

Eppur Si Muove

A 40 bar strathspey for four couples in a longwise set. 3rd and 4th couples start on the opposite side.

The title comes from Galileo. His astronomical observations led him to advocate that the Sun was the centre of the solar system and the Earth orbited around it. However the Church authorities, refusing to look through his new fangled telescope, clung to the doctrine that the Earth was the unmoving centre of the universe. Galileo was forced to recant his published scientific opinions after being threatened with torture by the Inquisition. Despite this he was later reported to have said about the Earth “Eppur si muove” (And yet it moves).

Galileo was the first to observe the moons of Jupiter, three of which are part of an “orbital resonance”. Io makes four orbits and Europa two orbits for every one orbit by Ganymede. This is illustrated in the figure of bars 5-8 and 21-24 though the demands of choreography require the central pair, representing Io, to defy reality and turn the opposite way from the others. The reel could be taken to represent the wiggles in Saturn's rings caused by small “shepherd” moons; the casting and hands across as the gravitational sling shot manoeuvres used to get observational space craft to the outer planets; and the final circle as the actually rotating and not fixed galactic background. Or invent your own symbolism!

Bars Description

- 1-4 1st and 4th couples, giving both hands, half turn their partner, pull right shoulder back and cast a quarter widely round each other to end on the centre line, men in the middle.
- 5-8 **Orbital Resonance:**
1st and 4th men, giving left hands, turn tightly twice round, ending back to back;
while 2nd and 3rd couples, with long steps, chase clockwise once round them;
while 1st and 4th women dance half way clockwise to the other end of the centre line.
- 9-16 1st and 4th couples dance a reel of four on the centre line.
- 17-20 1st and 4th couples, giving both hands, half turn the facing person. Pulling right shoulder back they then cast away in a small loop to end on the centre line, women in the middle.
- 21-24 All repeat bars 5-8 from new places : 4th and 1st women turn twice in the centre; 2nd and 3rd couples repeat their chase; 1st and 4th men dance half way round outside them.
- 25-28 4th couple (at the top) and 1st couple (at the bottom) each cast in tandem, with the men leading, right shoulder round 2nd and 3rd women respectively. 2nd and 3rd couples step out to the ends on bars 27-28.
The order is now 2,4,1,3 with 1st and 3rd couples on the opposite side.
- 29-32 4th and 1st couples dance left hands across and end heading towards the sides.
- 33-36 2nd with 4th couples, also 1st with 3rd couples, each dance right hands across.
- 37-40 All circle eight hands half way round to the left.
The final order is 3,1,4,2 with 4th and 2nd couples on the opposite side.

Music

- Suggested tune: Ladykirk Bridge (Muriel Johnstone).
- Suitable recording: Sheila of Morpeth (Marian Anderson and her Band: Newcastle upon Tyne & District RSCDS 70th Anniversary). The suggested tune is the 4th one in this recording.