



SHTI GATZU DEBRU ( this is July)

Folk dance from Okinawa. Record available later from Folk Dance House Box 2305 N Babylon LI NY 11703.

Taught by Harumi Sano, Maine Folk Dance Camp 1983

Music of this dance originated about 500 years ago in Okinawa. It is quite a religious song dediacted to Budda in the Okinawa area. People sang this music to set at rest the soul of the dead person. Once a year, on July 13th, people welcome the souls of ancestors whom they have lost forever. They commemorate this by cleaning the ancestor's tombs and gardens and present flowers and fruits. The people dance in front of the gardens and tombs.

The dance is done with special Japanese wooden "castanets"(not like the Spanish castanets) with red and white tassels, made out of bamboo. In Okinawa they are not tied to the fingers, although as Harumi explained that is quite difficult to master the art of playing them this way. So they do make these now with an elastic type string to tie around the fingers. Spanish castanets may be used but they should be tied on and used in the Japanese way as demonstrated in class. On each beat of the music the "castanets" are "clcked" together.

THE DANCE

INTRODUCTION:

Stand solo, facing center of ring. Hands at side. Brush right foot forward and back and step on it. Brush Left foot forward the same way. Clack castanets on each beat. This is done for 16 counts.

PART 1 Step to Right on Right foot and at same time bring both hands overhead to Right. See diagram # 1  
Cross Left foot over Right, step on it and do a bend of both knees. Bring both hands down to Left past your body. See Diagram # 2.



Still facing center, step back on Right foot, swinging both hands to Right, step back on Left foot, swing both hands to Left. Step forward Right and Left foot and swing both hands forward to finish in front of chest. Clack on each beat.

Foot work is: Step to Right, Cross Left over Right, Step to Right, Cross left over Right as both hands go up to Right over head and low to Left. Clack castanets on each step.

Part 1 is done twice.

(continued)

**PART 2** Still facing center...Take three quick steps turning a quarter turn to Right to face counterclockwise as you clack castanets three times.  
 See diagram # 3  
 Facing counterclockwise. Step on Right foot and touch Left toe next to Right foot as you gracefully circle both hands in front of chest to finish with Right hand in air about head high, and clack, on each step touch. Repeat stepping on Left foot, and touch Right toe, and finish with Left hand at head height. See Diagrams # 4 and 5.

Repeat same foot work but this time the hands are used differently. Note that in the above, the hands are done with elbows quite bent when the last count is done with a hand up. Now the same figure is done but the hand is brought forward with only a slight bend of elbows and fingers are forward as if the castanet was snapping at something ahead of the hand.

**CUE:** Feet: Step touch, step touch, step touch, step touch.  
 Hands: Right hand up, Left hand Up. Right hand snaps forward, Left hand snaps.



Do another step-touch starting with Right foot, then left foot, but this time, put Left hand down straight beside body as Right hand moves STRAIGHT forward at shoulder height, then Left hand goes forward as Right hand is held straight down beside body. Clack on each step touch.

**FINISH** by facing center and take two steps in Place Right and Left, and clack on each step.

Repeat dance from beginning. ( leave out introduction)

Dance Directions by Mary Ann Herman

Presented by Harumi Sano at Maine Folk Dance Camp 1983

