

The book cover features a woman with long dark hair and a black top with red lace, looking down. Behind her is a dark horse's head. The background is a warm, golden-yellow with faint circular patterns and autumn leaves. The author's name 'Julia Ecklar' is on the left and the title 'Horse Tamers' is on the right, both in a stylized font.

Julia Ecklar

Horse Tamers

# 1. Going Back

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In the early 1980s, I was one of several singer-songwriters represented on the cassette tape *A Wolfrider's Reflections* — a collection of music inspired by the graphic novel series *ElfQuest* by Wendy and Richard Pini (later released as a CD by Warp Graphics). A lot of us wrote a lot of songs for that project. Alas, only about an hour's worth could make it onto the final tape.

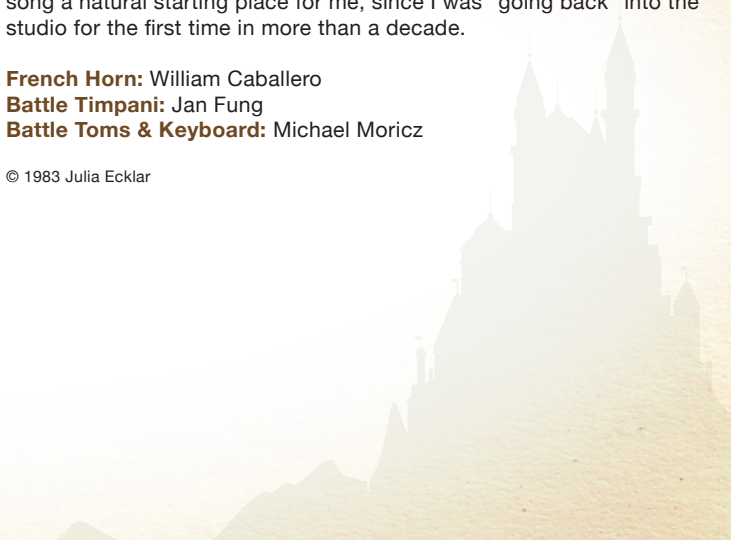
“Going Back” is one of the songs that didn't make it. That made the song a natural starting place for me, since I was “going back” into the studio for the first time in more than a decade.

**French Horn:** William Caballero

**Battle Timpani:** Jan Fung

**Battle Toms & Keyboard:** Michael Moricz

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## 2. The Dark is Rising

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first conceived of the music for “The Dark is Rising” as a sort of Pagan incantation. The poetry scattered throughout Susan Cooper’s wonderful young adult series, *The Dark is Rising*, serves as narrative hook, clue, and prophecy for the characters. I wanted to capture that ancient, insistent feel.

Michael Moricz was the one who first saw it as another sort of “war song” — this time, a war against the Dark for all that is Good and Light, and not just the reckless slaughter of trolls. Together, “Going Back” and “The Dark is Rising” represent both the outer and inner struggles faced by those swept up in the tide of heroic events.

**Battle Brass:** Drew Fennell, Robert Lauver, John Olsson & Philip VanOuse

**Battle Timpani:** Jan Fung

**Battle Toms:** Michael Moricz

**Acoustic & Flamenco Guitars:** Roberto Castellón

**Electric Guitars:** Dale Cinski

Lyrics © 1973-1977 Susan Cooper (adapted by Julia Ecklar)

Music © 1987 Julia Ecklar

### 3. With the Trees

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**M**y friend Rusty is as close to a plant mage as I've ever met in a human. She's always surrounded by happy, thriving plants — in her house, in her garden, in her greenhouses, in her hair. She can recognize every growing thing in the 50-some-odd acres of woods surrounding her house, and even knows the best places to harvest the tastiest kinds of mushrooms.

Rusty is the only person I know who has kept Spanish moss alive on a hook in her bathroom for years. Come the zombie apocalypse, we're all going out to Rusty's farm to hole up, confident that she'll be able to feed and protect us until the worst of it is over.

Meanwhile, I like to think this is the song she sings to make all her daylilies bloom in the spring.

