

Tango Creole

English sequence dance by H. Clarke, 1924

Reconstruction by Richard Powers and Nick Enge



This tango is notable for illustrating the continuity between earlier and later forms of tango, and it also gives an example of sequence tangos borrowing steps from previous sequences.

Part 1 is seen in an earlier sequence by Vernon and Irene Castle (1914), and is similar to Arthur Murray's later American tango basic (1938). Part 2 evokes the structure of a Nicanor Lima media luna (c. 1916). The roots of Part 3 can also be found in Lima, as it begins with a repeated Sentada No. 1, but in the later style of collecting the feet, as seen in Argentine tango today.

Victor Silvester's Donella Tango (1950) includes half of these sections, Parts 2 and 3, unmodified. Part 4 is taken from a sequence that preceded Tango Creole, the Royal Empress Tango from 1922.

Danced in Closed position throughout.

bars Part 1

2 Starting Lead's left, back the Follow two slow steps along LOD (1, 2), then dance half of a box: forward, side, close (3, 4-and). The description doesn't say whether the timing of the second bar is S-QQ or QQ-S, so we let the music suggest which. Richard chose Tango Magenta as appropriate music for this dance, and that music suggests S-QQ.

2 Repeat with the opposite foot (5, 6, 7, 8-and).

 Part 2

2 Step side to center (1), then Lead crosses right foot over in front of left as the Follow crosses left foot behind (2), then replace left foot (3), step right foot side toward the wall (4), and close (and).

2 Repeat with the right foot (5, 6, 7, 8-and).

 Part 3

3 Back the Follow one step along LOD, then collect right foot to side of left without weight (1, 2). Repeat this twice more, with alternating feet (3, 4, 5, 6).

1 Do a CW quarter-turning box step on the second foot to bring the Follow into the outside lane (7, 8-and).

 Part 4

2 Promenade two steps along LOD (1, 2), then pivot halfway around CW to bring the Lead into the outside lane (3), and point the free foot toward LOD without weight (4).

2 With this foot, promenade two steps along LOD (5, 6), then do a slight CW pivot to bring the Follow back to backing along LOD (7), and collect the free foot without weight (8).

Repeat from the beginning.

Source: H. Clarke, "Tango Creole." The Ball Room, Theatre & Dancing News, London, W. F. Hurndall, ed., 1924. Thanks to Nick Enge for discovering this dance.

BALL ROOM		OCTOBER, 1924.	
"Tango Creole"			
<i>An E.A.D.M. prize-winning dance by H. CLARKE.</i>			
Hold partner as in Waltz. Lady's back to line of dance.			
		<i>Bars.</i>	
Step forward L, step forward R, step forward			
L. step to side on R and close L.			2
<i>Repeat, commencing R.</i>			2
Step to 2nd Position with L, cross R over L,			
transfer weight to L, step back on R, and close			
L to R.			2
<i>Repeat, commencing R to opposite side. ...</i>			2
Step forward L and close R, step forward R,			
and close L, step forward L and close R, step			
forward R and pivot $\frac{1}{4}$ of a turn, step to 2nd			
position with L and close R.			4
<i>Both face line of dance.</i>			
Step forward L and R, step to opposite side			
of partner on L and point R forward... ..			2
<i>Repeat, commencing R, back to places ...</i>			2
			16

Thanks to Nick Enge for discovering this description.