

12 Estampies



Based on medieval tunes from
Scandinavian sources

Poul Høxbro, Copenhagen 2026

Preface

Anyone who is both an instrumentalist and fascinated by the music of the Middle Ages soon realises that the amount of genuinely “original” repertoire available is remarkably small. Of the several thousand pieces of music that have survived from this period, only a tiny fraction can truly be regarded as instrumental compositions. Yet this can hardly provide an accurate picture of medieval musical life. Both iconographic and written sources point to a vibrant and diverse instrumental tradition, one that was only very rarely committed to writing by the few educated and privileged individuals who possessed the skill of musical notation.

If, therefore, one does not wish to perform the same pieces over and over again, one must attempt to imagine the mind of a medieval instrumentalist. Fortunately, the surviving sources offer a few guidelines that can help us in our attempts to recreate—and indeed create anew—instrumental music that is historically and musically rooted in the period before 1500.

Among the very few instrumental works written down before 1450, many are *estampies* (see below).

We know that *estampies* were performed on a wide variety of instruments.

We also know that musicians sometimes used vocal compositions as the basis for improvised or newly composed instrumental pieces.

Exactly how medieval instrumentalists transformed vocal material into instrumental works remains unknown. Despite the lack of definitive knowledge about their methods or performing styles—which almost certainly varied considerably from place to place—improvising or composing *estampies* is perhaps one of the most authentic ways of reconstructing a small part of what was probably a rich and flourishing medieval instrumental tradition.

That is precisely what I hope to contribute with these twelve *estampies*, all of which are based on Scandinavian source material. I have been composing medieval instrumental music for many years and have undoubtedly developed a personal style that reflects nothing more than my own dreams, strengths, and limitations. I hope these pieces may also inspire others to develop their own individual approach to medieval music and to create *estampies* of their own.

The Estampie

The word *estampie* (also found as *istanpitta*, *stantipes*, etc.) refers simply to a poetic or musical form. *Estampies* may well have been danced to, but they were also performed purely for listening.

In a well-known passage from his treatise *De Musica*, the French music theorist Johannes de Grocheio remarks that “an *estampie* is particularly suitable for performance before powerful people, because its intricate structure occupies their thoughts and thus keeps them from entertaining perverse ones.” The form itself takes a little while to become familiar.

An *estampie* consists of a number of different sections arranged in a distinctive pattern.

First come the various musical “verses”, which I have numbered in my editions (1, 2, 3, etc.). These are followed by a refrain with an open ending, marked *Ou* for the French *ouvert* (“open”). Finally, the same refrain appears with a closed ending, marked *Clo* for *clos* (“closed”). Today, the terms *ouvert* (Ou) and *clos* (Clo) have become the standard labels for these two endings.

An *estampie* is performed as follows: the first verse (1) is played and leads directly into the refrain with the open ending (Ou). The first verse is then repeated, this time leading into the refrain with the closed ending (Clo). Next comes the second verse (2), followed by the open refrain (Ou).

The second verse is then repeated, leading into the closed refrain (Clo). The same procedure is followed for the third verse, and so on.

An *estampie* with five verses therefore has the following structure:

1 – Ou – 1 – Clo

2 – Ou – 2 – Clo

3 – Ou – 3 – Clo

4 – Ou – 4 – Clo

5 – Ou – 5 – Clo

All twelve of my *estampies* follow this general pattern and use these designations, although individual pieces may contain either fewer or more verses.

Transposition

Each *estampie* in this edition is presented in two different keys. As I myself perform medieval music on the pipe and tabor, the first version is transposed to suit a G tabor pipe. This is followed by a second version transposed down a perfect fifth. Naturally, all of the pieces may be performed in whatever key best suits the instrument on which they are played.

Instrumentation – Ornamentation – Tempo

The *estampies* may, of course, be performed on any instrument and arranged in whatever manner the performer chooses. I have therefore not provided a drum part alongside the tabor pipe melody, leaving such decisions entirely to the taste and abilities of the individual musician. Performers are warmly encouraged to add additional parts, arrange accompaniments for harp, lute, or any other available instrument—just as medieval musicians themselves would almost certainly have done.

