



Saucējas, the traditional singing ensemble of the Latvian Academy of Culture, has for more than 15 years studied and performed a variety of Latvian ethnographic singing styles and techniques, with particular attention to those local traditions involving multipart singing. Since 2017 the group has been interested in the natural acoustic environment and has been recording songs outdoors. Thus the hills, forests, marshes and lakes of Latvia have become their recording studio and the wind, birds, insects and other nature sounds unwitting participants in their performances. These recordings give the listener a fuller insight into the tradition of Latvian vocal music, which developed through the integration of the singer, natural acoustics and various sounds created by nature.

"Ui, egle, egle" (Nierza, eastern Latvia) was recorded on a September evening in a hilly, sparse pine forest. "Ai, ganiņi, nedzeniet" (Jūrkalne, Alsunga, western Latvia), which combines individual cowherd calls and a traditional celebratory song sung by the whole group, was recorded on a May morning in the same pine forest, with the group and individual singers situated on separate hilltops at some distance from each other.



ZeMe (meaning 'land') is a duo consisting of kokle player Laima Jansone and DJ Monsta. Both musicians are experienced in a variety of genres and have collaborated with many different musicians. Therefore, as they began working on this project, they decided to do everything the way they wanted to. Improvisation is their strong point, and this permeates the ethno-groove sound of their album Visuma vizošā tumsa (The qlimmering darkness of the universe).

"This album tells about the link between two different worlds: between the contemporary and the traditional, between peace and rowdiness, between fragility and the imperturbable, between seriousness and playfulness, which is a poetic and also philosophical way of looking at life," says Jansone.

ZeMe has performed across the world, including in Japan, the United Arab Emirates, Italy, Finland and Kazakhstan.



The drum and bagpipe group Auli has become something of a Latvian brand, performing at the largest cultural events in the country and composing and arranging music for the Latvian Song and Dance Festival, national celebrations and films. Voices of the Ancestors is the group's new album and concert programme in collaboration with musicians from different parts of the world. Auli have travelled far and wide to meet singers representing ancient and unusual singing traditions and techniques. This time the group has focused on powerful men's voices that characterise specific geographic regions. Performances by these well-known singers merge with Auli's powerful instrumental sound produced by six bagpipers, three drummers and a double bass.

The song "Orbina" (Orphan) was created together with Sami yoiker Kai Somby, and the accompanying video was filmed during a -30° C cold snap.

The theme of war plays a central role in Auli's music and is also a significant theme of this new album, particularly in the music of Mongolian throat singer Batzorig Vaanchig. "Chinggis Khaan" (Genghis Khan) is one of the songs created in collaboration with Vaanchig.



Iļģi have been playing together since the 1980s, originally as a folklore group at a cultural centre in Riga. For the past thirty-eight years, Iļģi have been the best-known ethnic music group in Latvia. They have received the Latvian award for best contemporary folk music album six times, and have been at the top of the World Music Charts Europe a couple of times as well. But Iļģi still have things to say, and audiences are still listening.

The title of the Tur Kur Mīti (2016) album is a play on words, meaning both "where the legends are" and "where you live". In a similar vein, the songs refer to already familiar motifs, quoting themselves and playing with nuance.

The music contains a certain lightness and freedom that comes naturally when a group of musicians has been playing together as long as Ilģi and has such a vast source of inspiration to draw from as Latvian folklore.



After three years of musical experimentation, Tautumeitas finally released their debut album in 2018, for which the group received the Annual Latvian Music Recording Industry Award for best folk/ethnic/world album of the year.

Tautumeitas' debut album is about self-awareness and contemplating one's own form. It centres on the tautumeita ('folk maiden') herself and important events in her life, as reflected in songs such as "Ūgas" (Berries), "Pāde" (The Newborn), "Raudi, raudi" (Weep, Weep), "Bārainīte" (Orphan Girl), "Vainagu deja" (Dance of the Headdress), etc.

"Dai citas meitas" is the song with which Tautumeitas first introduced themselves to a wider audience. It tells about a young woman who, in contrast to the stereotypical "good girl" image of a tautumeita, is lazy and boastful yet successful in life.

