

RŮČENICA FOR THREE
(Bulgaria)

Pronunciation: Ruh-cheh-NEE-tsah

This is an unusual dance from the Strandža district in southeast Bulgaria. Dick Crum originally learned it from the late Ilija Rizov, lead dancer with the Kutev Bulgarian State Ensemble. In a very elaborate form, the dance served as a basis for a portion of that group's show-piece, "Růčenica." On the basis of later research into Růčenica for Three, Mr. Crum arbitrarily selected the four figures below and put them into a fixed sequence for use and enjoyment by American and Canadian folk dancers. Figs I, II and III are original "village" figures; Fig IV is a stylized pattern, for convenience of learning, meant to give an idea of the improvised, non-structured solo dancing typical of the dance in its village setting.

Record: Any moderate-to-fast "Růčenica" recording may be used. Mr. Crum likes to use several different ones, such as both sides of X-324 (A) "Strandžanska růčenica" (full studio orchestra)
(B) "Trakijska růčenica" (trio of older folk instruments)

Rhythm: The dance is in the standard "růčenica" rhythm, conventionally notated in 7/16 meter in a quick-quick-slow pattern having 3 dancer's beats:

| | | |
|---|---|----------|
| Q | Q | S |
| ♪ | ♪ | ♪. |
| 1 | 2 | <u>3</u> |

Formation: One man with 2 girls, one on either side, all facing fwd twd ctr. His arms are outstretched in front of girls; his R hand holds R hand of girl on R, his L hand holds the L hand of the girl on L. The girls' other (inside) hands are joined in front of him, over his arms.

Basic Step: The basic step used throughout (with exceptions in Fig IV) is the so-called 'růčenica' step, a lively RLR, LRL sequence in the above rhythm (Q-Q-S), with an occasional stamp to punctuate the beginning or end of a phrase. The basic 'růčenica' step is danced in place, backward, forward, sideways, turning, etc., and is subject to many individual variations. In this dance, all figures begin with the R ft.

Meas

PATTERN

FIGURE I (Forward and back) (Trios all facing ctr)
1-4 Basic steps fwd, RLR, LRL, RLR, LRL.
5-8 Basic steps bkws, RLR, LRL, RLR, LRL.
9-16 Repeat action of meas 1-8.

FIGURE II (Turn trio inside out)
1-2 Girls dance Basic step in place, raising their joined hands high. M does a prysiadka (deep knee-bend) in meas 1 (down on ct 1, up on ct 3) moving fwd under girls' raised arms. Coming up from prysiadka his wt is on R ft, and the L ft is brought across in front of R ft with L knee slightly bent. On meas 2, M does a Basic step LRL, turning a bit to L and bringing his R hand (holding R-hand girl's R hand) fwd over his head. He is now facing the L-hand girl.

RŮČENICA FOR THREE (continued)

- 3-4 All do 2 more Basic steps; M turns further to L, at same time pulling L-hand girl, who uses her 2 Basic steps to pass fwd under arch and bear R.
- 5-6 All do 2 more Basic steps: L-hand girl, having passed under arch, bears R, keeps her L hand (holding M L hand) high and turns a little R, allowing these joined hands to pass fwd over her head; R-hand girl moves fwd with 2 Basic steps, passing under this arch, bearing R and following L-hand girl.
M follows R-hand girl through arch, turning gradually L and bringing his L hand back over his head. At the end of these two meas, dancers are roughly in the same pos as in Fig I, but girls' joined hands are held high rather than crossed in front of M.
- 7-8 In 2 Basic steps, re-assume original pos, M ducking back under.
- 9-16 Repeat action of meas 1-8, Fig II.

FIGURE III (Circle R and L)

At the end of Fig II, release all hands momentarily, then re-join them in a circle of 3. Do not let go of hands during the circling:

- 1-8 8 Basic steps around to R in free style - turning, dancing sideways, etc.
- 9-16 8 Basic steps around to L " " " " " " " "

FIGURE IV (Solo Figures)

All release hands and place on own hips. M faces twd ctr, girls are facing each other about 6 ft apart, having stepped away from each other at the end of Fig III. R-hand girl's R shoulder and L-hand girl's L shoulder are twd ctr. M and girls' steps differ in this Fig.:

GIRLS

- 1 Beginning with R ft, girls move twd each other with 1 Basic step, each making a 1/4 turn CW, ending with their L elbows pointed twd each other.
- 2 Looking at each other over L shoulders, girls do the following "bounce step": Place L ft out to side (twd other girl) putting wt on both ft, and bounce twice (cts 1,2), bounce again, but release R ft (ct 3).
- 3-4 Do a Basic step, RLR, backing away from each other, making a 1/2 turn so that when they reach their home their R elbows are pointing twd each other. Looking at each other over R shoulders, do the bounce step described in meas 2. (L ft this time is pointed away from other girl).
- 5-8 Repeat action of meas 1-4, Fig IV.
- 9-12 With 4 Basic steps, beginning R ft, girls move twd each other as if to pass L shoulders, turn as they meet and back into opp place. (They are face-to-face throughout this movement.)
- 13-16 Repeat action of meas 9-12, Fig IV, to return to own pos.
- NOTE: - - Meas 1-8 are done with hands on hips. Meas 9-16 (changing places and returning), however, are accompanied by special hand movements:
- ct 1-2 Hands are held out in front, high, palms out, fingers not spread, though thumbs are opened out; bring hands downward with an abrupt, flat movement as if smoothing a flat wall or surface.
- ct 3 Quickly flick hands under and out. In slow motion this would be: bend fingers twd palms and turn plams twd you; then, with outside edge of hand "leading down" and away from you, flick hands out and into the pos of cts 1-2. Hands do not touch; if they did, middle knuckles would be in contact during the down-and-away flick.

A total of 8 of these gestures are done, one per Basic step: 4 across to opp place and 4 back to own place.

RŮČENICA FOR THREE (continued)MEN

- 1 In place, hop on L ft, kicking R ft across in front (ct 1). Step on R ft in place (ct 2). Hop on R ft in place, kicking L ft across (ct 3).
- 2 Scissors in place as follows: step on L ft, kicking R ft fwd (ct 1). Step on R ft in place, kicking L ft fwd (ct 2). Step on L ft, kicking R ft fwd (ct 3).
- 3-8 Repeat action of meas 1-2, Fig IV, three more times in place.
- 9-12 4 Basic steps as follows: RLR fwd, LRL back to place, then RLR, LRL fwd quickly passing between girls and gradually making 1/2 turn R (CW), ending on other side of set, facing the place he started from.
- 13-16 Repeat action of meas 9-12, Fig IV, returning to original pos.

At the end of Figure IV, all dancers quickly re-form the trios so as to begin the dance all over again from the beginning with Fig I.

Presented by Dick Crum