

# Palestinian Debkeh

Palestinian line dance

Learned from Becky Gordon who spent a couple weeks learning it from Palestinian youth  
6/4 meter (222)

Styling: Energetic but contained; action is almost entirely from waist down (except brief arm swinging in chorus)

Handhold: down "V" hold; Start facing LOD

Clarification: In meas 7, Part A: Chorus, what I'm trying to describe is a variation of a debka (debkeh?) step. It takes some practice and isn't easy to notate. If you're a novice try just doing a "hop-step-step" (LRL); then as you hop on the left try touching forward with the ball of the R; finally, instead of just touching forward with the R, try taking some (not a lot of) weight on the ball of the R (forward) as you hop on the L, in effect almost (but not quite) hopping on *both* (as in "both-step-step").

meas

## **K: Chorus**

### **"tap"**

- 1 Raise and lower L heel on each beat (1 - 6)
- 2 Repeat meas 1 one time (total of 2x)

### **"transition"**

- 3 Stamp L in place with wt (1); hold (2); RLR (QQS ) all in place (3&4); low kick (or touch) fwd with L while arms swing in or fwd(5); low kick (or touch) back with L, arms swinging back (6).

### **"walk"**

- 4 Moving LOD: Starting with L, walk four steps LOD (1, 2, 3, 4); touch L fwd (5); touch L back (6); Arms continue to swing in and out going in (fwd) (1), out (back) (2), etc.
- 5 – 6 Repeat meas 4 twice (total of 3x); note: can take weight on L on last beat of meas 6

### **"debkeh"**

- 7 Moving LOD: Hop on ball of L, (or leap onto L if your weight isn't already on it) simultaneously touch or take some wt on R fwd of L (ideally about 2/3 wt on L, 1/3 wt on R)(1); leap fwd onto R (& of 1); Step fwd onto L (2); Repeat counts 1&2(3&4); Leap onto R, turning to face center while swinging L back(5); Low kick fwd with L (6).
- 8-10 Repeat meas 7 three more times
- 13-14 Repeat meas 7 twice more, but gradually cease fwd travel in LOD and gradually turn left to end doing complete figure in place facing center; in called version this is something leader leads not with a call but by example.

### **A:Figure One**

- 1 Facing center: Step side L (1); stamp R next L (2); Step side R (3); Stamp L next to R (4); Step side L (5); stamp R next L (6)
- 2 Step side R (1); Stamp L next to R (2); Moving center, step L, step R next to L (3&); stepfwd L (4); leap fwd onto R, swinging L back (5); low kick fwd with L (6);
- 3 Moving away from center (still facing center): step L back, step R next to L (1&); step L back, swinging R back (2); low kick R fwd (3); leap onto R in place swinging L back (4); low kick with L fwd (5); step LR (QQ) both in place (6&);
- 4 Stamp L with wt in place (still facing center) (1); hold (2); Leap in place onto both, L fwd, R back (3); leap onto R in place swinging L back (4); low kick with L fwd (5); step LR (QQ) both in place (6&); Note: beats 4–6 of measure 4 are exactly the same as those (beats 4–6) in measure 3.
- 5-6 Repeat meas 4 two more times (total of three times)

meas

### **B: Figure Two**

- 1 Facing and moving center: Step L, Step R next to L (1&); Repeat 1&(2&); hold (3); leap onto both feet, apart horizontally (4); Take wt onto R in place (I tend to actually leap onto my R, but Jane says I shouldn't)(5); Stamp L next to R (6);
- 2 Backing out of center: Step L, R, L, R (1-4); Low kick fwd with L (5); Bring L back (6);
- 3 – 6 Repeat meas 1 & 2 two more times (total three times)

### **C: Figure Three**

- 1 Facing center: Stamp L four times in place (1-4); lift L back, bending knee (5); Step L,R, both steps in place, (6&);
- 2 Stamp, with wt, L in place (1); Hold (2); twisting slightly to the left, stamp (no wt) R three times QQS (3&4); low kick R fwd (5); Step R in place next to L (6);
- 3 - 6 Repeat meas 1 & 2 two more times (total three times)

Presented by Gary & Jane Diggs

Camp Hess Kramer Institute

October 28-30, 2011 Starting with two meas (12 counts) intro (no action), do the above in the order KAKBKCKAK.

The dance is traditionally (and should be) called. Anywhere in the notation of figures that you see “repeat meas x y times”, it is only a suggestion. These figures or steps can be repeated any number of times. Specifically, only meas 3, the “transition”, and the first three meas of part A, are *not* repeated. Everything else is up to the caller. Having said that, the repetitions notated above, along with the intro and order suggested, fit well with the music and may work well for those new to the dance.

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