

Opsa

(U.S. Serbian/Croatian)

Notes by Andrew Carnie July 19, 2003 based on notes by Dick Crum, July 1994

Here's what Dick Crum had to say about this dance:

“Opsa (OHP-sah) is currently one of the most popular dances at Croatian & Serbian dance events in the major cities of the Upper Midwest & the Pennsylvania/Ohio area. Its melody is relatively recent, having been composed & recorded in former Yugoslavia about a decade ago. The origins of the dance per se are obscure - it seems to have arisen here in the U.S., possibly around Pittsburgh. On the other hand, its structure has the same 5-measure pattern as the old Serbian Vranjanka. I first saw & learned it at the Tamburitza Extravaganza weekend in Los Angeles, 1993, where tamburitza players & fans of tamburitza music from all over the U.S. had gathered, and Opsa was played & danced dozens of times.”

2/4 meter

Formation: W position.

Bar 1

1	2
R	L
→	↗

Bar 2

1	2
R	touch L next to R
→	●

Bar 3

1	2
L	touch R next to L
←	●

Bar 4 repeat bar 2

Bar 5

1	2	&
L	R	L
←	↙	↗
	arms swing down	arms swing back up to W position

Opsa Transcribed & translated by Dick Crum, 7/94.

1. \: Nek' se igra ovo kolo, ko ga ne bi vol'o? :\
\: Kolo ide tako lako, da zaigra moz[e] svako. :\ z[]

Refrain:

- Devojke se c[]uju, opsa, skoc[i]!
Nedaju se momci, oc/e br[]e,
sloz[nije i bolje, igraj do zore, opsa!
2. \: Nek' se igra ovo kolo, ko ga ne bi vol'o? :\
\: Momci, cure, svi u kolo, nek' se vije naokolo, :\
 3. \: Nek' se igra ovo kolo, ko ga ne bi vol'o? :\
\: Zurla jec[e], bubanj bije, vesele se meraklije. :\

Translation

1. Let's dance this kolo -- everyone loves it. It moves so freely & easily, everyone can dance it.

Refrain:

- You can hear the girls shouting: "Opsa!* Dance!" The boys won't be outdone – they want to dance faster, more together & better -- dance till dawn, opsa!
2. Let's dance this kolo -- everyone loves it. Boys, girls, everybody join the kolo, wind it around.
 3. Let's dance this kolo -- everyone loves it. The zurlas** are wailing, the drum is beating, and the dancers are on a high.
- * opsa! - spontaneous exclamation often used while dancing (no exact English translation; something like 'whee!', 'yippee!', or 'hee-haw!')
- ** zurla (zoor'-lah) - shawm-like folk instrument common in southern Serbia, Macedonia, & other southern Balkan countries. Usually played in pairs with accompaniment by a drum (bubanj, tapan, etc.)