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Glen Shannon, Editor

Emilie George, *arranger*

3 Balkan

Line Dances

for SATB Recorders

3 Balkan Line Dances

Arranged by Emilie George

“The girl who can’t dance says the band can’t play.”

— *Yiddish proverb*

PREFACE

Joyous harmonies and compound rhythms are a hallmark of folk music from southeastern Europe. These three short dance tunes arranged for SATB recorders are sure to bring a smile to your face and put a spring in your step.



Emilie George is an Albanian-American singer, songwriter, and arranger, currently living in Tucson, Arizona. Prior to relocating there in the 1980’s, Ms. George was a French teacher near Poughkeepsie, NY. She performed regularly in Pete Seeger’s Sloop Clearwater Festivals on the banks of the Hudson and played guitar with a Hellenic dance troupe. She is a member of the Tucson Recorder Society, leads their Chapter meeting once annually (always including a Balkan arrangement), and until 2010 performed regularly at the Tucson Folk Festival as a duo with her son Stefan George, who is also a professional musician. She has recorded three LP’s of French folk songs for Folkways Records: two volumes of “Voix du Sol Français, Voices of French Soil”, featuring folk songs of the French provinces (FW08601) and francophone territories (FW08602); and one on the American and French “sister” revolutions, “The Stars & the Lily” (FW08603). These archives were reissued as CD’s by the Smithsonian Institute, and are still available at Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, <http://www.folkways.si.edu>.

—*Glen Shannon*



Performance notes: For the uninitiated Western musician, the immediate challenge in music from the Balkan region lies in the asymmetrical meter. The three dances presented here are all in the relatively simple meter of $\frac{7}{8}$, which can be broken down to its basic components of **3+2+2** eighth-notes. Focusing on the smaller groupings has proven successful for Ms. George when helping players internalize the larger meter of three pulses per measure (one “long”, two “short”). Phrases are 4 and 8 bars long, and usually repeat — because this music is meant to accompany dancers, any number of repeats can be added. Ornamentation of the melody is encouraged as well. For example, tiny trills on selected main beats (1, 4, and 6) add sparkle while keeping the dancers in time; trills start on the main note. Percussion such as a tambourine would also be welcome.

“Albanian Folk Song” shows modal influences of the Ottomans who dominated the region for centuries, and has more of a Middle Eastern flavor than the two Greek dances. Notable is the distinctive augmented step between G# and F# such as in measures 6 and 7 in the Soprano, and measure 18 in the Alto.

“Samiotissa” (The Girl from Samos) and “Vangelio” are both examples of the *Kalamatianós*, one of the most popular folk dances in Hellenic culture. Named after the Kalamata region of southern Greece where it originated, the lively dance is performed in 12 steps, by dancers holding hands in a circle that rotates 10 steps counter-clockwise followed by 2 steps clockwise.

Albanian Folk Song

arr. Emilie George (1997)

Soprano Recorder

Alto Recorder

Tenor Recorder

Bass Recorder

5

Detailed description: This system contains the first five measures of the piece. It features four staves for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass recorders. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 7/8. The Soprano part has a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The Alto part provides a harmonic accompaniment with eighth notes. The Tenor part follows a similar melodic pattern to the Soprano. The Bass part provides a bass line with eighth notes and rests.

10

Detailed description: This system contains measures 6 through 10. A double bar line is placed at the end of measure 6. Measures 7-10 continue the piece. The Soprano part features a melodic line with eighth notes and a half note. The Alto part has a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The Tenor part has a melodic line with eighth notes. The Bass part has a bass line with eighth notes and rests.

15

Detailed description: This system contains measures 11 through 15. A double bar line is placed at the end of measure 11. Measures 12-15 continue the piece. The Soprano part has a melodic line with eighth notes and a half note. The Alto part has a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The Tenor part has a melodic line with eighth notes. The Bass part has a bass line with eighth notes and rests.