

"ARKAN"

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"Arkan" - continued

at this school, that I learnt the "Arkan Kolomijski" described below. The dance is not merely spectacular to watch: it is pleasant and satisfying (though fairly strenuous) to dance.

10. АРКАН.

The musical score is written in 2/4 time and consists of four systems of piano accompaniment. Each system has a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The music is primarily composed of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests and dynamic markings. The first system has a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The second system has a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The third system has a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The fourth system has a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The score ends with a double bar line.

Formation

The dance is performed by men only, each standing with his hands on his neighbours' shoulders to form an open chain. (In some versions of Arkan, but not the one described here, the leader carries a mountaineer's axe. In other versions the chain closes up to form a circle; however, one man is still chosen as "leader".) The leader calls for the successive steps as described below.

The structure of the dance

The dance consists of a basic step, and of a succession of fancy steps, each with its call. The call for the basic step is "pishov" (let's go) and when this is called, the basic step is repeated until the leader calls for the next step. He can allow the basic step to continue as many or as few times as he likes before he makes the next call. The first movement of the first basic step of a sequence is always performed with a stamp. After each fancy step there is always a basic-step; the dance never goes from one fancy step directly into another.

Music

The music is very strongly in duple rhythm, and I have written it in 2/4 time. Of the two beats in the bar, the first is, of course, a strong beat, the second is much weaker, and every step starts on the first beat of a bar. In this version (and, indeed, in most versions) of Arkan the music does not control the steps to any greater extent than this. There is, for example, no attempt to start a new step at the beginning of the tune. Notice that in the descriptions below, the counting is by beats, not by bars.

"Arkan"—continued

Introduction

As soon as the leader feels the beat of the music he begins to sway to the right and left (right on beat one, left on beat two). This is a purely horizontal movement, with no twisting of hips or shoulders. (This remark, indeed, applies throughout the first half of the dance.) When he is ready for the dance to start he calls "Raz" on the second beat of a bar. On the next beat he calls "Dva", on the next "Tri pishov". On the next beat (which will, of course, be the first beat of a bar) the basic step starts. The calls "raz", "dva", "tri" mean "one", "two", "three".

Basic Step

- Beat 1 Step to the right on the right foot. (Reach out as far as you comfortably can.)
- 2 Bring the left foot across behind the right.
 - 3 Step to the right on the right foot.
 - 4 Hop on the right foot, swinging the left foot across in front of it. The swing is in a very "open" position; that is the left knee still points towards the left, it is only the lower leg that swings across to the right.
 - 5 Step to the left on the left foot.
 - 6 Hop on the left foot, swinging the right foot across. (See the description of the movement on beat 4.)
- The step is danced on the balls of the feet, the toes slightly turned out (but no more than is natural). All movements (except the stamp) are fairly light.

"Raz pribij" (one knock)

The call is on beat 1, and the first four movements of this step are the same as the first four movements of the basic step.

- Beat 5 Step to the left on the left foot, bringing the right foot to the left calf (just below the knee) with the right knee tightly across to the left. (See diagram 1.)
- 6 Without moving the right foot, move the right knee across as far as it will go to the right, i.e., "open up" the right knee and thigh. (See diagram 2.)
 - 7 Kick the right foot forward, hitting the ground with the heel and finishing with the foot about six inches off the floor.
 - 8 Hold this position for one beat.

This step can be repeated as often as the leader likes. On each repeat he calls out something on the first beat such as "Toj samij" (same again), "A za mamu" (and for mother), "A za tata" (and for father). When he wants to change he calls "pishov" on beat 7, and the basic step starts on the next beat after 8.

"Z tropachkom" ("with stamps")

This call can be made anywhere in the course of the basic step, but usually about the fourth beat. The basic step is completed and then:-

- Beat 1 Stamp the right foot twice (once before the beat and once on it) as it moves to the right.
- 5 6 As in the basic step.

This step is repeated as often as the leader likes. To change, he calls "pishov" anywhere in the course of the step, usually about beat 5 or even 6.

"Arkan"—continued

"Raz, dva, tri pidkivka" ("One, two, three horse-shoes")

The call "raz pidkivka" is made on beat 4 of a basic step. The basic step is completed and then:—

Beats 1-2 The first two movements of a basic step.

3 Hop on the left foot and, while, the foot is in the air, click the heels together.

4-9 A complete basic step. On beat 7 the leader calls "dva pidkivka".

10-11 As beat 3, twice.

12-17 A complete basic step. On beat 15 the leader calls "tri pidkivka".

18-20 As beat 3, three times. On beat 20 the leader calls "pishov".

