example, since 1996 the institute has annually held short courses and seminars in nyckelharpa building organized and led by Esbjörn Hogmark.

### The Nyckelharpa in Other Music Genres

Traditional Swedish folk music for nyckelharpa has not been the only music played within the CADENCE project. Other music genres have been taken up during lessons and performances.



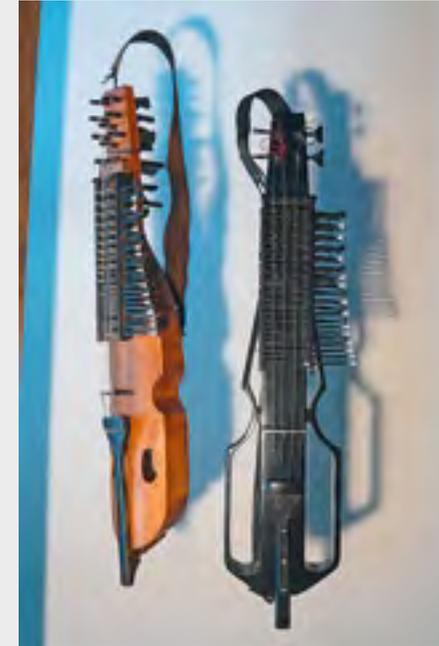
Kontrabasharpa  
by Mårten Blanch ca 1785



This is actually in line with the modern history of the instrument in Sweden. From being an instrument only played in a small area of northern Uppland until the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it is today treated as other instruments and appears in different music genres.

Eric Sahlström himself explored the possibilities of the three-row chromatic nyckelharpa. He composed tunes that differed from the nyckelharpa music played at that time. Even though he preferred to play the old nyckelharpa tunes and his own compositions you could hear him play popular music and sometimes even a jazz tune. After a tour in Japan, he often played a Japanese song when he performed. He played as the soloist in a modern piece of music for nyckelharpa and orchestra by Bo Nilsson at the Biennale in Venice in 1960.

During the folk music wave in the 1970s the interest in the nyckelharpa increased dramatically and many people who wanted to play, first had to make their own instrument. The nyckelharpa also became a popular instrument among young people for example in folk music groups such as Väsen and folk rock groups such as Nordman. One young nyckelharpa player, Åsa Jinder, composed melodies that became very popular among people outside the folk music world. Torbjörn Näsborn and



E-harpa by Olle Plahn



other musicians before him played classical music on the nyckelharpa. Another result of the folk music wave was that some people picked up the old types of the instrument, the Moraharpa, the contra droned nyckelharpa (kontrabasharpa) and the silver bass nyckelharpa (silverbasharpa). Those models are frequently built today, for example at the building course at ESI.

### The Nyckelharpa Conquers the World

Around 1970, Eric Sahlström started to teach courses in nyckelharpa building and this was crucial for the survival of the instrument. Since then, thousands of nyckelharpas have been built. And there is hope for the future; more than a hundred children take nyckelharpa lessons every week at music schools in Sweden. Many of them play on instruments specially made for children.

Since the 1970s the quality of the instrument has gradually increased and many nyckelharpas today have a standard fully equal to that of good violins. As a result of the increasing number of instruments, playing courses for adults and children were started all over Sweden. Many people from abroad have attended summer courses and became ambassadors for the nyckelharpa and Swedish folk music in their home countries. The interest is especially great in the parts of the USA with Swedish descendants. Many Swedish nyckelharpa players have been there to give courses and to perform.

Somewhat differently, many musicians in Germany and Italy did not enter the nyckelharpa world through Sweden and Swedish folk.





## The Nyckelharpa in Germany and Italy

Stories often start unspectacularly: When Marco Ambrosini first saw a funny looking instrument in the museum of Oslo about 1980, he was a talented, academically skilled young Italian violinist, performing classic music worldwide as a successful soloist with great orchestras. The Norwegian custodian told him this was just an awful sounding Swedish instrument called "nyckelharpa". Collecting string instruments Ambrosini asked a friend in Stockholm to find such a funny nyckelharpa for him. And for sure at that time he did not expect to initiate a European project about teaching this instrument.



Marco Ambrosini, January 2010

With no information about Swedish nyckelharpa tradition he started to tune and play his new instrument like a viola. Practicing and discovering its possibilities by and by he fell in love with the nyckelharpa and made it his main instrument. Thus he became a well known nyckelharpa soloist touring throughout the world, playing nearly all kinds of music (except traditional Swedish nyckelharpa music because of his respect for those players grown up with the real tradition).

Of course there are people in continental Europe who have discovered the nyckelharpa since the 1970s because of the European folk revival and their love of Sweden and Swedish folk music. But quite a lot of people started to learn nyckelharpa after hearing Marco Ambrosini play. Together with the instrument



builders Jean Claude Condi and Annette Osann, both trained in the continental violin building tradition, Ambrosini worked also on changes on the instrument so it would fit best to his needs and his sound ideas. He started to work and play with Didier François, violinist and nyckelharapist from Belgium who first saw the nyckelharpa through the group Väsen and Olov Johansson.

Thus a small but growing continental nyckelharpa community occurred, who grasped the nyckelharpa to be just an instrument with an interesting sound but not a special instrument for Swedish folk music. Actually the nyckelharpa in continental



Nyckelharpa family built by Olle Plahn



Europe is maybe mostly used in early music, regarding the inconvenient look and the heritage of the medieval instruments called “Schlüssselfidel” in Germany and “viola d’amore a chiavi” in Italy, though known only from pictures. But it should be remembered that the instruments played nowadays are usually following the Swedish inventions of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **The International Days of the Nyckelharpa**

