



# Earlybird Stringband: LassoFolk

LILLEBJØRN NILSEN: Danse ikke gråte nå · TRAD. : Fyrispil · Trippar · Halling · Den fyrste gongen eg såg deg · Springar · To riler fra Agder · Griffenfelt · Ril fra Landvik · Gamle mykkeln · Rudl · Gudmunddansen · Ølet på lista · Vals

**Hans Martin Austestad, banjo · Erlend Viken, fiddle, Hardanger fiddle, octave fiddle, vocal · Olav Christer Rossebø, fiddle, mandolin, vocal · Christian Skaugen, dobro, vocal · Sebastian Haugen-Markussen, double bass, vocal**

Norwegian folk music with an old-time bluegrass flavour

**Earlybird Stringband is one of Norway's foremost bluegrass bands. On the band's first Norwegian-language album, LassoFolk, the musicians delve deeply into the Norwegian treasure trove of folk music, and serve us Norwegian folk music with an old-time bluegrass flavour.**

Earlybird Stringband has two outstanding records to its credit: Earlybird Stringband, released in 2010, and Blindsides, released in 2011. Both were nominated for a Spellemannspris, the Norwegian Grammy. At the bluegrass festival EWOB in the Netherlands, in 2010, the band was voted as Europe's second-best bluegrass band, and they have been named the audience favourite several times at the Risør Bluegrass Festival.

## LassoFolk

The idea for LassoFolk was born when vocalist Hans Martin Austestad and fiddler Olav Christer Rossebø were on a study trip to the USA to immerse themselves in the world of American folk music: old-time and bluegrass. At a jam session with a handful of local musicians they started to play a Norwegian reinlender, a tune they often played at folk music jams in Oslo, and it proved to work equally well at a jam in the USA. They didn't tell the others anything about the tune beforehand, so nobody knew that it was Norwegian. "Afterwards someone asks what kind of tune it was. Some of them even think that they have heard it before. We explain that it's a Norwegian instrumental. Somebody says, 'I thought for sure that it was an American tune....'"

"Alternating between American and Norwegian folk music is something we have always done in the Earlybird Stringband," Hans Martin writes in the liner notes. "For us, it's just as natural as alternating between cheese and cold cuts on our sandwiches. Sometimes we play both at the same time, just to be wild and crazy." Combining different folk music genres has been at the core of old-time and bluegrass music from the very beginning.

## About the album

LassoFolk was recorded live in an old house. The entire album was recorded with stereo microphone equipment and with limited use of effects. "We have tried to reduce the number of elements separating the instrument from the listener as much as possible." The sound on this recording is the sound of a log cabin, not a reverb machine.

The members of the band have discovered unique Norwegian tunes from different parts of the country, which have a wide range of tonalities and rhythms. They also present their own version of an early song by Lillebjørn Nilsen, "Danse ikke gråte nå".

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