The refrain of "Sadziedami" features traditional Latvian multipart singing, and in late 2018 the song was recognised by Latvijas Radio 3 as one of the most valuable songs of the year, alongside the best of homegrown Latvian pop music.



Sudden and sharp-tongued, loud and perhaps even coarse...were it not for the band's female members. Rahu The Fool is a musical formation that performs music inspired by grandfathers' stories of love and war, about the seas and meadows of our countryside as well as other things long forgotten. To label things fairly, the group's music can be classified as folk music with sparkles of jazz, hip hop, avantgarde, bluegrass and world music. Tune in and polish yer shoes, folks! Best listened to while dancing.

The song "Švilpastīte" comes from the debut double album Rahu the Fool, the first part of which (Rahu) consists of folk music and the second part (The Fool) of American blues and swing.



11. **Tālu tālu** (Far, Far) — **6:06** M: Toms Poišs, Kaspars Kurdeko, Kaspars Vizulis, Elza Rozentāle / T: trad.

from the album **Tālu Tālu** (Far, Far), 2019

The ethno-jazz group Bur Mani unites professional musicians and friends Elza Rozentāle, Kaspars Kurdeko, Toms Poišs and Kaspars Vizulis. Together they create contemporary arrangements of Latvian folk songs, preserving the energy, meditative flow and symbolism so characteristic of this music.

The group's repertoire contains original compositions with Latvian folksong lyrics, but the musicians consciously avoid playing folk instruments, thus leaving more room for synthetic sounds and allowing the folk songs to speak in the language of modern instruments.

Bur Mani has just released its debut album Tālu tālu (Far, far), and in concert the group offers listeners an unprecedented experience, namely, enjoying the live performance on a wireless headset with individual volume control, on which every nuance of the performance is distinctly heard.



12. Cik dziļa jūra (How Deep the Sea) — 5:38 M: Staņislavs Judins / T: trad.

from the album Op. 2, Brīvās mūzikas centrs, 2018

This duet, consisting of an experienced double bass player and ethno voice serves as a meeting point for two environments: improvisation and traditional music. Stanislav Yudin traces his roots to Abkhazia, and several years ago he made a pilgrimage to his ancestral homeland. Inspired by the power and beauty of nature there, he dedicated a composition to Abkhazia and invited Asnate Rancāne to perform it. While previously active in jazz and pop music as well as teaching music, Yudin had nevertheless felt a desire to delve deeper into the traditional music of Latvia and other cultures. The duet's album expresses the musicians' desire to explore their roots more closely, yet also embrace their own contemporary essence.



The ImantaDimanta band formed in 2014, when, after a few successful jam nights, this group of friends had the opportunity to perform live. While some of the band members are originally from Latvia, others grew up in Latvian diaspora communities, and this has resulted in a refreshing melange of musical styles and fusions. ImantaDimanta and Friends (draugi means 'friends' in Latvian) have since found their groove and have had the joy of playing with many friends at concerts in Latvia as well as in the United States and Germany for Latvian diaspora and locals alike.

The ImantaDimanta and Friends' concert repertoire is rooted in the Latvian folk music tradition but incorporates numerous elements from indie folk and bluegrass and employs a contemporary ensemble of instruments.



from the album Vēstījums rakstos (Message in the Symbols), Premium Art, 2018

Raxtu Raxti is a group of musicians who on stage always succeed in conjuring a story about all that is Latvian, beautiful and strong. The group's repertoire includes arrangements of folk songs as well as original songs by composer Imants Kalniņš (1941), including songs written for the theatre and based on folk motifs. Raxtu Raxti's concerts are popular with Latvian audiences and often conclude with sing-along sessions together with the audience, the songs highlighting various regions of the country.

Raxtu Raxti's new album, recorded together with the drum and bagpipe group Auli, grew out of a multimedia performance celebrating Latvia's centenary. Vēstījums rakstos (Message in the Symbols) features music from the dance production of the same name, which was inspired by the meanings of Latvian folk symbols. The musical aspect of this event consisted of eighteen new, original Raxtu Raxti compositions with Latvian folksong lyrics.

"Jānīšami maza sieva" (Dear Jānis Has a Small Wife) reflects the playful yet competitive musical exchange of insults and teasing that is an important part of several traditional Latvian celebrations.



