


THE MAGNIFICENT
MAZOWSZE

Polish State Ensemble of Folk Song and Dance

Mira Zimińska-Sygietyńska
General and Artistic Director

Witold Zapala
*Deputy Artistic Director and
Chief Choreographer and Head of the Ballet*

Conductors: Jan Grabia and Marek Witkowski

Saturday Evening, February 1, 1992, at 8:00
Sunday Afternoon, February 2, 1992, at 3:00
Hill Auditorium, Ann Arbor, Michigan

Choirmaster: Jan Grabia

Ballet Teachers: Józefa Wloozkowska, Elzbieta Oleksiak, Witold Zapala, Adam Kludczyński

Choir Teachers: Irene Jezierska and Edward Pawlak

Choir Coaches: Jan Grabia and Marek Witkowski

Accompanist: Edward Witek

Technical Director: Andrzej Zawistowski

Sound: Tadeusz Wojda and Janusz Wójcik

*Direction, selection and adaptation of the texts,
and adaptation of the folk costumes for the stage:*

Mira Zimińska-Sygietyńska

Mazowsze is represented by Columbia Artists Management Inc., New York City; produced in association with PAGART/Polish Artists Agency.

CAMI Production Staff: Harry Rakoski, Company Manager; Alison Johnson, Stage Manager;

Coach Transportation: Anderson House, Dick Kottke and Don Anderson, Drivers.

P R O G R A M

OVERTURE Tadeusz Sygietyński

CHODZONY “KOLEM, KOLEM” Sygietyński
(Walking dance “in a circle, in a circle”)
Choreography: Witold Zapala

The Chodzony is an old Polish folk dance of slow tempo and solemn character. Originally performed at wedding ceremonies, this circular pageant dance now traditionally opens festivals and parties. First mentioned as early as the seventeenth century, it is believed to be an archetype of the most famous Polish national dance, the Polonaise. With the words written specially by Mira Zimińska-Sygietyńska, the company greets the audience with the Chodzony from the Opoczno region located in central Poland.

OBEREK OPOCZYŃSKI (Oberek from the Opoczno region) Sygietyński
Choreography: Eugeniusz Papliński
Soloists: Bożena Rybińska, Krzysztof Fijak, Malgorzata Badetko, Konrad Golianek, Elzbieta Oleksiak, Piotr Krysiak

The Oberek is one of the most popular seventeenth-century Polish folk dances, originally known as the *obertas*. It is a dance with very specific figures, characterized by great speed, vigor, and vitality, full of fantasy and truculence. It was once the highlight of every country party. In high spirits, the young people sing, “Oh, how we would have danced, if the room had not been too small for us!

TANĀCE SIERADZKIE
(Dances from the Sieradz region: Kadziolecza and Polka sieradzka)
Choreography: Michał Jarczyk

Kadziolecza (“little distaff”) is a typical country Mazurka with a lively tempo and joyful mood. The text of the couplet is playful. The girl sings: “My mother ordered me to spin the distaff in order that I could earn for my trousseau. I want to spin, but I can’t. Unruly little distaff ran out of the room, so I had to follow it. Let this little distaff go to the devil!” After the Kadziolecza is a Polka typical of Sieradz.

KASZUBSKIE TANĀCE I PIEŚNI (Dances and couplets from the Kaszuby region)
Music arranged by: Mieczysław Piwkowski
Choreography: Witold Zapala
Stage adaptation: Mira Zimińska-Sygietyńska

Soloists: Malgorzata Chróścielewska, Bożena Klimczuk, Tomasz Borkowski, Dariusz Machej
The Kaszuby region is part of the Pomerania region on the Baltic Sea. This piece is a medley of dances and songs accompanied by local instruments such as the *Diabelskie skrzytce* (“Devil’s Violin”), a kind of primitive fiddle ornamented with the devil’s head, and the *burczybas*, a kind of double bass — a small wooden barrel with a strap of hair from a horse’s tail that emits a deep and vibrating, but dull, bass sound. One of the charming songs tells of a boy and girl having fun with each other. The girl says she would let the boy kiss her if she could be sure he wouldn’t tell. The boy answers that she hesitates only from fear that he would tell others she didn’t try to stop him from kissing her.

