

DRMEŠ

The Drmeš is the native folk dance of Croatia. It is a partner or group dance consisting of many routines and variations done in couple formation, in threes, fours, and groups in closed circles, which makes it one of the most colorful dances of Yugoslavia. Every locale seems to have its own music for the dance, and the steps vary from village to village. The National Dance Ensemble of Croatia has fit many of these steps and variations into beautiful choreographies to go with the equally colorful peasant costumes, all of which brings great acclaim wherever the group performs. Described here are several routines, depending on the number of dancers.

RECORD: Balkan 506-B; Jugoton J-6002; Jugoton C-6256.

PRONOUNCED: DURR-mesh (Shake Dance)

BASIC DRMEŠ STEP: (Simplified "USA ethnic" version) for Part I of any routine given here.

- Meas. 1 All hop on right foot (count 1, and or "down, and")
2 All hop on left foot (count 1, and or "down, and")
3 All step right, left, right.
4 All hop lightly on right foot. Pause.
5-8 Repeat meas. 1-4 reversing footwork and starting with left hop.
9-16 Repeat all of the above, meas. 1-8. The translation of Drmeš is "shake" and that is just what the step is designed to produce. There are many variations of this step, some very intricate, but all have the same rhythm and produce the same bounce. The body is held proud and erect, and the steps can be done without the feet being raised off the floor.

COUPLE DRMEŠ

- Part I
- A. In shoulder-waist position couple dances meas. 1-16 as described. Man may shift woman slightly to his right and left.
 - B. In extended arm position: Man's right arm is held straight resting on woman's right shoulder while her right arm is held adjacent to man's extended arm and resting on his right shoulder. Free hands are held bent in back (as leader's in kolos). Left hands are used for meas. 9-16. Couple may move in a semi-circle either way, but with very small steps.
 - C. Couple stands apart 3 or 4 feet, hands on hips (man's may be clasped in back, but not low); there is more freedom for individuality here, both showing-off in femininity and masculinity.

- Part II
- Man places woman slightly on his right and in shoulder-waist position couple turns clockwise with 8 czardas turn steps. Actually only 6 are done, the 7th and 8th measures being used for the change step: step right, left, right, hold, and turning to the left for repetition (meas. 25-32) to the left, ending with a step left, right, left - but do not stamp.

DRMEŠ FOR THREES

FORMATION: One man, two women. Women stand side by side facing man. Man's right hand is on the left hip of the woman on his right, his left hand is on the right hip of the woman on his left. Women's inside hands are on the man's nearest shoulder (left woman's left hand on his left shoulder). Sets may be scattered about the floor, but dance is stationary. (Continued on next page)

DRMEŠ FOR THREES, Cont.

- PART I In formation as described the set does 16 drmeš steps, all starting with the right foot. Man may switch the position of the women on measure eight: pass the woman on the right in front of the woman on the left and place "right" woman at left shoulder, and turn body about $\frac{1}{4}$ turn so that original "left" woman now assumes position at right shoulder; dance back into place. Man may switch back on measure twelve.
- PART II (Meas. 17-24) All releasing hold, man turns with "right" woman in shoulder-waist position eight czardas turn steps clockwise. The 7th and 8th steps are change steps: right, left, right in place (do not stamp). Then (meas. 25-32) man turns to "left" woman and repeats the 8 czardas turns with her (ending with left, right, left and preparing to assume the position for the drmeš step for Part I). While man is dancing with one woman, the free woman does the drmeš step of Part I in place (no turning), hands on hips, in a nonchalant manner since supposedly, for the moment, the other woman is preferred. There is nothing to prohibit the man from dancing with the same woman in both directions, but being a good sport he will make it up next time.
- VARIATION. All three join hands behind backs forming a small, tight circle (hands are joined with one person removed). All cross right foot over left (count 1) and clockwise continue with L,R,L,R,L,R,L,R,L,R,L,R,L,R,L. Right foot is kept almost stationary. Repeat (meas. 25-32) in the opposite direction, or for variety, set may revolve all 16 measures in one direction.

DRMEŠ FOR FOURS

FORMATION. Two men standing facing across from each other with partners at right side also standing facing across. Men's hands are joined behind women's backs, women's hands are laid loosely on men's nearest shoulders.

- PART I Set dances drmeš step as described; the men may switch women on the 8th measure (also 4th or 12th) so that the women pass left shoulders.
- VARIATION. Couples may do Part I in "couple" position then join into set for Part II
- PART II All bringing hands down and crossing them in front (left hand over, right hand under) the set dances clockwise with 16 modified czardas-turn steps to eight measures of music, then swing-left foot over repeat counter-clockwise. Or set may dance all 16 measures clockwise for variety.
- VARIATION. Each man dances with his partner right and left as in the Couple Drmeš, ending with the woman on his right.
- VARIATION. Each man dances with his partner clockwise, then with the other woman counter-clockwise, ending with her on his left and resuming positions for Part I.
- (An interesting routine can be developed using the "circle" and one of the variations alternately.)

DRMEŠ CIRCLE

FORMATION. This is an interesting progressive drmeš excellent for group dancing and colorful enough for exhibiting. Close one large circle consisting of couples, the woman on the man's right. The hand positions are identical to the formation for Drmeš For Fours, the men's hands joined behind the women's backs, the women's hands on the men's nearest shoulders. The men are erect, their hands supporting the women.