15. Nojāsim mēs uz Ķezbieriem (Let's Go Down to Ķezbieri) — 3:13 M: Arnis Veisbārdis, Andris Alviķis T: trad.

from the album **Tā viš'i** (That's the Way It Is), MicRec, 2017

A relatively new group, Ducele brings together four very experienced musicians and many more instruments: double bass, percussion, guitars, accordion, kokle, bagpipes, flutes, banjo, bouzouki and vocals. At the group's core are Arnis Veisbārdis and Andris Alviķis, both former members of the progressive rock/folk group Vecās Mājas (Old Houses) and the army ensemble Zvaigznīte (Little Star), from which Ducele has inherited many folk songs.

Ducele's debut album Tā viš'i (That's the Way It Is) includes thirteen new arrangements of Latvian folk songs. In the Suiti dialect of Latvian, a ducele is a light, versatile cart that moves quickly and can hold many belongings. The song "Nojāsim mēs uz Kezbieriem" tells about heading to the tavern.



For 25 years already, Laiksne has been playing contemporary interpretations of folk music using traditional instruments such as kokles, wooden flutes, drums, accordion, violin, mandolin and monochord as well as bass guitar and percussion. Laiksne's repertoire also includes dances and traditional a cappella singing, without which seasonal festival activities and family celebrations are unimaginable.

With its interpretations of ethnic Latvian music in concerts and recordings as well as its educational work, Laiksne is an important participant in the Latvian folklore movement and continues delighting audiences with new songs. Laiksne learned the wedding song "Nepūta taures" (The trumpets did not blow) from traditional Suiti singer Lidija Jansone.



Last year all of the Baltic states celebrated their centenaries. In addition to the celebrations, this was also a year of many significant cultural and educational projects: historical films, conferences, performances and new musical compositions about discovering one's identity. On November 18, the anniversary of the declaration of Latvian independence, the Anima choir released its album Jūrd/Saknes/Roots, which features melodies and songs from the Finno-Ugric peoples who have historically lived in the area of present-day Latvia.

The album contains arrangements of folk songs and original compositions performed by the Saulkrasti Mixed Choir "Anima" and an instrumental group led by composer Ugis Prauliņš.

Precisely one hundred years have passed since the clear definition of the borders of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. Each of these countries is developing in its own way, but an interest in our common roots can help us to discover what has made us who we are today.



18. **Rūtoj bite** (The Bee Moves) — **5:01** M: Trad., Andris Kapusts, Aīda Rancāne, Uģis Vītiņš, Staņislavs Judins / T: Trad. from the album **Variācijas** (Variations). Lauska. 2018

Lata Donga's album Variācijas (Variations) celebrates an aspect of traditional music that has been very little documented, namely, variation. In the past, folklore collectors often recorded only one version of a folk melody; there are also few audio recordings of traditional singers distinctly varying a melody. However, slightly altering a melody to fit the changing rhythm of the lyrics was a significant element of traditional singing. Researcher and composer Jēkabs Graubiņš (1886—1961) indicated that "Even a single singer, repeating a melody with different lyrics [..], does not sing it exactly the same way every time. Instead, he varies it, and the more skilled the singer, the more [he varies it]." The name of Lata Donga's album refers to various techniques of variation used in singing as well as the use of several different means of musical expression in the arrangement of folk songs.

At the core of Lata Donga is a family who has been performing ethnic music for already three generations. In addition to singing, the group's members also play several different folk instruments. Multi-instrumentalist Tobias Illingworth, double bass player Stanislav Yudin, Sergey Antsupov (sarod) and Uģis Vītiņš (saxophone, electronics and programming) are also heard on the album.



19. Kalnos jau snieg (It's Already Snowing in the Hills) — 6:20 M: Jānis Tumpelis, Maija Sēiāne Īle / T: Laima Mūrniece

from the album **Atdzīvinot vēiu** (Reviving the Wind), NABA music / Melo records, 2018

Kanisaifa is a world-music group from Riga. It developed from the creative environment of Nils Īle's music studio, where people of various ages meet to discover the world of rhythm. Ile. a well-known percussionist, was one of the first people in Riga to play the diembe and conga drums; he also established the first ethno-percussion group in Latvia, Afroambient.

