

Len Irthe Maes

(Thrace, Greece)

This playful and joyful dance hails from the area of Soufli in eastern Thrace. It originated in honor of the Spring season and, of course, celebrates the arrival of the month of May (thus its name Len Irthe Maes). It is the beginning of the first blossoms blooming in springtime, and nature is bursting in this agricultural area. But springtime is also associated with young people celebrating the Rites of Spring by gathering in countryside picnics and picking flowers and making their festive flowered wreaths which will adorn the door of every home. These wreaths will later ceremoniously burn on another feast day in the coming of fall. Celebrating the seasons is very important to this Thracian agrarian society. The celebrations are of significant importance, especially with the young people, as a chance to dance outdoors after a grim winter as they take hands in the “Aradiastos Horos” with freely defined movements representing the freedom and joy of springtime.

Pronunciation: LEHN EER-thee MAH-ees

CD: The Spirit of Greek Dance with Athan Karras AK2001 2/4 meter

Formation: Open circle of dancers facing LOD and traveling in a circle as if dancing on its circumference. Hands are joined in V-pos, punctuated with arm movements by raising arms up high.

Meas

Pattern

- A. TREHATOS (running)
- 1 Facing LOD, take a large running step fwd on R (ct 1); running step fwd on L (ct 2); running step fwd on R (ct &).
 - 2 Repeat meas 1 with opp ftwk.
 - 3 Turning to face RLOD but continuing to move bkwd in LOD, arms raised high, take a large step bkwd on R (ct 1); step bkwd on L (ct 2); step bkwd on R (ct &).
 - 4 Repeat meas 3 with opp ftwk.
 - 5-32 Repeat meas 1-4 seven times (8 total).
- B. TO PIDIMA (jump step)
- 1-2 Facing LOD with arms in V-pos, repeat Fig A, meas 1-2.
 - 3 Raise R ft and cross over in front of L (ct 1); step on R (ct 2); hop on R, raising arms (ct &).
 - 4 Lowering arms, taking large step bkwd in RLOD on L (ct 1); step bkwd on R (ct 2); step bkwd on L (ct &).
 - 5-32 Repeat meas 1-4 seven times (8 total).
- C. TO PIDIMA KE TREXIMO
- 1 Step fwd on R (ct 1); hop on R (ct 2).
 - 2 Step fwd on L (ct 1); hop on L (ct 2).
 - 3 Facing LOD, take a running step fwd on R (ct 1); running step fwd on L (ct 2); running step fwd on R (ct &).
 - 4 Repeat meas 3 with opp ftwk.
 - 5-8 Raising arms, repeat meas 1-4 but traveling bkwd.

Len Irthe Maes—continued

SONG WORDS:

LEN IRTHE MAES, AMAN GEL AMAN,
LEN IRTHE MAES KI'E ANIXI
N'IRTHI MAES KI' ANIXI, N' IRTHI,
N' IRTHI TOU KALOUKERI

The month of May is coming,

And with the month of May, summer is almost here.

LEN ANTHIZOUN TA, AMAN GEL AMAN
LEN ANTHIZOUN TA TRIANDAFYLLA
ANTHIZOUN TA TRIANDFYLLA,
TA MOUSHOU, MOUSHOUMYRIZMENA

They say that the roses are blooming,

The roses are blooming and the blossoms so well.

LEN ASPRU TRIANDA, AMAN GEL AMAN,
LEN ASPRU TRIANDAFYLLO FOURO
ASPRU TRIANDAFYLLO FOURO, KE THE
KE THELOU NA TOU VAPSOU

They say that I am wearing a white rose,

And this white rose I want to dye it.

LEN KI'AN THA TOU PLI AMAN GEL AMAN,
LEN KI'AN THA TOU PLINO STIN AVLI
KI'AN THA TOU PLINO STIN AVLI POULLES,
POULLES KARDIES THA KAPSOU

And if I dye on my courtyard,

I will hurt many hearts of suitors.

Presented by Athan Karras