

Bohemian Polonez (Polonaise)

Czech Republic

The Polonez became an international dance in many countries in the 19th century, each with its own way of pronouncing or spelling Polonez (Polonaise). The original dance was done by the gentry and aristocrats in the royal courts where it spread to the different countries.

This is a choreographic arrangement by Richard Powers based on the reconstruction by Frantisek Bonus (1919-1999). These are Polonez variations as danced in Bohemia in the 19 century. Prof. Bonus's long and complex original choreography was intended for stage performance by a professional company. This version is still challenging, but has been shortened to a social form dance for pleasure. It was presented by Mr. Powers at the 2003 Stockton Folk Dance Camp.

TRANSLATION: The original translation of Polonez (Polonaise) means Polish, but it is also means a processional type of dance. Therefore this is a Polonez done by the Bohemian aristocrats.

MUSIC: CD: Vintage Dance Music by Richard Powers, Stockton 2003, #1 "Z Horicka"

RHYTHM: 3/4 meter. Tempo: 96 beats/min

FORMATION: Cpls in a processional arrangement facing LOD with W on M R side.

STYLE: Tall and elegant

STEPS: Polonez step (basic):

On preliminary ct &, plié (MR, WL), then extend outside ft (ML, WR) fwd; strong step fwd onto ball of ft, standing tall (ct 1); walk elegantly 2 more steps (cts 2-3). Repeat with opp ftwk. When walking lead with the ball of the ft, then the full ft.

Polonez chassé R: (Same ftwk for both)

Step R fwd on ball of ft with a slight upward thrust of the body (ct 1); quickly close L beside R heel (ct &); walk R,L fwd (ct 2-3). Repeat 2 more times. On meas 4, walk 2 steps fwd then close ft tog.

Balancé: (Same ftwk for both)

Step L to L (ct 1); close L beside R rising on balls of both ft (ct 2); lower heels (fall) (ct 3). Repeat with opp ftwk.

Polonez Pas de Basque (PDB): (Both use same ftwk)

Meas 1: Step L to L (ct 1); step R across L with plié and lean slightly fwd to face diag L as L lifts behind R close to floor (ct 2); Step L bkwd to place where it was (ct 3). (Both M and W rise onto the sides following the body turn.)

Meas 2: Step R to R side (ct 1); close L beside R rising on balls of ft (ct 2); lower heels to floor (M arms down and slightly out to sides with palms fwd, W hands on skirt) (ct 3). (Both M and W arms down and slightly out to sides with palms fwd.)

Repeat meas 1-2 with opp ftwk.

Balancé Ouvert: (Both use same ftwk)

Small step R in place in plié - while turning 1/4 R (L shldr twd ptr) (ct 1); touch L toe on floor twd ptr - straighten knees (ct 2); step L beside R - turning to face ptr (M arms in akimbo pos) (ct 3). Repeat with opp ftwk

Step-rise-fall: Step fwd on ball of ft (ct 1); close one ft beside the other with wt on balls of both ft (ct 2); lower heels (fall) (ct 3). Ftwk (which ft you use) depends on whether you are a M or W.

POSITION: Open position: Cpls slide-by-side, facing LOD. Either inside hands, MR and WL or opp hands may be joined and are extended fwd at elbow ht. W slightly fwd of M, W hand on top of M.

ARMS: Akimbo for M: Loose fist on hip(s).

Arms & hands: For M and W, when hands are free they are down at sides and held slightly away from body.

METER: 3/4

PATTERN

Meas.

INTRODUCTION

1-4 Introduction, no action.

5-8 Honor ptr: Turn to face ptr on meas 5; hold in place facing ptr on meas 6; M bow slightly, W plié and both straighten on meas 7 (W may cast her eyes down, but do not bow or non.); cpls turn to face LOD - while joining inside hands and extending them fwd on meas 8.

Bow: With ft tog, M bend slightly fwd from waist as W plié keeping head upright.

PART I: PROMENADE

1-6 With cpls in open pos - do 6 Polonez steps fwd in LOD (beg out side ft) - inside hands joined and fwd.

