

SCENES OF A FOLK LIFE

AGATHE ENSEMBLE

RÖNTGEN
MAIER
GRIEG



SCENES OF A FOLK LIFE

...

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ATTIC NOTES

TRACKLIST

JULIUS RÖNTGEN

Old Dutch Farmer Songs	01	•	De Spaanse boerendans • Ik ben gegroet door
and Contra Dances	02	•	Jan, Ulrich en Christiaan gaan samen
			een wandelingetje maken • Malle Kits
	03	•	Dag en nacht ben ik onrustig • Ik ga mijn zoete engel
	04	•	In Babilone
	05	•	De groene boer • De blauwe boer
	06	•	Passepied • Pieternelle
Scenes from Dutch Folk Life,	07	•	Luilak
Op. 81	08	•	Het schoenmakertje • Skotse trije
	09	•	Het meifluitje
	10	•	Paasklokken • Het Sneker klokkenspel
	11	•	Cramignon

AMANDA MAIER

Swedish Tunes and Dances,	12	•	I. Moderato ed espressivo
Op. 6	13	•	II. Allegro non troppo
	14	•	III. Andante
	15	•	IV. Allegro
	16	•	V. Andante
	17	•	VI. Allegro

EDVARD GRIEG

Scenes from Country Life,	18	•	Brudefolget drar forbi
Op. 19			
4 Norwegian Folk Dances,	19	•	I. Allegro marcato
Op. 35	20	•	II. Allegretto tranquillo e grazioso
	21	•	III. Allegro moderato alla marcia
	22	•	IV. Allegro molto

PREFACE

What is folk music? The question sounds simple, yet it resists clear definition. Folk music is not a fixed style, a genre with strict rules, nor a relic preserved behind glass. It is better understood as a state of being: music that lives through use, change, and shared memory.

Folk music is born not on the page, but in people's minds. It is passed on through listening, imitation, and adaptation. Each singer, dancer, or musician reshapes it slightly – a different rhythm, a new inflection, a subtle melodic turn. Over time, the community decides what remains. Versions that resonate are kept alive; others quietly fade away. In this sense, folk music is rarely the work of a single author, but the result of collective creativity.

Its identity does not depend on origin. A melody may begin with an individual composer and still become folk music once it is absorbed into everyday life and transformed through oral tradition. Popularity alone is not enough. What matters is the ability of music to evolve, to belong to many rather than to one.

In an age of recordings and notation, this openness can seem fragile. Yet folk music continues to speak, not because it is nostalgic, but because it touches something essential. It accompanies movement and work, marks rituals and seasons, and brings communities together. It creates memories and gives shape to shared joy and loss. Folk music reminds us that music is not only something to be listened to, but something to be lived.

This album inhabits that space between past and present, where old melodies find new life, where composers listen closely

to what already existed and transform it into something refined: music that quietly slips into concert halls and travels far beyond the places where it was first born.

The works on this album were written by Julius Röntgen, Amanda Maier and Edvard Grieg at a time when composers increasingly began to reflect on national identity and local traditions. This movement, widespread in late Romanticism, brought folk and classical music into close dialogue. Yet in this process, folk elements can easily become blurred, absorbed into a polished musical language. With our newly written arrangements for our string ensemble, we aim to bring fresh attention to this music. We strip it back to its rhythmic drive, its physicality, and its dance-like impulse, and let the songs and dances that live within these compositions speak clearly once again.

IVÁN NOGUEIRA

cellist of Agathe Ensemble



PERFORMANCE CREDITS

STRING DUO

•
violin
cello

Leonid Nikishin
Iván Nogueira

J. Röntgen:
Old Dutch Farmer Songs
and Contra Dances
5 • De Groene boer • De Blauwe boer
A. Maier:
Swedish Tunes and Dances Op. 6
13 • II. Allegro non troppo
15 • IV. Allegro

STRING TRIO

•
violin
viola
cello

Fiona Robertson
Almudena González-Regueral
Iván Nogueira

J. Röntgen:
Scenes from Dutch Folk Life, Op. 81
7 • Luilak

STRING TRIO

•
violin
viola
cello
(with an additional violin)