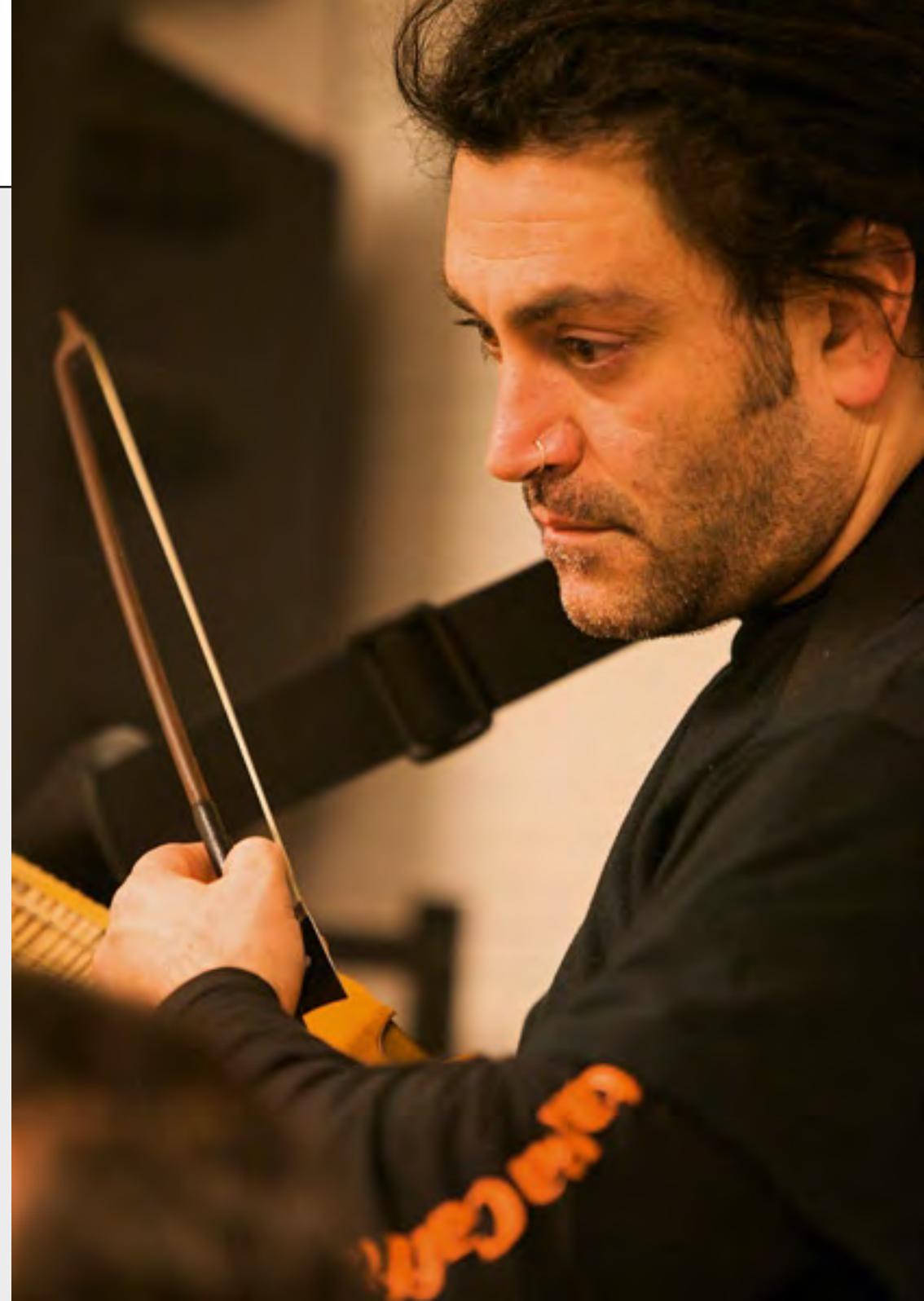
Knowing Academy BURG FÜRSTENECK as a teacher for early music Ambrosini asked Karsten Evers to organize international workshops for nyckelharpa players. Thus in 2004 the “International Days of the Nyckelharpa” were established. To connect to the Swedish roots the Eric Sahlström Institute was involved with an official visitor in the first year and since the second year Ditte Andersson has joined in the teacher’s team.

But soon it occurred that one course a year is not enough to form skilled nyckelharpa players and teachers, and it became clear enough, with the steadily increasing interest in this instrument, one would need both even outside of Sweden.

### **The European Nyckelharpa Training**

Renzo Ruggiero, participant of the first International Days of the Nyckelharpa, became tired of travelling to Germany for nyckelharpa lessons. So he suggested to Ambrosini and his companions to start a nyckelharpa course in Italy. They asked Marco Bartolini, if lessons could be done at the Scuola di Musica Popolare di Forlimpopoli, and got the legendary answer: “Why not?”

The vocational “European Nyckelharpa Training for Musicians” started in 2006 first at the Scuola di Musica Popolare in Italy





and one year later at Academy BURG FÜRSTENECK in Germany. The idea is to deal intensively with the technique of playing but also with different styles of music and with pedagogical subjects.

Though both trainings are following an identical pedagogical concept agreed by those two schools and supported by the Eric Sahlström Institute, some minor but interesting differences occurred. Although having International Days of the Nyckelharpa in Germany and international summer courses in Sweden the nyckelharpa communities seemed to stay isolated in some way.

### Starting the learning partnership CADENCE

After noticing this, the idea of a European project came up to intensify the exchange and to get people from all three countries to visit one another and to really work together. Besides their common teaching of the nyckelharpa, the three institutes differ significantly in terms of organization, teaching schedules, teaching methods, target groups, financial resources and regional or supra-regional orientation.

Therein they realised it was possible to learn from each other in other areas, not just in relation to nyckelharpa education. Thus the focus of the project was broadened to subjects of management and cultural adult education in general.

A Grundtvig partnership turned out to be the first choice. A focus of this programme are the "mobilities", where participants travel to the partner organizations, work together and get to know each other and to some extent the culture of the



other countries. The Grundtvig programme deals with adult education and this was very well in line with the three schools. In Germany and Italy, almost all people that start nyckelharpa training are adults.

After one year of preparation the Grundtvig learning partnership officially started in 2009 with a meeting of managers and teachers at BURG FÜRSTENECK for detailed preparation. After collecting and writing personal contributions we had an editors meeting in February 2011. The programme will be finished by publishing the results in summer 2011.

But out of the experience of cooperation additional publications, musical events and teaching teamwork are planned and will be realized subsequently.

### Travelling Artists

A medieval fresco can to a certain extent symbolize the spirit and the rationale of our CADENCE collaboration. We were shown this image in Tolfta Church during our visit in Sweden. (See also page 24.) It pictures two angels playing the nyckelharpa and was painted sometime between 1500 and 1520. It belongs to the oldest representations of this instrument. On the same ceiling fresco more angels play the harp, the viol or the lute, i.e. Medieval instruments used all over Europe.

We know nothing more about the painter than his name, "Eghil, Master of the Alpha-



Silverbasharpa  
end 19<sup>th</sup> century



bet”, and we don’t know who really played the medieval nyckelharpa. But we know that in those times musicians travelled throughout Europe playing wherever they got an engagement, and painters were travelling around, painting wherever ornamentation was needed. Meeting one another on their way, the painters might have got new ideas of nice looking instruments and reproduced them even on places where those instruments hadn’t been known before. Looking at those instruments in their church might have inspired local musicians to replicate and play them. Thus, touring musicians and painters played a key role in spreading the knowledge of culture.