SZCZAWNICA (Dances and couplets from the Szczawnica region)

Music arranged by: Marian Domański

Choreography: Witold Zapala

Soloists: Malgorzata Koch, Elzbieta Zawistowska, Sebastian Krzysztoforski

This set of dances with couplets from the Szczawnica, a small township in the Pieniny mountain range in southern Poland, outlines a kind of game played by girls with boys who have just joined the army. There is a note of sorrow as one girl sings of her regret at saying good-bye to the boy she just met. The raucous country boys engage in hearty play, showing off their strength and readiness to serve their country.

WILANÓW (Dances and songs from Wilanów, a suburb of Warsaw) Sygietyński

Choreography: Zbigniew Kiliński

Soloists: Malgorzata Koch and Krzysztof Dmochowski

This set of songs and dances includes the Chodzony and the Mazurka. In the solemn tempo of the Chodzony, the chorus sings: "When it is sunny and beautiful, we shall go out to the garden together." The Mazurka illustrates the words of the couplet, "My little quail ran away from me into the millet field, and I, poor country boy, have to follow her barefoot."

PIOSENKI KURPIOWSKIE (Songs from the Kurpie region) Sygietyński

These are two charming songs composed in the style of the Kurpie region, which is situated north of Warsaw. The first song, *W kadziłańskim boru* ("In the forest of Kadzidło"), tells of a spring in the forest near the town of Kadzidło. Though everyone who passes by drinks from this spring, the song warns people that the water has been made muddy by the soul of a girl who was beautiful, but bad. The second song, *To i hola* ("Guests are coming up"), is a joyful couplet that tells about some guests passing by the garden of a country girl. They do not stop, because the girl is poor. Although she is poor, the girl's mother refuses to give her beautiful daughter to anyone. The song ends with a suggestion to boys that they kiss the girl while they have the opportunity.

PIEŚNI, TAŃCE I ZABAWY PASTERSKIE Z JURGOWA

(Songs, dances, and games from the Jurgów region)

Music arranged by: Stanislaw Wysocki

Choreography: Witold Zapala

Soloists: Krzysztof Fijak, Malgorzata Badetko, Piotr Krysiak, Marek Huzar, Adam Kludczyński

These are traditional dances and couplets from the small town of Jurgów in the Podhale region at the foot of the Tatra mountains. The maidens sing of a horse that lost its shoe not far from the town. While they sing, the bells of the sheep are heard in the distance. The shepherds come in, dancing and showing off their skill with their staffs.

TAŃCE SZAMOTULSKIE (Dances from Szamotuly)

Music arranged by: Stanislaw Wysocki

Choreography: Witold Zapala

Soloists: Anna Stepień and Krzysztof Dmochowski

In this set there are segments of dances called Poniewierany, Przodek, Trojak, and Polka. The names of the first three are not as well known as the Mazurka, Polonaise, or Polka, possibly because they are untranslatable names of traditional figures of the Polish folk dances. The figure that finishes this selection of dances is called "cheer of adoration," as the boys carry their female partners off the stage on their shoulders.

TAŃCE WIELKOPOLSKIE Z PRZYŚPIEWKAMI I KAPELA

(Dances from the Wielkopolska region, with couplets and orchestra)

Stage Adaption: Mira Zimińska-Sygietyńska

Choreography: Zbigniew Kilinski

In this selection of songs and dances from the region of Wielkopolska near the town of Poznań, there is a very popular song called *Swiniorz* (a folk term for a male swine-herd). The girl tells that there was a swine-herd who courted her, coming to see her even when it rained cats and dogs, but who always hurried to go back to his pigs. He wrote her a love letter saying his love for her was as great as his love for his pigs. She writes back, suggesting that he marry one of them.

