



# Musicus - Folkbarokk fra Røros-området

FREDRIK CHRISTOPHER PRØSCH: Menuett av Fredrik C. Prøsch · TRAD. : Marchs · Engelsdans · Menuett · Vivace Fransk · Menuett · Polsdans · Menuett · Menuett · Polsdans · Pollones · Nu er os Gud Misundelig, salme · Englis · Menuett · Pollones · Con Variat · 36 Dalers-Leken, Pols · Menuett · Pols Dans · Engelsdans · Polsdans · Menuett · Menuett

**Olav Mjelva · Hans Fredrik Jacobsen · Hans Hulbækmo · John Ole Morken**

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There is a large amount of written music from this district from the 1700s and 1800s that was originally transcribed by local fiddlers and other musicians. They were hired to play at dances by the managers of the Røros Copper Works, the "storingene" – "lofty gentlemen" – as they were known colloquially. In "Musicus" the musicians are brushing the dust off of this exciting music, which has been forgotten for 150 years.

This music represents a vital part of the folk music and history of the Røros area, although not many people are even aware that it ever existed. Now it is finally being brought into the light again.

## The process

Olav L. Mjelva and John Ole Morken began unearthing and playing some of this material in 2004–2006, while they were still studying at the Ole Bull Academy in Voss. They were given several grants to enable them to pursue the project. After working on it for a number of years they had uncovered a substantial selection of melodies that revealed the breadth of the existing material.

They consulted with baroque music specialists who could advise them about typical performance practices of the time, and have also used their own knowledge of folk music to form an idea of how this music sounded when it was transcribed.

The duo always hoped to be able to perform the music publicly again, and to document it on a recording. In 2007 they both felt that the project needed time to mature, and decided to revive it when the time seemed right. In 2013 they resumed work on it, and resolved to take the next step by organising concerts and a recording.

## Folk Baroque

Much of the material used by Mjelva, Morken and the ensemble was transcribed in the 18th and 19th centuries. Several of the fiddlers hired by the "storingene" were given musical training, where they learned musical notation, among other things. øsch, Skomaker-Erik, Knopf, Engzelius, Kristen Dahl, Kristen Evensen and Smed-Jens were key figures in these transcriptions. They left behind a large legacy of written music. Some of this is stored in public archives, while some is held in private collections. The fiddlers who performed this music played on a wide variety of occasions, and thus many of them were familiar with more "serious" music, too.

The melodies that were transcribed are no longer a part of contemporary dance practice, today they belong to the folk dance tradition: minuet, polonaise, feier, etc.

"Musicus – Folk Baroque From the Røros Area" was recorded at Røros Church by sound technician Audun Strype in September 2015 along with a dream team of musicians from a wide spectrum of musical backgrounds ranging from folk music and classical music to improvisation. The result is a fascinating record that has rescued important music from oblivion.

A pre-release concert will be held at Røros Church during the Rørosmartnan festival on 18 February. This will be followed by a concert at the Norwegian Hub for Traditional Music and Dance in Oslo on 19 February.

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"– Dette er ikkje ei innspeling for puristar, men eit vellukka døme på kor godt crossover fungerer om kunstnarane har god nok kunnskap om (og praktisk dugleik i) begge stilartane dei opererer i. [Sjur Haga Bringeland / Dag og Tid]"