

## ABOUT THE TUNES

**NININ** This song is a tribute to my great uncle **Ninin**, who was a barber and violinist in our home town of Malo in northern Italy. Ninin's passion for the fiddle was so great that he rode his bike every Saturday from Malo to Padua in order to reach his teacher and get a lesson, a trip of more than 60 Km each way! (**MC**)

**ENA TWIGG/HALLOWEEN PEABODY** I came across Halloween P's gravestone during a walk in Westwood Cemetery, Oberlin, Ohio. She had the cheeriest location and the best name in the entire place. Ena Twigg was one of England's most famous mediums until her death in 1984. I like to imagine that they meet regularly for tea in the Other Side Café. (**AM**)

**GET HIM** The tune for **Get Him** is found in a book of songs and melodies from Orkney, collected by Col. David Balfour (1811-1887) as a musical memento of his childhood and published in Edinburgh in 1885. Balfour gives this tune some new patriotic words and entitles it *Dear Orkney for Thee*. This song, as well as *I Wish in Vain*, may have arrived in Orkney via England, the Scottish mainland, or Ireland.

**DRY TOES WALTZ** A great traditional waltz from central France, taught to me by my friend and noted hurdy gurdy maniac, Richard 'RT' Taylor. Thanks, RT! (If anyone knows the real name for this tune, please email me). (**BQ**)

**WALTZ 39.3** I first heard this disarmingly guileless tune from my seat near the back of the symphony orchestra. Since we were accompanying a wonderful *bayan* (Russian chromatic button accordion) player, I assumed it was a charming Russian folk melody - in fact this waltz is by Johannes Brahms, a master of unassuming yet unforgettable tunes. (**CS**)

**VALLEY GIRL WALTZ (VALLPIGAN VALS)** Several of our favourite pieces come from a collection of Swedish fiddle music compiled by Ben Paley; this vaguely sardonic waltz is 'efter' the playing of the great Karl Lindblad.

**PASQUALE** is a song from the track-list of Malox, a psycho-liscio band that the Cera brothers created in the nineties. *Liscio* is a genre of Italian folk music, a mixture of Viennese

waltz, tango and other latin music, French musette, etc. During the *sagra* (a summer open-air village party), elderly people with blue wigs and artificial hips eat grilled pork with polenta, drink acidic wine and dance to this surreal kind of music. (MC)

**I WISH IN VAIN** Col. Balfour's book of Orcadian tunes contains the title and tune of *I Wish in Vain*, but no words. Katherine found the text in various other sources, connected to other tunes, and brought the original words and melody together again. You can hear an instrumental version of this tune on our CD, *Vikings on Vacation*.

**I KOPANITSA IN VAIN, OEUVE MMM** A *kopanitsa* is a traditional dance and rhythm from the Balkans. This tune, based partly on the melody of the preceding song, started out with the best intentions, but got knocked off its feet somehow...It's unlikely to recover fully. (BG)

**THE TURNIP TUNE** (yes, that's its real name - **ROVLÄTEN**) is a wistful Swedish traditional tune, though it's not clear why turnips should sound sad. This is a three-part arrangement for the Polaris women, all of whom appreciate turnips. (AM)

**LE MANINE DI PRIMAVERA (THE LITTLE HANDS OF SPRING)** This little beauty is from Nino Rota's soundtrack to Fellini's *Amarcord*, and refers to the pollen puffballs (*manine*), which the villagers welcome as harbingers of springtime.

**SOLOMON BUSTER** Two federal elections ago, Prime Minister Stephen Harper posed for a photo op in BC holding a 6-month-old boy from Burnaby named **Solomon Buster**, who proceeded to grab and hold Harper's nose in an impressive death grip. What an inspiration. This seljefløyte tune is for him. (AM)

**VALS ETTER VIDAR LANDE** Vidar Lande is a Norwegian Hardanger fiddle player, who has published a vast collection of folk tunes from the Bygland region, and is professor of folk music at the Telemark University. We learned the *Vals etter Vidar Lande* from a recording by our colleague Tellef Kvifte and his band Chateau Neuf Spelemannslag.



