

Presented by Gordon Tracie

GAMMAL POLSKA
Sweden

Gammal Polska is also known as "allmän polska" (common Polska). At one time it was done generally throughout the land, now it is done mainly in localized forms in central and northern districts. It is considered a restored old time dance and was researched in Sweden by Gordon Tracie from 1950 on.

"Gammal polska", literally meaning Old Polska, is in essence a "generic" form of the dance which prevailed throughout much of Sweden for a half-dozen generations. It is the "common denominator" of a myriad of sub-forms which are found in local districts throughout the land. A dancing cpl need only sense the basic rhythm as found in Gammal polska, and master the technique of rotating to it, to be able to grasp the spirit of the Swedish Polska idiom, and from there go on to learn any number of fascinating variants, each with their own individual dialect.

This dance was brought to the U.S. from Sweden in 1961, following research spanning a period of over 10 years, on old Swedish dance forms. It was danced in Seattle at Skandia Folkdance Society, and first introduced to the general American folk dance public, at Stockton Folk Dance Camp in 1962 -- nearly a decade before domestic research by Sweds themselves began unearthing a myriad of similar forms. Through the devoted efforts of retired school teacher Johan Larsson of Dalarna, a number of other Swedish researchers, the Old Polska, in numerous local variants, is now firmly re-established in Sweden as a viable traditional dance.

PRONUNCIATION: Gahm-mahl Pohl-ska

RECORD: Viking V-821-a (45)

RHYTHM: Triple meter; quaver (8th note) polska rhythm; tempo can be from moderately slow to moderately fast; definitely legato temperament.

FORMATION: Cpls in a circle (W on M's R) facing LOD (CCW) in open shldr-waist pos

STYLE: Legato, restrained and smooth or animated, depending on tempo and temperament of music being played; free form.

METER: 3/4

PATTERN

NOTE: The following parts are not figures in the regular sense, but merely two dance positions -- rest-step and turn -- which are alternated at will, with no fixed number of meas for either.

Continued...

PART A: Open polska fwd ("försteg")

In open shldr-waist hold, begin on outside ft and move fwd in LOD with open polska steps.

PART B: Closed polska turn ("rundpolska")

Whenever desired, cpls assume closed basic polska hold, and rotate CW with full turn polska steps: M L, both, R; W both, L,R.

Cpls may revert to open "rest" steps (promenade) at any time by merely breaking out into open position again.

Repeat until end of music.