

BALLARISTOS

- Pronunciation: ball-ah-ree-STOH
Place of origin: the island of Mykonos
Source of music: *Balkan and Beyond: Greek Dances*, Lee Otterholt CD, track 1
Learned from: Lee Otterholt, 2006
About the dance: Ballaristos is an island-style “sta tria” dance. “Sta tria” means “three parts”, noted as A/B/B/ (A/B/B symmetric). It is danced to the same melody as “Syrtos naxou” or “Vlaha naxou”, and the steps are, indeed, a variation of this dance.
- Rhythm: 2/4
Formation: Open circle, leader on the R. Arms joined in “T” position. Leader holds R hand high. There is a quite pronounced soft bounce on the slow figure. The dance is more energetic, of course, on the fast figure.

Direction Measure Step

Introduction:

The leader may start anywhere in the music.

Slow, softly bouncing “sta tria”:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| → | 1 | Facing diagonally R of center and moving to the R, step on R to R (ct. 1), step on L in front of R (ct. 2). |
| ⊥ | 2 | Turning to face slightly L of center, step on R to R (ct. 1), keeping ball of L foot on floor, bend and then straighten R knee, that is “touch” ball of L foot on floor diagonally to the L with the feet quite far apart (ct. 2). Turning to face slightly R of center, repeat Measure 2 with opposite footwork. |

Throw L foot behind R:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| → | 1 | Facing center and moving to the R, leap onto R to the R, throwing L foot behind R with knees quite close together (ct.1), hop on R, bringing L foot around toward front (ct. 2), step on L across in front of R (ct. &). |
| ← | 2 | Stopping the momentum to the R and beginning to travel to the L, leap onto R to the R, again throwing L foot behind R with knees quite close together (ct. 1), step on L in place behind R (ct. 2), step on R to the L in front of L (ct. &). |
| ⊥ | 3 | Stopping the momentum to the L, jump onto both feet with knees bent and R slightly forward of L (ct. 1), low leap onto L, lifting R knee in front (ct. 2). |

Leader repeats each figure as many times as he or she pleases, generally phrasing the transitions so that the more energetic 2nd figure coincides with the more energetic part of the music (the refrain), although the phrases do not coincide exactly. The leader calls the transitions with a hearty “opa!” at the end of each dance phrase.

Dance notes by Lee Otterholt
(reformatted)