KRAKOWIACZEK Z PRZYŚPIEWKAMI (Cracoviennette with couplets) . . . Sygietyński

Choreography: Witold Zapala

Soloist: Stanislaw Jopek

The title of this set is the title of a very popular song from the region of Kraków, a town in southern Poland and former capital of the country. It includes three patriotic songs, *Na Wawel, na Wawel, krakowiaku zwawy* ("Go to Wawel, to Wawel, brisk Cracovian"), *Plynie Wisla, plynie* ("And the Vistula keeps on flowing"), and the melody of the song *Albosmy to jacy tacy* ("We belong to no one"). Wawel is the name of a castle on a hill in Kraków, which was the seat of the kings of Poland. The song about the Vistula river says: "As long as the Vistula flows across the Polish land, Poland will not vanish." All three songs possess the rhythm of the Cracovienne dance.

KRAKOWIAK (Cracovienne) Sygietyński

Choreography: Elwira Kamińska

Krakowiak is one of the most popular and characteristic Polish folk dances, with its very lively, even wild tempo, and long, easy strides, demonstrating spirited abandon and elegance at the same time. The rhythm of Krakowiak could already be found in Polish and foreign musical compositions of the sixteenth- and seventeenth centuries. In the seventeenth century, it spread among townsmen and noblemen, becoming a national dance.

INTERMISSION



OVERTURE Michal Kloofas Ogiński
(1765-1833)

POLONAISE AND MAZURKA Karol Kurpiński
Music arranged by: Stanislaw Galoński (1785-1857)

Choreography: Witold Zapala

The Polonaise is the most famous Polish national dance. It is performed in pageant and in pairs and traditionally opened balls and dances. It is characterized by a slow tempo and solemn, dignified movements. Derived from the serious and solemn walking dance performed at Polish manors, it probably descended from the Chodzony. Descriptions by foreigners of "the Polish dance" first appeared in the seventeenth century and spread widely during the eighteenth century, when "Polonaise" became its official name. As a musical form, the Polonaise was readily adopted by composers of the nineteenth century, not only in Poland, but also in neighboring countries.

The Mazurka is the second most famous Polish traditional dance. Originally, it was a folk dance from the region of Mazowsze in central Poland. It combines speed and vigor with dignity and is performed in pairs. First notations of Mazurka rhythm are found in writings from the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century, the Mazurka spread among townsmen and noblemen, developing its form and, with the addition of added texts and patriotic titles, became a national dance. A great number of Mazurkas were created in the eighteenth century — not only vocals such as the *Dabrowski Mazurka*, which became the Polish national anthem, but also instrumental pieces that became parts of operas, symphonies, and masses.

Karol Kurpiński, the composer of this Mazurka, was considered the "father" of Polish opera. His operatic works represent an important stage in the development of the Polish national style in opera before Stanislaw Moniuszko.

PIOSENKI CIESZŃSKIE (Songs from Cieszyn)

Music arranged by: Mieczyslaw Piwkowski

Text: Mira Zimińska-Sygietyńska

Cieszyn is a small town in the Beskidy mountain range in southern Poland. This selection is a set of lyrical girls' songs of love, separation, and nostalgia.

1. "The sweet moments flew that I had been spending with my Janek (Johnny); they flowed like a stream, and all that is left for me is memory."

2. "My dear love, I dreamed about you so sweetly, though I can feel you will bring my heart to ruin."

3. "I am singing, but my heart is crying. When shall I see you again, my love?"

TANŃCE RZESZOWSKIE (Dances from the Rzeszów region)

Music arranged by: Marian Domański

Choreography: Witold Zapala

Soloists: Stanislaw Jopek, Crazyna Kobylak, Janusz Durlak

This is a selection of the folk dances typical for the region of the town of Rzeszów in southeast Poland. They are dances of a very simple form with humorous little verses.

LUBUSKIE WINOBRANIE (Wine gathering in the Lubuskie region)

Music arranged by: Marian Domański

Choreography: Witold Zapala

A customary dance connected with wine gathering, the song is an accompaniment to a slow and picturesque dance performed with garlands made of flowers and wine leaves, saying, "A girl picked sweet wine grapes, but all the time she was thinking about her love."

