

CONRADANCE MOSKWA (Moskva)

by Richard Powers

Moskwa is a longways set comprised of five figures from 19th century contradances and longways sets. It is named after 19th century music "Moskwa" composed by J. Decker-Schenk. It is not a Russian dance.

The Quadrille was a collection of five favorite Cotillion figures, combined into a new dance. But there was no comparable collection of five favorite figures for Longways Sets. They could have thought of it, but no one did. Moskwa is my answer to this long overdue concept.

Formation: Couples in a longways set, duple improper, with active couples facing down and inactive couples facing up the hall, all ladies at the right hand side of their partners.

Music: "Moskwa" by J. Decker-Schenk, 2/4 time. Performed by Mary Lea and Friends.

A TRADITIONAL CONTRADANCE FIGURE

- Half-coupled with partners (his right arm around her waist, her left hand on his right shoulder), the two men allemande left elbows with each other, with their partners in their arm, three-quarters around. 8 steps, falling back at the sides on counts 7 and 8.
- Take hands-four and circle to the left 8 steps, almost a full turn.
- Keeping hand with opposite, turn vis-a-vis by open two hands clockwise, one full turn.
- Keeping hand with opposite, take hands-four and circle to the left three-quarters, ending with the head gent back in original place, but keeping both ladies in his hands, one on either side (Troika position), with those three facing down the hall, as the inactive man steps off to his side (the original gent's side) alone.

B THE GRACES (or TROIKA)

- The trio, *à la graces*, walks down the hall 6 steps.
- Active man arches R hand high and L hand low to lead the ladies to cross over to opposite sides, then he turns under his own arm to face up the hall, counts 7-8.
- Trios advance up the hall to places, 6 steps, and start to lead the ladies into each other on counts 7-8.
- Two ladies of the trio Half Ladies Chain to each other, to cross over. Do not chain back. 8 steps.

C SPANISH DANCE

- Facing across the set with the lady on the right, gent gives his R hand to partner's L hand, gracefully balance forward and back.
- Advance to partner raising his R arm as he crosses over to her place, allowing her to pass forward under his arm and she turns a quarter to her left.

High energy music

- Facing up and down the set, execute the Spanish Dance figure again, but with Polka steps.
- Facing across the set, execute the Spanish Dance figure again. Finish after these 3 passes with all in their original places, duple improper, not progressed.

D LA TEMPÉTE

- Keeping near hands with partners, chassé as a couple 3 slides to the left, diagonally forward. Counts 1-2-3.
- Chassé as a couple 4 slides to the right, passing dos-a-dos with opposite couple. Counts 4-1-2-3, and close feet together, without weight, on count 4.
- Chassé as a couple 3 slides back to places. Counts 1-2-3, close feet together on count 4.
- Release partner's hand and advance to pass through to the next couple (pass vis-a-vis by R shoulder).

E RUSTIC REEL This is William Sidney Mount's couple version of the Rustic Reel. The Rustic Reel was traditionally done in trios, but Mount described a version for couples.

- Taking vis-a-vis in waltz position, galop 3 slides to the side, away from partner, and stop.
- Without turning, galop 3 slides back toward partner. On the 4th count, he unfolds his R arm to his R side, turning her halfway toward her right, which places her in the arms of her partner.
The ladies pass each other face-to-face, not back-to-back.
- Galop with original partner 3 slides to the side and stop.
- Galop 3 slides back toward the center. On count 4, he unfolds her to his right again, but instead of exchanging ladies again, the couple stays together, to repeat the dance from Figure A, with gents linking left elbows with each other.