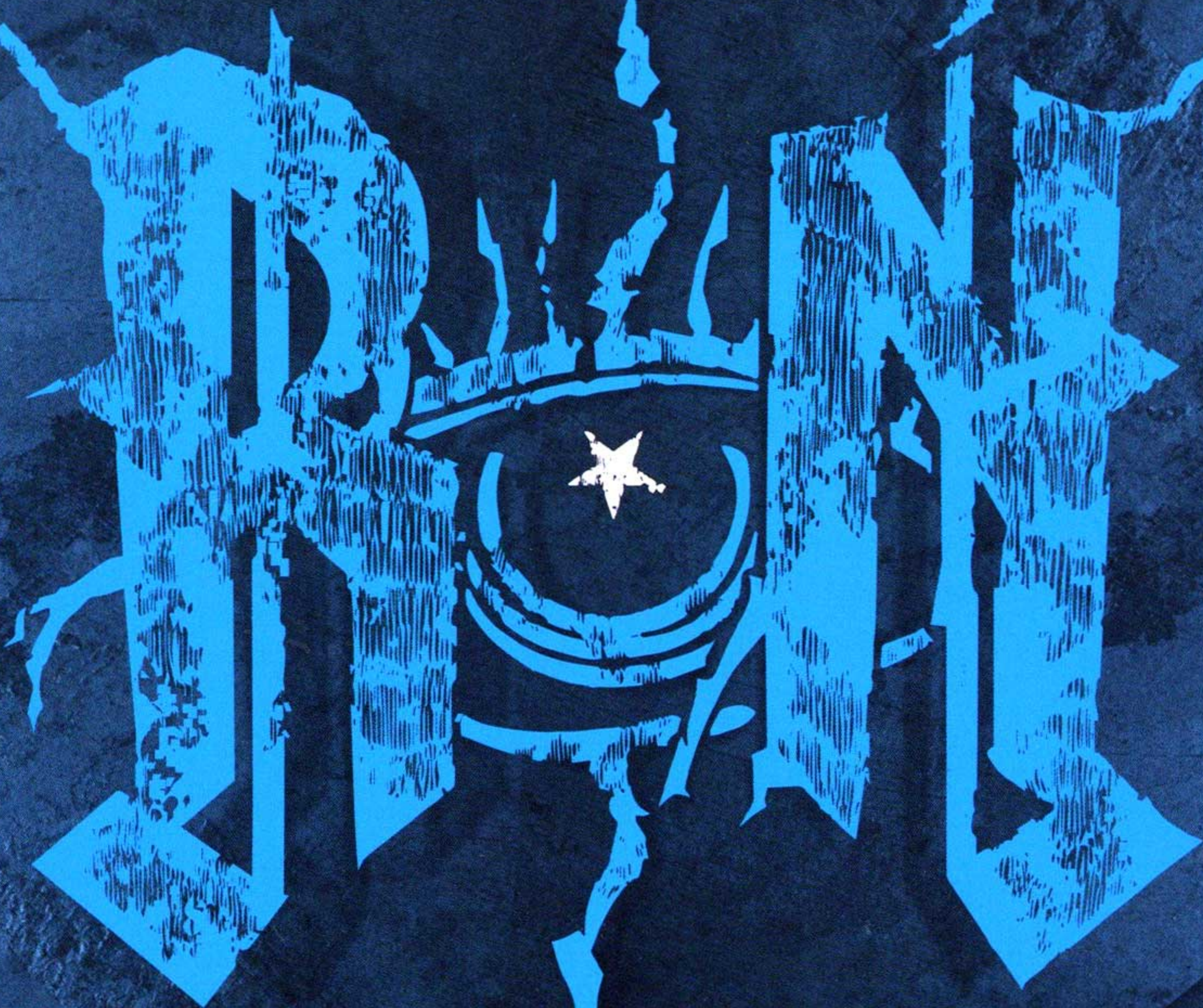


R I T V A N E R O



I M M O R T A L T R A D I T I O N

### 1 **TREPATSKA THRASHER** 2:50

comp. Sanna Salonen & Petri Prauda

arr. Sanna Salonen, Petri Prauda, Emilia Lajunen, Jani Snellman & Patrik Fält

*In the darkest corner of the room, you can hear music in the air – a trepatska tune that has always cried out for double-kicks.*

Trepatska is a dance that has been improvised by bowed lyre and kantele players right up to the beginning of the 20th century. Finnish ethnomusicologist A. O. Väisänen recorded Karelian trepatska and many other forms of dance music improvisation with the phonograph in his expeditions to Karelia and Aunus. Väisänen published the tunes he had collected in 1928 in his book *Kantele- ja jouhikkosävelmiä*. Around a hundred years later, Trepatska Thrasher was inspired by those pieces. In this dance you can hop and skip to your own ability and wellbeing. You can showcase your dexterity and skill!