**French Horn:** William Caballero

**Acoustic Guitars:** Dale Cinski

**Piano:** Michael Moricz

**Electric Bass:** Jeff Mangone

**Violin:** Warren Davidson

**Cello:** Joseph Bishkoff

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## 4. Shai Hulud

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**D**une is my *Lord of the Rings*. Don't get me wrong — I totally love the *Lord of the Rings* movies! And I thank J.R.R. Tolkien every time I sit down to play D&D. But I have never, ever been able to slog through the books. Too many places, names, legends, languages, histories, nicknames, side quests for my more logical, linear brain.

Ah, but *Dune*...

Ecology! Anthropology! Really awesome giant worms! *Dune* is the first book I remember that looked at the wheels within wheels of interplanetary politics and economics, that tried to create a place and a time that wasn't just people from the 1960s thrown into the future. I re-read it every few years, and my appreciation for the thought and structure that went into the novel increases (especially in the last dozen years or so, when Western awareness of Arabic culture has seen such an upsurge).

I loved the feel of this song from the first moment I heard it. The strong rhythms, the simple narrative belying more complicated workings underneath — everything captured the emotional heart of the story. Add John Maione's wild guitar work and Palya Bea's radiant vocal ad libs, and you can practically smell the spice in the burning air.

**Claypot Percussion:** R.J. Heid  
**Acoustic Guitars:** John Maione

**Electric Guitars:** Dale Cinski

**Electric Bass:** Tom Bellin

**Opening Synth Guitar Solo:**  
Michael Moricz

**Violin:** Warren Davidson

**Desert Woman:** Palya Bea

**Chorus of Fremen:** Gregg Brandt,  
Billy Hepfinger & Joe Jackson

**Guttural Chanting:** Michael Moricz



## 5. Gentle Arms of Eden

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**T**his is the only song I've ever "covered" on an album that I first heard on the radio. I was halfway through graduate school (something I'd decided to take on at the ripe old age of 42), and felt like I was spending my whole life in class, driving back and forth between the university and the zoo where I was doing my research, and driving to my job. My thoughts were pretty much dominated by biology, driving, and when I could take my next nap.

You can imagine my delight, then, when I first heard this sweet, wonderful song. The evolution of life on Earth in under five minutes! Not to mention a truly inspiring chorus, for those times when our treatment of this Eden would otherwise have me in despair.

**Flute:** Barbara O'Brien

**French Horn:** William Caballero

**Percussion:** Andrew Reamer


**Acoustic Guitars:** Dale Cinski

**Electric Bass:** Jeff Mangone

**Piano:** Michael Moricz

**Cello:** Joseph Bishkoff

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## 6. The Troll King's Dream

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One of the goals for the *ElfQuest*-inspired *A Wolfrider's Reflections* album was to feature a song for each of the individual characters from the saga. As anyone who has read the series knows, that's a tall order. There are dozens of characters, of various races and motivations, and we the readers still didn't know where they were all headed or how things would work out. This left lots of wonderful room to imagine around the edges of the tale.

I loved the image of the powerful, terrifying Troll King from the north. So different from the bumbling trolls of the forests, yet, like them, ultimately undone by his own machinations.

**Clarinet:** Mary Beth Malek  
**Bassoon:** Linda Morton Fisher  
**Acoustic Guitar:** Dale Cinski  
**Cello:** Joseph Bishkoff

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## 7. The Horsetamer's Daughter

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I'd been in the San Francisco Bay Area for nearly a month, working on some recordings and visiting *Time After Time* landmarks with my new (and forever) friend, Joey Shoji. So many wonderful filkers of that time came and went at the house where I was staying. I remember writing songs on the front steps, taking walks around the neighborhood while analyzing lyrics, and even sitting across a music stand from Leslie Fish while we alternated writing verses on a song that would eventually be known as "Rest Stop."

It was during that summer of heady creative fervor that I and some other denizens of the house returned from a quick trip to the grocery to find Leslie sitting in the living room with her guitar. Sheets of yellow notebook paper littered the couch and coffee table. "I wrote a song while you were gone," Leslie said.

"Oh, good!" we said, pausing on our way to put up groceries. "Play it!"

Leslie played with the tuning on her guitar. "Sit down."

"That's OK," we said. "We'll just stand here."