The same freedom naturally applies to the addition of trills and other ornaments.

Likewise, performers are encouraged to experiment with different tempi in their own interpretations. My metronome markings should be regarded as purely indicative.

Poul Høxbro. Copenhagen, 2026.

Cover photograph: Poul Høxbro. Musician (c. 1465), Roskilde Cathedral (DK).

Estampie - Drømde mik

Tabor pipe in G

Based on a music fragment from "Codex Runicus" (Denmark/Scania ca. 1300).

Anonymous / Poul Høxbro.

1 ♩. = ca. 116

Fine



2



3



4



5



D.C. al Fine



Estampie- Canute

Tabor pipe in G

Based on the sequence "Preciosa mors sanctorum".

Found in the officium for Canute Lavard.

Anonymous, Denmark, 12th century / Poul Høxbro

1 ♩ = ca. 90

2

3

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8

9

10

Ouvert (Ou.)

Closs (Clo.)

Estampie - Ex te lux

Tabor pipe in G

Based on the song "Ex te lux oritur" composed for the wedding of the Norwegian king Erik Magnusson to the Scottish princess Margareta. Anonymous, Bergen, 1281 / Poul Høxbro.

1 ♩. = ca. 66

1. 2. Ou. : Clo.

1. 2. Ou. : Clo.

1. 2. Ou. : Clo.

1. 2. Ou. : Clo.

1. 2. Ou. : Clo.

1. 2. Ou. : Clo.

1. 2. Ou. : Clo.

1. 2. Ou. : Clo.

Ouvert (Ou.)

Closs (Clo.)

Estampie - Gauda Maria

Tabor pipe in G

Based on the sequence "Gaude Maria templum summe trinitatis" from "Liber Scolæ Virginis".

Lund (Scania), 14th century (Paper inset from early 16th century).

Anonymous (12th century?) / Poul Høxbro

1 $d. = \text{ca. } 52$

Musical notation for the 'Ouvert' section of the 'Marche des Enfants' from 'Les Contes de la Forêt Noire'. The notation is in treble clef, key of D major (two sharps), and 3/4 time. It features a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, with a bracket underneath labeled 'Ouvert'.

The musical notation shows a single staff in G major (one sharp). The 'Ouvert' section consists of the first 10 measures, and the 'Closs' section consists of the next 10 measures. The notation includes various note values, rests, and bar lines.

[illegible][illegible]

Coda (optional)



rit.

Estampie - Erik

Tabor pipe in G

Based on the song "Got in vil hôhen vreuden saz"

(song of praise to the Danish king Erik Menved).

Meyster Rumelant (Active in Denmark around 1286) / Poul Høxbro.

1 ♩ = ca. 76

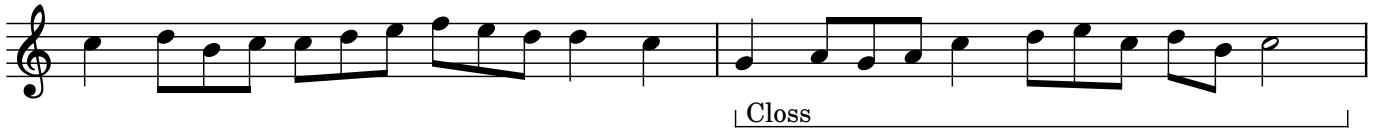
The musical score is written for a Tabor pipe in G. It consists of ten staves of music. The first staff begins with a measure number '1' in a box and a tempo marking '♩ = ca. 76'. The music is in treble clef and features various time signatures: 2/4, 4/4, 3/4, and 2/4. There are several triplets indicated by a '3' over the notes. Brackets below the staves indicate sections labeled 'Ouvert' and 'Closs'. Measure numbers 1, 2, and 3 are marked in boxes at the beginning of the first, third, and fifth staves respectively. The score ends with a double bar line on the tenth staff.

