

ORIGAMI ARKTIKA



ABSOLUT GEHÖR



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aBSOLuT GEHÖR



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Ro og hamle

In the distant Northern seas, among treacherous skerries and fog-ridden ice floes, one has to not only know the lay of the land, but also the will of the water. *Ro* in Norwegian means 'to row'. It can also signify tranquility. *Hamle* likewise has more than one meaning: measuring up to something, a challenge or a quest; or rowing your boat backwards. Which is in fact going forwards, as you'd normally face away from where you are rowing. Some challenges are best avoided, and sometimes the way forward lies behind you. As there is always light somewhere, surely somewhere else the mist prevails. Now you know where we are, but perchance not where we are headed. Norway's culture and history is irrevocably connected to the sea that gave the land its name – the Way North, *Norvegr*. This piece was thoroughly improvised in the studio. Eight men are playing, but softly.

Bryggja te jol

A sad song, but with the faintest glimmer of romantic hope. The lovers camouflage their wedding as an ordinary Yule celebration, brewing the beer prescribed by church and tradition for both occasions. After the concealed ceremony, they escape out to the watery wastes in search of a place where they can live together. The element of longing, vividly portrayed in strings and percussion, depicts the loss of family and fortune for the sake of following one's heart and dreams.

Me ska bryggja te jol
Og me ska halda det i skjul
Det sko ingen få høyra ell sjå
Me sko bjoa te lag
På ein joledag gla
Og så stille sko brudlaupet stå.
Me ska rømme frå mor, ifrå far og ifrå bror
Me sko ut på det bårute hav.
For her finnst ei vel ro
I det blånande nord
Der me saman kan liva, me to.

Háttalykill 45-46

Part of a voluminous poem by the poet earl St. Rognvaldr Kali Kolsson (1103 – 1158), together with the Icelander Hallr Þórarinsson breiðmaga ('Broad-belly'). In some 88 verses, they demonstrate their extensive knowledge of traditional Old Norse poetic metres, each couplet demonstrating a new variation. Earl Rognvaldr was in forefront of a grammatical and poetic Renaissance in the North, where Snorri Sturluson later emulates *Háttalykill* with his own poem '*Háttatal*', an essential but oft neglected part of Snorri's *Edda*. Rognvaldr was born in Norway, but became one of the most celebrated earls of Orkney, allegedly attaining sainthood in 1192. His grave is in one of the pillars supporting the nave of the tall and magnificent cathedral of Kirkwall. The Orkney islands are a wonder to behold, and winter there surely both gave ample inspiration and opportunity for the composition of poems. These stanzas tell of an eternal battle called *Hjaðningavíg*, instigated by Freya after a bet with Óðinn. All *dróttkvætt* stanzas like these can be sung to what in Norway is known as 'the old stef-tune'. This is not reason enough to say that skaldic poems were originally performed to this or any other melody, however tempting that might be. Let it suffice to listen to this possible way of bringing some of our oldest cultural heritage alive.

Hverr réð Hildi at næma?
hverir daglengis berjask?
hverir síðarla sættask?
hverr siklingum atti?
Heðinn réð Hildi at næma,
Hjaðningar æ berjask,
þeir síðarla sættask,
saman Hildr liði atti.

Hverr rýðr hvassar eggjar?
hverr brytjar mat vargi?
hverr gerir hjalma skúrir?
hverr eggjaði styrjar?
Heðinn rauð hvassar eggjar,
herr brytjar mat vargi,
hjalmskúr gerir Hogni,
Hjarrandi réð gunni.

Folkestadvisa

One of the true gems among the traditional folk songs from Telemark, this magnificent piece commemorates lost love. Allegedly composed by a priest, whose sweetheart deserted him for another, the gist of the song would be something like this in the Queen's own: 'I couldn't wish for fortune, gold and greener pastures, if only I could have someone like you.' Yes, it is sad. No, there is no hope for reconciliation between the couple. Still, his magnitude shines through at the end, where he wishes her all the best, hoping she will have as many peaceful nights as the linden tree carries leaves, as the hazel brings forth nuts, as many as the fish in the bay, as grains of sand at the bottom of the ocean, and as the uncountable stars in the clear heavens. This song is for Gro S.

Eg ynskje meg 'kje gods hell gull og grøne engar,
Når eg kunn få meg ei, var god med sine hendar.
Eg ynskje meg 'kje gods hell gull og rare ting,
Når eg kunn få meg ei, so var etter mitt sinn.

