

Sobótki

Łowicz

On the eve of June 23rd, the shortest night of the year, the Poles celebrate St. John's Eve or as it was known in Pagan times "Sobótki". Many celebrations include music and dancing, fireworks, boat parades and lighting bonfires. In some regions women were celebrating the shortest night separately from men. Women were throwing herbs to the fire - hoping that it would protect them from evil. A single woman would make a wreath from herbs and float it down the river hoping that her future husband would find it and fall in love with her. During the "Throwing of wreaths" (Rzucanie Wianków), the men were jumping through the fire to test their strength and courage. Even today the traditional candle-lit wreaths are floated on the Vistula in Krakow during the St. John the Baptist feast - together with fireworks and bonfires to commemorate the holiday.

Translation: derived from Sobota – Saturday in Polish

Pronunciation: soh-BOOT-key

Choreographer: Richard Schmidt

Formation: Circle of individual dancers facing center. Men have hands on hips; Women have arms extended out to sides as if holding skirts.

Style: Non-partner dance done to a "chodzony" (walking) melody, the precursor to the Polonaise

Meter: 3/4

Walking step: (starting R) With wt on L, bend L knee and extend R ft fwd (&), step fwd on ball of R ft (1), step fwd on ball of L ft (2); step fwd on ball of R ft (3). Starting on L uses opp ftwk. Can be done fwd, bkwd, or sideways

Floating steps: On tiptoes with slightly bent knees, take 6 small steps per measure (2 per count) keeping the movement fluid and flowing as if carrying a full glass of water on the head

Meas **Introduction**

1-2 Face ctr

3-4 Starting with R ft, take 2 Walking steps CCW in small circle ending back in place

Meas **Part 1** (Verse)

1 Do full turn CW to R in 3 steps: R (1), L (2), R (3)

2 Facing ctr, with feet together do deep knee bend

3-4 Repeat meas 1-2

5 Starting with R, do Walking step to R (LOD), turning L on ct 3

6 Facing L of ctr, step L behind R (1), straighten both knees pointing toes of R in front of L and lean back on L (2,3)

7-8 Repeat meas 5-6

9-12 Starting with R, do 4 Walking steps to L (RLOD)

13-14 Repeat meas 5-6

15-16 Starting with R ft, take 2 Walking steps CCW in small circle ending back in place

Meas **Part 2** (Instrumental)

Close the circle by joining hands in V-position

1-7 Starting on R, do 7 Walking steps to R (LOD), raising arms straight up on meas 5, downwards on meas 6, to end parallel to floor on meas 7

8 With arms parallel to floor, begin Walking step with L (1), R (2), turn L and step L behind R (3)

9-10 Face RLOD holding hands down in V-position, do 12 floating steps fwd moving closer together

11 Do 6 Floating steps, raising arms up over heads

12 Keeping hands joined, do 6 Floating steps while putting R hand on own L shldr and L hand on shldr of dancer ahead

13-14 Do 12 Floating steps

15 Do 6 Floating steps while raising hands up, turning ¼ CW to face ctr

16 Do Walking step bkwds releasing hands

Dance Sequence: 1, 2, 1, 2, 1