"No, really," Leslie insisted mildly. "Sit down."

The next fourteen minutes would change my life.

**Woodwinds:** Barbara O'Brien & Linda Morton Fisher

**Brass:** Drew Fennell, Robert Lauver, John Olsson & Philip VanOuse

**Timpani:** Jan Fung

**Acoustic Guitars:** Dale Cinski

**Strings:** Irene Cheng, Warren Davidson, Jennifer Gerhard & David Premo



## 8. Songbird

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When I was 14, I read the beautiful short story, “Mikal’s Songbird,” in *Analogue* magazine. As a lover of both science fiction and music, I felt that I had found the perfect blend of the two. The story of a talented but damaged boy, and his torturous journey toward salvation, stayed with me long after my mother threw out the original magazine. I couldn’t have told you the author’s name, but I remembered everything about the Songhouse.

I glimpsed a book cover in the store three years later, and knew immediately that it was the same story. That copy of *Songmaster* would be my official introduction to Orson Scott Card as a novelist, and would lead me to all his other wonderful fiction. With this as my background, you would think I would have written this song. Instead, another songwriter beat me to it, creating something so beautiful and perfect that it left me nothing else I could add. Except, of course, to sing it here.

**Soprano Soloist:** Katy Shackleton Williams

**Flute & Piccolo:** Barbara O’Brien

**Violin & Viola Solos:** Warren Davidson

**Cello:** David Premo

**Additional Strings:** Irene Cheng & Jennifer Gerhard

**Sampled Harp:** Michael Moricz

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## 9. Ender Interlude I

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**Ender Wiggin:** Joseph Serafini

**Colonel Hyrum Graff:** Mark Elliot Wilson

## 10. The Battleroom

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**Ender Wiggin:** Joseph Serafini

**Colonel Hyrum Graff:**

Mark Elliot Wilson

**Woodwinds:** Barbara O'Brien &  
Linda Morton Fisher

**Brass:** William Caballero,

Drew Fennell, Robert Lauver,  
John Olsson & Phil VanOuse

**Snare Drum:** R.J. Heid

**Keyboards:** Michael Moricz

**Cello:** Joseph Bishkoff

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## 11. Ender Interlude II

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**Ender Wiggin:** Joseph Serafini

**Valentine Wiggin:** Emma Baker

**Dink:** Jason Shavers

**Colonel Hyrum Graff:**

Mark Elliot Wilson

**Brass:** William Caballero,  
Drew Fennell, Robert Lauver,  
John Olsson & Phil VanOuse

**Snare Drum:** R.J. Heid

**Piano:** Michael Moricz

**Acoustic & Electric Guitars:**  
Dale Cinski

**Electric Bass:** Tom Bellin

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## 12. Tin Soldier

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I think about Ender Wiggin whenever I knock back a Zerg assault, or punt my Weighted Companion Cube into the nearest portal. I also think of him whenever a 12-year-old hands me my ass in Team Fortress 2.

It's hard to imagine a future where we don't use video games and 3D simulations to train our soldiers. Anyone who has ever taken on their nephew at Super Mario Brothers already knows that 12-year-old boys may be the only ones with the twitch reflexes and mad exploit skillz needed to battle something like the Buggers. So the next time you're trying to decide between that gravity hammer and the frag grenade, ask yourself: Are we really all that far from turning xenocide into just one more unlockable achievement?

**Ender Wiggin:** Joseph Serafini

**Dink:** Jason Shavers

**Colonel Hyrum Graff:** Mark Elliot Wilson

**Mazer Rackham:** Ross Bickell

**Valentine Wiggin:** Emma Baker

**Additional Vocals:** Matt Augustyniak & Kristin Serafini

**Brass:** William Caballero, Drew Fennell, Robert Lauver, John Olsson & Phil VanOuse

**Snare Drum:** R.J. Heid

**Piano:** Michael Moricz

**Acoustic & Electric Guitars:** Dale Cinski

**Electric Bass:** Tom Bellin

## 13. Native Son

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Stepping out into a pasture of sheep is like pushing through a membrane between two worlds. The world you just left is the world of computers and cars and TVs and cellphones. Most people only ever see the world that's constructed out of ordinary things. They think that's the only world, the real world. The sky has a particular color, the sheep crop at too-short grass with a methodic *rip-rip-rip*, and the dog you've brought here in the back of your SUV is just a dog who, for some reason, starts to shiver violently at the first whiff of musty wool.