Knowing many similar cases, one can recognize that the dissemination of culture in Europe since the Middle Ages largely depended on highly skilled travellers and that some cultural practices were disseminated by travelling artists who became deeply rooted in new places so that nowadays they can be proudly claimed to be part of the local culture.

Though we don’t know where this story will end, our own cooperation through the nyckelharpa started in a similar way: Just seeing a nyckelharpa in a museum on one of his trips Marco Ambrosini brought this instrument back to continental Europe, together with his travelling colleagues from Belgium, France and Sweden.

Starting our Grundtvig partnership CADENCE we tried to establish a new link between our different countries, musical cultures, teaching methods and techniques. We cannot imagine yet the long-term effects of this cooperation. But hopefully this experience will play a significant role in the cultural life of the participants, “musici vagantes” of the XXI century.



CADENCE aims to add one small brick to a shared musical culture in Europe. Instruments, styles and techniques develop constantly, but, like in the Middle Ages, knowledge of cultural roots associated with curiosity and openness for other societies and diversities and with the chance to meet each other will allow us to progress.



Angel with nyckelharpa, Tolfta Church, Uppland, fresco about 1500 – 1520



## Eric Sahlström Institute

The “Eric Sahlström Institute” (ESI) is a foundation with the mission to support Swedish folk music, folkdance and folksong. Special attention is placed on the nyckelharpa. ESI was founded in 1998 by the Eric Sahlström Memorial Foundation and is Sweden’s first national folk music centre. The board consists of representatives from the prime and largest national organizations of folk music and folkdance, the Eric Sahlström Memorial Foundation and the Royal College of Music in Stockholm. The institute receives funding from the Swedish Arts Council, Uppsala County Council and the Municipality of Tierp. It is situated in a manor house from late 19<sup>th</sup> century in the small village of Tobo in northern Uppland.

For hundreds of years the nyckelharpa was played only in Uppland, but thanks to Eric Sahlström (1912-1986), who was an extraordinarily skilled nyckelharpa player, composer and nyckelharpa maker living in Tobo, the instrument gained in popularity. Today it is played all over Sweden as well as in many other countries and used in various genres.

Every year about 200 people take part in workshops and courses in folk music, folkdance and folksong at ESI. There are two courses running over a year “Nyckelharpa and Fiddle playing” and “Folkdance”. In addition, there are courses of different length dealing with various instruments and subjects as for example nyckelharpa, fiddle, clarinet, harmonica, Scandinavian folk dances, folk song and also nyckelharpa building.



About 500 people visit concerts, open-house activities, seminars and other events at the institute every year. ESI organizes networks and meetings between national organizations of folk music, folkdance and folksong. A couple of Nordic seminars have also been carried out.





## Academy BURG FÜRSTENECK

The “Academy BURG FÜRSTENECK” in Germany, Eiterfeld (district of Fulda), was founded in 1952 as an institute for adult education. The medieval castle, first mentioned in 1309 and well conserved, was reconstructed for this new use by Otto Bartning, a famous German architect. In 2004 the interior was modernized again. The management of the institution is formed by an association as a “round table” of various social institutions. BURG FÜRSTENECK is financed by the fees of its students and subsidised by the German State of Hesse.

The academy offers a very broad range of vocational courses and cultural education. The concept of education is holistically in the combination of professional, social/political and cultural education. Music is one key aspect of the activities. Participants come from all over Germany and for some courses even from abroad. The courses are always full board residential at the medieval castle and last from two days to two weeks. Each year about 3500 participants are registered to one of about 200 seminars.

Concerning nyckelharpa teaching Academy BURG FÜRSTENECK currently offers the “International Days of the Nyckelharpa” each October, the on-going “European Nyckelharpa Training” and one workshop during the “Bordunale” at the begin of each year. Nyckelharpa players are also very welcome in many ensemble workshops throughout the year.





## Scuola di Musica Popolare

The “Scuola di Musica Popolare” (SMP) is a music school in Forlimpopoli (region of Emilia-Romagna, Northern Italy). It was founded in 1986 by the City of Forlimpopoli and some time later transformed into a “Cultural Association”. This means that all its students and teachers are members of this association and govern the school democratically.

The Rocca, a fortress built by Cardinal Albornoz between 1360 and 1365, and a former Augustinian convent of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, house the school’s classrooms. The buildings belong to the city of Forlimpopoli who grants the school the right to use them.

The school’s main activity is teaching adult learners of all ages mainly from the region. Most courses are held weekly as evening classes. The school offers lessons for more than 30 musical instruments associated with folk music from different parts of the world. One focus is on the folklore of the region. Some other courses, like the European Nyckelharpa Training, have nationwide relevance and are organized as residential courses of several days.

Moreover the Scuola di Musica Popolare di Forlimpopoli realizes CD-productions and other projects, organizes public festivals and concerts as a cultural support for the community and region. About 250 members per year and several thousand people participate as students or as audience in the activities (courses, workshops, concerts) organized by the school.





## Municipal Cooperation

The partnership is supported by the three municipalities in which the participating teaching facilities are located. An additional partnership has been established between the communities of Eiterfeld (Germany), Forlimpopoli (Italy) and Tierp (Sweden). The agreement of this partnership has been ratified by the respective community representatives and was signed by the three mayors in a public ceremonial act in Forlimpopoli on 18 February 2009.



Bo S Englund, Paolo Zoffoli, Hermann-Josef Scheich  
at press conference in Tierp, Sweden



The mayors in Forlimpopoli after signing the  
agreement of cooperation of their municipalities



## Participants of CADENCE

### The Multinational Study Group

Eighteen people formed the mutual CADENCE group and in 2010 visited the Eric Sahlström Institute in Tobo, Sweden, the Scuola di Musica Popolare di Forlimpopoli, Italy, and Academy BURG FÜRSTENECK in Eiterfeld, Germany. Additional guests joined in all of our meetings.





Photo: Heidrun Fischer

### Angelika Maier, Germany

Besides being a nyckelharpa player Angelika teaches flute and recorder. Loving folk music and instruments which produce lots of harmonics she was charmed by the nyckelharpa and decided to give it a try. That was six years ago and she has never regretted this decision.



Photo: Bruno Thiebergien

### Annette Osann, Germany/France

Annette, professional nyckelharpa builder, soloist and teacher, studied violin making, but concentrated on nyckelharpa making and developed her own model. She performs with "Arcangelo en duo et en trio". She doesn't only teach playing, but also the basics of instrument making and instrument care.



Photo: Per-Ulf Allmo

### Boris Koller, Austria

Boris Koller used to live as a composer of classical music in Vienna. Currently he is writing a large-scale opera „Tvillingene fra Island“. On stage he can be heard with „Poeta Magica“ and „Estampie“. He plays different nyckelharpas with quatertones. He is also a painter, specializing in Scandinavian landscape.