Estampie - Elin

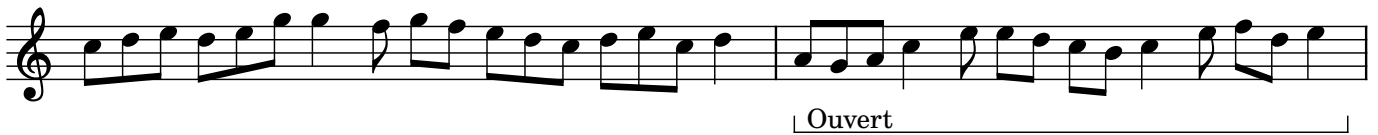
Tabor pipe in G

Based on melodic lines from "Alleluja, Helena vesgocie" (Officium for Elin of Skövde).
Vadstena, Sweden, ca. 1400. Anonymous / Poul Høxbro

1 ♩ = ca. 126



2

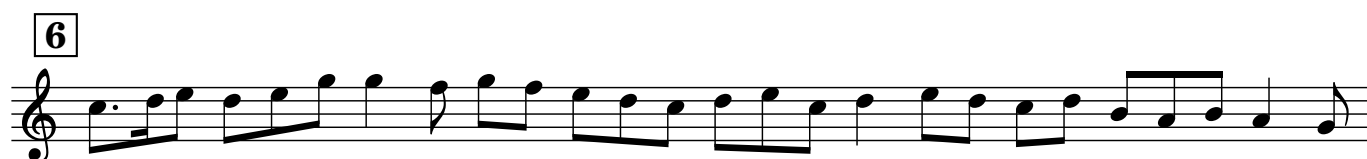


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Estampie - Arce sidera

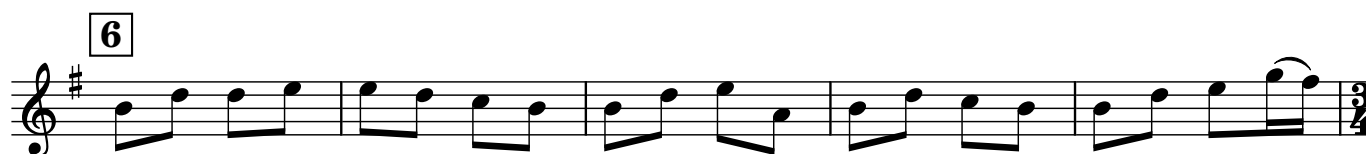
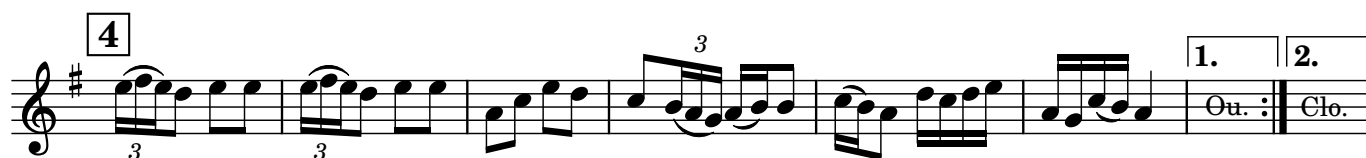
Tabor pipe in G

Based on the sequence "Ab arce sidera".

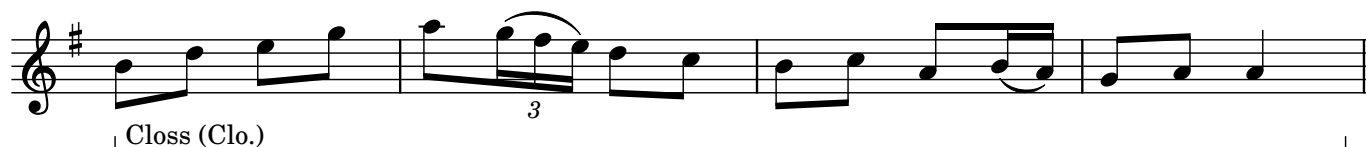
From "Liber daticus Lundensis (Lund, Scania, 12th century).

