

Polonaise, traditional Polish dance on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity



Polonaise, (in Polish Polonez) traditional Polish dance has been inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity during the eighteenth session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage taking place at the Cresta Mowana Resort in Kasane, Republic of Botswana from Monday 4 to Saturday 9 December 2023.



Polonaise is one of the most ancient Polish dances representing Polish cultural dance tradition. Polonaise dance influenced European ballrooms, folk music and European classical music. The original Polish name of the dance is Chodzony meaning “the walking dance”. The polonaise is a very popular dance uninterruptedly danced in Poland till today.

It is the opening dance in all major official balls and events, at New Year’s balls, on national days as well as various less official parties. The polonaise is always the first dance at a *studniówka* (“student ball”), the Polish equivalent of the senior prom that occurs approximately 100 days before exams, hence its name “studniówka” or literally in Polish “the ball of the hundred days”.



UNESCO points out that as it is widely present in Polish culture, general awareness of the dance and its social meanings are increased by literature, music and film. A form of joint celebration, the polonaise commemorates important moments in family and community life and symbolizes cooperation, reconciliation and equality. Because it is often danced by people of all ages and backgrounds, it also promotes unity, solidarity and dialogue.

Sources: Polonez Wpisany na Listę Reprezentatywną Niematerialnego Dziedzictwa Kulturowego Ludzkości UNESCO. <https://www.gov.pl>dyplomacja>

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