### Corrado Bungaro, Italy

Musician, composer, teacher. Corrado dedicates himself professionally to the creation, organization and direction of cultural events. He performs in Italy and abroad taking part in various musical projects including jazz, popular, classical, world music and experimental contemporary music.

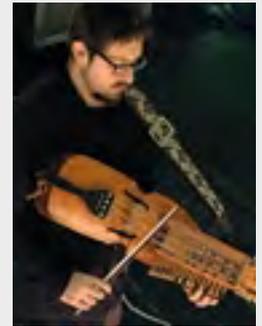


Photo: Giorgio Moser

### 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.



Photo: Esbjörn Hogmark

### Davide Castiglia, Italy

Davide is the manager and conductor of the school orchestra, violin teacher and member of the board at the Scuola di Musica Popolare. Though trained in classical music at the academy his attention soon moved to popular music and the musical traditions of the Mediterranean area and Eastern Europe.



Photo: Esbjörn Hogmark



Photo: Per-Ulf Allmo

### Didier François, Belgium

After a long journey of violin studies in the classical and jazz world Didier has now been playing nyckelharpa for almost 20 years. He developed his own technique of relaxed playing and fluid movements to avoid tendinitis and for the beauty of the sound and he specializes in playing in a polyphonic way.



Photo: Ditte Andersson

### Ditte Andersson, Sweden

Musician – nyckelharpa player, fiddler, singer, composer. Ditte plays Swedish folk music and a mix of genres, with the aim to create acoustic music in the borderland between folk and popular music. Experienced teacher on a freelance basis (Master of Education in Music, main subject Swedish Folk Music).



Photo: Simon Johansson

### Emilia Amper, Sweden

Emilia started playing nyckelharpa in 1991 and is now an award winning performer and teacher world wide as soloist and with folk, chamber and rock/pop ensembles. She is an educated Nordic Master in Folk Music, member of the board at the Eric Sahlström Institute and World Champion of Nyckelharpa 2010.



### Esbjörn Hogmark, Sweden

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



Photo: Åsa Hogmark

### Gioele Sindona, Italy

Gioele graduated in violin in 2006 and recently at the Conservatory “B. Maderna” in Cesena. He has had a lot of experience in orchestral, symphonic and chamber music. He works as a teacher and assistant with Bardh Jakova in a laboratory ensemble, mostly playing traditional music of the Balkans.



Photo: Annalisa Maniscalco

### Håkan Larsson, Sweden

Håkan represents the administration of the Eric Sahlström Institute in the CADENCE-project. He plays fiddle, nyckelharpa and harmonica and performs together with his wife Sonia Sahlström in various constellations. He is the 13<sup>th</sup> harmonica player awarded the title “riksspelman” in Sweden.



Photo: Esbjörn Hogmark



Photo: Mia Marin

### Josefina Paulson, Sweden

Josefina is a modern musician standing grounded in her own tradition and exploring new territory, where the nyckelharpa brings an earthy taste into different genres. She was awarded the title "riksspelman" 2008 and has studied at the Royal Academy in Stockholm with the nyckelharpa as her main instrument.



Photo: Mike Lörler

### Jule Bauer, Germany

Jule was the first graduate of the "European Nyckelharpa Training". She studied singing, musicology and music pedagogy. She performs with many ensembles all around Europe. Being teacher for music since 2003 she is now about to publish a nyckelharpa manual for beginners.



Photo: Per-Ulf Allmo

### 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. He has been responsible for cultural adult education at BURG FÜRSTENECK for 26 years.



### Marco Ambrosini, Germany/Italy

Marco inspired us to do this project. He was violinist and composer when he discovered the nyckelharpa in the 80s. He fell in love with it and made it his main instrument performing as soloist for early and contemporary music all over the world. Currently he is writing a book of daily exercises for nyckelharpa players.



Photo: Hermann Kurz

### Marco Bartolini, Italy

During the last 10 years, Marco is in charge of the direction of the Scuola di Musica Popolare and the artistic direction of some Festivals. As a percussionist he has played Celtic, gypsy, Sephardic and Emilia Romagna folk music in different ensembles, performing live and recording about a dozen of albums.



Photo: Esbjörn Hogmark

### Renzo Ruggiero, Italy

It was Renzo who first asked for a European Nyckelharpa Training, thus bringing our institutes in contact. For many years he studied as a multiinstrumentalist musical repertory from Middle Ages to the present day including Italian and Mediterranean popular traditions and touring with various bands in Italy and abroad.



Photo: Per-Ulf Allmo

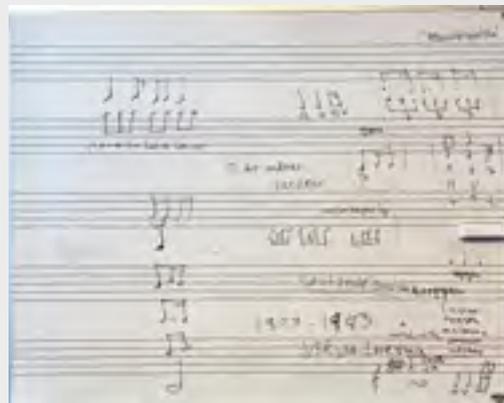


## Additional Articles

The responsibility for the following articles is taken by the authors. They reflect aspects of our work and will be available for download on our website [www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu](http://www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu).

- Combining the best of two worlds *by Emilia Amper*
- The nyckelharpa in the CADENCE project *by Esbjörn Hogmark*
- Nyckelharpa manufacturing in Sweden *by Esbjörn Hogmark*
- “A keyed vielle” – Construction of the instrument from the fresco in Siena, 1408 *by Silver Plachesi (guest article)*
- Findings on medieval nyckelharpas *by Per-Ulf (guest article)*
- Care and maintenance of the nyckelharpa *by Annette Osann*
- About tuning *by Emilia Amper*
- Nyckelharpa in music schools, the beginning – Interview with Anders Liljefors *by Ditte Andersson*
- How it all started with Swedish folk music at the Royal College of Music (KMH) *by Ole Hjorth (guest article)*
- Folkmusikinstitutionen – En personlig tillbakablick på 30 år av folkmusikutbildning (Swedish) *by Sven Ahlbäck (guest article)*
- Swedish schools for music and arts *by Dag Krafft (guest article)*
- Musical education in Germany *by Angelika Maier*
- Musical education in Italy *by Gioele Sindona*

