

A4 NAMA DRMEŠ MEDLEY

Croatia (Yugoslavia)

The *drmeš* (DRR-mesh, "shaking dance") is the most typical traditional dance form in the northwestern part of Croatia. In former days, each village had at least one, and often several, melodies to which the dancers did the same local *drmeš* movements. A typical *drmeš* consisted of a circle of dancers who alternated some sort of "traveling" steps with various types of "shaking" steps, either in place or moving in one direction or another. The length of time devoted to traveling and in-place movements was indefinite, usually determined by the momentary, general mood of the dancers or the initiative of one acknowledged "leader."

In those rare cases where the *drmeš* is still done today (occasionally at a wedding or other celebration, usually only by older dancers) it is danced in couples (resembling, to the untrained eye, a stylized polka) or in small circles of 3 or 4 people. For the most part, however, the *drmeši* are seen nowadays only when presented by village amateur performance groups, at regional folk festivals. These are organized groups of villagers who, typically, select an old *drmeš* tune and set a fixed sequence of movements to it (the movements generally are culled from the memories of older local dancers) for presentation to an audience, as preserved, living museum pieces. Sometimes groups from two adjacent villages will select different movements and sequences for a *drmeš* melody common to both, giving rise to what puzzled American folk dancers sometimes think of as conflicting versions of one and the same dance.

The three dances in the "NAMA Drmeš Medley" are examples of *drmeši* which have undergone the preservative process just described. *Drmeš iz Zdenčine* originated in the village of *Zdenčina* (ZDEN-chee-nah), southwest of the Croatian capital, Zagreb; *Križi, križi, tiček* (KREE-chee KREE-chee TEE-check) is from the Prigorje district just north of that city; both these dances were collected by Dick Crum in 1954 and introduced to American and Canadian folk dancers shortly thereafter. *Kiša pada* (KEE-shah PAH-dah) or *Posavski drmeš* (POH-sahv-skee) was originally collected by Z. Ljevaković, choreographer for the "Lado" Croatian Folk Ensemble and included in his early piece, *Posavski plesovi*.

All the *drmeši* in this medley are in 2/4 time. The transitions from one to the other have been arranged by David Owens of NAMA (see "Sequence" at end of description).

Formation: Closed circle, integrated (M & W), hands joined in back-basket, i.e., with second person over on either side, across in back of nearest neighbor. There is no "rule" about which arms are over or under those of the neighbor, though when the circle alternates exactly M, W, M, W, etc, W's hands tend to be joined over M's arms.

NAMA DRMEŠ MEDLEY (Continued)

MEAS

PATTERN

DRMEŠ IZ ZDENČINE

Part 1-a

- 1 Facing ctr, fall onto flat Rft, bending R knee (1); stamp onto full Lft (stressing heel) beside Rft, sharply straightening both knees (&); repeat mov'ts of counts 1,& (2,&). Note that these mov'ts are all loudly, evenly stamped and have a distinct down-up appearance.
- 2-7 Repeat mov'ts of meas 1 six more times, gradually moving L (CW).
- 8 Stamp in place, Rft (1), Lft (2).

Part 1-b

- 9 Still facing ctr, step flat Rft twd ctr (where it will retain this same position relative to Lft thruout meas 9-16) (1); quickly flex R knee and straighten (&); step back onto Lft (2); quickly flex L knee and straighten (&).
- 10-15 Repeat mov'ts of meas 9 six more times, gradually moving L (CW).

Part 2

- 1 Turning to face L, stamp fwd in this direction with Rft, taking wt (1); hop on Rft, continuing to move in this direction (2); step fwd in this direction with Lft (&).
- 2-8 Repeat mov'ts of meas 1 seven more times, traveling rapidly so circle revolves CW.
- 9 Stamp fwd onto Rft in this direction, taking wt (1); abruptly pivot on Rft $\frac{1}{2}$ turn to face R (i.e., CCW around circle) and pause (2).
- 10 Facing in this new direction, stamp onto Lft beside Rft, taking wt (1) and pause (2).
- 11 In place, stamp onto Rft beside Lft, taking wt (1) and pause (2).
- 12 Moving fwd in this direction, stamp fwd onto Lft, taking wt (1); hop on Lft continuing in this direction (circle revolving CCW) (2); step Rft in this direction (&).
- 13-15 Repeat mov'ts of meas 12 three more times traveling rapidly.
- 16 Repeat mov'ts of meas 12, but instead of a step on the last "&", pause and ready Rft to begin Part 1 again.

(Continued).

KRIČI, KRIČI, TIČEK

Part 1

- 1 Facing slightly L, hop on Rft in RLOD (1); step Lft in this direction (&); step Rft in this direction (2).
- 2-8 Repeat mov'ts of meas 1 seven more times, for a total of eight, continuing to move circle in RLOD.

Part 2

- 9-12 Continue moving in RLOD with 7 walking steps beginning Lft (two per meas) followed by a pause on ct 2 of meas 12, in which dancer turns to face R (i.e., LOD).
- 13-16 Moving in LOD, take eight walking steps (two per meas) beginning Rft. Note that this is not identical to meas 9-12 - there is no pause here at the end; dancer ends facing R with wt on Lft.

Part 3

- 1-8 Reverse footwork and direction of Part 1.

Part 4

- 9-16 Reverse footwork and direction of Part 2.

KIŠA PADA (POSAVSKI DRMEŠ)

Note: At least four versions of this dance have been introduced in the U.S. and Canada since the late 1950's. All consist of various sequences of typical *drmeš* movements from the Sava River Valley (Posavina), and most are traceable, directly or indirectly, to Z. Ljevaković's stylization as performed by "Lado" and other stage groups in Yugoslavia. The version given here is made up of two traditional Posavina figures: a traveling buzz step and a basic *drmeš*.

Part 1 - Buzz step

- 1 Facing slightly L and moving in RLOD, step flat Rft across in front of Lft, bending R knee (1); continuing in RLOD, step on ball of Lft fwd in this direction, with L knee slightly bent, but not as deeply as R knee was in count 1 (2).
- 2-16 Repeat mov'ts of meas 1 fifteen more times, for a total of sixteen.

Part 2 - Drmeš

- 1 Facing ctr, stamp onto flat Rft beside Lft, taking wt and bending R knee (1); rise onto ball of Rft (&); come down on both heels together, knees stiff (2); come down on both heels again as in ct 2, but immediately release wt from Rft in preparation for following mov't (&).
- 2-16 Repeat mov'ts of meas 1 of this Part 2 fifteen more times, for a total of sixteen. Note that circle moves very gradually in RLOD during this part.

NAMA DRMEŠ MEDLEY Sequence

This medley is so arranged that the transitions from one dance to another occur "by surprise," i.e., the last movement of *Drmeš iz Zdenčine* (step-hop) becomes the first movement of *Kriči, kriči, tiček* (hop-step), etc., by means of an extra half-measure in the music that allows the transition to come out on the right foot. In both cases, this transition is signalled by the change to a new melody. Here is the sequence:

DRMEŠ IZ ZDENČINE

Two times through whole dance as written and one extra time through Part 1, PLUS the stamp onto Rft of ct 1 of meas 1 of Part 2.

KRIČI, KRIČI, TIČEK

Two times through whole dance as written and one extra time through Part 1, PLUS the step with the Lft of ct 1 of meas 1 of Part 2.

KIŠA PADA (POSAVSKI DRMEŠ)

One time through whole dance as written and one extra time through Part 1.