

# OBEREK OPOCZYNSKI

(Poland)

This lively couple dance (o-BEHR-ek o-po-CHIN-ski) is a simplified version of an oberek from Opoczno as done by Mazowsze, The Polish Song and Dance Company, and was introduced by Dr. Morley Leyton at the 1971 University of the Pacific Folk Dance Camp. It is in the National style; that is, a sophisticated dance, as opposed to a Folk or "people's dance" as might be found in villages and rural areas. The people of Opoczno may do an oberek, but it would not be as stylized as this choreography.

**MUSIC:** Record: Muza XL 0141. Monitor Vol. I - MFS (C) 360, Mazowsze. 3/4 meter.  
Note: Bruno BR 50017 and Vanguard VRS 6001 and 9016 are from an earlier recording by Mazowsze and will not do for this dance, as they are arranged differently.

**FORMATION:** Cpls in a circle, M on inside with back to ctr, inside hands joined and held low. Free hands fisted on hip. Dance is best done with five or more cpls in the circle.

**STEPS AND STYLING:** Basic Oberek Step: Step on R ft with knee bent (ct 1). Step L next to R with knee bent (ct 2). Rise onto ball of L ft (ct &). Step on R ft in place (ct 3). Next step would begin by stepping on L ft. Direction of step is largely determined by placement of ft on ct 1.

Pas de basque\*. Ftwork described for M, W opp unless otherwise noted.

Most movements in the dance are strong and vigorous with a lively, swift character.

\*Described in volumes of "Folk Dances from Near and Far" published by the Folk Dance Federation of California, Inc., San Francisco, California.

**MUSIC** 3/4

**PATTERN**

Measures

4 meas INTRODUCTION - No action.

## I. FORWARD

1 Step fwd in LOD and away from ptr on L, knee bent (ct 1). Scuff R heel away from ptr, ft close to floor (ct 2). Jump fwd onto both ft, knees bent, with a strong downward motion (ct 3).

Joined hands swing in LOD with a strong motion, elbows straight, forcing ptrs to turn away from each other. There is a definite downward thrust throughout this meas with no lift during ct 2.

2 Continuing to move in LOD, step on R (ct 1). Step L across in front of R (ct 2). Step R next to L (ct 3). Joined hands swing back thru a low arc in RLOD with a strong motion, forcing ptrs to turn twd each other. Ptrs keep tension in arms.

3-8 Repeat action of meas 1-2, three more times, 4 in all.

9 Change to Open Mazur Pos (M R arm around ptr waist, W L hand on M R shoulder, free hands joined twd LOD, opl face LOD). Bend fwd from waist, keep knees close together. Moving swiftly and lightly, run fwd in LOD using Basic Oberek Step with the following variation: Step fwd on L (ct 1). Step a little fwd on R (ct 2). Rise on ball of R ft (ct &). Step fwd on L, brushing R ft up in back, toes pointed down (ct 3).

10 Repeat action of meas 9 with opp ftwork.

11-12 Repeat action of meas 9-10.

13-15 Repeat action of meas 9-11, but move bkwd in RLOD.

16 Stamp R, L (cta 1,2). Hold (ct 3).

## II. TURNING IN PLACE

Turn to face ptr and assume shoulder-waist pos.

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- 1-8 With very small, unobtrusive, flat-footed steps (3 per meas) turn CW, no more than once around.
- 9-16 Change to ballroom pos but M hold W R wrist in his L hand and W puts her head on her L hand at M R shoulder. Turn CCW back to place using same tiny steps.

BREAK I

- 1-2 M take ptr L hand in his R and lead her twd ctr as he takes two steps in place (one per meas) R, L and ends facing ctr. W step R, L as she moves twd ctr and turns CCW to face ptr.
- 3 W join hands in a high arch and do one small Pas de basque in place, begin R. M, with fists on hips, do one Pas de basque with larger step than W and turn body slightly to R, begin R.
- 4 Repeat action of meas 3 (Break I) with opp ftwork.