Polska rhythms



- Three models of teaching the nyckelharpa *by Gioele Sindona*
- Self-learning by the example of nyckelharpa *by Jule Bauer*
- The nyckelharpa as a bowed instrument in music education for young children *by Susanne Brameshuber (guest article)*
- The search for a methodology in devising exercises suitable for different types of nyckelharpa *by Marco Ambrosini*
- Body, instrument and swing, one unit *by Josephina Paulson*
- The language of mind and body in the nyckelharpa practice *by Carrado Bungaro*
- Playing in a relaxed way to avoid tendonitis *by Didier François*
- The motion of bowing *by David Eriksson*
- Anhemitonische Heptatonik auf traditionsmusikalischer Basis in Hinblick auf die Nyckelharpa (in German) *by Boris Koller*
- Arranging a rock-tune for nyckelharpa ensemble *by Davide Castiglia*
- Analysis of a contemporary tune – “La Musa danzante” *by Renzo Ruggiero*
- Aspects of project-management *by Karsten Evers*
- From disappearing relict to world music instrument: An example of musical globalisation *by Jan Ling (guest article)*



Torbjörn Hogmark



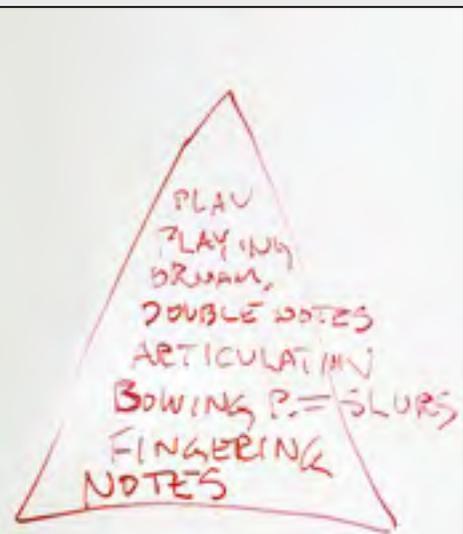
## Sheet music

Sheet music from CADENCE concerts will be available for download at [www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu](http://www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu). See the track list at the last page. Additional sheet music for download:

- Concert - music – see page 80
- “CADENCE” *composition by Didier François & Emilia Amper*
- Polska fra Hoffsmýran  
*composition and arrangement by Emilia Amper*
- Easy folk tunes – arranged for 2 nyckelharpas  
*by Angelika Maier*
- Manfrina romagnola *arrangement by Davide Castiglia*
- Examples of polyphonic arrangements (Bach, Jobim, Satie)  
*by Didier François*

More publications on the nyckelharpa are in progress and will be published by “Verlag der Spielleute” ([www.spielleute.de](http://www.spielleute.de)) and “Tongång” ([www.tongang.se](http://www.tongang.se))

“Hierarchy of needs”



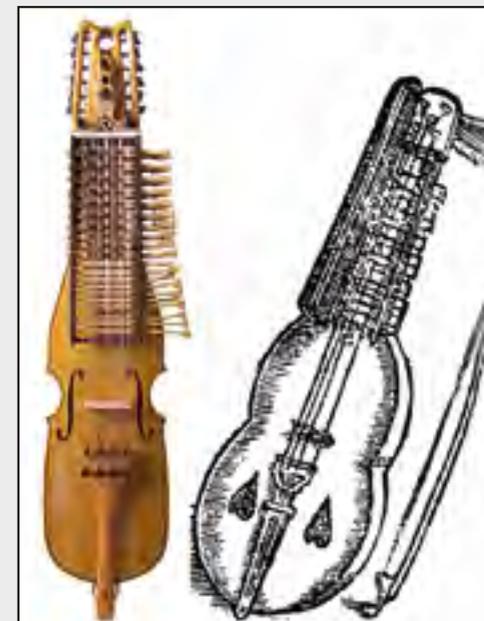
## Approaches to Teaching Music

The responsibility to coordinate the educational aspects of our project and to choose the musical material to be used was in the hands of Ditte Andersson, Marco Ambrosini and Didier François.

Basically CADENCE was not a project for making music; the focus was on the educational aspects of teaching music to adults in general, and nyckelharpa in particular. However, we managed to include practice of music in a very natural, synergistic way.

During our three meetings we tried to show as much as possible of our personal views of teaching, both philosophy and practice. We talked about our individual history and experiences, offered exemplary lectures and tunes, responded to questions and tried to promote general discussions, to give the other participants a chance to share their views and experiences.

During each meeting the participants of the project also had the possibility to visit regular nyckelharpa lessons at the three schools.



Nyckelharpa by Annette Osann  
Schlüssselfidel by Michael Praetorius, 1615



The CADENCE party first went to Tobo, Sweden, to Eric Sahlström Institutet, under the supervision of Ditte Andersson.

### Ditte Andersson:

*I started to teach very early in my nyckelharpa and violin/fiddle career. Not intentionally; it just happened. When I, after four years of playing the fiddle, applied for admission to the Royal College of Music, I thought more of improving my own playing than anybody else's. I guess that this is the motivation for many young people in the process of being trained to teachers.*

*My eminent teachers in teaching methods at college – Ingvar Kullberg (violin), Harald Thedéen (violin) and Ole Hjorth (violin and fiddle) gave me great insights into the process of analysing the behaviour of pupils and finding the way to improve their playing. They also introduced me to the work of Paul Rolland, which has inspired me since then. During my education I also had the privilege to meet with other fore-runners in the field of teaching the violin, like Sheila Nelson and Géza Szilvay.*

*Therefore, the most important issues for me when I teach are*

- *establishing good movements:*

*As Rolland thought, I think that, in teaching violin/fiddle or nyckelharpa, there is often too much fuss about details and*

ESI, Tobo, January 2010, Ditte Andersson teaching





*not enough consideration of the whole player; – is he or she using his or her body in the most efficient and healthy way.*

- *meeting the pupil where he is*

*To play an instrument means learning new motorical skills. Therefore, you have to start where the pupil actually is in this respect and do what it takes to develop these skills; you cannot just skip a step. If you are building a house you can't start with the roof before the bearing walls are there. This means that you might have to introduce activities that the pupils find unnecessary or peculiar, because they are usually only focused on the actual notes of the melody.*

*Apart from superficial adaptations that different situations call for, these are my main emphases, regardless of whom I am teaching.*

The second “round”, in the Scuola di Musica Popolare, Forlimpopoli, Italy, was under the responsibility of Marco Ambrosini.