Now, some of the Afroambient musicians who studied under le have come together with other musicians to form Kanisaifa. With a desire to broaden their creative horizons, they create sound paintings that reflect various parts of the world. The membranophones are supplemented with the sound of melodic instruments such as the futujara and Indian bansuri flutes, the African balafon and kalimba, the Western guitar and bass guitar and also the human voice.

NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Latvian Music Information Centre

Director: Egīls Šēfers +371 67226797 +371 27519914 info@lmic.lv

Latvian National Centre for

Folklore Expert: Gita Lancere +371 62305830 gita.lancere@lnkc.gov.lv www.lnkc.gov.lv

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

Latvian Folklore Society

Chairman: Andris Kapusts +371 26063277 birojs@folklorasbiedriba.lv

Society SKANUMĀJA

Chairwoman: Sandra Lipska +371 26162146 +371 29138299 sandra.lipska@inbox.lv fb.com/skanumaja www.muzikanti.lv

FESTIVALS

Nationwide Latvian Song and Dance Celebration

Organiser: Latvian National Centre for Culture +371 67228985 Inkc@Inkc.gov.lv www.dziesmusvetki.lv Frequency: every 5 years

International Folklore Festival BALTICA

Organizer: Latvian National Centre for Culture
Director: Gita Lancere +371 62305830
gita.lancere@lnkc.gov.lv
www.lnkc.gov.lv
Frequency: triennial

International Folk Dance Festival SUDMALIŅAS

Organiser: Latvian National Centre for Culture +371 67228985 maruta.alpa@lnkc.gov.lv www.sudmalinas.lv Programme Director: Maruta Alpa Frequency: triennial

International Music Festival RĪGAS RITMI

Organiser: Contemporary Music Centre Director: Diāna Briežkalne +371 26821855 info@rigasritmi.lv www.rigasritmi.lv Frequency: annual

World Music Festival PORTA

Manager: Ilze Apsiņa +371 29377269 ilze.apsina@festivalporta.lv www.festivalporta.lv

International DRONE FESTIVAL

Organiser: Suiti Ethnic Culture Centre Director: Dace Martinova +371 29222103 dace.martinova@inbox.lv www.suitunovads.lv Next Fastival: 2021

Art, music and culture festival KOMĒTA

+371 26185028 info@festivalkometa.lv www.festivalkometa.lv fb.com/festivalskometa

International music festival LABA DABA

+371 67211040 kristine@labadaba.lv www.labadaba.lv fb.com/LABADABA18

Folk / pagan / metal festival ZOBENS UN LEMESS

Organiser: Valdis Bērzvads +371 29645264 zobensunlemess@gmail.com zobensunlemess.lv

Ethno-Festival SVIESTS

Organiser: Daina Zalāne +371 29156686 daina@lauska.lv www.etnosviests.lv fb.com/etnosviests Annual international festival featuring crafts and music, taking place in June

FOLK, WORLD, POST-FOLKLORE AND TRADITIONAL MUSIC GROUPS

ABRA

+371 29139519
pusluvijole@gmail.com
fb.com/Folkloras-kopa-ABRA
Geore- traditional

ANIMA, mixed choir

Director: Laura Leontjeva +371 26398719 koris.anima@gmail.com www.korisanima.lv fb.com/korisanima/ Genre: choral music

ΔT7FI F

Director: Anna Annuškāne +371 27800837 vilakaskn@inbox.lv Genre: traditional

AUSTRUMKALNS

Contact Person: Karoline
Zobens-East
+44 7835699322
austrumkalnsmusic@gmail.com,
karoline.east@gmail.com
austrumkalns.bandcamp.com
fb.com/Austrumkalns/
Genre: folk/indie

AULI

Director: Kaspars Bārbals +371 28376398 kaspars@auli.lv www.auli.lv fb.com/AuliEtnotranss/ Genre-traditional/world

BRĀĻI UN MĀSAS

+371 29790189 brothers.n.sisters.music@gmail. com

fb.com/brothers.n.sisters.music Genre: world

RIIR MANI

Nirector: Flza Rozentále Manager: Anete Atvare +371 29330799 burmaniband@gmail.com fh com/hurmanihand Genre- ethno art rock