Fiona Robertson
Almudena González-Regueral
Iván Nogueira
Leonid Nikishin

J. Röntgen:
Scenes from Dutch Folk Life, Op. 81
8 • Het Schoenmakertje •
Skotse Trije

STRING TRIO

•
two violins
viola

Aleksandra Kwiatkowska
Ella van der Mespel
Almudena González-Regueral

A. Maier:
Swedish Tunes and Dances, Op. 6
12 • I. Moderato ed espressivo
16 • V. Andante

STRING QUARTET

•

two violins
viola
cello

Aleksandra Kwiatkowska
Ella van der Mespel
Almudena González-Regueral
Iván Nogueira

J. Röntgen:
Old Dutch Farmer Songs
and Contra Dances

1 • De Spaanse boerendans •
Ik ben gegroet door
2 • Jan, Ulrich en Christiaan gaan
samen een wandelingetje maken •
Malle Kits
3 • Dag en nacht ben ik onrustig •
Ik ga mijn zoete engel
6 • Passepied • Pieternelle

A. Maier:
Swedish Tunes and Dances Op. 6

14 • III. Andante
17 • VI. Allegro

VIOLIN QUARTET

Fiona Robertson
Leonid Nikishin
Aleksandra Kwiatkowska
Ella van der Mespel

J. Röntgen:
Scenes from Dutch Folk Life, Op. 81
9 • Het Meifluitje

STRING QUINTET

•

two violins
viola
two cellos
(with voice)

Aleksandra Kwiatkowska
Ella van der Mespel
Almudena González-Regueral
Iván Nogueira
Jorge Municio
Fiona Robertson (voice)

J. Röntgen:
Scenes from Dutch Folk Life, Op. 81
10 • Paasklokken •
Het Sneker Klokkenspel

STRING SEXTET

•

two violins

two violas

two cellos

Aleksandra Kwiatkowska

Ella van der Mespel

Almudena González-Regueral

Fernando Pérez

Iván Nogueira

Jorge Municio

J. Röntgen:

Scenes from Dutch Folk Life, Op. 81

11 • Cramignon

STRING SEXTET

•

three violins

viola

two cellos

Aleksandra Kwiatkowska

Ella van der Mespel

Leonid Nikishin

Almudena González-Regueral

Iván Nogueira

Jorge Municio

J. Röntgen:

Old Dutch Farmer Songs

and Contra Dances

4 • In Babilone

STRING OCTET

•

four violins

two violas

two cellos

Leonid Nikishin

Aleksandra Kwiatkowska

Ella van der Mespel

Raquel Marín

Almudena González-Regueral

Fernando Pérez

Iván Nogueira

Jorge Municio

E. Grieg:

Scenes from Country Life, Op. 19

18 • Brudefolget drar forbi

E. Grieg:

4 Norwegian Folk Dances, Op. 35

19 • I. Allegro Marcato

20 • II. Allegretto tranquillo e grazioso

21 • III. Allegro moderato alla marcia

22 • IV. Allegro molto

CREDITS

Agathe Ensemble

VIOLIN Aleksandra Kwiatkowska
Leonid Nikishin
Ella van der Mespel
Raquel Marín Garcés
Fiona Robertson

VIOLA Almudena González-Regueral Navarro
Fernando Pérez Calvo

CELLO Iván Nogueira Martínez
Jorge Municio Corcho

SOUND ENGINEER AND PRODUCER Tom Peeters
EDIT, MIX AND MASTER Tom Peeters
TRANSCRIPTION AND ARRANGEMENTS Iván Nogueira Martínez
Almudena González-Regueral Navarro
ARTWORK, ILLUSTRATIONS AND DESIGN Roland Toth
TEXT Iván Nogueira Martínez
PROGRAM NOTES SUPPORT Pedro Louro
TEXT REVISION Ella van der Mespel
PHOTO Alex Schröder
Toine Mudde

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Agathe Ensemble brings together music, visual art and craft. *Scenes of a Folk Life* follows a return journey: back to the origins of this repertoire, and from there into the present day.

We have collected and written down the stories we encountered along the way - about the composers and the music that shape this album.

The full stories, together with our reflections on the music, are included in the printed edition of this booklet. We explore the origins of each piece, the rituals and celebrations they are connected to, and our own contribution to the project. The text also features quotations from the composers' letters and memories, alongside song lyrics and historical details that provide further insight into the music.

Inspired by the music and its background, artist Roland Tóth has created a series of lino-cut illustrations, reproduced within the 72 pages of the physical book. A limited number of prints and small crafted objects are also available.

If this music has sparked your curiosity, the printed edition offers a way to explore the project more fully. The book and artwork can be found in our webshop, which we warmly invite you to visit.

www.agatheensemble.nl/category/all-products