III. DUCK IN AND OUT - ELBOW HOOK

- 1 M: In place, step on R, turn body slightly to R (ct 1). Stamp L ft in front of R, take wt (ct 2). Step on R in place (ct 3).
- 2 Repeat action of meas 1 (Fig III) with opp ftwork.
- 3 With one Basic Oberek Step move fwd and duck under W arch, passing ptr by L shoulder.
- 4 Turn CW to face out stamping L, R (cts 1,2). Hold (ct 3).
- 5-8 Repeat action of meas 1-4 (Fig III) to return to outside of circle. Pass thru same arch, turn to face ptr.
- 1-2 W: In place do two small Pas de basque, begin R.
- 3 Move fwd with one small Basic Oberek Step as M duck thru arches.
- 4 Bring joined hands down sharply, bending fwd at waist, stamp L, R (cts 1,2). Hold (ct 3).
- 5-8 Raise joined hands to arch pos, repeat action of meas 1-4 (Fig III), but move bkwd during meas 7.
- 9-11 Hook R elbow with ptr, turn CW with Basic Oberek Step, begin R. L hand fist on hip. Move out from ctr to enlarge circle.
- 12 Stamp L (ct 1). Clap own hands, stamp R (ct 2). Prepare to change direction.
- 13-16 Hook L elbow, repeat action of meas 9-12 (Fig III) turning CCW. Separate two or three ft from ptr on meas 16 and end with W back to ctr of circle, facing ptr.

IV. LIFT

- 1-2 Both ptrs repeat action of Fig III, meas 1-2 (M part). M step twd ptr on ct 3 of meas 2.
- 3 M: Prepare with pli e (ct 1). Hands at ptr waist, lift her overhead (ct 2). Begin 1/2 turn CCW (ct 3).
- 4 Complete 1/2 CCW turn (cts 1,2). Set ptr down (ct 3). W now on outside of circle facing in.
- 3 W: Jump onto both ft, knees well bent (ct 1). Place hands on ptr shoulders, press down, and jump up until torso is horizontal over M head. Bend knees and bring ft up behind (ct 2). Hold (ct 3).
- 4 Sustain pos until ct 3 when M puts ptr down.
- 5-6 Both ptrs repeat action of meas 1-2 (Fig IV).
- 7 Change places with ptr, passing L shoulders, with one Basic Oberek Step, turning 1/2 CW

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to face ptr again. Lean torso to L while passing.

8 Facing ptr, stamp L,R (cts 1,2). Hold (ct 3).

9-16 Repeat action of meas 1-8 (Fig IV). Remain close to ptr on meas 15. M must free R ft for Fig V.

V. TURNING OBEREK

1-16 Assume shoulder-shoulder blade pos, arms nicely rounded. Begin MR-WL, do 16 Basic Oberek Steps, turning CW and travelling in LOD. Make a one-half turn on each meas and lean upper body twd LOD on ct 1 of each meas.

BREAK II

1-2 Assume Open Mazur Pos except that W either places L hand under M upper R arm, thumb back, or hooks her L forearm under M R upper arm, hand fistcd. Free hand fistcd on hip. Begin MR-WL, walk two steps (one per meas) turning CW.

3-4 Continuing to turn CW slowly, do two small Basic Oberek Steps. Finish facing LOD.

VI. LEAP

1 M: Step R across in front of ptr (ct 1). Leap into air, keep head down, arch back, throw ft high in air (cts 2,3).

2 Land on L ft bending knee well to absorb shock (ct 1). May slap floor with L hand and go down to floor with R knee, toes of R ft extended back so that top of ft is on floor. Recover to erect pos (cts 2,3).

1-2 W: Guide M in turn, helping to lift on meas 1 and steadying partnership on meas 2. Ftwrk not definitive, only important that W act as support for ptr.

3-4 Two Basic Oberek Steps, completing one CW turn to end facing LOD. Begin ML-WR.

5-8 Repeat action of meas 1-4 (Fig VI).

9-15 In Open Mazur Pos, but with W L arm around ptr neck, joined hands make a rounded circle of arms, knees bent in semi-plié, back straight, bend fwd from hips, ft close together, do 7 Basic Oberek Steps (begin MR-WL) turning CW 1/2 turn with each Oberek Step. Steps are small with no perceptible up-down motion; heads remain level. In order to develop speed in turn ptr's ft must remain close together, W leans wt against ptr's R forearm.

16 Drop to full plié (ct 1). Hold pose (cts 2,3).

NOTE: In Fig III, meas 3-4 (Lift) cpl may execute 1/2 turn CCW in shoulder-waist pos with Basic Oberek Steps if Lift is not possible.

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SONG TEXT: *Oj, tańcowałibyśwa*

*Ale mała izba.//*

*Trzeba by piec synosić*

*Będzie izby dosyć.//*

*Oj, dana moja, dana*

*Nie syjdą za pana.//*

*Oj, ino za takiego,*

*Jak ja jazdem sama.//*