

POLONEZ

Arranged by Ada Dzielanowska.

Record: Muza XL-0203, side A, band 1, Ogiński's Polonez "Pożegnanie Ojczyzny,"
[poh-zhehg-NAH-nyeh oy-CHIHZ-nih] (Farewell to my Country), 3/4 time,
available from Ada.

Polonez [poh-loh-nez], the Polish national "Grand March,"*) is Poland's oldest dance in 3/4 time, dating back to the 15th century and is derived from the peasant walking dance, the chodzony. The music for chodzony was simple, slow and even in rhythm, which made the dance dignified, serious but almost monotonous. It was first written in 2/4 time. Later on, the rhythm was changed to 4/4: one step on each of the first three beats of the measure with a pause on the fourth beat. The peasant chodzony, sometimes also called wolny (slow), okragly (round) or polski (Polish), was usually done with singing. It was always part of wedding and other family rituals, and various communal ceremonies. It was an honor to be the leader, the wodzirej [voh-jee-ray], and usually an older man was chosen. He played an important role, as he led the couples into intricate, moving, winding, serpentine pattern.

From Poland the peasant chodzony migrated to neighboring countries: to Morawy (Moravia, presently part of Czechoslovakia) and to Łużyce (Lusatia, presently in East Germany), where it became almost its national dance.

In Poland from the village folk the chodzony was taken up by the nobility. First it was done as a slow, triumphant procession of knights, with all the elements of a medieval marching dance. It is said, that in 1574, during the coronation of King Henry Valois, in the royal castle of Kraków, it was danced for the first time with ladies. In this way dignitaries of the state and their wives were introduced to the new French King, who came to rule Poland. This was also the first time that the polonez was danced in 3/4 time. From that time on, it became a court dance and was used to open all great, stately balls. The music became more elaborate, livelier, and acquired a wider range, the steps became embellished and numerous new figures choreographed; singing was eliminated, but facial expression and hand gestures became important.

The polonez reached the peak of its development by the end of the 16th and the beginning of the 17th centuries. The lovely music and the graceful movement of the dancing enchanted foreigners and it spread all over Europe under its French name, polonaise. Practically all great composers and choreographers tried their hand at it and, of course, Chopin made it famous. It also reached Sweden during the reign of the Swedish dynasty of Waza kings in Poland; even now, there exists a Swedish singing folk dance, called the "polska."

The tradition of polonez survived all the political and social changes that took place in Poland throughout the centuries, and it has remained the queen of Polish dances to this day. It is still danced in present-day Poland: older people remember it, young people learn it through participation in numerous folk dance groups. Research on the old figures is continued and even contemporary music is composed. The polonez has its triumphant hour every year, when literally thousands of couples in folk costumes dance it in a stadium during the annual harvest celebrations, the all-Poland dożynki, held in a different city each year.

The polonez, "Farewell to my Country," used for this arrangement, is an old piece of music, known and beloved by every Pole. It has an interesting format of 10- and 8- and 6-measure phrases. It was composed in 1794, by Michał Kleofas Ogiński (1765-1833), an aristocratic man of wealth and diplomat. He created this haunting melody, in a nostalgic mood, after the downfall of the first Polish insurrection, when he was about to leave his fatherland for Italy to continue the struggle for Polish independence abroad.

*) For a traditional arrangement see p. 4.

(Polonez - p. 2)

Steps and Styling

The Polonez should be danced smoothly, with pride, dignity, and grace. Torso is erect and head held high. Courteous attention should be given to ptr. With each step, ft should be extended and slightly turned out. Arms, when extended, are straight but not rigid. M's free hand(s) should be in a fist(s) placed on the fwd part of his hip(s), elbow(s) fwd and shldr(s) down. With her free hand(s) W holds her skirt out to side(s).

Polonez Step - takes 1 meas: Do a preparatory bending of the knees as you release wt from outside ft (M-L, W-R) and begin to straighten outside leg as you move ft fwd just off the floor (ct & before ct 1); continue motion of outside leg and end by stepping onto it, knee straight, as you rise from inside leg (ct 1); do 2 sliding, elegant steps fwd (cts 2,3). Repeat of Step is done with opp ftwk.

Polonez Step Moving Bkwd - takes 1 meas: Do a preparatory bending of the knees as you release wt from ft about to step (ct & before ct 1); take 1 step bkw (ct 1); take 2 small steps bkw (cts 2,3).

1st Bow - takes 2 meas (described for M, W use opp ftwk): Step L ft sdwd to L, leaving R ft extended on floor (ct 1 of 1st meas); hold (ct 2 of 1st meas); close R ft to L ft (no wt) (ct 3 of 1st meas); leaving L ft in place and L leg straight, step back with R ft, bending knee (ct 1 of 2nd meas); hold (cts 2-3 of 2nd meas).

2nd Bow - takes 2 meas (done only by M): As you lift head slightly, take a small step L ft sdwd to L, leaving R ft extended on floor (ct 1 of 1st meas); hold (ct 2 of 1st meas); close R ft to L ft, wt on both ft (ct 3 of 1st meas); bow head (cts 1-2 of 2nd meas); straighten head (ct 3 of 2nd meas).

1st Arm Pos: Cpl stands side by side, W on M's R, both facing LOD. M: extend R arm fwd, at waist level, palm facing L. W: place L hand, palm down on M's R hand.

2nd Arm Pos: Cpl stands side by side, W on M's R, both facing LOD, but M's upper body turned slightly twd ptr. M: extend L arm fwd, at waist level, palm up, and extend R arm diag up and diag in back of ptr. W: place L hand, palm down, on M's L hand.

Note on changing Arm Pos - M: when assuming 2nd Arm Pos, always do a large upward sweep of straight R arm; when changing from 2nd to 1st Arm Pos, do a large downward sweep of straight R arm.