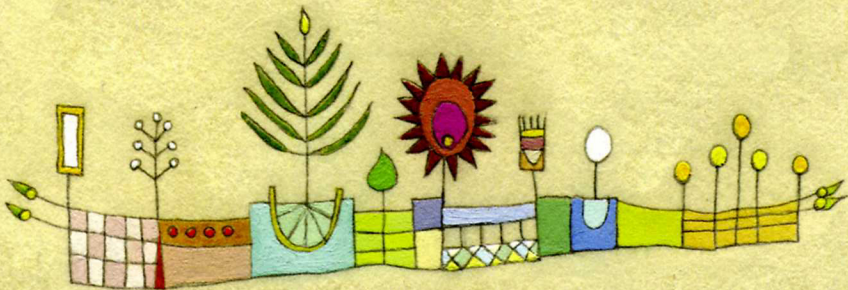
**STEKLÅT FRÅN SÄRNA** and its accompanying **Polska** are traditional tunes found on Olle Gällmo's website, where Kirk goes for all his svenskpipa needs. The steklåt is played at wedding parties when large platters of steak are marched into the banqueting hall..

**EL DOMADOR DE TARENGUE** There is a Venezuelan tamer in the Polaris Circus. He's the only one capable of keeping both a Tarantella and a Merengue under control... (MC)

**JEG LEGGES I MIN VUGGE NU** Katherine and I first heard this beautiful Norwegian lullaby through the solo singing of Pernille Anker. Besides its striking melody, it's the only lullaby we know which is sung from the baby's point of view. It's also known as *Gjendine's Lullaby*. (AM)

**BEETROOTS FOR NICO** along with the *Turnip Tune*, is part of an ongoing *Tuber Medley* in celebration of root vegetables. This particular tune is named for a friend from Montréal. Parsnips are up next. (AM)

**GÅNGLÅT FRÅN KLOCKARBERG** is a walking tune from the Dalarna region of Sweden, but in our version the Viking ship seems to have taken an unexpected turn and ended up in the Caribbean.



# TRANSLATION

## JEG LEGGES I MIN VUGGE NU (TRAD., NORWAY)

I lie in my cradle now, sometimes happy, occasionally sad.  
My mother has soothed my pains, worries, and discomfort.  
Sleep now, sleep now, in Jesus's name;  
Jesus protects little children.

My mother sings, 'Sleep now.' My grandmother sings the same.  
My brother sings, "Are you sleeping?"  
My sister sings, 'Are you sleeping?'  
Sleep now...

After I've slept a little, I start to cry  
and fuss.  
My father takes me in his arms  
and dances with me, back and forth.  
Dance like this with the little one,  
dance like this,  
Dancing like this makes everything  
well again.  
Sleep now...





# ENSEMBLE POLARIS

**MARCO CERA**  
**KIRK ELLIOTT**

guitar, jarana barroca  
mandolin, accordion, violin, ukulele,  
Swedish bagpipes, Celtic harp, bouzouki  
'cello, guiro  
vielle à roue, jew's harp  
voice, nyckelharpa  
traverso, recorders, seljefløyte  
clarinet, bass clarinet, recorders  
percussion (*Ninin, Pasquale, Valley Girl, Vals etter Vidar Lande*)  
percussion (*everything else*), birimbao



Recorded in April 2009 & January 2011 at **Canterbury Music**, Toronto, Canada.

Engineered by **Jeremy Darby**.

Produced by **Patrick Jordan & Ensemble Polaris**.

Edited by **Kirk Elliott, Jeff Wilson, Ben Grossman & Colin Savage**.

Mixed by **Kirk Elliott & Ensemble Polaris**.

Mastered by **David Travers-Smith**.

Translation by **Alison Melville**.

Artwork by **Loree Ovens**. ([www.loreeovens.com](http://www.loreeovens.com), [www.davidkayegallery.com](http://www.davidkayegallery.com))

Design by **Yesim Tosuner, Backyard Design**. ([www.backyarddesign.ca](http://www.backyarddesign.ca))

Band photo by **Richelle Forsey**. ([www.richelleforsey.com](http://www.richelleforsey.com))

Photos of Jeff Wilson, instruments by **Colin Savage**.