But that world is just a hard-edged overlay atop a world immensely older and more intricate. In the world where you, your dog, and the sheep now stand, the hill before you exerts a gentle pull that will cause every living thing in the field to drift upward once it starts to move. The trees on your left push out an invisible convexity as real and unyielding as a fenceline; you'll have to give it a wide berth, or be prepared to ask your dog to plow into the pressure, as though asking him to throw himself at a wall. The shadows, the wind, the turn of your head and the force of your dog's silent gaze — everything in this older world is part of this cacophony of pressures that push and bounce against each other. These pressures create a landscape just as real as any hill or fence or tree. If you're very lucky, and very quiet, you can learn to feel those pressures. You can sense where to push against these masses of energies to make the sheep and your dog move in a direction you choose.

The ability to feel and see these energies is stitched into your dog's DNA. You don't teach him how to use this knowledge — he teaches you. He shows you what it's like to see microseconds into the future,

to know how all the pressures will shift and slip before he takes his first working step. Before you even look down at him, he's ready. When you send him off with a quiet, "Away to me," it's all he has ever been waiting for. It's why he was made, and all he wants to do. This is the only world that has ever been real for him, and you're lucky to be able to stand alongside him in it.

**Uilleann Pipes & Pennywhistle:** Bruce Foley

**Bodhran & Percussion:** Andrew Reamer

**Piano:** Michael Moricz

**Acoustic Guitar:** Dale Cinski

**Violin:** Warren Davidson

**Electric Bass:** Jeff Mangone

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LEE  
MOYER



# 14. Elizabeth's Song

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**S**heila Willis wrote this song for a sweet, wonderful woman named Elizabeth Burnside. I never met Elizabeth, but I came to know her through Sheila's stories, and through the beautiful imagery of this song which carries her name.

But this version of the song isn't really for Elizabeth. Instead, I'm singing it for a woman named Ann.

Ann Cecil was my friend, my mentor, my teacher, my inspiration. Ann was intelligent, generous, honest, and independent. She taught me to be a better writer and a better person. She showed me that you were never too young to reach for what you wanted, and never too old to take on something new. Everywhere Ann went, she encouraged people to be creative and interested in others. She could make a friend at the bus stop, and still get Christmas cards from that person a decade later. For nearly thirty years, she was my touchstone for how to be myself. Even when we were swirled about in our separate worlds, I knew she was out there. All we needed was an email, or a five minute phone call, and it was like no time had passed at all.

The world lost Ann on January 11, 2011. She's missed by so many people. She left her imprint not just on those of us lucky enough to have been taken under her wing, but on all the people we will ever mentor, all the bus stop friendships we will strike up, and all the songs that will ever be written or sung in her memory.

**Piano:** Michael Moricz

**Acoustic Guitars:** Dale Cinski

**Violin:** Irene Cheng

**Viola:** Jennifer Gerhard

**Cello:** David Premo

**Distant Voices:** Julia Ecklar

# 15. Cathedral

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I first encountered the beautiful Cathedral of Learning in the early 1980s. This tall, gothic tower dominates the University of Pittsburgh campus — Isengard of the Three Rivers. I used it to find my way around the city, only knowing which direction I was going based on whether the Cathedral was peeking over the hills to my right or left, or piercing the sky directly in front of me.

It wasn't just the architecture and the majesty of the place I loved, it was the name. I adored the image of Knowledge being as sacred as any religion, of Learning being something worthy of devotion. It is that idea that this song was written to celebrate.

