

Yolochki-metyolochki – Ёлочки-метёлочки

(Russia)

The song is a dance song from Siberia. It consists of so-called *chastushki*. These are four-line rhyming verses, often improvised by the singer on the spot (although many well-known and popular *chastushki* are written down and memorized by people these days). Sometimes, the *chastushki* in a song tell a complete story, but much more often the subjects of the verses have no relation to each other. Many *chastushki* are humorous and deal with current topics. In Communist times, *chastushki* were popular among common people to ridicule the leaders or the system, and were therefore not liked by the Party, but it was impossible to ban them from everyday life.

The title of this dance is the first line of the chorus of the accompanying *chastushki*. It can be translated as “little spruces, little brooms,” but actually the meaning of the words here is subsidiary to the rhyme and rhythm. The dance is choreographed by Hennie Konings and is an example of basic elements of the Russian folk dance school. It was first presented at a dance trip in Slavyanogorsk, Ukraine, in 2001.

Pronunciation: YOY-lahch-kee myeh-TYOY-lahch-kee

Music: 2/4 meter *Russian and Ukrainian Songs and Dances* presented by Hennie Konings and Ensemble Ozorniye Naigrishi, Syncoop 5770 CD 304, Band 18

Formation: Mixer circle, consisting of sets of two cpls (M on L, W on R), all hands joined in V-pos. Cpl on the R is Cpl #1, Cpl on the L is Cpl #2.

Steps & Styling: Double-step: Three steps in rhythm QQS, each step with a soft bounce in the knee.

Pripadanya step: Lift on L and step R to side with knee slightly bent (ct 1); step on the ball of the other ft with stretched knee crossing behind (ct 2). This step can be done with either ft, indicated as Pripadanya R (first step R sdwd to R) or Pripadanya L (first step L sdwd to L). This step shows a marked “up-and-down” movement of the body.

Drobniy khod: Slightly running step (ct 1); scuff-stamp with other ft (heel, no wt) next to the first step (ct &). Repeat with other ft. Basically, this is a running step with (scuff-like) stamps in between the steps.

Meas 2/4 meter

Pattern

8 meas INTRODUCTION No action.

I. FROM BIG TO SMALL CIRCLE

1-8 Beg with R, eight Double-steps in LOD.

9-12 Turn to face ctr. Pripadanya R to side in LOD four times. The last step L behind is replaced by a slight stamp (no wt) L next to R.

13-16 Turn to face RLOD. Starting with L, Drobniy khod six times followed by a stamped Double-step (L-R-L), starting off in RLOD, but the M of Cpl #2 releases his L hand and moves to the R into the ctr, after which the M of Cpl #1 also releases his L hand, such that cpls end facing each other, Cpl #1 on the outer circle facing in and Cpl #2 on the inner circle facing out.

II. SETS AND PROGRESSION

- 1-2 Cpl #1 forms an arch with inner hands; both cpls move fwd four steps while Cpl #2 goes under the arch made by Cpl #1 (cts 1-4).
- 3-4 Taking two hands with ptr, Cpl #1 on the inner circle moves LOD, and Cpl #2, on the outer circle, moves RLOD. All taking four steps, both M move fwd, while W move bkwd (M are “pushing” W), ending opp a new cpl (cts 1-4).
- 5-6 Cpl #2 now forms an arch with the inner hands. Both cpls move fwd four steps while Cpl #1 goes under the arch formed by Cpl #2 (cts 1-4).
- 7-8 All cast into place in four steps turning away from ptr and ending in the same formation as in Fig I meas 16.
- 9 Take two steps R-L fwd twd other cpl (cts 1-2).
- 10 Step R fwd (ct 1); stamp L without wt (ct 2). Greet across the set at stamp.
- 11-12 Repeat meas 9-10 with opp ftwk and direction (cts 1-4). Greet ptr at stamp.
- 13-14 Repeat meas 9-10 and take hands with other cpl to close the small circle.
- 15-16 Repeat meas 11-12 making the circle somewhat bigger (cts 1-4) and without greeting ptr.

III. FROM SMALL TO BIG CIRCLE

- 1-8 Eight Double-steps starting R, into LOD of small circle. The circle goes once around and then the W of Cpl #1 releases R hand and, followed by the other three dancers, leads the small circle into the big circle. All hands joined in V-pos.
- 9-10 Repeat ftwk of Fig II, meas 9-10 twd ctr of big circle (cts 1-4).
- 11-12 Repeat meas 9-10 with opp ftwk and dir (cts 1-4).
- 13-16 Repeat meas 9-12.
Repeat the whole dance from the beg with a new cpl.

Sequence:

Introduction (no action)

Fig I, Fig II, Fig III four times

Presented by Radboud Koop