7 W cross-over: M step fwd on L (ct 1); close R to L (ct 2); hold in place (ct 3)
W do 3 steps fwd as M leads W to his L side so that both face LOD. M R and W L hands remaining joined and fwd at elbow ht. End with M L arm in Protective Pos (M L behind W back, but not touching).

8 Cpls end step with a step-rise-fall.

9-14 Do 6 Polonez steps fwd in LOD - beg on new outside ft (MR-WL).

15-16 W cross-over: Repeating ftwk of meas 7-8, M hold in place and unfold ptr so that cpls face each other (M back to ctr).

Bohemian Polonez, page 3 of 4

- 17-19 R hand turn: Touching R palms tog at shldr ht with L arm hanging freely - both beg R, do 3 Polonez chassé steps fwd while making 1 complete CW turn.
- 20 M leads W into returning to open pos by - releasing R hands as W turns to R (CW) once stepping R,L, touch R beside L (3 cts) and join inside hands in open pos.
- 21-23 Cpls do 3 Polonez steps fwd in LOD, beg outside ft (ML-WR).
- 24 Both do a step-rise-fall - while turning to face ptr.
- 25-28 L hand turn: Repeat meas 17-20, with L hand, both beg L. This leads M back to his place at end.
- 29-31 Cpls do 3 Polonez steps fwd in LOD, beg outside ft (ML-WR).
- 32 Both do a step-rise-fall - while turning to face ptr (M back to ctr).

INTERLUDE I: (Same ftwk for both)

- 1-2 Balancé: With cpls facing (M bk to ctr) and M drawing arms into akimbo pos on balancé - M lower arms at end.

PART II: SOLO

- 1-4 Do 2 Polonez PDB, L,R.
- 5 Balancé Ouvert to R.
- 6 Repeat Balancé Ouvert to L, closing R to L ankle (no wt) on ct 3.
- 7-8 S-shaped cross-over: Beg R, do 2 Polonez steps fwd (pass ptr by R and turning R slightly to face ptr with eye contact). After passing M, hook L to face ptr (W back to ctr) with a step-rise-fall
- 9-16 With opp ftwk - repeat PDB, Balancé Ouvert and cross over (passing L shldrs).

INTERLUDE II: CIRCLE OUT

- 1-4 All cast off: Both beg L, individuals form 2 large circles to L (CCW) (M circle inside, W twd outside). Both do 9 walking steps, ending with step-rise-fall. End with ptrs facing in a single file circle. M face LOD and W-RL0D.

PART III: WEAVING

- 1-6 Grand Chain: Both beg R, do 7 Polonez steps fwd (passing 1 person per Polonez), passing R shldrs, L shldrs, etc. When passing each person by R, lead with R shldr, or lead with L shldr if passing by L - arms follow body movements.

- 7-8 With a polonez step and a step-rise-fall, turn $\frac{1}{2}$ with the 7th person and end facing each other (M RLOD, W LOD).
- 9-14 Grand Chain: Repeat meas 1-6, returning to meet your orig ptr.
- 15-16 With a polonez step and a step-rise-fall, turn with the orig ptr. All end facing cr.
- 17-19 All joins hands forming a large circle - hands are out to side and slightly fwd at chest ht, - both beg R, everyone does 3 Polonez moving to L (RLOD).
- 20-22 Releasing neighbors hand, both continue with L to extend and join 2 hands with ptr - both beg L, do 3 Polonez steps, and circle CW, with ptr one full turn, and end opening to face ctr.
- 23-24 All join hands in one large circle both beg L, move fwd twd ctr with 5 smooth walking steps - slowly hands raise to approx. eye ht. On last ct close R beside L. M bow, W plié - look fwd across the circle.

ALTERNATE ENDING

Alternate ending for exhibition (when you don't want to turn your backs to the audience): At the end of the Grand Chain, when you arrive back home, take ptr R hand and turn in place, all end facing RLOD (M on inside of circle) and taking Protective Pos: Retaining R hands, M hold L arm horizontally behind W back.

- 17-19 Promenade: In protective pos (R hands joined) - both beg R, do 2 Polonez fwd in LOD.
- 20-21 Turn in place: Turn ptr CW once, maintaining pos - M move bkwd, W fwd.
- 22 Step away from ptr keeping L hands joined.
- 23 M kneels on one knee.
- 24 M kisses W hand.

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