

PASARELSKA

Bulgarian

PRONUNCIATION: pah-sah-REHL-skah

TRANSLATION: From Pasarel

SOURCE: Dick Oakes learned this dance from Rubi Vučeta, a prominent Balkan dance leader and teacher in the 1950s and 1960s in the Los Angeles, California, area. Measures 5 and 6 are danced differently in the San Francisco bay area as taught by Dean Linscott and Suzanne Rocca-Butler (see below).

In the old days, when it was hard for (especially) Americans to travel to the eastern block, people "learned" a number of dances from various written sources, reconstructing them as best they could. "Pasarelska" provides a good example, where it seems clear that someone read Boris Tsonev's book, and found a tune that seemed to work – at least it was in the right meter, nevermind that the tune was Rhodope and the dance was Šop. Putting the two together resulted in a hybrid that presumably never existed in Bulgaria, but has lived a charmed existence in American International Folk Dance circles since the 1960s. – Tom Roby

BACKGROUND: Pasarel (Dolni Pasarel), Bulgaria, is home to a nearby moderately-sized hydro-electric power station commissioned in 1956. It is part of Stolichna Municipality. The town is located on the Iskar River some 12 miles southeast of the center of Sophia and just 3 miles from the Iskar reservoir. A dam is situated roughly halfway between the Iskar Reservoir and Lake Pancharevo nearby.

MUSIC: XOPO (45rpm) X-330
XOPO (LP) X-LP-4, Horo and Racenica Dances of Bulgaria
Mediterranean (45 rpm) 4003
DANSSA (LP) Bulgarian Folklore Songs & Horos, "Makadonsko Horo"

FORMATION: Lines of mixed M and W with hands grasping neighbors' belts in "X" pos with R arm under, L arm over, leader at R end. End dancers hold free hand on hip (often with fingers pointed back) or leader may flourish a handkerchief. If belt hold cannot be used, join hands low in "V" pos.

METER/RHYTHM: 7/8. Pasarelska is played in a "slow-quick-quick" rhythm pattern conventionally notated in 7/8 meter, with three dancers beats or counts. After several measures, the tempo quickens into 7/16 meter.

STEPS/STYLE: Movements are small and sharp and the knees are flexed. The style is simple, rustic, and unsophisticated.

MEAS

MOVEMENT DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION - None.

THE DANCE

- 1 Facing ctr, leaning fwd at hips, and looking R, step R swd (ct 1); step L across in front of R (ct 2); pause (ct 3);
- 2 Repeat action of meas 1;
- 3 Straightening body and looking fwd, small step R swd and slightly back, bending supporting knee slightly (ct 1); step L next to R (ct 2); step R next to L (ct 3);
- 4 Small step L swd, bending supporting knee slightly (ct 1); step R next to L (ct 2); step L next to R (ct 3);
- 5 Moving twd ctr, step R (ct 1); step L (ct 2); rise on L, raising bent R knee in front (ct 3);
- 6 Repeat action of meas 5;
- 7 Keeping bent R knee raised, rise again on L, pivoting to face L (ct 1); step R swd twd ctr (ct 2); bending R knee and bending fwd slightly at hips, stamp L next to R (ct 3);
- 8 Straightening body and turning to face ctr, step L bwd, bending supporting knee slightly (ct 1); step R bwd (ct 2); step L bwd (ct 3);
- 9 Step R bwd, bending supporting knee slightly (ct 1); step L bwd (ct 2); step R bwd (ct 3);
- 10 Step L diag fwd to L, bending supporting knee slightly (ct 1); step R in front of L (ct 2); step L in place (ct 3).

Repeat entire dance from beg.

NOTE: After the tempo quickens, the music becomes so fast that the the rise on ct 1 of meas 7 becomes the beg of a leap that ends on ct 2.

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA VARIATION

- 5 Moving twd ctr, step R (ct 1); step L (ct 2); begin to bring R ft low fwd (ct 3).
- 6 Lift on L bringing R ft up in front (ct 1); step R (ct 2); step L (ct 3).