

Walenki Funk

Russian

History

A Russian dance. Well, as far as I know the 'going round' and 'in and out' parts are traditional while the 'arches' part was choreographed by Bernhard Wosien. In this version the parts are twice as long as the version I was first taught, to fit the music.

Rhythm

An even 4/4 rhythm throughout. There is a step on each and every beat.

Use the unaccompanied voices as an introduction, and start the dance when the instruments come in.

Steps

Start the dance in two concentric circles, with equal numbers of dancers in each. The inner circle faces left, the outer circle faces right. Arms are in a V hold.

Going around

Everybody takes eight steps forward. On step number eight turn to face the other direction. Take another eight steps, and another turn. Then repeat, ending up with four sets of eight steps. At the end of the sequence face centre. People in the outer circle should end up between people in the inner circle.

Arches

The inner circle take four steps backwards, raising their arms high. At the same time the outer circle lets go hands and take four steps forwards, going through the arches formed by the raised arms, and joining hands again on the inside. The new inner circle then make the arches and the new outer circle go through them. There are eight sets of arches in total, so everyone will make arches four times and go through them four times.

In and out

Everyone takes four steps forwards, raising the arms high, then four steps back, lowering them back to a V hold. This is repeated four times in total, but on the last time the outer circle lower their arms in front of the inner circle, ending up in a sort of basketweave hold.

After linking up the 'going around' part is repeated, but with everybody starting off going to the right. The in and out part is then repeated in reverse, going in and out four times and 'unlinking' on the last time.

The sequence as originally taught to me was going around, arches, going around, in and out, and repeat. With beginners I often just alternate between going around and arches, and I have seen it done with going around and in and out alternating.

Music

Kurski Funk from Earthbeat by Paul Winter.

Dance description by Andy Bettis 4/2003