Anonymous / Poul Høxbro

1 ♩ = ca. 102



Ouvert (Ou.)



Closs (Clo.)

Estampie - Sancte martir Olaue

Tabor pipe in G

Based on the hymn "Sancte martir Olaue". From the officium for Olaf the Holy.
(composed continually between late 12th to 14th century)

Anonymous, Norway, 12th century / Poul Høxbro

1 ♩ = ca. 136

1. Ou. :|| 2. Clo.

2

1. Ou. :|| 2. Clo.

3

1. Ou. :|| 2. Clo.

Ouvert (Ou.)

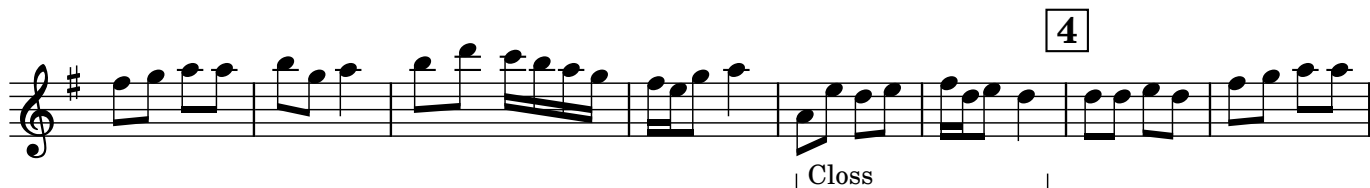
Closs (Clo.)

Estampie - Lux illuxit

Tabor pipe in G

Based on the sequece "Lux illuxit letabundus". From the officium for Olaf the Holy.
Ærkebiskop Eystein Erlendsson (?), Trondheim ca. 1170 / Poul Høxbro

1 ♩ = ca. 82



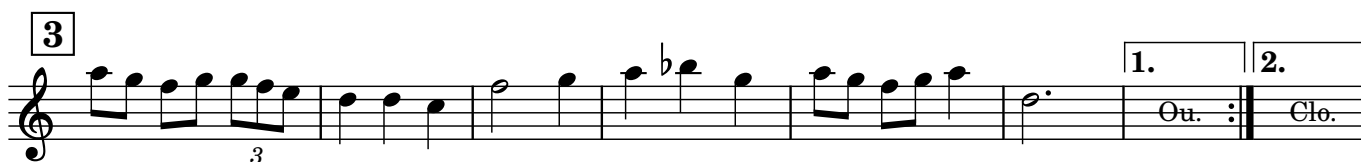
Estampie - Olaue

Tabor pipe in G

Based on "Alleluja - Sancte Olaue qui in celsus letaris". From the officium for Olaf the Holy
(composed continually between late 12th to 14th century)

Anonymous, Norway, 13th century / Poul Høxbro

1 ♩. = ca. 50



Estampie - Marie

Tabor pipe in G

Based on the song "Mith hierthe brendher".

Popular Maria song found in a Danish paper manuscript from late 15th century.

Anonymous / Poul Høxbro

1 ♩. = ca. 60



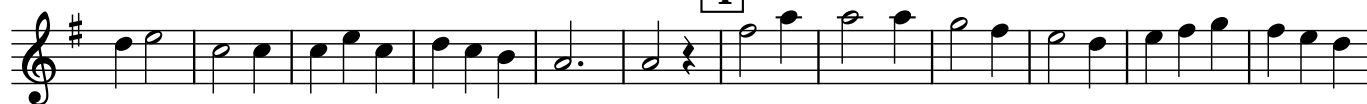
2



3



4



5



6



Estampie - Nattergal (Nightingale)

Tabor pipe in G

Estampie based on different traditional tunes to the Danish medieval ballad "Nattergalen".
Danmarks Gamle Folkeviser (DgF) No. 57.

1 ♩. = ca. 92



* Go straight into the upbeat of "Ouvert".

** Go straight into the upbeat of the next part - 1, 2, 3 or 4.

Estampie - Drømde mik

Based on a music fragment from "Codex Runicus" (Denmark/Scania ca. 1300).
Anonymous / Poul Høxbro.