ΠΔΒΔ SΔΝ

+371 29983855 grupadabasan@gmail.com fb.com/dabasangrupa/ Genre: folk/postfolk

DIMONSTA

+371 29454468 soundcloud.com/dimonsta mixcloud.com/di monsta fb.com/iamdimonsta voutube.com/iamdimonsta twitter: @dimonstrs Genre- electronica/broken heat/nu lazz/funk/nu soul/heats

DIICELE

Manager/musician/songwriter: Arnis Vaichārdie +371 29/499537 arnis veisbardis@gmail.com fh.com/profile php?id=100008921436508 Genre: traditional/world (pop/folk/ hipster/swinger - eco music)

ELEKTROFOLK

Manager: Ainārs Maiors +371 22131823 ainars maiors@gmail.com www.elektrofolk.lv www.fh.com/Flektrofolk Genre: postfolk

FIITURE FOLK ORCHESTRA

Director: Andreis Grimms +371 29149968 futurefolkmusic@gmail.com fh.com/FutureFolkOrchestra Genre- world/folk

GARATAKA

Niractor: Asnata Rancana Phone: +371 27528/488 asnate_rancane@hotmail.com fb com/folkloraskonagarataka Genre-traditional/folk/world

CRUDI

Director: Aīda Rancāne Andris Kanusts +371 26063277 andr27@ml lv aidarancane@hotmail.com www.arodi.lv Genre: traditional/authentic

ΠŽΔ

Director: Dace Tibovska +371 26157311 dafnat@inhox ly Genre- folk

ILGI

Director: Ilga Reizniece Manager: Marika Papēde +371 29155287 info@ilai.lv www.ilai.lv fb.com/ilaimusic Genre- roots music/folk rock

II YINSKAYA PYATNICA

Director: Sergey Olenkin +371 25 921 352 olen53@inbox.lv www.pjatnica.com Genre: traditional/authentic

IMANTADIMANTA UN DRAUGI

+371 28278838 imantadimanta@gmail.com fb.com/imantadimanta ImantaDimanta.bandcamp.com

JAUNO JĀNU ORKESTRIS

Manager: Aija Kaukule +371 29644546 jaunojanuorkestris@inbox.lv fb.com/jaunojanuorkestris Genre: folk/world

KANISAIFA

Manager: Raivis Dzjamko +371 27734342 raivis@kanisaifa.com www.kanisaifa.com https://www.fb.com/kanisaifa/ Genre: world

KNKLE

Director: Dina Liepa +371 29472293 kokles@navigator.lv fb.com/koklelv

Genre: traditional/folk/world

LAIKSNE

Director: Baiba Indrēvica +371 26389467 grupalaiksne@gmail.com fb.com/laiksne www.laiksne.ly

Genre: traditional/roots music

LAIMA JANSONE

+371 29670891 laimajansone@inbox.lv myspace.com/laimajansone fb.com/laimajansone Genre: traditional/folk

LAIMAS MUZYKANTI

Director: Artūrs Uškāns +371 28817461 Laimas-muzykanti@inbox.lv www.laimas-muzykanti.lv Genre: ethno-rock/world/folk

ΙĀNS

Director: Ruta Stepiņa +371 26101595 rutastepina@inbox.lv fb.com/1folkloraskopaLans Genre: traditional/folk

LATA DONGA

+371 26063277 andris.kapusts@gmail.com Genre: traditional/folk/world

PĒRKONVĪRI

Manager: Krista Bulgakova +371 26479944 perkonviri@gmail.com www.perkonviri.lv Genre: traditional/world/storytelling

RAXTU RAXTI

+371 29478732 raxturaxti@gmail.com fb.com/RaxtuRaxti Genre: ethnic/crossover

RĀVA

Manager: Ilze Celmillere rava.biedriba@gmail.com fb.com/Rava Genre: dark folk/experimental folk

RIKŠI

Director: Ēriks Zeps +371 29 791 979 info@riksi.lv www.riksi.lv fb.com/rikshi.lv

SAUCĒ IAS

Director: Iveta Tāle +371 26454974 saucejas@gmail.com fb.com/Saucejas Genre- traditional

SAVIEŠI

Director: Liene Kņaze +371 22322418 saviesi@gmail.com fb.com/saviesi Genre- traditional/folk

