

GAMBAO

The Gambio is one of the old dances of Puerto Rico and is basically a country dance of a comic nature. The music has words which are usually sung and may be sung even while dancing. Loosely translated, they tell of the Jibaro (country man) who goes into town and stops at the St. of the Tank and proceeds to have a "few too many" - to the point where he can no longer walk normally, but instead is both bowlegged (gambio) and hunchbacked (jorobao). He returns home in this deplorable condition and finds his wife not at all happy about the situation. The dance is many times performed in a most comical manner, even to the extent of swinging sticks or brooms at each other which must be ducked or jumped in the process of the dance. (The sticks are not included in this version.) The music is part of the large family of Seis dances which are extremely old. This particular recording was made for us by an old gentleman of about 75 years of age playing the cuatro, while his wife, about the same age, taught us the dance. The more vigor and life put into the dance the more fun it is to do.

Music: Monogram _____ - "Gambio"

Formation: Couples facing each other.

Style: Loose and floppy, with knees always bent slightly and turned outward to give a "bowlegged appearance."

Steps: Schottische - dance as a simple schottische (1-2-3 hop) but with knees bent and separated. Followed by step hops done as usual except that each ft is raised high into the air with knee bent out to side.

Gambio: Slow - With wt on L ft, R ft extended slightly fwd, knees well bent, R ft brushes fwd and back almost like a tap step (ct 1-2). On ct 2 wt is transferred to R ft. Change wt to L ft (ct 3-4).

Fast - Step done as above but count is as follows: R ft does fast brush step (ct 1) (wt is changed as ft brushes back), step L (ct 2), repeat brush (ct 3), step on L (ct 4).

Meas. Figure I

1-16 Partners facing, each dance one schottische step to own R. One schottische step back to place. Four step hops facing each other.

Repeat above.

Still facing, four step hops toward center of circle, M moving bkwd, W fwd. She should be shaking her finger at him and scolding. He is shaking his head to deny everything.

Repeat step hops toward outside of circle. (He is becoming angry and asserting himself.)

Repeat step hops to center - she is scolding again. Repeat step hops away from center (he is still trying to explain).

Figure II

1-8 Slow Gambio step, partners beginning step facing and dance eight full steps turning away from each other (M to his L, W to her R) to return to facing position.

9-16 Fast Gambio - 16 fast Gambio steps facing partner. (They are still arguing about the whole matter.)

Figure III

1-8 M turning to his L, W to her R, complete one turn with 3 step hops, stamping on ct 4.

Repeat above turning in opposite direction.

Repeat both turns.

Repeat entire dance three times in all. On last measure (a stamp), W claps her hands, swings with her R hand at M's head as he ducks, clapping both his hands to one side.