1 ♩. = ca. 116

Fine



2



3



4



5



D.C. al Fine



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Based on the sequence "Preciosa mors sanctorum".

Found in the officium for Canute Lavard.

Anonymous, Denmark, 12th century / Poul Høxbro

Anonymous, Denmark, 12th century / Poul Høxbro

1. $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 90$

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

Ouvert (Ou.)

Closs (Clo.)

Estampie - Ex te lux

Based on the song "Ex te lux oritur" composed for the wedding of the Norwegian king Erik Magnusson to the Scottish princess Margareta. Anonymous, Bergen, 1281 / Poul Høxbro.

1 ♩. = ca. 66

1. 2.
Ou. : Clo.

2. 1. 2.
Ou. : Clo.

3. 1. 2.
Ou. : Clo.

4. 1. 2.
Ou. : Clo.

5. 1. 2.
Ou. : Clo.

6. 1. 2.
Ou. : Clo.

7. 1. 2.
Ou. : Clo.

Ouvert (Ou.)

Closs (Clo.)

Estampie - Gauda Maria

Based on the sequence "Gaude Maria templum summe trinitatis" from "Liber Scolæ Virginis".
Lund (Scania), 14th century (Paper inset from early 16th century).
Anonymous (12th century?) / Poul Høxbro

1 ♩. = ca. 52



2



3



4



Coda (optional)



Estampie - Erik

Based on the song "Got in vil hôhen vreuden saz"
(song of praise to the Danish king Erik Menved).

Meyster Rumelant (Active in Denmark around 1286) / Poul Høxbro.

1 ♩ = ca. 76

The musical score for 'Estampie - Erik' is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of ten staves of music. The first staff begins with a boxed '1' and a tempo marking '♩ = ca. 76'. The score is divided into three sections by brackets labeled 'Ouvvert', 'Closs', and 'Ouvvert'. The first 'Ouvvert' section spans the first two staves. The 'Closs' section spans the third and fourth staves. The second 'Ouvvert' section spans the fifth and sixth staves. The third 'Ouvvert' section spans the seventh and eighth staves. The final staff concludes with a double bar line. Various musical notations are used, including eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and triplets (indicated by a '3' over a group of notes). The time signature changes from 2/4 to 4/4 and back to 2/4 throughout the piece.

Estampie - Elin

Based on melodic lines from "Alleluja, Helena vesgocie" (Officium for Elin of Skövde).
Vadstena, Sweden, ca. 1400. Anonymous / Poul Høxbro

1 ♩ = ca. 126



2

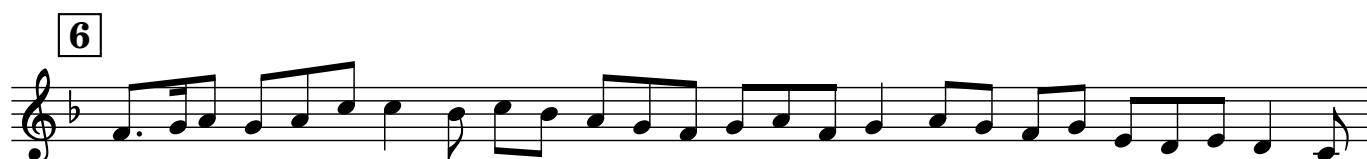


3



4





Estampie - Arce sidera

Based on the sequence "Ab arce sidera".
From "Liber daticus Lundensis (Lund, Scania, 12th century).
Anonymous / Poul Høxbro

1 ♩ = ca. 102

1. 2.
Ou. : Clo.

2. 1. 2.
Ou. : Clo.

3. 1. 2.
Ou. : Clo.

4. 3. 3. 3. 1. 2.
Ou. : Clo.

5. 3. 3. 1. 2.
Ou. : Clo.

6. 1. 2.
Ou. : Clo.

7. 3. 1. 2.
Ou. : Clo.