FIGLE I TAŃCE Z PODEGRODZIA

(Jokes and dances from the Podegrodzie region)

Music arranged by: Mieczysław Piwkowski and Stanisław Wysocki

Choreography: Witold Zapala

Soloists: Piotr Krysiak, Marek Huzar, Adam Kludczyński

Lads from a small town in Subcarpathia sing humorous songs and display feats of skill and strength. They sing, "I am a fellow from Podegrodzie, and like my father, I am gay and merry. I am partial to whistling and jumping up from time to time. Our fathers defeated the mountaineers, and we are going to do the same, because we are sons of our fathers!" The entrance of the girls interrupts their boasting, and the boys are not so brave and plucky any more. The girls invite them to dance, and at first they are clumsy and comic, but eventually regain their fantasy, and a joyful dance begins.

KUJAWIAK (Dance from the Kujawy region) Sygietyński

Choreography: Zbigniew Kiliński

Soloists: Bożena Kryczka, Malgorzata Michniak, Krzysztof Dmochowski,

Mieczysław Chróścielewski

A Polish folk dance from the region of Kujawy and characterized by slow pace and changing rhythm, this dance begins in a sentimental mood and then suddenly changes into a quick, lively, and even wild rhythm, which is similar to the vigorous Oberek.

TAŃCE GÓRALSKIE (Dances of the highlanders) Sygietyński

Choreography: Witold Zapala

Soloists: Bożena Rybińska, Krzysztof Fijak, and others

These are highland dances of the inhabitants of the Tatra mountains, full of bravado and vigor. There are dances by maidens and lads, in which the lively temperament of the highlanders pours out. Very small, precise steps are characteristic in these dances, as in the *Kzesany*, which means "to strike sparks out of mountaineers' axes," and the *Zbójnicki*, the term for highland robbers. In these dances, the boys display feats of skill and strength to impress the girls.

TAŃCE ZYWIECKIE (Dances from the Zywiec region) Sygietyński

Choreography: Witold Zapala

This set of dances and couplets is from the small town of Zywiec in the Beskidy mountain range in southern Poland. It consists of the Dance of the Handkerchiefs, the Waltz, and the Polonaise. The Dance of the Handkerchiefs is accompanied by the girls singing, "Give back, give back to me my handkerchief that I embroidered so beautifully." The boys answer, "How should I give it back without kissing you first?" Then follows the Polonaise illustrated by the well-known couplet, "Here goes the first pair: old Matthew and Barbara . . ."

PIOSENKI LOWICKIE (Songs from the Lowicz region) Sygietyński

1. *Walczyk jubileuszowy* ("The Jubilee Waltz"); Text: Andrzej Nowicki

2. *Kukuleczka* ("Little Cuckoo"); Text: Mira Zimińska-Sygietyńska

3. *Nie zginaj kaliny* ("Don't curve the cranberry tree")

"A little cuckoo is cuckooing, a boy is looking for a girl. He looks, he is hard to please, and he cocks his nose . . . The cuckoo is cuckooing, my heart is beating, silly is the boy who looks for a rich girl. You ask the cuckoo, and she will answer you that the richest one is he whose head is screwed on the right way."

MAZUR

OBEREK

FINALE

Choreography: Witold Zapala

This is a suite of dances from the region of Lowicz, situated in the Mazowsze region in the central part of Poland. The small town of Lowicz is famous for its beautiful folk costumes. The suite includes a Waltz, the Mazurka, the Oberek, and the Galop.



. **About the Artists**

Mazowsze is the name of the great plains region of central Poland surrounding the country's capital, Warsaw. This area is the home of one of Poland's best-known native folk dances, the Mazurka, as well as the home of the world-famous dance company that takes the region's name.