### 2 **SLAYER OF SCHOTTISCHE** 5:07

comp. Sanna Salonen

arr. Sanna Salonen, Petri Prauda, Emilia Lajunen, Jani Snellman & Patrik Fält

Nyckelharpa is a keyed fiddle which is commonly known as a traditional Swedish instrument. Finland was part of Sweden during several separate periods from around 1200s until the year 1809. Many European fashion trends arrived via Sweden also to Finland, i.e. Eastern Land. The Finnish version of the nyckelharpa is called *esseharpa* or *Ähtävä harppu*, and very little is known about its history – the one and only existing specimen was found in 1909, and its mechanism is plainer than that of the Swedish version. It is on display in the local history museum of Ähtävä.

Music seldom follows precisely the physical boundaries of different countries, although it is possible that various restrictions in selling of instruments, as well as other administrative aspects have affected the development of local music culture. At local level it is nevertheless possible to find interesting stylistic features; for example the melodic rhythms or phrasing of the *schottische* can contain some extremely unique local features.

### 3 **MOSHPIT MAZURKA** 4:35

comp. Sanna Salonen

arr. Sanna Salonen, Petri Prauda, Emilia Lajunen, Jani Snellman & Patrik Fält

*In June 2017, about a month after the Bachelor's Degree Concert<sup>1</sup>, I was working on a mazurka for Ritva Nero. I searched for melody ideas from folk music archives and wrote down a couple of mazurkas adding metal style riffs to them. The following day I was no longer happy with my work, as neither of the tunes resembled mazurka that much. Kill your darlings, I concluded, and discarded my mazurkas.*

*At the beginning of 2018 I met with a pioneer of Finnish thrash metal, Janne Joutsenniemi, who used to play in the metal band Stone that made its breakthrough in the 80s. Over a few meetings we went through Ritva Nero's repertoire, and subsequently I came up with new ideas for tune development: at least *Rutvan polkka* got a totally new sound. The previously discarded *Moshpit Mazurka* also came alive and this time round I gave the tune a chance to headbang freely. One of the most interesting processes with the band has been the fitting together of mazurka and the metal drum texture.*

- Sanna Salonen -

1) Ritva Nero performed for the first time in Salonen's Bachelor's Degree Concert on May 10th, 2017.



4 **MEGAPOLKA** 4:16

comp. Sanna Salonen

arr. Sanna Salonen, Petri Prauda, Emilia Lajunen, Jani Snellman & Patrik Fält

The worldwide popularity of the polka started as early as the 1840s in various dance salons around Europe. Helsingfors Tidningar (a newspaper published in Swedish in Helsinki at the time), mentions polka for the first time in 1844:

Den har blifwit hedrad med benämningen Polka och far lik en stormwind genom Europa. På brunnsbalerna i Helsingfors skall man redan haft den oskattbara lyckan att känna en liten fläkt deraf, men för våra läsare i andra landsändar, som ännu icke gjort bekantskap med den nya dansen, torde följande beskrifning af en i Paris wistande Swensk icke wara utan intresse.

"Polkan, såsom Coleran, kommer och far, man wet icke huru. Jag will i forthet nämna om denna dans, att den wäl till namnet skiljer sig från Mazurkan, men att den har slägttycke med den i stegen. Sådan den här dansas, består den i en jemn swängning af kroppen och häftig slängning med benen, af hwilka det ena knappt binner golfwet, förr än det andra bör lyftas. Foten oupphörligt än höjes än sänkes, med spetsen, så att fotleden oundwifligen måste swullna. Denna olägenhet jemte stommens och benens oupphörliga vinglande, är en verklig tortyr. -- För min del finner jag den icke serdeles wacker; men andra tycka annat. Och dansa de ej af tycke, så sker det -- för modens skull. --"

*This dance has been honoured with the name polka, and it is sweeping across Europe like a storm wind. It seems that the exceptional luck of getting a small flavour of polka has been bestowed upon some people at brunnsbalerna [meaning: ball] in Helsinki. Those who live elsewhere and therefore have not yet become acquainted with this new dance, may find the following description, given by a Swede living in Paris, interesting:*

