

Beraçe, Levéndikos, Puštено

Albania and Macedonia

Beraçe (Beh-RAH-chay), Levéndikos (leh-VEHN-dih-kos), and Puštено (POO-shtay-noh) are common Albanian, Hellenic, and Slavic names, respectively, for this traditional men's dance, which is popular in a large three-country region surrounding Berat in southern Albania, Flórina in western Greek Macedonia, and Bitola in former Yugoslav Macedonia. Beraçe refers to the town of Berat, Levéndis to a man with the qualities of youth, bravery, heroism, agility, and strength, and Pusteno means letting go. Related Slavic names include Beranče, Puscheno, and Puschenoto. Sometimes the dance is named for a village where it is especially well known; e.g., Armentsko and Bufsko. In its generic three measure form described below the dance has been taught recently by John Pappas (Mendocino Folklore Camp '93), Dick Crum (Westwind Workshop '93), Dennis Boxell (Kolo Festival '91), and Joe Graziosi (Stockton Camp '90). Many variations, including some for women, have the same rhythmic structure but different patterns and names. The musical repertoire is extensive. In the limited sample given below some of the compositions have names different from those of the generic dance.

- CASSETTES: John Pappas, *Elliniki Hori, Greek Songs and Dance* by the Kalakos Band, Side B/5;
Dennis Boxell, *Dances of Greek Macedonia*, Sides A/1, B/3;
Joe Graziosi, *Greek Dances, Summer 89*, Side A/11; 1990, Side B/3; 1992-Tape 2, Side B/6;
Atanas Kolarovski, *Makedonski Narodni Pesmi i Ora, AK-2*, Sides A/3, B/6; AK-4, Side A/4;
Society for the Dissemination of National Music, SDNM 105, Side B/5; SDNM 124, Side A/6.
- RECORDS: Pece Atanasovski, *JU LPY 50985*, Sides B/1, B/3; LP 6156, Sides B/4, B/6;
Dances of Serbia, Macedonia, and Bulgaria, AMAN-103, LP Vol 3, Sides B/2, B/3;
Folk Music from Northern and Eastern Europe, NISAVA, LP, Side B/5;
Simos Kostandinou, Flórina, *Folk Dances of Macedonia, Greece, 45 FL 2C*;
Dennis Boxell et al, *Macedonian Folk Dances, Folkraft, LP-15*, Vol I, Side A/1;
LP-24, Vol II, Side A/2; LP-25, Vol III, Side B/3.
- RHYTHM: The usual meter is 12/16 or 12/8=3+2+2+3+2, counted here as $\underline{1}+2+3+4+5=S Q Q S Q$
Alternatives include 17/16=4+3+3+4+3, 11/16=3+2+2+2+2, and 16/16=2+2+2+3+2+2+3.
- FORMATION: Line faces center with leader at right. Hands are joined, usually in W-pos; following the leader they may be lowered to V-pos, especially when the line moves rapidly.
- STEPS: "Bounce": Raise on ball of ft ahead of the beat and lower heel to ground on the beat.
- STYLING: Depending on the music and leader, movement is deliberate or active, but always controlled.

Measures	12/16 or 12/8 meter	PATTERN
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INTRODUCTION. The dance begins with any measure at the discretion of the leader.

I. BASIC

- 1 Facing ctr, bounce twice on L, raising R ft fwd and to R (cts 1, 2); step on R to R (ct 3); step on L slightly behind R (ct 4); step on R to R (ct 5).
- 2 Facing R of ctr, step in LOD on L across in front of R (ct 1); bounce on L, raising R ft fwd (ct 2); step in LOD on R (ct 3); turning to face ctr, step fwd on L (ct 4); step back on R (ct 5).
- 3 Facing ctr, bounce twice on R, raising L ft fwd and to L (cts 1, 2); step back on L (ct 3); step back on R (ct 4); step fwd on L across in front of R (ct 5).

II. IMPROVISATIONS

Improvised variations in footwork are common. The leader, who is in control of the pace of the dance, may perform turns, hops, squats, and leaps at will. Improvisations by other dancers come partly from the need to keep pace with the leader, but most are optional. For example:

A. Dance meas 3 in place.

- 3 Facing ctr, bounce twice on R, raising L in back and to L (cts 1, 2); step on L beside but slightly fwd of R (ct 3); step fwd on R in front of L (ct 4); step back on L (ct 5).

B. Vary the weight transfers.

In most Macedonian dances two-count combinations like bounce-step, touch-step, and step-hold are interchangeable; also, the precise timing of the weight transfer is optional. A common variation of the Basic pattern removes a 'bounce' and adds a 'hold' in any or all measures.

- 1 Bounce, step, hold, step, step (cts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5).
2 Step, step, hold, step, step (cts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5).
3 Bounce, step, hold, step, step (cts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5).

C. Use syncopation to add rhythmic variety.

The slow counts 1 and 4 are often danced as two counts; i.e., 1=1-uh (or uh-1), where 1, 1, and uh are of relative musical lengths 3, 2, and 1, respectively. In measure 2 of the Basic pattern, cts 1 and 4 may be danced as hop-step or step-step to provide leaping or skipping movements with effectively seven, rather than five, dance counts. For example:

- 2 Hop-step, hop, step, hop-step, step (cts 1-uh, 2, 3, 4-uh, 5).

D. Point.

Measures 2 and/or 3 may be danced with a foot point.

- 2 Dance cts 1,2,3 of Basic pattern (cts 1,2,3); straightening knees, point L ft out and slightly fwd without wt (ct 4); hold (ct 5).
3 Raise L leg, bending L knee (ct 1); bounce on R ft, swinging L behind R (ct 2); step on L behind (ct 3); straightening knees, point R ft out and slightly bkwd without wt (ct 4); hold (ct 5).

DANCE SEQUENCE: Dance Basic pattern, or substitute any part of these or other appropriate improvisations.

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