



Junior Hoedownner

Volume 2, Issue 6

June 2008

Greetings Junior Hoedowners,

I want to tell you a story about this article. I belong to the Hardanger Fiddle Association. The Hardanger fiddle is a fiddle that is different from the one you play. It is unique to Norway. I think you would enjoy the web site that tells about the association: [HYPERLINK "http://www.hfaa.org"](http://www.hfaa.org) [http://www.hfaa.org/](http://www.hfaa.org) Every three months I receive a magazine put out by the Hardanger Fiddle Association. In the last issue is an article that is a good for both young and older fiddlers. I wrote to the editor who sent my letter to Sarah Nagell in Norway where I think she is studying the Hardanger fiddle. Sarah gave me permission to share her article with you. Here is the first part of it. Lew

Opening Your Ears:

Suggestions on Learning by Ear from a recording by Sarah Nagell

One of the beautiful and frustrating aspects of playing any instrument is that there are a million different ways that it can be played and there is no single right answer for all, but instead many right answers for different players. This, the purpose of this article is not to give "the rules" as concrete facts, but instead to suggest a variety of things that one might think about when learning to play the fiddle

by ear from a recording. Hopefully some of these suggestions will strike a familiar chord and you, the reader, will be able to make your own decisions about what sounds and feels best in your own music making.

Once you have the tune running through your head at a high level and are able to sing or whistle through the whole thing, then you will always have it available for your when playing the fiddle. It is stored in your memory banks and available for use as you lay the melody. Knowing the music in depth in your head will also enable you to improvise around the melody and make subtle changes in an informed fashion because your knowledge of the tune will not be based on muscle-memory in the fingers, but rather a deeper understanding of the music in your brain.

Singing softly along with the recording can help to cement the melody in your head. Take care to sing along to the recording in a manner that allows you to hear the recording clearly. Try to be as accurate as you can from the beginning, listening louder than you sing. It saves time and energy later on, as unlearning bad habits takes twice as much energy as learning it right the first time. It is perfectly normal to be confused by tricky passages, or to forget certain melodic lines during these early

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stages. This is OK. Simply go back to the recording, listen carefully, and sing along with it until things feel comfortable.

Tune of the Month

This month's tune is Sleeping Giant two-step, by the late Manitoba fiddler, Andy DeJarvis. This is a lively tune and should be played that way.

SLEEPING GIANT by ANDY DEJARVIS

ARRANGED BY ALICE HOLT JUNE 2001