*"As is the case with cholera, nobody knows how polka comes or goes, either. I wish to mention briefly that although this dance bears its own name, its steps are related to those of mazurka. In these parts of the world it is danced so that the body smoothly sways whilst the legs are vigorously flung about – one foot has hardly enough time to touch the floor before the other one must be lifted. Feet are continuously raised and lowered so that the ankles inevitably start to swell. This hindrance of the swelling ankles together with the incessant swaying of the body and legs is pure torture. [...] In my opinion it [polka] is not a particularly beautiful dance, but others may beg to differ. And if people are not dancing polka because they like it, they must be doing it for the sake of fashion. [...]"*



## 5 RAHAPOLSKA HELSINGISTÄ 5:27

comp. Sanna Salonen

arr. Sanna Salonen, Petri Prauda, Emilia Lajunen, Jani Snellman & Patrik Fält

In the 1800s, the bridal polska (morsiuspolska) was still the first dance at weddings in some parts of the Nordic countries. Its style was formal and dignified, and it was danced by single couples. It was customary that in turn the wedding guests paid for the privilege of dancing with the bride, and this way the newlywed couple earned funds. Bridal polskas danced in Finland fell out of fashion during the latter half of the 1800s, but money polskas (rahapolskat) as a method of collecting money remained for longer.

Rahapolska Helsingistä (Engl. Money Polska from Helsinki) has been written particularly with the melody and bourdon pipes of the Finnish bag-

pipes in mind. It is more than likely that the bagpipes have been used in Finland also as a musical instrument at weddings. The following recollection, however, is from an end of harvest dance from the early 1800s:

*Kun viljankorjuu oli päättynyt kello 9 illalla, esille kannettiin vaahtoavaa sabtia. Viulut ja säkkipillit kutsuvat tanssiin, jota innokkaasti jatketaan pitkälle yöhön. Tanssijoista taitavimmat naiset kieputtavat polskaa ympäri niin, että he nojaavat käsillään maahan jalkojen kieppuessa vinbasti ilmassa.*

*When the harvest was finished at 9 pm, frothy home-brewed beer was carried out. The sound of violins and bagpipes would invite everyone to a dance that would be continued whole heartedly well into the night. Of the dancers the most skilled women would rotate in polska by leaning with their hands against the ground and spinning their legs in the air.*



## 6 KAKS'ASKELVALSSI 4:59

comp. Sanna Salonen

arr. Sanna Salonen, Petri Prauda, Emilia Lajunen, Jani Snellman & Patrik Fält

*The Sibelius Academy Degree Programme in Folk Music included a course in folk dancing. It took me three years to pass the otherwise one year course. During the course the musicians were mainly taught partner dances from the 18th and 19th centuries such as schottische, polska, waltz and mazurka. I remember trying the kaks'askelvalssi<sup>2</sup> where the steps are taken on the first and third beats. This is different from the silia valssi<sup>3</sup>. The tempo of the kaks'askelvalssi is fast, and rotating with two steps was a lot of fun.*

- Sanna Salonen -

2) "two-step waltz" 3) a waltz originating from the Central Ostrobothnia region of Finland / Kaustinen municipality

## 7 DRAGON QUADRILLE 4:05

comp. Petri Prauda

arr. Sanna Salonen, Petri Prauda, Emilia Lajunen, Jani Snellman & Patrik Fält

*Abkerasti siinä tanssittiin, vuorotellen polskaa ja walssia. Waan kun pelimannit alkoivat kadrillia soittamaan, niin silloin tuli toisille huoahdus-aika, ja tämän kunnia-arvoisen tanssin mestarilliset taitajat astuivat esiin näyttämään jalkatempullisia ihmetöitä. (Vaasan Lehti 1886)*

*They danced assiduously, polska and waltz in turn. But when the musicians started playing the quadrille, they would get some rest, as those who had mastered the skill*

*of this respected dance would step forward to show off their miraculous footwork tricks.*

*(Vaasan Lehti 1886)*

Quadrilles that were called Dragon Quadrille can be found in a couple of notebooks dated to the early part of the 1800s. In these manuscripts, archived in Finland, the dragon means a dragoon or a soldier who used to travel on a horse but fight on foot. Salonen asked Prauda to write a new Dragon Quadrille, because a long time had passed since the previous one.