### **Marco Ambrosini:**

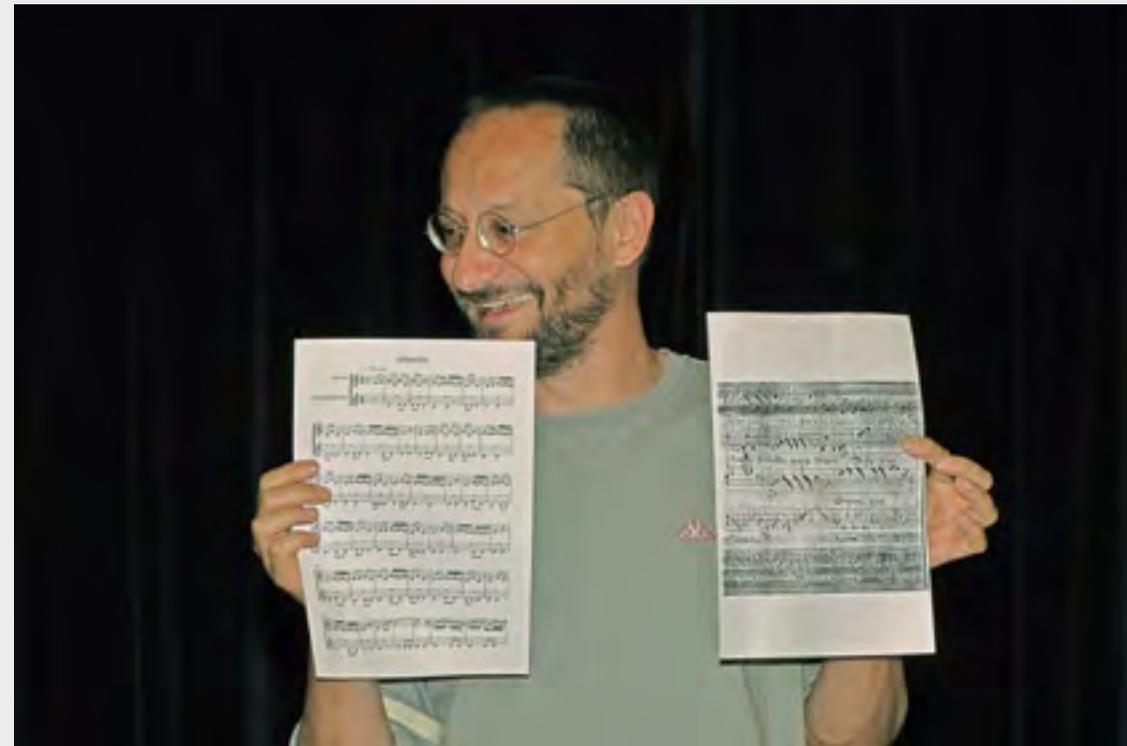
*I started my musical experience as a classical violin player, but was always involved in performing baroque and contemporary repertoire, with a big respect for all types of folk music. I discovered only after the end of my education the various exciting possibilities of other string instruments – and finally I totally fell in love with the nyckelharpa.*

*One of the most important persons in my life was my violin tutor, Adrio Casagrande – a great soloist and an even greater educator. Over so many years his teachings showed me how to mix techniques and feeling, always being earnest*

*and professional, but at the same time promoting pleasure and fun within the musical realm and beside it – all this while paying heed to the individual feelings and attitudes of the pupils. He even had a wonderful, calm and gentle way of explaining difficult things, together with an incredible deep and precise view in the examination of musical phrases and technical details.*

*I still notice that I think of him very often and almost hear his voice in my head in very different situations, while I'm teaching or when I'm confronted to a new, difficult tune for the next concert.*

*Adrio Casagrande has always tried to support my self-esteem, giving me the courage to perform in front of an*





*audience, to be proud of myself, to test new possibilities of my instrument ... and of course especially to take care of my psyche. Even today, I believe a true teacher should absolutely bring together all these features – not only to be a “master” in music, but rather a friend, possibly a support in daily life of each of his students.*

*I believe, a teacher should be able to offer a solid basis in the matter he is teaching, offering all the technical knowledge a student needs but at the same time showing the “way out”, the possibility to escape from the technical “handcuffs”, the path to the freedom of expression and to the joy of playing.*

*My theme for the CADENCE meeting in Italy was the approach in the use of scores: we got into a musical time machine, jumping from examples of medieval notation to modern folk music, from early baroque to rock compositions of the 1970s.*

*We discussed questions about how to read scores, how to interpret different musical languages of different historical times, how to decide how much to play (or not to play) from what is written in the staff, how to imagine what could be beside the written music, the “hidden” meaning of the notation.*

*The tunes we used as examples, together with the melodies we already had from the first meeting in Sweden, formed the basis of the repertoire we performed on our first public concert as CADENCE-ensemble, in June 2011, as a part of the Festa Artusiana in Forlimpopoli.*



The third meeting, in the Academy BURG FÜRSTENECK, Germany, was hosted by Didier François.

#### **Didier François:**

*Like Marco I started my musical experience as a classical violin player but I didn't fit into this “normal” path well. I had to study Beethoven or Bach but I would be playing Stephane Grappelli stuff. My teacher asked me to study a caprice by Paganini and I would be playing Chet Baker solos! Not that I just wanted to be an outlaw or “bad boy”, I just wanted to do it my way. “The truth is I worked more on the “chaconne” (solo partita nr 2) when I was out of school than when I had to. This was something I just couldn't understand. Once I was sitting on a bench in New York City*



*watching young skaters speeding along the streets of Manhattan. Those guys were skating everyday for hours and hours! They enjoyed doing it and became the very best at their discipline. Not because they had to or because someone told them to but because they chose to do it. I believe that if we really make a choice to learn, we can succeed at any age or at any subject!*



*Later on I had the chance to work with Myriam Quersin. She was the successor of Arthur Grumiaux, the world famous violin player. Together with help from David Oistrach, she developed the fantastic method of playing in a relaxed way. She showed me that the real teacher was the violin itself: when I wasn't doing something right, my violin*

*was telling me before my teacher was. I was frustrated because my violin was always right! I always thought it must be the fault of something or somebody else but it was my body which did not react in the way my violin wanted it to. The most important thing I learnt was to be honest with myself, which has given me a lot of strength in my life. My next teachers, jazz violinist Stephane Grappelli and jazz guitarist Philip Catherine told me everything about groove and creativity. Improvisation brings you close to the essence of music: "When it comes out of your heart, it becomes an honest language!"*



*This was the theme of the third meeting: Improvisation. We worked on how to express ourselves using the language of music. How do we tell a story with notes in the same way we tell our children a bedtime story". When we have a conversation around the table we talk and share our thoughts with each other. With music we can approach ensemble music in just the same way. How do we listen to each other, how do we answer". By letting each other speak and taking the chance to express ourselves in a better way.*





## Musical Repertoire

Music is made to be played to an audience. In a wider perspective, playing concerts is part of a communicative-pedagogical process as well among the musicians as between the musicians and their audience. And to rehearse a concert is welding a group of musicians together in the common task.

