



From the rotten roots of folklore, Akkajee emerges with a new thematic album in April

Akkajee, the headstrong rascal of the Finnish folk music scene, releases their second album *Lastenkerääjä* on April 18, 2021. Presumably the world's only duo to bring together the nyckelharpa, the viola and vocals has extended its instrumental repertoire with a whole load of junk in the form of self-made "instruments". The musical potion that has been simmering for seven magical years immerses its listeners in Finnish folktales as well as transcendental string noise.

The thematic album, aptly named *Child Collector* in Finnish, is centred on the mind of a child. The difference between what is real and what is imagined is fickle in the impulsive actions and experiences of the young. Beliefs, memories and fears together with child's play and magical practices all blend in through capricious and whimsical ways as the imagination races to the unknown.

"Exploring the mindscape of a child through music felt novel, and the sounds of our childhood, varying from the hum of a cassette player to the jingling of music boxes, inspired us to venture into different directions. At first, childhood felt a little light for a theme, but we soon found that many songs reflected on death or at least the fear of it," nyckelharpist [Meriheini Luoto](#) explains.

The many stories told give the album layers and a wealth of voices: the old codger collecting naughty children in a sack, wicked spirits keeping infants awake at night, and the young mother giving birth with the help of both ritualistic magic and the Holy Mary are some of the tales and themes that the songs explore.

“We were initially studying folktales in the archives, but over the years our relationship with them has changed and stretched out to new heights. There’s a level of oblivion that ties together with boisterous imaginations in a way that we could not have achieved in a short period of time. I don’t think that this album took seven years to ripen for nothing. After all, the number seven is the symbol of perfection and completeness,” the duo’s violist [Iida Savolainen](#) notes.

Akkajee: Meriheini Luoto (nyckelharpa, vocals etc.) & Iida Savolainen (viola, vocals etc.)

Produced by **Selma Savolainen, Joonas Saikkonen & Akkajee**

Recorded by **Joonas Saikkonen, Lammaskallion Audio, 2/2020**

Additional recordings and editing by **Akkajee, Studio Vainiolla & the Sauna of Isokaari**

Commune

Mixed by **Joonas Saikkonen, Ambience Studios**

Mastered by **Jarno Alho / Alho Audio Mastering**

Cover Art by **Tekla Vály, Tereza Holubová & Linda Kokkonen / Valreza Collective**

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Distributed by **Eclipse Music**

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Akkajee: Lastenkerääjä (digital, CD, LP)

Lastenkerääjä

comp. IS & ML

lyr. Akkajee / trad.

Have you heard of the old codger collecting naughty children in his sack?

Yönitkettäjä

comp. ML & IS

lyr. trad. "Mukka Klaara" 80 years., Teuva, 1889 (SKVR XI: 955 'the ancient poems of the Finnish people')

According to old beliefs, there are wicked spirits who are keeping infants awake at night.

Orpopojan valssi

comp. IS & ML

lyr. IS

This ballad is based on a true story of an orphaned boy in 1930s' Finland.

Hys hys hymylään

comp. IS & ML

lyr. IS / trad. excerpts from several short rhymes (SKVR 'the ancient poems of the Finnish people' : Southwest Finland)

Welcome to the trip of your life! We are heading towards Hymylä; a mysterious land of unsolved riddles.

Äidin itku

comp. IS & ML

lyr. Anna Buššin (Kivisoo) c. 51 years., Kosemkina, Väikylä, 1931 (Ingrian Laments)

Mother's lament

Syntymä

comp. ML & IS

lyr. trad. excerpts from several childbirth spells (SKVR)

If you like to avoid laboair pains, here's an easy three step tutorial from the 19th century:

- 1.) Drink some sweat of a horse dissolved in coffee or booze.*
- 2.) Thread yourself through a horse collar three times and at the same time...*
- 3.) Recite the prayer "Our Father" three times backwards.*