Mazowsze, the colorful and energetic national folk dance troupe of Poland, was born of the dedication of two people to the preservation of native folklore, dance, costume, and song in a rapidly industrializing post-war world. Polish composer and researcher of folklore, Tadeusz Sygietyński, and his wife Mira Zimińska, who was one of Poland's leading actresses before becoming a costume and stage designer, formed the company in 1948. They established a colony at Karolin, a great estate in the countryside 20 miles outside of Warsaw. Sygietyński and

Zimińska toured central Poland, auditioning over 5,000 boys and girls before choosing the original 180 dancers that became the first student body that would live, study, and work at Karolin. In addition to courses such as solfège, singing, piano, and folk and classical dancing, they found that it was necessary to teach reading, writing, history, and arithmetic as well, since so many of the youngsters had had their education interrupted by the war. With only their own money and the contribution of time by a few Polish scholars of music and dance, they began to rehearse.

By 1950, Mazowsze was ready for its first performances inside Poland, and in the following year a troupe of 80 dancers, their average age 16, traveled to Paris for Mazowsze's first tour abroad. Since then, the dance troupe has toured literally all over the world. The current season marks the company's 30th anniversary of its first North American tour in 1961.

After the death of Tadeusz Sygietyński in 1955, Mira Zimińska continued the work they had begun together. Today, the Mazowsze touring troupe numbers around 100 performing dancers, singers, and orchestral musicians. Madame Zimińska annually auditions approximately 300 young adults from all over Poland for the 15 or so openings in the troupe that are created each season. General academics are no longer taught at Karolin; instead, Mazowsze offers intense study and workshops in music and dance. Modern dormitories and rehearsal halls have been added, helping to maintain the high performance standards that have made this one of today's finest folk ensembles.

During the course of each evening's program, the young dancers wear more than 1,000 authentic costumes that represent dozens of Poland's regions, with some dancers facing as many as 25 costume changes. It takes 98 steamer trunks just to transport the group's costumes and props during a tour.

From the brightest brocades to the subtlest of delicate monochrome laces, the costumes reflect the variety of the people of Poland. Some of the costumes are antiques — original folk-dresses up to 70 or 80 years old, and weighing well over 20 pounds each. Director Zimińska scours the countryside herself to buy them from people whose families have had them for generations.

Traditionally, no dance is added to the company's repertoire unless it is approved by the dancers themselves, in accordance with Tadeusz Sygietyński's original philosophy that it is the young dancers and singers of Poland who are closest to the original folk sources. Some of the music of Mazowsze's repertoire was composed by Sygietyński himself, and modeled so closely on the authentic native songs and idioms that it has, conversely, passed back into the culture and become part of the national folklore. "The Magnificent Mazowsze" today is a world-renowned living monument to Poland's multi-faceted culture and its long folk heritage.

Mazowsze now makes its fourth Ann Arbor visit, after performances in 1961, 1964, and 1989.

Only two international folk dance companies have such an established worldwide reputation that their names are instantly recognizable. One is



the Moiseyev Dance Troupe of Russia, and the other is Poland's Mazowsze. Costuming is the specialty of Mira Zimińska, and Igor Moiseyev has been known to ask Mme Zimińska for costuming advice. She was perhaps the best known actress in Poland before turning her interests to stage and costume design. The first famous actress in Poland's movie industry, she was known for her versatility — drama, dancing, singing, and comedy.

Mira Zimińska married Tadeusz Sygietyński, a serious musician who had studied abroad with Max Reger and Arnold Schoenberg, but who had been fascinated all his life by the melodies and rhythms of the folk music of Poland. Eventually, he returned home to continue the work of a man known only by his last name of Colberg, who was a friend of Frederic Chopin, and who published 56 volumes about the folk materials that he had collected, restored, and preserved.

During the worst part of World War II, Zimińska and Sygietyński vowed that if they survived, they would move to the countryside outside of Warsaw and establish a school for the folk arts. Thus was their community started at Karolin in 1948.

Since the death of her husband in 1955, Mira Zimińska has directed the company single-handedly with astounding energy. A few years ago, she was the subject of a testimonial documentary movie, made in Poland, titled *Mira*, and has nearly attained the status of a true folk hero for her part in preserving the authentic cultural heritage of her native land.