Music from the repertory we worked with during the three meetings and additional tunes practiced in sub-ensembles were played in two CADENCE concerts on 23 June 2011 in Forlimpopoli and on 10 October 2010 at BURG FÜRSTENECK. The last one was recorded and broadcasted by the national German radio "Deutschlandfunk" and is documented on the CD.

### Musical notes

- The main source for medieval instrumental music from Italy is an anonymous Tuscan manuscript at the British Library labelled "Add. 29987" which dates from the late 14<sup>th</sup> or early 15<sup>th</sup> century. The more renowned opus of the manuscript is the second **Saltarello** in the collection, which we use in our project as an example of early instrumental music, ideally connected to the last tune of our concert, the **Saltarello Romagnolo**, which is a popular folk dance of the region where the Scuola di Musica Popolare is based. The transcription of this folk-tune is made by Paolo Giacomoni, one of our first Italian nyckelharpa students and a great folk fiddler.
- When the party came to Eric Sahlström Institutet for the first CADENCE meeting, Ditte Andersson wanted to work

with the music that is most typical for Sweden, i.e. "polska". Polska is a dance in triple time, and there are two major types from a rhythmical point of view: "åttondelspolska" (quaver polska), where the beats are subdivided in three, and "sextondelspolska" (semiquaver polska), where the beats are subdivided in four. The "sextondelspolska" Ditte chose was **Kalla kårar**, a polska from Bingsjö in the province of Dalarna, that she had learnt from Bosse Larsson, a prominent fiddler from her area. "Kalla kårar" means, literally, cold breezes, but in a figurative sense it means cold shivers down one's spine. Ditte's choice for the "åttondelspolska" was **Polska from Österleufsta**, a tune from her home province Uppland, played by Gustaf Jansson (1852 – 1916), farmer, district judge and nyckelharpa player.



- Renzo Ruggieros **La Musa danzante** is a “beguine”, written originally in 2003 for violin, accordion, guitar & bass, re-arranged in 2008 for nyckelharpa quartet, where the first nyckelharpa has a large solo-part respecting the harmonic themes of the original tunes.

- Béla Bartók studied the popular music of his homeland, Hungary, in-depth but he also studied the popular music of the neighbouring populations of Eastern Europe, in an as much as possible more “genuine” form. He is perhaps one of the most important composers that used tonal forms and the popular and traditional material together in a synergetic way with modern techniques of composition. Rather than more technical studies, Béla Bartók’s **44 Duos for 2 Violins** are études in musicianship and a great example of the integration of folk song into contemporary classical music. All except two of the themes are traditional – culled from



the ‘peasant’ tunes Bartók had gathered in his field work. For this concert, Marco Ambrosini & Didier François have prepared a transcription for 2 nyckelharpa of 3 duos of these colourful miniatures. These three tunes are followed by a **Hungarian dance** in an arrangement for harmonic flute and nyckelharpa.



- Ditte Andersson wrote **Elegisk schottis** (Ecossaïse élégiaque) for the 2004-5 classes at the Eric Sahlström Institute. One can think of it as a bitter-sweet lament at the prospect of the ending of the academic year, with all the farewells that this involves.
- Marco Uccellini (\*Forlimpopoli 1603 or 1610, 10 December 1680) was an Italian Baroque violinist and composer. He was one of a long line of Italian violinist-composers in the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. His sonatas for violin and continuo contributed to the development of an idiomatic style of writing for the violin (including virtuosic runs, leaps, and forays into high positions), expanding the instrument’s technical possibilities and expressive range. Like other 17<sup>th</sup>-century Italian sonatas, Uccellini’s consists of short contrasting sections (frequently dances) that flow into each other. Uccellini mainly composed instrumental music, of which seven collections were published. **A Todeschina** is part of the Sinfonia Boscarecce, Op. 8, a collection of 37 small pieces for violin and basso continuo joined ad libitum by a second and third violin.
- **Sa démarche chaloupée et provocante** is a composition of Didier François based on seventh, major seventh and half diminished chords. The harmonies follow tonal principles whereas the improvisations have modal colours.



- **La rosa enflorece** is a Sephardic romance. These romances traditionally were sung by women. In Spain as early as the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance the romance or ballad was a very popular song-form. It originally survived as a folk song handed down in verbal form and was introduced to the Spanish court only towards the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. This song is one of the most famous Sephardic romances, it is handed down in Turkey, Bulgaria, Greece, Libya, Jerusalem. It is an excellent example for the tonal modal system, it is written in the mode "hijaz". In this version it is an example how a nyckelharpa ensemble accompanied the solo voice of Jule Bauer in an improvised way.
- Sven Donat (1755 to 1815) was a corporal and fiddler, who lived in Småland, Emilia Amper's home province in the south of Sweden. **Polska efter Sven Donat** is a slängpolska from his repertoire. Emilia made an arrangement for it inspired by evocative slängpolska dance floors and angel voices. She really loves both playing and dancing the sensitive, beautiful and playful slängpolskas, and the slängpolska masters Bengt Löfberg, Pelle Björnlert and Johan Hedin have been a great inspiration to her.
- **Vals efter Futturi Petter** from Ljusnarsberg, played by David Eriksson and Josefina Paulson, is a traditional tune from Västmanland, Sweden, close to where Josefina grew up. Josefina plays the melody and David improvises a second voice. This is music played for dancing a Swedish type of waltz, heavily accented on the first beat of the triple time, a sort of "simple" time subdivided in three, giving a feeling of a spinning wheel.





- Marco Ambrosini's **Fantasia in sol minore** was born originally as an educational tune made for nyckelharpa students interested in a short, condensed and funny introduction to some basics of baroque articulation and diminution techniques applied to the nyckelharpa. Based on a modular series of harmonically easy, stereotypical 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century cadences, it offers to the player a big range of effective exercises for both left & right hand – and finally a



high virtuoso sounding performance as an extra gift to the audience. The Fantasia is written especially for the exploration of the possibilities of a four-row nyckelharpa, but could be played easily (revised) also with three-row instruments with Continental or Swedish tunings.

- The title **Barockpolskan** is also the “program” of this tune. A traditional Swedish melody, very popular in the folk revival of the 1970s, became the theme of the composition. Boris Koller used the traditional Swedish melody in flexible way to a compositional approach as it is more common in continental Europe. Using the single parts of the melody, eight bars each, as examples, he shows how homophonic and polyphonic playing is possible in the ensemble. A soloist harpa introduces the melody; a real harpa string quartet plays variations of the motive. But in fact all five voices are playing like intersecting soloists. The technique of composing is not limited to baroque usages. Also tech-



niques of orchestration like spreading melodies and motives to different instruments were used. To play this composition you need at least some four-row nyckelharpas in the ensemble and one tenor-nyckelharpa.