**Solo French Horns:** William Caballero

**Brass:** Drew Fennell, Robert Lauver,  
John Olsson & Philip VanOuse

**Timpani:** Jan Fung

**Strings:** Irene Cheng, Warren Davidson,  
Jennifer Gerhard & David Premo

**Electric Guitar:** Dale Cinski

**Chorus:** Gregg Brandt, Billy Hepfinger &  
Joe Jackson

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# Album Credits

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**Arranged and Produced by Michael Moricz**

**Executive Producer:** Eli Goldberg

**Packaging Design:** Richard Leeds | [bigwigdesign.com](http://bigwigdesign.com)

**Cover Illustration:** Lee Moyer

**Supervising Engineer:** Jay Dudt

**Mastering Engineer:** Dino DiStefano

**Mixing Engineers:** Michael Moricz & Jay Dudt at Audible Images

**Additional Engineering:** Eric Wright, Michael Moricz & Roberto Castellón

**Recorded at:**

Audible Images (Pittsburgh, PA)

Wrecking Crew Media (Pittsburgh, PA)

AM Studios (New York City, NY)

MBR Studio Productions (West New York, NJ)

**Additional Production Support by:**

JC Carter, Wrecking Crew Media (Pittsburgh, PA)

**All Lead Vocals:** Julia Ecklar

**All Keyboards & Programming:** Michael Moricz

**Project Guitarist:** Dale Cinski

**Special Guest Vocalists:** Palya Bea & Katy Shackleton Williams

**Special Guest Actors:** Emma Baker, Ross Bickell, Joseph Serafini,  
Jason Shavers & Mark Elliot Wilson

**Background Vocals:** Matt Augustyniak, Gregg Brandt, Julia Ecklar,  
Billy Hepfinger, Joe Jackson and Joseph & Kristin Serafini

# Featured Musicians

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## GUITARS

### **Acoustic & Electric Guitars:**

Dale Cinski & John Maione

### **Acoustic & Flamenco Guitars:**

Roberto Castellón

### **Electric Bass:** Tom Bellin &

Jeff Mangone

## WOODWINDS

### **Flute & Piccolo:** Barbara O'Brien

### **Clarinet:** Mary Beth Malek

### **Bassoon:** Linda Morton Fisher

### **Uilleann Pipes & Pennywhistle:**

Bruce Foley

## BRASS

### **French Horn:** William Caballero &

Robert Lauver

### **Trumpet:** Drew Fennell

### **Trombone:** John Olsson

### **Tuba:** Philip VanOuse

## PERCUSSION

### **Percussion:** Andrew Reamer,

R.J. Heid & Michael Moricz

### **Timpani:** Jan Fung

## STRINGS

### **Violin:** Irene Cheng & Warren Davidson

### **Viola:** Warren Davidson &

Jennifer Gerhard

### **Cello:** Joseph Bishkoff & David Premo

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**Special thanks** to John Maione, Warren Davidson & Joseph Bishkoff, who all appeared on *Divine Intervention*. Julia and Michael are pleased and honored to still be making music with them 25 years later.


**Additional thanks** to Nancy Burridge, Monica Cellio, T.J. Burnside Clapp, Cheryl Crawford, Mark Mandel, Jim Partridge, David Jordan, Stanley Schmidt, Andrew Strassman, David & Diana Stein, and Alan Thiesen.

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"Going Back" and "The Troll King's Dream" are inspired by *ElfQuest*, created by Wendy and Richard Pini and used with permission. *ElfQuest* is a registered trademark of Warp Graphics, Inc. All rights reserved. ([www.elfquest.com](http://www.elfquest.com))

"The Horsetamer's Daughter" is based on the Darkover novels of Marion Zimmer Bradley; derivative work by permission.

Spoken text from *Ender's Game* by Orson Scott Card ([www.hatrack.com](http://www.hatrack.com)) is included by permission of the author.



*This album is dedicated to  
the memory of Ann Cecil:  
friend, mentor, and inspiration.*



*"I have no stone at all," said I,*

*"Just a mirror like the sea.*

*And you fought with never a man this day—*

*Just eight wild horses and me."*

1. Going Back
2. The Dark Is Rising
3. With The Trees
4. Shai Hulud
5. Gentle Arms of Eden
6. The Troll King's Dream
7. The Horsetamer's Daughter
8. Songbird
9. Ender Interlude I
10. The Battleroom
11. Ender Interlude II
12. Tin Soldier
13. Native Son
14. Elizabeth's Song
15. Cathedral

Produced by Michael Moricz



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