

**BALLROOM DANCE:**

a sport or an art?

*Dance is music made visible.*

*©George Balanchine.*

# ABOUT MY PROJECT



- ❖ What are the two points of view on defining ballroom dance as a sport?
- ❖ What are the athletic and artistic aspects of ballroom dance?
- ❖ How does its history help to answer these questions?

## Aims

1. Answer raised questions.
2. Learn the history of ballroom dancing and its becoming a dancesport.
3. Spread the knowledge of ballroom dance.

**Ballroom dance** refers to a set of partner dances, which are danced in special shoes on special flooring and has two main features which separate them from other dances:

- ❖ All ballroom dances are danced in couples, which consist of a man and a woman.
- ❖ Couples dance in physical contact.



*Let us read and let us dance —  
two amusements that will never do any  
harm to the world.*

© *Voltaire*

## A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY...



In times past, ballroom dancing was social dancing for the privileged, leaving folk dancing for the lower classes. However, it should be noted even in times long gone, many ballroom dances were really elevated folk dances.



At that time ballroom dance was just leisure, one of the ways to spend spare time, something which is now considered to be social dancing. It was also an art, exhibition dancing, like, for example, ballet.

In 1920<sup>th</sup> ballroom dance competitions were started to develop. They were unofficial and not very strict, because there weren't specific criteria how to evaluate dancers. That's why in England in 1924 Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing (ISTD) started to create standards in music, steps and technique of dancing.





## BLACKPOOL



**The 8-day Blackpool Dance Festival** is the most famous annual ballroom dance competition of international significance, held in May in the Empress Ballroom at the Winter Gardens, Blackpool, England since 1920. It is also the largest ballroom competition: in 2003, 1539 couples from 54 countries took part in the festival.

*The body says what words cannot.*

*©Martha Graham*



# INTERNATIONAL STYLES OF COMPETITIVE BALLROOM



- ❖ Standard
- ❖ Latin American
- ❖ 10 dances



# Slow Waltz (English Waltz)



# Tango



# Viennese Waltz



# Slow Foxtrot



# Quickstep



# Samba



# Cha Cha Cha





# Rumba



# Paso Doble



# Jive



*The dance is a poem of which  
each movement is a word.*

*©Mata Hari*

## WHAT ARE COMPETITIONS LIKE?

Dancers are judged by different criteria, such as:

- ❖ *Posture*
- ❖ *Musicality*
- ❖ *Frame*
- ❖ *Togetherness*
- ❖ *Foot and leg action*
- ❖ *Led and follow*
- ❖ *Floor craft*
- ❖ *Presentation (emotions)*
- ❖ *Couple's style (costumes, behavior on the floor etc.)*



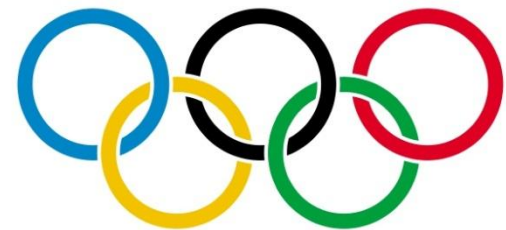
*The trained dancer must not only have  
grace and elegance,  
but also the leap of an Olympic hurdler,  
the balance of a tight-rope walker  
and panther-like strength and agility.*

*© Camilla Jessel*

## THE BIRTH OF DANCESPORT

**Dancesport** is competitive ballroom dancing, in contrast to social or exhibition dancing. The name was invented to help competitive ballroom dancing gain Olympic recognition.

On September 5, 1997 the International DanceSport Federation (IDSF) was recognized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) as the sole representative body for dancesport.



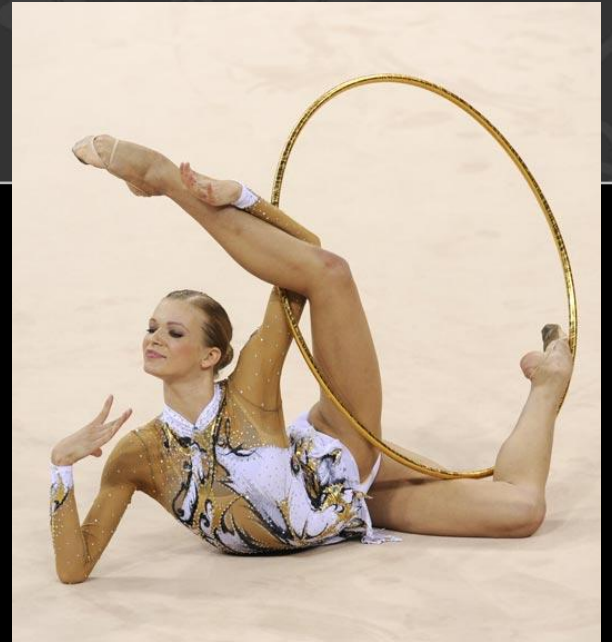
Ballroom dance demands from dancers qualities which are demanded in real sports:

- ❖ *Physical strength.*
- ❖ *Flexibility and coordination.*
- ❖ *Endurance.*
- ❖ *Discipline and team spirit.*

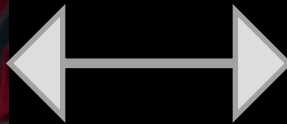




SO IT'S A SPORT...



... BUT AN ART ALSO!



## CONCLUSION

Today we consider ballroom dance as “an artistic sport”. Why sport? Because it demands from dancers qualities, which are demanded in real sports. But in contrast of other sports, it has special features which allow considering it not only as a sport, but as an art also.

*Dancers are athletes of God.*

*©Albert Einstein*

*Dance is the mother of the arts.*

*Music and poetry exist in time;  
painting and architecture in space.*

*But the dance lives at once in time and  
space.*

*© Curt Sachs*

## Sources of information:

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The history of English ballroom dancing (Richardson P.J S. 1948. London)

<http://www.idsf.net/>

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<http://www.dance-quotes.net/>

## Photos used in presentation:

<http://www.gsn.com.pl>