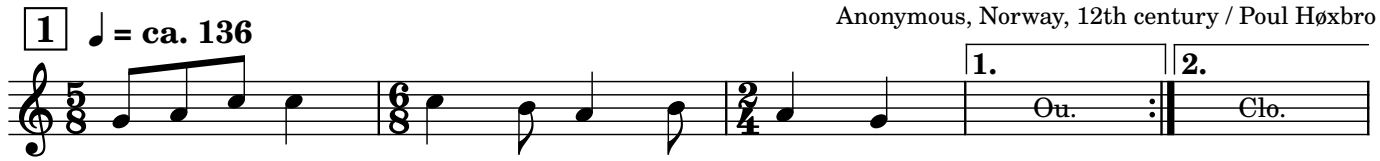
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Anonymous, Norway, 12th century / Poul Høxbro

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2



3



Ouvert (Ou.)



Closs (Clo.)

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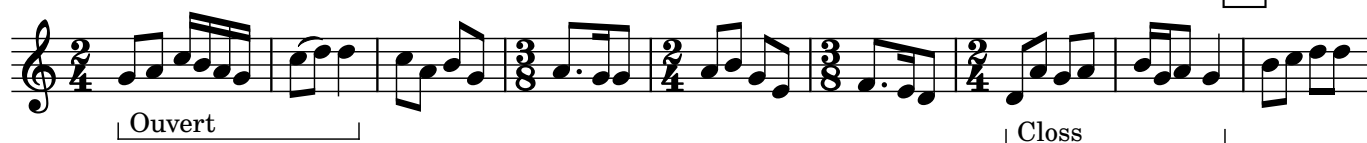
1 ♩ = ca. 82



2



3



4



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Estampie - Olaue

Based on "Alleluja - Sancte Olaue qui in celsus letaris". From the officium for Olaf the Holy.
(composed continually between late 12th to 14th century)
Anonymous, Norway, 13th century / Poul Høxbro

1 ♩. = ca. 50

1. 2.

Ou. : Clo.

2

1. 2.

Ou. : Clo.

3

1. 2.

Ou. : Clo.

4

1. 2.

Ou. : Clo.

5

1. 2.

Ou. : Clo.

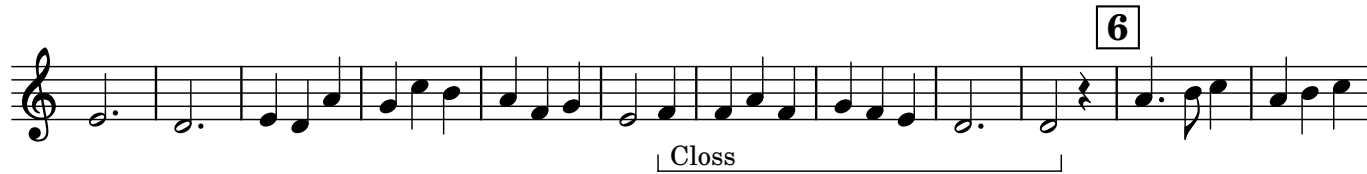
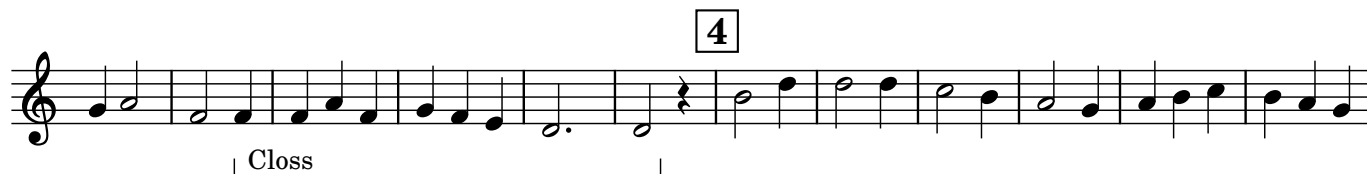
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Estampie based on different traditional tunes to
the Danish medieval ballad "Nattergalen".
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1 ♩. = ca. 92



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**** Go straight into the upbeat of the next part - 1, 2, 3 or 4.**