Ei god og trufast venn, ho er så rar at finne.
Det verste som eg veit, ei vond og arrig kvinne.
Du gode kvinne er ei gåve utav Gud,
Og lukkeleg er den so fange deg til brur.

Men nå har eg høyrte eit nyss, at du 'kje meg vil hava
Då blir det tungt for meg i mine ungdoms dagar.
Nå har eg høyrte eit nyss at du vil bruka svik
Då blir det tung for meg uti mi ungdomstid.

Gud trøyste bere meg so ska mitt vennskap miste
Uti mi ungdoms tid, mitt hjarta må vel briste.
Åleine må eg stå, åleine må eg gå,
Åleine må eg sviva, eg veit meg inga rå.

Ha takk for kvart eit blick som du til meg hev kasta
Og ofte om eg bleiv av dine venir lasta
Ha takk for kvart eit ord, eg hørde frå din mun
Takk for du elska meg, den korte tid og stund.

Eg ynskje deg min venn så mange roleg netar
Som lindi bære lauv, og hasselen bær netar.
Som fisken uti sund, som sand på havsen botn
Som stjønner utan tal på himlens klåre grunn.

Tora liti

Another first take, where I rather timidly set out on this sorrowful traditional song about the imminent and seemingly unprovoked death of *Tora liti* – Little Tora. Both the band and myself gain confidence as the sad fate of *Tora liti* unfolds itself musically. She was betrothed to a prince of England, but an angel in the shape of a dove came suddenly to tell her that her young years were all accounted for. She barely has time to bid her parents good-bye, and she is dead before the sun rises. Twelve angels follow her to her grave. ‘Our kind Lord send us his mercy’ is the *stef* (the refrain) of the song.

Duva sette seg på lindar kvist
Gud at råde
Ho tala so fagert om Jesum Krist
Herre Gud sende uss sin nåde.

Høyr du Tora liti, eg tala te deg
Gud at råde
Lyster du at fylgje af londe me meg?
Herre Gud sende uss sin nåde

Tora lita fekk ilt før enn tuppen den gol
Gud at råde
Og var nå dø før opprinder sol
Herre Gud sende uss sin nåde

Så bar dei like etter vegen fram
Gud at råde
Dei tølv guds englar føre rann
Snillan Gud sende uss sin nåde

Det syng for Storegut

Yet another *pièce de résistance* from the treasure trove of Telemark's song tradition. The lyrics were written by Aa. O. Vinje in 1866. The song is about *Storegut*, a character loosely based on Sterke-Nils, both of whom we have dealt with previously on our album *Trollebotn*. Vinje is a Norwegian icon, his prose and poetry probably untranslatable, but nevertheless a force of nature in himself, and one of my many heroes. This is a love song, from a girl of the *huldre* folk, the people living beyond the doors of the mountains. It expresses her love for *Storegut*, and I am confident both she and Vinje would have enjoyed our take on this oft-rendered pearl.

Den dag kjem aldri at eg deg gløymer,
for um eg søver, eg um deg drøymer.
Um nott og dag er du like nær,
og best eg ser deg når myrkt det er.

Du leikar kringom meg der eg vankar.
Eg høyrer deg når mitt hjarta bankar.
Du støtt meg fylgjer på ferdi mi,
som skuggen gjeng etter soli si.

Når nokon kjem og i klinka rykkjer,
d'er du som kjem inn til meg, eg tykkjer:
Eg sprett frå stolen og vil meg té,
men snart eg sig atter ende ned.

Når vinden lint uti lauvet ruslar,
eg trur d'er du som gjeng der og tuslar!
Når sumt der burte eg ser seg snu,
eg kvekk og trur det må vera du.

I kvar som gjeng og som rid og køyrer,
d'er deg eg ser; deg i alt eg høyrer:
I song og fløyte- og felelåt,
men endå best i min eigen gråt.

Skonde deg du jente – lurlokk

And lastly, a tune based on a *lokk*, a calling of the livestock. This one was most probably originally performed on a *lur*, a trumpet-like instrument made from birch bark. The lyrics call for a girl to hurry up and bring milk to her little, illegitimate daughter. The child lies hidden in the forest; no one is to know about her and the shame of her mother. Tore accompanied me on this one without actually hearing my singing. The power of AndereBaustelle.

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