

RŪČENICA FOR THREE

(Bulgaria)

Rŭčenica (ruh-chen-NEE-tsah) is from the Strandža district in southeast Bulgaria. The dance was learned by Mr. Dick Crum from the late Ilkja Rizov, lead dancer with the Kutev Bulgarian State Ensemble. In a very elaborate form, the dance served as a basis for a portion of that group's show-piece "Rŭčenica." After much research into Rŭčenica For Three, Mr. Crum selected four figures and put them into a fixed sequence for use and enjoyment by American and Canadian folk dancers. Figs I, II, and III are original "village" figures; Fig IV is a stylized pattern, meant to give an idea of the improvised, non-structured solo dancing typical of the dance in its village setting. The following description is as the dance was presented by him at the 1974 University of the Pacific Folk Dance Camp, Stockton, California.

MUSIC: Record: XOP0-324 - A "Strandžanska Rŭčenica"
- B "Trakijska Rŭčenica" 7/16 meter.

Any moderate to fast Rŭčenica may be used.

RHYTHM: This music is in 7/16 meter, counted 1-2 (2/16); 1-2 (2/16); 1-2-3 (3/16). Since 3 beats to a meas are felt, the ct will be given thusly: ct 1 (2/16), ct 2 (2/16), ct 3 (3/16), with the ct 3 being of slightly longer duration. Cue Q,Q,S.

FORMATION: Trios, 1 M with 2 W, all facing ctr of large circle of many trios. M arms are outstretched in front of W, his R hand joined with R hand of W1 to his R, L hand joined with L hand of W2 to his L. W join inside hands in front and above M arms.

STEPS and Basic Rŭčenica Step: Step R (ct 1), step L (ct 2), step R with slight bend of R knee STYLING: (ct 3). Reverse ftwk for repeat of step. Steps are small with a light leaping quality. Dance moves quickly with precise, controlled ftwk. Begin R, the basic step is danced in place, bkwd, fwd, sdwd or turning with an occasional stamp to accent the beginning or ending of a musical phrase. The basic step is used in Figs I, II and III.

Bounce: With wt on one or both ft raise heel(s) with ball(s) of ft still on the floor (up beat) lower heel(s) (down beat). The bounce has a heavy down feeling.

All Figs beg R.

MUSIC 7/16

PATTERN

Measures

I. FORWARD AND BACK

- 1-4 With 4 basic steps trio move fwd twd ctr of circle.
5-8 With 4 basic steps trio move bkwd.
9-16 Repeat action of meas 1-8 (Fig I) fwd and back. At end of meas 16 W raise joined arms high to form an arch.

II. SQUAT, ARCH AND TURN SET INSIDE OUT

- 1 M: Squat to a deep knee-bend moving fwd under W raised joined hands (cts 1-2); rise with wt on R, L extended across in front of R with L knee slightly bent (ct 3).
2 M dance 1 basic step LRL, turn L (CCW) and raise his R and R hand of W1 high to form an arch. M is now facing W2.
W: Dance 2 basic steps in place.
3-4 With 2 basic steps, M turn more to the L, at the same time pulling W2 fwd under arch of M and W1. With 2 basic steps W1 move a little fwd, beginning to follow W2.
5-6 With 2 basic steps W2 turn R (CW) raising her L and M L joined hands high to form an arch, and lead the trio in a CW direction. W1 move fwd, passing under this arch, turn R and follow W2. M follow W1 under the arch, turn L (CCW) and bring his L hand

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back over his head. Set is roughly back in orig starting pos facing ctr of room. W keep joined hands high in an arch.

- 7-8 With 2 basic steps M move bkwd ducking under W arch. W dance 2 basic steps in place.
9-15 Repeat action of meas 1-7 (Fig II).
16 Release hands and re-join them to form a circle of three.

III. CIRCLE RIGHT AND LEFT

- 1-8 With 8 basic steps circle R (CCW) turning, dancing sdwd, etc., in free style.
9-16 With 8 basic steps circle L (CW) turning, dancing sdwd, etc., in free style. Finish the circling with M facing ctr of room. On last meas (meas 16) release hands and place them on hips, fingers fwd, thumbs back. M dance 1 basic step in place. With 1 basic step W move a little fwd of M, W1 turn 1/4 L (CCW), W2 turn 1/4 R (CW), to face each other about 6 ft apart. W1 R and W2 L shldrs twd ctr of room.

IV. SOLO

- 1 M: In place, hop L, kicking R across in front of L (ct 1); step R in place beside L (ct 2); hop R, kicking L across R (ct 3).
2 Step L in place, extend R fwd low (ct 1); step R in place, extend L fwd low (ct 2); step L in place, extend R fwd low (ct 3). (Scissor Kicks)
3-8 Repeat action of meas 1-2 (Fig IV) 3 times.
9 With 1 basic step move fwd twd ctr of room.
10 With 1 basic step move bkwd.
11 Repeat action of meas 9 (Fig IV), passing between the 2 W.
12 With 1 basic step turn 1/2 R (CW) ending on the other side of set with back to ctr of room, M is now facing his orig pos in the circle of three.
13-16 Repeat action of meas 9-12 (Fig IV) returning to orig pos.

- 1 W: With 1 basic step move fwd twd each other, turning 1/4 R (CW) to end with L elbow pointing twd each other.
2 Looking over L shldrs at each other, touch L toe to L side, leave R ft in place, with wt over both ft bounce twice (cts 1-2); bounce again releasing R ft with a slight flick (ct 3).
3 Begin R, with 1 basic step move bkwd, turning 1/2 L (CCW) to end with R elbow twd each other, looking over R shldrs.
4 Repeat action of meas 2 (Fig IV) with L toe pointing away from each other.
5-8 Repeat action of meas 1-4 (Fig IV).
9 With 1 basic step W move fwd twd each other as if to pass L shldrs.
10 With 1 basic step turn 1/2 L (CCW) to exchange places.
11-12 With 2 basic steps move bkwd into each other's pos.
Note: W stay face to face throughout this movement (meas 9-12, Fig IV).
13-16 Repeat action of meas 9-12 (Fig IV) returning to orig. pos.

W: Meas 9-16 (Fig IV) are accompanied by special hand movements. Hands are held in front a little above face level, palms fwd (fingers not spread, although thumbs are opened out). Bring hands downward with an abrupt, flat movement as if smoothing a flat wall or surface (cts 1-2); quickly flick hands under and out by turning palms twd you as fingers bend twd palms, then with outside edge of hand "leading down" and away from you, flick hands out into pos of cts 1-2 (ct 3). Hands do not touch; if they did, middle knuckles would be in contact during the down-and-away flick. 8 hand movements are done (1 per basic step).

At the end of Fig IV, quickly re-form the set to repeat the dance from the beginning.