

LESNOTO ORO

Macedonian

PRONUNCIATION: LEHS-noh-toh OH-roh

TRANSLATION: Light, easy dance

SOURCE: Dick Oakes learned Lesnoto oro from Anatol Joukowsky who learned it in southern Macedonia and introduced it to folk dancers in the United States in 1956 at the Santa Barbara Folk Dance Conference. It is described in *The Teaching of Ethnic Dance* by Anatol Joukokwsky, J. Lowell Pratt and Company, New York, New York, 1965.

BACKGROUND: Most native Macedonians, upon hearing the music for this particular dance, would dance the more traditional Lesnoto having a 3-measure pattern of "three steps right and one step left," the most popular dance done in Macedonia. Lesnoto oro, however, is danced in four measures. Lesnoto oro is danced in a curved line or open circle facing in. Originally men and women danced in separate lines, or in a gender-segregated line, with men on the tail end. Men danced in shoulder hold, their arms horizontal, hands resting on their neighbor's shoulder, while women held hands at shoulder height, their arms in a "W" shape, right hand palm up, left hand palm down. Today it is usually done in mixed lines, with all dancers using either the "W" handhold or shoulder hold. The dance pattern is repeated throughout the dance and the line moves slowly to the right. The dancer at the right end is responsible for leading the line so it does not collide with other lines.

MUSIC: NAMA 1 (LP) 1101, side B, band 3
Fez (45rpm) F-701
Folkraft (45rpm) 1552x45 "Lesnoto II"
Sperry (45rpm) 6115

FORMATION: Open cir of mixed M and W with hands joined and held at shldr height in "W" pos, hands slightly fwd. When danced only by M, hands often are placed on neighbor's shldr in "T" pos.

METER/RHYTHM: 7/8. The rhythm is slow-quick-quick (3 + 2 + 2 = 7) and is counted here in three dancer's beats with the first being the longest. The tempo gradually accelerates to 7/16.

STEPS/STYLE: As the music increases in tempo, the steps become low leaps and the bounces become low hops. Some dancers hold the pos of ct 1 in meas 3 for the additional two cts, imitating the hold of the one note in the music.

INTRODUCTION

None. Begin with any musical phrase.

THE DANCE

- 1 Facing slightly R, step R swd with a slight flexion of the R knee (ct 1); flexing R knee, bring L across in front of R with bent knee (ct 2); step L across in front of R (ct 3);
- 2 Facing ctr, step R swd with a slight flexion of the R knee (ct 1); flex R knee, bringing bent L knee up an across in front of R (ct 2); remaining in this pos, flex R knee again (ct 3);
- 3 Repeat action of meas 2 to L with opp ftwk;
- 4 Swing R around in back of L calf (or knee), rising slightly on ball of L ft (ct 1); step R slightly bwd (ct 2); step L next to R (ct 3).

Repeat entire dance from beg.