

Ritva Nero: Immortal Tradition

OUT 14th of January, 2022



Ritva Nero is a relatively new band on the Finnish music scene, formed in 2017. The music of the band could be described as Party metal folk. Lead instruments played in the band are Soprano Saxophone, Finnish Bagpipes and Nyckelharpa, complemented by a rock style Bass and metal music style Drums.

Folk dance tunes are cleverly combined with the metal tradition of our time in a contemporary manner.

Immortal Tradition is a collection of dances that were fashionable in the 1800s; such as polka, mazurka and maanitus, that have now in true spirit of the 21st century evolved into massive festival thunder. Explosive elements have been borrowed from the metal tradition of today, whereas the melodies drew their inspiration from dance repertoires that were present, and partly still are, in the Finnish and Border Karelian regions.

Sanna Salonen (Soprano Saxophone)
Petri Prauda (Finnish Bagpipes)
Emilia Lajunen (Nyckelharpa)
Jani Snellman (Electric Bass)
Patrik Fält (Drums)

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Ritva Nero was founded in 2017 when the band's soprano saxophonist **Salonen** was preparing her Bachelor's degree concert for the Sibelius Academy Folk Music Department. Her idea was to try a new interesting instrumentation for a band that would combine 19th century folk dance tunes with fast heavy metal drumming (double-kicks and blast beat). The dense low frequency bass-and-drum accompaniment could create its own energetic layer in the music without debasing the nuances and rhythmic details of the tunes' melodic phrasing, which is one of Salonen's main interests in folk music.

At the Folk Music Department Salonen met **Prauda** who is one of the few people who play bagpipes in Finland, at least in the case of Finnish bagpipes. There she also met **Lajunen** who plays nyckelharpa. These historical melody instruments, Salonen felt, were a nice combination with the soprano saxophone. **Fält** (Brymir, Feastem) was asked to join Ritva Nero, as he was known for very fast double-kicks playing and **Snellman** (Poets of the Fall) as a rock bass player had already some experience with Finnish folk music and even with baroque dance music.

Ritva Nero performed for the first time in the spring 2017 in Salonen's Bachelor's concert. Their sound was something totally fresh and unheard of in the Finnish folk music scene, even if it was not exactly what Salonen had expected: subtle nuances of melodic phrasing were completely lost. But the audience was enthralled to hear the band's unique and massive sound just rolling compellingly with the folk dance tunes. After that, Ritva Nero has performed on several major stages at European folk music festivals, including Kaustinen Folk Music Festival (FI), Nordischer Klang (GER), Korrö Festival (SWE) and Guinness Irish Festival (CH).

Since 2017 Ritva Nero has had a collaboration with RED ORANGE arts agency (UK) and in 2021 the band started working with Bafe's Factory, a ground breaking Finnish record label. Ritva Nero's debut album **Immortal Tradition** will be released 14th of January 2022.

Photo Tiia Öhman



Emilia Lajunen, Petri Prauda, Sanna Salonen, Patrik Fält, Jani Snellman

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