SKANDINIFKI

Director: Julgī Stalte +371 26474911 skandinieki1976@gmail.com fb.com/skandinieki/ Genre: traditional/authentic/folk

SKANDI

Director: Baiba Ērgle +371 27590492 skandidzied@gmail.com fb.com/skandidzied Geore: folk/world

SKYFORGER

Manager: Andis Mikainis Phone: +371 29650815 hopkins@skyforger.lv www.skyforger.lv tb.com/skyforgerofficial Genre: folk/nanan metal

STANISLAV YUDIN & ASNATE Rancane

+371 29345402 stanislavjudin@gmail.com fb.com/yudin.rancane Genre- folk/world

SUITU DŪDINIEKI

Director: Juris Lipsnis +371 26151541 juris.lipnis@gmail.com www.alsunga.lv Genre: traditional/authentic

SIJITIJ SIFVAS

Director: Ilga Leimane +371 29538267 ilgaleimane@inbox.lv www.alsunga.lv Genre: traditional/authentic

TARKŠKI

Director: Kristīne Karele +371 26522510 tarkskene@gmail.com fb.com/tarkski Genre: traditional/authentic

TAUTUMEITAS

Manager: Santa Kola +371 29121316 santak.management@gmail.com fb.com/tautumeitas Genre: latvian roots/contemporary

TRE JASMENS

Director: Andrejs Planders + 371 27796567 andrejs.planders@gmail.com Genre: traditional/folk

VILKAČI

Manager: Edgars Zilberts +371 26477242 zilberts@gmail.com www.vilkatis.lv fb.com/Vilkaci George-folk

VĒTRAS SAITES

Director: Ģirts Pavēnis +371 29798142 aazz3@inbox.lv fb.com/StormLinks Genre: ambient/world

VĪTERI

Director: Sandra Stare +371 26521351 sandrastare@inbox.lv www.viteri.lv fb.com/RezeknesVITERI Genre- folk

7ARI

Director: Liene Križevica +371 29667283 Lkrizevica@gmail.com www.zari.lv fb.com/Grupa.Zari Genre: Folktronik

7FMF

+371 29454468 info@zemeband.com http://zemeband.com fb.com/pg/ZeMeBand Genre: world

AGENTS AND PRODUCERS

LATVIJAS KONCERTI AGENCY

+371 67205485 www.latvijaskoncerti.lv koncerti@latvijaskoncerti.lv Genre: clasisal/jazz/rock/world

HERMAN BRAUN FOUNDATION — MUSIC AGENCY

Director: Inna Davidova +371 67205444 hbf@hbf.lv www.hbf.lv Genre: classical/iazz/world

RADIO STATIONS

LATVIAN RADIO 3

Director: Gunda Vaivode +371 67206637 klasika@latvijasradio.lv klasika latvijasradio.lv

RADIO NARA

+371 67034454 naba@radionaba.lv www.radionaba.lv

LARFLS AND MANAGEMENT

Culture Management Centre LAUSKA

+371 29156686 www.lauska.lv lauska@lauska.lv

PASAULES MŪZIKA

Manager: Ilze Apsiņa +371 29377269 ilze.apsina@festivalporta.lv

RIGA RECORDING COMPANY

Managing director: Aldis Ermanbriks +371 67225 725 www.music.lv/rrc rigarecording@sveiks.lv

MICROPHONE RECORDS

Chairwoman: Elita Mīlgrāve Phone: +371 67409911 www.micrec.lv elita@micrec.lv

UPE t.t.

Managing director: Iveta Mielava +371 29505543 www.upett.lv iveta@upe.parks.lv Concept&Text: Lauma Bērza Translation: Amanda Zaeska Mastering: Kaspars Bārbals Photos: Jānis Deinats, Gatis Indrēvics, Edijs Andersons, Jānis Romanovskis, Aiga Ozoliņa, Kristaps Kalns, Tenis Dimants, Ineta Ūdre, Andris Priedīte, Jurģis Rikveilis, Andris Uškāns, Roberts Āboltiņš, Ripley, Sandra Jasčerica, Aiga Rēdmane Design: Vadims Kožins

I MIC N78