- Emilia Amper loves heavy metal and rock music, so she wanted to play some on her nyckelharpa. After being extremely moved and inspired by a concert with the Norwegian hard rock/metal drummer Kenneth Kapstad, she started composing **Kapad**. Emilia dedicates the tune to Kenneth and Vigdis Sjelmo, another great Norwegian rock drummer that she played with some years ago when she lived in Norway. Kapad means “hijacked” or “cut” and refers to Kenneth’s last name but also the way his intense music just blew Emilia away. Emilia first made the arrangement for the world famous chamber orchestra The Trondheim Soloists when she was going to perform with them. Later, a dream came true when she could try this whole piece with a full nyckelharpa orchestra in the CADENCE project! Nyckelharpa power!

- **Djävulspolskan** is a traditional polska from Bingsjö (Dalarna/Sweden) after the fiddler Pekkös Per, arranged by Didier François with classical string quartet influences. Players took the theme in turns to present different interpretations. The improvisation was done by several players who alternated.



# CADENCE – NYCKELHARPA – ENSEMBLE

## Tracks:

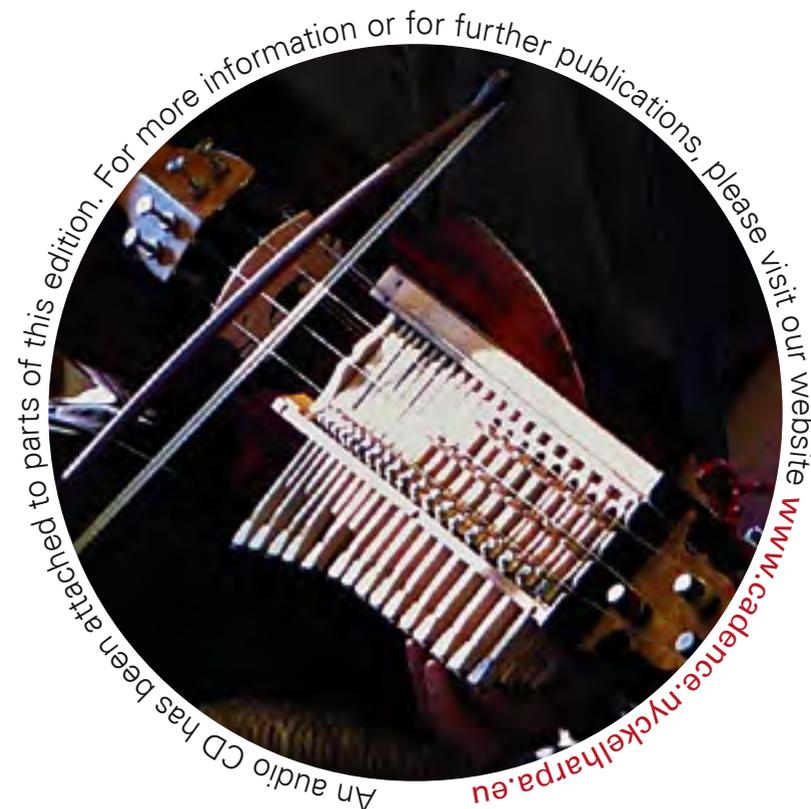
- |   |      |  |
|---|------|--|
| 1. Saltarello (Anonymous, Italy, 14 <sup>th</sup> century, arrangement: Marco Ambrosini)            | 3'36 |    |
| 2. Kalla kårar (Trad. Dalarna, Sweden, arrangement: Ditte Andersson)                                | 4'10 |  |
| 3. La Musa danzante (Lorenzo Ruggiero)  | 4'48 |    |
| 4. Szól a duda (Béla Bartók)  | 0'56 |  |
| 5. Párnás tánc (Béla Bartók)  | 0'47 |  |
| 6. "Ugyan édes komámasszony..." (Béla Bartók)   | 0'49 |  |
| 7. Ungarischer Tanz (Marco Ambrosini)   | 1'44 |  |
| 8. Elegisk schottis (Ditte Andersson)   | 3'28 |  |
| 9. A todeschina (Marco Uccellini, arrangement: Marco Ambrosini)                                     | 1'37 |    |
| 10. Polska from Österleufsta (Trad. Upland, Sweden, arrangement: Ditte Andersson)                   | 3'34 |  |
| 11. Sa démarche chaloupée et provocante (Didier François)   | 4'04 |    |
| 12. La rosa enfiorece (Anonymous Sephardic romance, arrangement: Jule Bauer)                        | 6'16 |    |
| 13. Polska efter Sven Donat (Trad. Småland, arrangement: Emilia Amper)                              | 5'33 |    |
| 14. Vals efter Futturi Petter (Trad. Västmanland, arrangement: David Eriksson and Josefina Paulson) | 3'29 |  |
| 15. Fantasia in sol minore (Marco Ambrosini)  | 4'50 |   |
| 16. Barockpolskan (Trad. Sweden, arrangement: Boris Koller)   | 2'60 |  |
| 17. Kapad (Emilia Amper)  | 4'46 |  |
| 18. Djävulspolskan (Trad. Dalarna, Sweden, arrangement: Didier François)                            | 5'42 |  |
| 19. Saltarello Romagnolo (Trad. Romagna, Italy, arrangement: Marco Ambrosini)                       | 3'26 |  |

**Total time: 66'35**

 = sheet music will be available at [www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu](http://www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu)

DDD live-recording: © Deutschlandradio, BURG FÜRSTENECK, 9 October 2010  
 Executive Producer: Dr. Christiane Lehnigk  
 Recording: Tonissimo  
 Recording Producer: Stephan Schmidt  
 Digital editing: Studio Katharco – sound:creations

**Deutschlandfunk**



The Home-Municipalities  
 Tierp Forlimpopoli Eiterfeld



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ERIC SAHLSTRÖM INSTITUTET  
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## **Booklet and CD**

The printed version of this report about the CADENCE partnership and also the CD of the CADENCE concert are available from the publishers:

Verlag der Spielleute – [www.spielleute.de](http://www.spielleute.de)

Tongång – [www.tongang.se](http://www.tongang.se)

and from the participating Institutes

Eric Sahlström Institutet – [www.esitobo.org](http://www.esitobo.org)

Akademie BURG FÜRSTENECK – [www.burg-fuersteneck.de](http://www.burg-fuersteneck.de)

Scuola di Musica Popolare – [www.musicapopolare.net](http://www.musicapopolare.net)

Please visit also our website [www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu](http://www.cadence.nyckelharpa.eu)