

# Ragnhild Hemsing

## Violin & Hardanger Fiddle

[www.ragnhildhemsing.com](http://www.ragnhildhemsing.com)



### BIOGRAPHY

Ragnhild Hemsing's emotional resonance still resonates, long after the music has ceased to be heard.

– Julian Haylock

Violinist and Hardanger fiddler Ragnhild Hemsing has had a deep connection to the rich folk music tradition of her native Norway since childhood. Thanks to her ability to explore the standard violin repertoire while being equally at home with folk music, she enjoys a flourishing career as a virtuoso exponent of both instruments, bringing the Hardanger fiddle to the attention of audiences outside Norway. Her extensive repertoire of classical solo violin works, fiddle pieces, and original compositions, each with their own charm and expressive power, make her one of the most versatile musicians of our time.

Ragnhild Hemsing was born in the region of Valdres. She began playing the violin at the age of five and the traditional Hardanger fiddle shortly thereafter. Later she studied at the Barratt Due Music Institute in Oslo and with Professor Boris Kuschnir in Vienna. Aged just 14, Ragnhild made her debut with both the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra and the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra, performing Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto.

In the **2025/26 season**, Ragnhild Hemsing will premiere three new concertos written for the Hardanger fiddle. This is in line with her mission to expand the repertoire and stylistic range of this instrument and is a particularly significant achievement, given that the last concerto for the Hardanger fiddle was composed 60 years ago by Geirr Tveitt. In September, she will perform the world premiere of a new concerto by Kim André Arnesen with the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Adam Hickox. The piece will be repeated the following month with the Kristiansand Symphony Orchestra. In January 2026, she will perform another new concerto for the Hardanger fiddle, this time by Gordon Hamilton, with the Düsseldorf Symphony Orchestra under Ustina Dubitsky's direction. Later that month, at the Northern Lights Festival, she will premiere a double concerto for Hardanger fiddle, jazz violin, and orchestra, composed by Norwegian jazz violinist Ola Kvernberg.

She will also perform as soloist with the Württemberg Chamber Orchestra Heilbronn, the Bielefeld Philharmonic Orchestra, the Arctic Philharmonic and with the Orchestre National Auvergne Rhône-Alpes conducted by Thomas Zehetmair, as well as appearing again with the Tallinn Chamber Orchestra. As Artist in Residence with the Stavanger Symphony Orchestra, she will be the soloist in numerous concerts throughout the season.

Together with the Trondheim Soloists she will tour Spain with her Peer Gynt programme and also perform at the Bodensee Festival. With the ensemble Barokkanerne she will appear at Schloss Elmau and in the Prinzregententheater in Munich with her Vivaldi project *Norwegian Seasons*. She will also perform her version of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* alongside that of Max

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Richter with the Camerata Goltz at the Chamber Music Festival in Regensburg. Further festivals where she will appear include Kristiansund, Røros and the Ålesund Chamber Music Festival, as well as at the "vielsaitig" Festival in Füssen, where she will perform with cellist Julian Steckel.

She will continue to cultivate many other stylistically varied chamber music partnerships, including those with the lutenist Jadran Duncumb, her jazz trio with Mathias Eick and Mats Eilertsen, the folk-jazz Vetra Trio with Steinar Raknes and Terje Isungset, and the quartet extension thereof which includes Mathias Eick. She will be performing in duo with the Danish accordionist Bjarke Mogensen in Grenoble and with the Argentinian bandoneonist Omar Massa at various venues in Germany. Her classical collaborations include a recital at the Beethoven House Bonn with pianist Jonas Vitaut as well as a tour of Germany with the Røta Trio with Benedict Kloeckner and Mario Häring.

In recent years, she has performed at the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Festival, the Rheingau Music Festival, the MDR Music Summer, the Beethovenfest Bonn, the Thüringer Bachwochen, the Olavsfestdagene in Trondheim, the Gezeiten Festival in Emden, the Risør Chamber Music Festival, and the Schwetzingen SWR Festival. She has also performed with the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra and the NDR Radio Philharmonie Hannover, the MDR Symphony Orchestra under Kristjan Järvi, the Estonian State Symphony Orchestra, the Nuremberg Symphony Orchestra, the Freiburg Philharmonic Orchestra, the Württemberg Chamber Orchestra Heilbronn, the Residentie Orkest Den Haag, the Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra under Santtu-Matias Rouvali, the Belgian National Orchestra, and the Düsseldorf Symphony Orchestra. She has also performed at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D. C., the Tonhalle Düsseldorf and Zurich, the Philharmonie Cologne, the Prinzregententheater Munich, the Musée d'Orsay, the Brucknerhaus Linz, and the Mariinsky Concert Hall in St. Petersburg.

Ragnhild Hemsing has released five albums on the Berlin Classics label since 2021. All have been enthusiastically received by the public and press alike. On four of these she plays both violin and Hardanger fiddle, reflecting her dual classical and folk music identity. Her most recent album, *The Norwegian Seasons*, together with the Norwegian ensemble Barokkanerne sheds new light on Vivaldi's famous *Four Seasons*. Here she performs the solo part only on Hardanger fiddle and integrates elements of Norwegian folk performance style with historical performance practise. Likewise, her album *Peer Gynt* with the Trondheim Soloists offers fresh insight into the links between Grieg's famous incidental music and traditional music. The recording features arrangements commissioned from Tormod Tvette Vik for violin and Hardanger fiddle and was a great success on digital streaming platforms. Her album *Røta* ("Roots") includes works by Norwegian classical composers as well as traditional folk music for violin and Hardanger fiddle. It was awarded the prestigious Opus Klassik Prize in the category "Classical Music without Borders" in 2021. On the album *Bruch + Tveitt*, Ragnhild Hemsing performs Bruch's Violin Concerto and Geirr Tveitt's Second Concerto for Hardanger Fiddle with the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra. *Vetra* ("Winter") presents melodies collected



during the 19th century in Hemsing's home region of Valdres, as well as two of her own compositions.

Her earlier recordings include Johan Halvorsen's *Fossegrimen* op. 21 with the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra and Neeme Järvi (Chandos) and three albums on the label 2L with pianist Tor Espen Aspaas: *Northern Timbre*, *YR* and *Beethoven's Testaments of 1802*.

In 2013, Ragnhild Hemsing founded the Hemsing Festival with her sister Eldbjørg Hemsing, which the two have been running together ever since. The chamber music festival takes place every year in February in their hometown of Aurdal in the Valdres region.

Ragnhild Hemsing plays a violin by Francesco Ruggeri (Cremona, 1694) and a Hardanger fiddle previously played by the violinist and composer Ole Bull (1810-1880), who was dubbed the "Paganini of the North", both generously on loan from the foundation Dextra Musica.

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