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## MANY THANKS

to Patrick Jordan, Loree Ovens, Yesim Tosuner, Nino Rota, Andrea Cera, Olle Gällmo,  
David Kaye, Island Foods.

**Check us out at**

[www.ensemblepolaris.com](http://www.ensemblepolaris.com)  
[www.myspace.com/ensemblepolaris](http://www.myspace.com/ensemblepolaris)  
[www.youtube.com/ensemblepolaris1](http://www.youtube.com/ensemblepolaris1)

**Write to us at**

[ensemblepolaris@gmail.com](mailto:ensemblepolaris@gmail.com)

**Ensemble Polaris's** innovative and genre-bending artistry and style has earned the Toronto-based band international rave reviews of all kinds, from an Amazon.com customer's "I dare you not to love this music!" to a Disc of the Month award from Britain's Classic CD magazine. Founded to explore the 'idea of North' in music, **Polaris** first performed at Toronto's Northern Encounters Festival and subsequent concerts have been heard across Canada in numerous broadcasts on CBC-Radio 2 and Radio-Canada. Their Montréal début for Radio-Canada at the Salle Pierre Mercure in 2005 met with enthusiastic audience response, as have other performances across Ontario, and on tour in the Maritimes, Alberta and British Columbia.

The band's first CD **Midnight Sun** received glowing praise in folk, classical and alternative music publications from Canada, the USA, Holland, Norway and the UK. Subsequent CDs, **Not Much is Worse than a Troll** (2005) and **Vikings on Vacation** (2009), have met with similar enthusiasm. Frequently heard on Canadian radio, Polaris's recordings have also been in regular rotation on the ABC, NPR, NRK, BBC and other European radio networks.

**Ensemble Polaris** extends sincere thanks to the Canada Council for the Arts, and the Ontario and Toronto Arts Councils for their support of the band's Toronto concert series, CD production and touring activities.

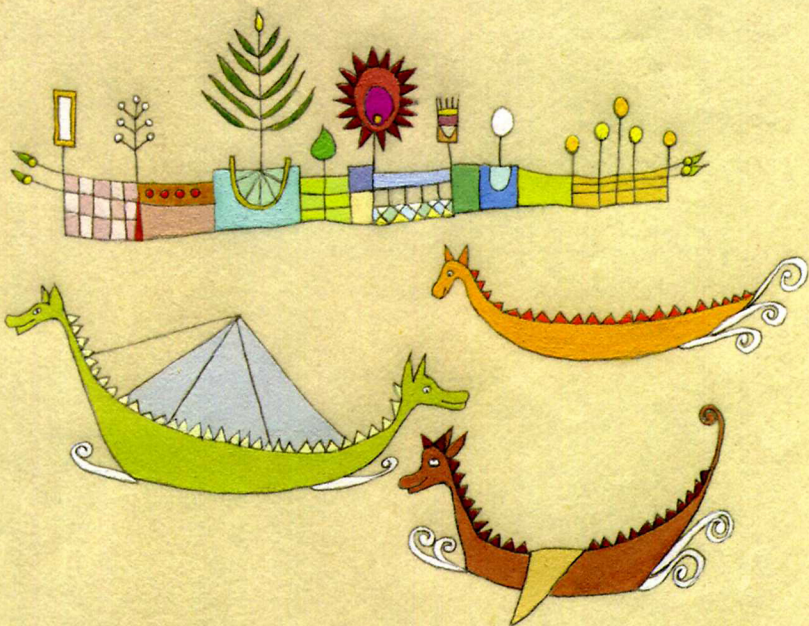


*Ensemble Polaris*



*Jeff Wilson (and friends)*





Other titles by Ensemble Polaris:

**MIDNIGHT SUN**

**NOT MUCH IS WORSE THAN A TROLL**

**VIKINGS ON VACATION**