

SLÄNGPOLSKA FROM DUNKER

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Source

Jim learned this dance from Henry Sjöberg in Stockholm, in the summer of 1984. Dunker is a parish in the county of Södermanland, which lies south and west of Stockholm, and this dance was actually collected by Henry himself in the early 1960's. It is an especially expressive dance and allows for great stylistic variation on the part of the couple, though, of course, as in many Scandinavian dances the more exuberant moves are reserved for the male. In particular, the notes for this dance are intended as a bare bones outline of the basic dance, while more subtle features of styling must be learned in class and by study of archival film.

Music

Slängpolska are in 3/4 time. Any slängpolska from Södermanland, such as the one on the privately produced tape mentioned in class, will do.

Hold

Walk:

M and W walk side by side in a small circle, with each partner alternately on the inside. Inside hands are held together palm to palm, and outside hands are held palm to palm. The person on the inside of the circle has his forearm over the forearm of the other partner.

Dishrag:

M and W walk side by side with M on the inside of the circle. M's left hand holds W's left and his right, her right, with the right arms over the left.

Turn:

M and W stand right shoulder to right shoulder, with both M and W having right hand on partner's waist and left hand on partner's upper right arm.

Free Dance:

Partners dance individually, walking and turning.

Steps

Walk:

M proceeds about floor in a small circle, taking one step on each beat. These steps are relatively even, though there is a very slight "svikt" on each beat. W accompanies M around floor in position described above.

Dishrag:

Still using one step per beat, M begins to turn W CW under their upraised arms; as she completes her turn, M begins to turn himself CCW under the upraised arms.

Polska:

Both M and W dance: Ct 1) step L around partner, ct 2) step R across L, toe more or less pointing towards center of circle, ct 2&) step ball of L, continuing around in circle, ct 3) Step R.

Polska turn may be done for any number of measures, at M's discretion. The couple will then open up and begin the "lausdans" (free dance).

Sequence

- I Promenade
- II Dishrag
- III Polska

Jim LaVita

~~JB~~

Tulsa 1990

continued →

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- IV Free Dance
- V Polska and Free Dance repeated
- VI Exit from floor.

Comments

The term "slängpolska" is used in at least two different ways in Sweden, though all uses of the term refer to a 3/4 time dance. In central Sweden, say in Jamtland and Medelpad, the prefix "släng" refers to a quicker polska, to distinguish it from a slower, or "sen" polska. These central Swedish slängpolskor, as a rule, progress around the room, as does the waltz. However, south of Lake Mälaren the term "slängpolska" refers to dances that are done in place, or "på fläck". It has been suggested that, at one time, all polskor revolved about one spot and that some of them began to move about the room only in the last century, under the influence of the waltz and polka. These stationary versions, in this view, are relics of the very earliest couple dance forms in Sweden.