"Bez konechna pidkivka" ("endless horse-shoes")

The call is made on beat 4 of a basic step. The basic step is completed and then:—

Beats 1-2 The first two movements of a basic step.

3-14 Heel-click, as in the previous step, 12 times. On beat 14 the leader calls "pishov".

Note: From the call one would expect that the leader could allow any (even) number of heel-clicks, but in fact Evanchuk always allowed twelve.

"Batka spit" ("Papa's asleep")

The call is made anywhere in the course of a basic step. Instead of the right foot being swung across in front of the left foot on beat 6 of the basic step, it is swept round in a circle, first to the left, then forward, then down beside the left foot, taking all of beats 5 and 6 and leaving the dancer standing on both feet on the beat after 6. The dancers remain still until the leader calls "Batka vstav", which he can do on beat 2 of any bar. (He usually allows a pause of eight or twelve beats.) On the next beat the basic step starts (with a stamp, as always) and the leader calls "pishov" on this beat. Notice that this is the only case where the call "pishov" comes on the start of the step, rather than just before it. If the leader likes he can, instead of standing motionless during the step, mark the beats by tapping with his right foot. A third possibility is to keep the basic step going but with very tiny movements. In any case, the other dancers follow the leader.

"Shist' zmini" or **"Chist' zmini, Hajduk dva"**

The call is made at the beginning of a basic step.

Beats 1-6 Dance a basic step, but at the end lift the right foot across to the left, turning the body to face left.

7 Step on the right foot with a very straight knee and high posture.

8 Step on the left foot behind the right with a relaxed knee, relaxing also the right knee and the posture.

9-18 Repeat these two movements, making a total of six bars, but on the last beat, instead of stepping on the left foot behind the right, swing it across in front of the right, turning the body to the right.

19-28 Repeat these movements to the right five bars in all.

29-36 Repeat these movements to the left four bars in all.

37-42 Repeat these movements to the right three bars in all.

43-46 Repeat these two movements to the left two bars in all.

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- 47 Lift the left foot across in front of the right (turning the body to the right) and step on it.
- 49 Lift the right foot across in front of the left (turning the body to the left) and step on it.
- 51 Lift the left foot across in front of the right (turning the body to the right) and step on it.
- 53 Drop into a full squat (full plié) facing the front.
- 54 Spring up and land on the left foot with the left knee half straightened (demi-plié) and the right knee raised, keeping this knee well bent, with the right foot across in front of the left knee.
- 55 Drop into a full squat facing the front.
- 56 Spring high into the air bending both knees fully until the heels touch the buttocks.
- 57 Land on both feet.
- 59 Stamp the right foot, shouting "Raz".
- 61 Stamp the right foot, shouting "Dva".
- 63 Stamp the right foot, shouting "I teper". The syllable "per" comes on the beat.
- 64 Stamp the right foot, shouting "Pi . . ."
- 65 Stamp the right foot, shouting "shov".

The next first beat starts the basic step again.

Note: The rhythm of the stamps is S., S., Q., Q., S.

"Tri zmini" or **"Tri zmini, hajduk tri"**

This is like Shist' zmini except that the main sequence is done three times left, three times right, three times left (instead of six times left, five right . . . twice left); and after the squat and half-rise with right knee raised there is another squat and half-rise with left knee raised, before the squat and high leap.

"Hajduk krut"

The call comes at the beginning of the basic step. Complete the basic step and then:

- Beat 1 Drop into a full squat, swinging the knees across to the right.
- 2 Spring up on to both feet, with knees half straightened and swung across to the left.

Repeat the last two movements until the call "pishov" which will be on a "down" movement. Complete the step, and on the next beat start the basic step.

"Hajduk svertyk"

The call comes at the beginning of the basic step. Complete the basic step and then:—

- Beat 1 Drop into a full squat, swinging the knees across to the right.
- 2 Swing the knees across to the left.

Repeat the last two movements until the call "pishov" which will be on a "right" swing. Complete the step, and on the next beat dance a basic step, starting with knees fully bent, gradually straightening the knees until you are fully upright on the last beat. On the next beat an ordinary basic step starts (with the usual stamp).

Variation

"Arkan"—continued

The following version of "Raz pribij" is the one taught by K. Kubilansky.

Beats 1-6 Basic step.

7 Stamp with the right foot.

8 Hop on the left foot.

The stamp is very often done with a grand flourish, the foot being brought round in a large circle forward, upward, backward, downward and forward. His version of the dance also introduced several steps familiar from ordinary Ukrainian dancing, such as Kolysanya (scissor-kick) and Vyhynanya (raise the foot to the knee and kick it forward).

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