Formation

Cpls around the room, M's back to ctr, ptrs facing each other and holding inside hands, joined arms extended in RLOD; free fist placed on own hip. Unless otherwise noted, beg all Figs M-L ft, W-R ft, and dance 1 Polonez Step to each meas.

PATTERN

Mel. MeasuresTime 3/4I. PROMENADE AND BOW TO PTR

- | | | |
|---|------|---|
| A | 1 | No action. |
| | 2 | With 2 steps (M-LR, W-RL) done in place, face LOD, assume 1st Arm Pos, W hold skirt (cts 1,2); hold (ct 3). |
| | 3-8 | Promenade in LOD. |
| | 9-10 | Stepping to side to face ptr and extending joined inside arms in RLOD, dance M-2nd, W-1st Bow. |
| A | 1-2 | Facing LOD again and resuming 1st Arm Pos, move in LOD. |
| | 3-10 | Repeat action of previous 3-10 meas. |
| B | 1-8 | Continue promenade in LOD. |

(cont.)

II. CHANGING PLACES

- A 1-2 Move in LOD.
 3 M: close R ft to L ft, wt on both ft, while leading ptr in front of you (cts 1,2); hold (ct 3). W: walk fwd in a semi circle in front and around ptr to his L side.
 4 M: hold. W: with 3 steps (LRL) make a 1/2 CCW turn to face LOD.
 5 Move in LOD.
 6 M: move slightly fwd, leading ptr in front of you. W: move fwd and across to R in front of ptr to return to his R side.
 7 Move in LOD.
 8 Assuming 2nd Arm Pos, move bkwd in RLOD.
 9-10 Cpl dance a full CCW turn in place.
 C 1-10 Changing to 1st Arm Pos, repeat action of previous 10 meas, except end with M slightly fwd of ptr.

III. TRIANGLE FIG

- D&E 1 Retaining 2nd Arm Pos, M: step with an accent L ft across to R in front of ptr, bending knees very deeply (ct 1); with 2 steps (RL) move slightly to R (cts 2,3). W: dance in place.
 2 Releasing ptr, move M-bkwd, W-fwd.
 3 M: move fwd at a L diag. W: extending slightly curved R arm fwd at waist level, make a full CW turn with 3 steps (RLR).
 4 Assuming 2nd Arm Pos, cpl move in LOD. M: on ct 1 clap hands in a large vertical motion, R hand moving up, L hand moving down, head held high.
 5-8 Move in LOD.
 9-16 Repeat action of previous 8 meas.

IV. PROMENADE

- A 1-10 Changing to 1st Arm Pos, promenade in LOD.

V. FINAL BOW

- A 1 With a 1/4 M-CW, W-CCW turn move to the R-side-to-R-side pos, join R hands, elbows bent, palms at head level, place L arms in the same pos on your L side, and start a CW walk around ptr.
 2-3 Continue the CW walk around ptr.
 4 Release R hand hold and with 3 steps (M-RLR, W-LRL) make a 1/2 CW turn in place to reverse pos.
 5-8 Move CCW around ptr.
 9-10 Release L hand hold and making a 1/4 CCW turn, step fwd to face ptr, join R hands at head level and dance the 1st Bow, extending L arms diag down to side.



This arrangement introduced in February 1982, at a workshop for Mr. Masaharu Sano's Folk Dance Group in Tokyo, Japan, by Ada Dziewanowska. Please do not reproduce these directions without the Dziewanowskis' permission.

TRADITIONAL ARRANGEMENT OF THE POLONEZ (p.4)



Starting position: Couples entering in line or around the room moving in LOD, hands held either in 1st or 2nd Arm Pos.

Wodzirej [voh-JEE-ray] (the leader) calls the figures.
Suggested figures:

Para za para [PAH-rah ZAH PAH-rom]: MARCH of couples around the room.



Panie do śródeczka [PAH-nyeh DOH shroh-DECH-kah]: LADIES STEP INSIDE the circle helped by their ptrs and move in RLOD walking on their tip toes with smooth, tiny steps, one to each ct. Meanwhile Men move in LOD with regular polonez step, arms in 2nd pos. When ptrs meet Man takes Woman's L hand with his R hand, they turn in place CCW and resume movement in LOD.

Para w lewo, para w prawo [PAH-rah VLEH-voh PAH-rah FPRAH-voh]: Down the center, COUPLE LEFT AND COUPLE RIGHT, and when the two lines meet...

Brama [BRAH-mah]: One row makes a GATE for the other row by lifting the joined hands and when they meet again, the other row makes the gate.

Czwórkami [chfoor-KAH-mee]: When the two rows meet again, march down the center IN FOURS.

Gwiazda [GVYAHZ-dah]: Make a L-hand STAR formation (four abreast) and move in LOD.

Kółeczko [koo-WECH-koh]: Open the Star and join hands in a CIRCLE.

W lewo [VLEH-voh]: MOVE IN RLOD.

Ślimak (SHLEEh-mahk): Leader leads the "SNAIL" until the circle starts walking in LOD.

Para za para [PAH-rah ZAH PAH-rom]: MARCH of couples.

Łańcuch [WAHNEE-tsooh]: Face ptr and dance GRAND RIGHT AND LEFT.

Another Brama [BRAH-mah]: Move down the center, leading cpl lifts the joined hands and the second cpl walks under this GATE and in turn lifts their joined hands; rest of the cpls follow in like manner.

This can be followed by marching or other figures and ended with the FINAL BOW. Depending on number of couples and figures record must be played more than once.



Dance introduced in 1968 in Cambridge, Mass. by Ada Dziewanowska. Assistance in writing the directions by Conny and Marianne Taylor. Please do not reproduce the notes without Ada's permission.