

**Performing Abroad: ‘Lúčnica – Slovak National
Folklore Ballet’ in Melbourne, 2007**

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DECLARATION

I, Diane Carole Roy, hereby declare that, except where otherwise acknowledged in the customary manner, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, this work is my own, and has not been submitted for a higher degree at any other university or institution.

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DEDICATION

Jeseň na Slovensku

Vonku je ticho, všade je šero

Vo vnútri hmly vidím priateľských duchov

Biele brezy so zlatými vlasmi

Okolo ich nôh, zlaté koberec

Táto krajina je moja sestra

Niekedy rušová, niekedy pokojná

Niekedy stará, niekedy mladá

Ďakujem jej

Di Roy 2003

Autumn in Slovakia

Outside is quiet, all around is dim,

Yet inside the fog I see friendly ghosts

White birches with golden hair

Around their feet a golden carpet

This country is my sister

Sometimes turbulent, sometimes peaceful

Sometimes old, sometimes young

I thank her

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the significance of a Slovak traditional music and dance performance in Melbourne in October 2007 by *Lúčnica: Slovak National Folklore Ballet*. While the troupe represents a genre of traditional music performance that is revered by many Slovaks, it is also criticized in the community and scholarly narratives as being ‘artificial’. This thesis shows that *Lúčnica*’s performances are deeply significant, however, and that they constitute a legitimate form of music folklore practice for performers and Slovak audiences, embodying the Slovak landscape and history, despite artistic modifications. However, by taking an interactional viewpoint, this thesis shows that on foreign soil, complex meanings were thrown into relief. While *Lúčnica*’s stated mission is to spread Slovak traditional music culture abroad, it was found that in multicultural Melbourne, *Lúčnica*’s performance generated a variety of discursive strands. The same performance confirmed and celebrated Slovak ethnicity for Slovak Australians, and at the same time, contributed to the discourse of British hegemony and marginalization of the same. A second, but equally important focus of the thesis, is that it addresses the dialectic between theory and data. Ethnographic notes were analyzed according to Goffman’s model for non-verbal interaction, an ethnographic interview was analyzed according to the methods of Conversation Analysis, and an audience survey was conducted. These varied data and methodologies were unified by adopting an over-arching Foucauldian theoretical framework, thus aligning theory, data, and methodologies, and giving findings added cogency.

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