

TOP SHOURMA

(Armenia)

Rhythm: 3/4, changing to 9/8 meter (counted: 1-2, 1-2, 1-2, 1-2-3)

Source: This dance was learned by Tom Bozigian from Sarkis Paskalian, artistic director and choreographer of cultural presentations of the Armenian General Benevolent Union and, for five years, director of Baalbeck International Folk Festival near Beirut (Lebanon). The music is from the Soviet Armenian State Folk Ensemble (T. Atumian, Director). Tom Bozigian first presented the dance at the 1972 San Diego Folk Dance Conference.

Style: Caucasian-Armenian form is very tall and straight. Movements are extremely sharp and defined.

Formation: The dance begins in 3/4 meter with little fingers joined at shoulder height ("W" position), then changes to 9/8 meter and dancers join in shoulder ("T") position. Leader is at the right.

Meas Count Movement

3/4 INTRODUCTION: 8 measures, orchestra

PART 1 (During Part 1, all movements are on count 1 of each measure.)

STEP 1

- 1 Facing center and moving sideways in LOD, step R to R; arms bend from the elbow sideways to R (windshield wiper effect)
- 2 Step L across R; arms move toward L
- 3 Repeat measure 1 (R to R)
- 4 Touch L toe next to R; arms move to "W" position
- 5 Step L forward toward center; hands lower to "V" position
- 6 Touch R toe across L instep
- 7 Step R backwards; hands raise to "W" position
- 8 Step L beside R
- 9-32 Repeat measures 1-8, 3 more times (4 times in all)

STEP 2

- 1 Moving toward center, step R forward; arms move toward R
- 2 Step L forward; arms move toward L
- 3 Step R forward; arms move toward R
- 4 Touch L toe beside R; arms remain toward R
- 5 Step slightly L on L; arms move toward L
- 6 Touch R toe beside L; arms remain toward L
- 7-12 Repeat measures 1-6 of Step 2
- 13 Moving backward, step R back as L heel pivots inward; arms move toward R
- 14-18 Repeat measure 13, alternating footwork, 5 more times (6 in all). During measures 17-18, change to shoulder hold ("T" position) in preparation for the next phase of the dance

Meas Count Movement

9/8 PART 2

STEP 1

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|-----|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | Facing center and moving sideways LOD with large steps, step R to R |
| | & | Step L across R |
| | 2 | Chug forward on L with bent knee as R raises beside L knee |
| | 3 | Hop on L as R extends forward |
| | 4 | Leap on R |
| 2-3 | | Repeat measure 1, alternating footwork, 2 more times (3 times in all) |

STEP 2

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|-----|----|--|
| 1 | 1 | Facing center and dancing in place, raise R knee across L |
| | & | Step R beside L with slight stamp (heel slightly raises throughout) as L knee raises slightly across R |
| | 2 | Repeat count & (L in place as R knee raises |
| | 3 | Kick R across L |
| | 4& | Step R-L in place with slight stamp |
| 2-4 | | Repeat measure 1 of Step 2, 3 more times (4 times in all) |

STEP 3

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|---|-----|--|
| 1 | 1 | Leap R slightly to R as L raises backward |
| | 2 | Leap L, as in count 1 but with opposite footwork |
| | 3 | Leap R in place with slight plie as L heel extends forward and touches floor |
| | 4 | Hop on R in place with raised heel; L lifts forward with toes pointed down |
| 2 | 1&2 | Facing slightly L and moving in RLOD, step L-R-L quickly as heels raise backward |
| | 3 | Chug forward on L toward RLOD as R heel touches forward on floor |
| | 4 | Slight hop on L in place with raised heel as R lifts forward, toes pointed down |
| 3 | | Repeat meas 2, moving LOD, with opposite footwork (RLR, chug R fwd, lift L) |
| 4 | | Repeat measure 1 with opposite footwork (leap LRL, lift R) |

REPEAT: Step 2, 4 times; Step 3, 1 time.

STEP 4

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|-----|-----|--|
| 1 | 1&2 | Facing and moving in LOD, step R-L-R quickly |
| | 3 | Step L across R |
| | 4 | Touch R toe in front of L |
| 2 | | Repeat measure 1 (RLR, L across, touch R) |
| 3 | 1 | Facing center and moving sideways to R, step R to R |
| | 2 | Step L behind R |
| | 3 | Step R to R |
| | 4 | Raise L in front of R |
| 4 | | Repeat measure 3 with opposite footwork and direction (L to L, R behind L to L, raise R) |
| 5-8 | | Repeat measures 1-4 |

REPEAT: Step 2, 4 times; Step 3, 1 time; Step 4, 2 times; Step 1, 2 times

Meas Count Movement

STEP 5

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|-----|-----|---|
| 1 | 1-3 | Facing and moving in LOD, release "T" position and, clapping hands on each count, step R-L-R in LOD |
| | 4 | Touch L across R |
| 2 | | Repeat measure 1, with opposite footwork, moving toward center |
| 3 | | Repeat measure 1, moving backward |
| 4 | | Repeat measure 1, with opposite footwork, moving in RLOD |
| 5-8 | | Repeat measures 1-4. On last count, step R next to L so that L is free to begin next step pattern. |

STEP 6

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|-----|-----|---|
| 1 | 1 | Joining again in "T" position and facing center, step L slightly forward |
| | & | Chug slightly forward on L as R circles sharply up (bicycle motion) to inside of L knee |
| | 2 | Step R in place as L heel sharply extends forward to touch floor |
| | 3&4 | Repeat counts 1&2 |
| 2 | 1 | Leap on L in place as R foot lifts sharply behind and across L leg |
| | & | Leap on both feet in place with heels raised and body twisting sharply to face slightly L of center |
| | 2 | Repeat count 1 with opposite footwork and toward LOD (heels twist L) |
| | & | Leap on R in place to face slightly L of center; L raises sharply behind and across R leg |
| | 3 | Leap on L in place to face center as R heel extends forward to touch floor (scissors) |
| | 4 | Repeat count 3 with opposite footwork (scissors) |
| 3-4 | | Repeat measures 1-2 |

ENDING

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|-----|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | Facing slightly L of center and moving backward in LOD, skip R as L steps backward |
| | 2 | Skip L as R steps backward |
| | 3 | Leap on both feet |
| | & | Jump backward with knees bent |
| | 4 | Land in place |
| 2-4 | | Repeat measure 1, 3 more times (4 in all). On final note of music, the dance concludes sharply by leaping on R in place as L heel extends forward to touch floor in RLOD, body also faces RLOD. |