

TSAMIKOS

Athas Karras

Record: Any Greek Tsamiko

This dance now is danced throughout Greece, though in its beginnings it was danced primarily in Epirus and in the Peloponesus. The dance is characteristic of a man who dances through, and with his movements symbolizes, goes through a battle. There is great heroic feeling as well as tense masculine expression. The dance is characterized with leaps and jumps, and though women now do this dance, they do not do any of the low bending, slapping of the feet or leaping in the air. The leader of this dance especially can show all his dance ability and thus share a great creative release in dance and in his imagination.

Music: The music is 3/8 and though we learn to adhere to this rhythm, it is important to forget the rhythm and develop an inner response to it, thus syncopations are a part of what we can do with the rhythm.

Dance Phrase is in a series of 12 steps, 8 of which travel to the right and 4 of which travel to the left.

The rhythm is characterized through a heavy and a light beat, thus making all the odd numbered beats heavy and the even number beats light.

Example: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10-11-12

Formation: Everybody holds hands in a circle, hands are held at shoulder height, leader holds handkerchief, which later on enables him to turn, swirl, leap, etc.

1. Step R foot to right in the circle (Heavy).
2. Step L foot to right in the circle (Light) crossing in front of R foot.
3. Step R foot to right in the circle (Heavy) feet apart.
4. Step L foot to right in the circle (Light) crossing in front of R foot.
5. Step R foot to right in the circle (Heavy) feet apart.
6. Step L foot to right in the circle (Light) crossing in front of R foot.
7. Step R foot to right in the circle (Heavy) feet apart.
8. Hop on the R foot, bring L foot close to R and off the floor, raising the L leg as you accent the beat (Light).
9. Step L foot to left side, traveling the opposite direction feet apart (Heavy).
10. Step to left side with R foot crossing in front of L foot (Light).
11. Step to Left side with L foot, feet apart (Heavy).
12. Bring R leg off the floor and cross it in front of the L in the air, and with the accent there is a slight kind of a kick-cross, simultaneously the Left leg lifts a little, carrying the accent of the crossing leg.

1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8

12-11-10-9

continued...

Variations for the dance follow

Leader's Variations:

Bear in mind that the Tsamikos leader realizes the greatest and fullest expression that is to be found in this dance. The leader eventually improvises within the strict rhythm his own feelings, and the keenest agility in movement. The steps and movements comprise low bends, forward and backwards; of leaps in the air, turns and single as well as multiple slapping of the heels.

TURN TO THE RIGHT:

- 1 - (Heavy) Bring and step right foot circling to Right.
 - 2 - (Light) Bring and step foot in front of right foot turning to right.
 - 3 - (Heavy) Bring and step right foot to right stepping on the side and completing the turn.
 - 4-5-6-7-8-9-10-11-12 - same as basic step.
- Note: One or more turns can be done within the phrase.

SLAP STEPS FOR LEADER:

- 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 - same as basic step.
 - 8 - Bring Left leg high and crossing Right with the foot almost as high as the knee and slap left 5 with right hand.
 - 9-10-11 Same as in regular step.
 - 12 - Raise right leg to side and slap right foot with right hand.
- NOTE: Other slaps are also permissible by the leader (male only) as long as they are within the phrasing of the dance measure and correspond with the rhythm.

SLAP VARIATION:

- 1-2-3-4-5-6 - same as the regular step.
- 7 - (Heavy) Bring feet together and sit in bend knees.
- 8 - (Light) Straighten up and as you come up, raise right leg to the side and slap right foot with the right hand.
- 9 - (Heavy) Place right foot down next to left on the floor.
- 10 - (Light) Raise left leg up and cross it in front of right leg and slap left foot with right hand.
- 11 - (Heavy) Place left foot down next to the right foot together.
- 12 - (Light) Raise right leg to side again and slap right foot with right hand on the heel, and you are ready to begin again from the beginning of the phrase.