## 8 RUTVAN POLKKA 4:11

comp. Sanna Salonen

arr. Sanna Salonen, Petri Prauda, Emilia Lajunen, Jani Snellman & Patrik Fält

There has been a particularly strong polka tradition amongst the accordion playing folk musicians in the Southern Ostrobothnia region of Finland. Rutvan polkka (Engl. Rutva's Polka) has drawn inspiration from polkas performed by Southern Ostrobothnian two row accordion players Tauno Aho, Aapeli Hautanen and Tauno Krossi, to name a few.

Aapeli Hautanen's thoughts were recorded in the 1970s as follows:

*Kansanmusiikkikappaleet pitäisi soittaa niin kuin ne ovat ennen olleet. Kunhan vain komioita ovat. On hyviä ja huonoja pelimanneja. Hyvä soittaa reilunlaisesti, kovea ja hyvällä tahdilla, ei kitkuttele, sujuvasti että ottaa ihmisten varpaisiin. Muffia, koristeita, pitää laittaa lisää. Komiammasti saa aina soittaa, muttei rumemmasti eli suoraan. Pitää kruusata. Polkat ovat iloisia. Panevat veren kiertämään.*





*Folk music pieces should be played the way they used to be played in times past, provided they are played in a handsome fashion. There are good and bad players. A good one plays vigorously, loudly and keeps good rhythm, doesn't hold back but plays fluently so that everyone will feel the need to tap their toes. Embellishments, musical flourishes, need to be added. It is always preferable to ornament your playing more but never to play in a dull fashion by simply following the exact line of melody or harmony. Ornamentation is needed. Polkas are joyous. They make your blood flow faster.*

## 9 MASTER OF MAANITUS 5:22

comp. Sanna Salonen

arr. Sanna Salonen, Petri Prauda, Emilia Lajunen, Jani Snellman & Patrik Fält

It seems quite clear that maanitus, trepatska and ripatska have been considered to be the same dance – at least by many kantele players who lived in Eastern parts of Ladoga Karelia (Raja-Karjala). It is possible that maanitus used to be the latter part of two-part ristikontra, as becomes apparent from reading the following description given by a passer-by and published in Uusi Suometar<sup>4</sup> at the end of 1800s:

*Mutta nyt on rahwas alallaan kun kuuluu "ristikontran" nuotti. Asetutaan neljä paria wastakkain, toiset ympärille katsomaan. Soiton tahdissa tuletaan wastakkain, siwuitse, ympäri j.n.e. Alkaa sitten hupaisin osa, "maanitus". Pojat wuorottain pyytävät tyttöä pariksi. Mutta se ei ole niinkään helppoa. Tyttö ei suostu, waan kulkee taakse ja siwulle "sipsuttaen", tehden*

*puolipyöreän kierroksen. Hänellä on pää kallellaan ja silmät kainosti maassa. Monet temput saa poika hypellen, käsiä kääntäen, taputtaen, päätä weikistäen tehdä, saa lyödä huimasti "prischankkaa", kunnes wihdoin tyttö siirtyy hänen siwulleen. – Kuinka he tanssivat hartaasti ja siwästi. Ei kiibkoa, ei teeskelyä. Luontaista sulawuutta, pehmenttä ainoastaan. Taitoisin minäkin tuota heiltä oppia, että woisin olla mukana.*

*But now, as the tune of "ristikontra" can be heard, the peasantry stands still. Four couples take their positions opposite to each other as others around them watch. Dancing to the beat the couples move towards each other, to the side and around and so on. Then begins the amusing part, "maanitus" [meaning: to coax]. Each boy in turn will ask a girl to be their partner. But it proves not to be so easy. The girl refuses, moving behind the boy and to the side, "tiptoeing" in a semicircle. She will tilt her head to the side and keep her eyes bashfully cast down. The boy will need to perform many tricks hopping and skipping, twisting his arms, clapping his hands, jovially holding his head, saa lyödä huimasti "prischankkaa" until the girl finally moves to his side. – And how they dance so sincerely and sweetly. There is no passion, no pretence. Only natural gracefulness and softness. I wish I too could learn that from them, to be one of them.*

4) Uusi Suometar was a newspaper established by the Fennoman movement at the end of the time period when Finland was an autonomous part of the Russian Empire (1809–1917). During that time several cultural phenomena tended to be described using nationalistic and romantic nuances. This description was seemingly written down by a Finnish passer-by visiting Eastern Karelia.

RITVA NERO



2022