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## UNH Hosts Norwegian Fiddler March 26 and 27

By [Erika Mantz](#)

603-862-1567

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DURHAM, N.H. -- Celebrate the heritage of Norway at the University of New Hampshire March 26 and 27 with an evening of music and dance featuring internationally acclaimed Norwegian fiddler Vidar Lande and the debut of a historical video documentary about the now infamous Smuttynose murders of 1873.

Lande is a frequent guest teacher and performer at festivals and workshops sponsored by the Hardanger Fiddle Association of America and is also widely published on the history of Norwegian folk fiddle music. He will be joined by Annamarie Pluhar and Len Newman, folk dancers from Washington, D.C., Wednesday, March 27 at 7:30 p.m. in the Bratton Recital Hall at UNH's Paul Creative Arts Center. The lecture/performance is free and open to the public, but seating is limited and early arrival is recommended.

In addition, the UNH Chamber Singers, under the direction of William Kempster and joined by professor and solo baritone David Ripley, will welcome Lande with Edvard Grieg's Four Psalms, Op. 74 performed in Norwegian.

Lande's visit is the culmination of a project that started more than two years ago. It was his careful documenting and performing of traditional Norwegian folk tunes that inspired Christopher Kies, associate professor of music at UNH, in composing the score to "Murder on Smuttynose," a ballet choreographed by UNH professor of dance C. Lawrence Robertson and performed by the UNH Dance Company and orchestra.

"As I searched for traditional Norwegian folk music to convey the dread and darkness that was about to occur, Lande's work touched a sympathetic nerve in my own

music taste buds because it reminded me of Stravinsky, one of my favorite 20th century composers, and because it sounded ominous," Kies says.

"Because this guy was so inspiring, I felt he was a big help to me in doing the score," Kies adds. "After the ballet premiered in 2000, I found an e-mail address for Lande and amazingly, he wrote back. He was very interested and honored that his music had been used, and to show my appreciation and admiration I invited him here."

In addition to his evening performance, Lande will meet with all UNH string students in a special session, and the visiting dancers and Lande will work with Robertson's advanced ballet class as well.

"Originally, I thought of this visit as a way to repay my debt to him, but really he's doing us a big favor," Kies says. "The exposure to foreign music and dance is a great opportunity for our students and this is the first time he has performed locally."

Lande's performance is sponsored by the UNH Center for the Humanities, the Hatch Fund of the College of Liberal Arts and the UNH Music Department. For more information, call the UNH Music Department at (603) 862-2404.

The premiere of the video documentary, "Murder on Smuttynose: The Evolution of a New England Crime Story," will be Tuesday, March 26, at 3 p.m. in the UNH Memorial Union Building's Theater II. The film, co-produced by Stuart Williams and Eric J. Gleske of UNH Academic Technology Video Services, brings together artists and historians to interpret the circumstances surrounding the people, places and events. It will be immediately followed by "Murder on Smuttynose," a video of the original ballet. Seating is limited in the theater, but both films are free and open to the public.

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