

The MODERN BALLROOM
T A N G O

as danced in
PARIS - LONDON - BUENOS AIRES
and by the smartest set of NEW YORK

4949



Mr. CARLOS CRUZ



STANDARD OF THE FOUR
FUNDAMENTAL FIGURES

by

CARLOS CRUZ

Famous Teacher Exponent

21 ✓

The MODERN BALL ROOM TANGO

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(C. BAREIRO-PEREYRA)

THE difference between the modern ballroom tango and the primitive tango is very great. The primitive Tango was a dance, disjointed to a certain extent, with many "backward movements", in reality very little suited to be performed in a salon, without counting its most complicated structure. The modern Tango, on the contrary, is a very compact dance, without any movement at the back, whose principal advantage is that it constantly progresses according to rule, that is to say, from right to left (see diagram).

Besides, the modern Tango is so simple that a child can learn it in two hours. In spite of this simplicity, the Tango is an enchanting dance, elegant and so different from all the other dances that for this very reason the pleasure which it gives the skilled amateur is all the greater.

The successive evolutions which the primitive tango experienced until it was converted into the Tango which at present is danced in Buenos Aires, Paris and London, are due chiefly to three of its best exponents: Mr. Eladio Fernandez, the famous director of the Washington Palace of Paris; Mr. Julian Lastra and Mr. Carlos Cruz.

Carlos Cruz's Professional Record

If it is true that the first two exponents who showed essential modifications in the structure of the Tango in Paris about 1913, were Mr. Eladio Fernandez and Mr. Julian Lastra, who replaced the antiquated "corte" and the "sentada" with the present "Media Vuelta" (Half Turn, 2nd figure in the diagram) to Mr. Carlos Cruz belongs entirely the credit of having constructed the only technical standard which exists of the celebrated dance, thanks to which two results of prime importance have been attained:

1st: Systematizing and simplifying its teaching, creating infallible means for easy and complete understanding of the dance.

2nd: Enabling all his pupils to dance the Tango correctly wherever they may be in Paris, in London, or New York, thanks to the exact knowledge of the four fundamental figures of the standard.

Mr. Cruz is more than an exponent, he is a teacher, as the reader will see from the dissertation of this booklet. The technical value of his standard was publicly sanctioned in 1923, by the "Tango Referendum" organized in London by the publication "Dancing Times" at which were present more than 300 professionals of Great Britain. On said occasion Mr. Cruz performed in com-

petition with two famous professionals. His version was the one adopted. Right after said referendum, the English denominations for the four fundamental figures of the Tango were definitely established, that is:

1. *The March*
2. *The Half Turn*
3. *The Lace Steps*
4. *The Promenade*

The champions of the world of modern dances in 1923-1924, Mr. Victor Sylvester and Miss Philip Clark, professionals; Mr. Cecil Reuben and Miss Flora le Breton (film star) amateurs, were specially trained by Mr. Cruz. The world champions of 1924-1925, Mr. Maxwell Stewart and Miss Barbara Miles, also pupils of Mr. Cruz and later of Mr. and Mrs. Alec Mackenzie of London, who teach according to the method of Mr. Carlos Cruz, attained the honors of championship, thanks to an impeccable tango.

Mr. Carlos Cruz came to New York for the first time in December 1923, under contract to Mrs. Evelyn Hubbell, principal of the "Castle School of Dancing" of New York. His success among the select clientele of this school was immediate, simply because everyone who had been in Paris found in him an honest exponent of the real Tango, *as it is danced in Paris*. His classes in association with Mrs. Hubbell, at the Plaza Hotel, and at the Colony Club, made him popular among the "400" of New York.

Three dancing films of Mr. Cruz were exhibited in the Plaza Cinema of New York for three consecutive weeks.

Finally, the two young society amateurs who won in the Tango Contest of the Junior League Ball of this year, were pupils of Mr. Cruz and Mrs. Hubbell. (Mrs. Hubbell teaches according to the Cruz Standard.)

What is the Meaning of "Rhythm" for the Dancers

In order to dance any dance whatever, fox-trot, waltz, tango, etc., the first thing required is to *feel* the rhythm of the corresponding music. Rhythm presides over, and determines the formation of the figures of a dance, to such a point that the figures of the waltz, for instance, can never be suitably adapted to the rhythm of a polka, of a habanera or of a tango, in spite of the fact that many people are apt to think so. Suppose for a moment that the step dance or the Charleston be danced to the music of Chopin's Funeral March: the result which would be obtained, would not only be much inferior to that accomplished by dancing said dances to the rhythm which is characteristic to them, but it would even be absurd.

The great obstacle which the Tango encounters in America to becoming popular is precisely in the nature of the music. Generally, American orchestras play simple "habaneras" in the guise of the tango. How many times have we heard "La Paloma", a classic habanera, played, or "La Violetera" the most typical of the Spanish Schottish, in place of the true tango?

All Americans who have travelled in Europe know that the tango which is played in America, is not the tango which is played in Paris, as the fox-trot which is played in Paris (when the orchestra which is playing it is not American) is not the Fox Trot played in America. In Spain it is usually said that "the fox trot is a Schottish translated from English", an observation which is justified by the fact, certain although incredible, that the fox trot which is played in Madrid or in Barcelona,, is nothing else than a "Schottish" with an American melody, which is danced better as "Schottish" than as fox-trot, which is natural and logical.

Mr. Cruz, who has carefully studied all these local phenomena, concludes affirming that in order to dance the Tango properly, in a typical manner, with perfect comprehension of its romantic nature, it is indispensable to dance it with its real music, with its true rhythm, feeling this rhythm intensely. Foreign music with foreign rhythm cannot produce a perfect tango. The "Chaloupee" and the "Java" of the apaches of Paris require their own music and rhythm, this may be said to strengthen the example given.

Consequently, in order to teach, or to learn the Tango, and then in order to dance it, appropriate music must be counted on.

Our phonograph record, made especially for us by the great Argentine pianist, Mr. Carlos Cobian, fills this requirement.

We provide for the written music of the recorded Tangos by Carlos Cobian and in this manner we enable the pianist of dancing schools, as well as the conductors of orchestras to "assimilate" perfectly the typical way of playing a Tango with its peculiar syncopation simply playing the written music as they hear it reproduced on the record.

For the amateur, who is beginning to learn the Tango by means of our diagram, the record will be a great help. We recommend that before he attempts the *structure of the dance*, that he listen 20, 30 and 50 times to the recorded music, until his ear perceives clearly the time and the rhythm without the possibility of error.

He who can remember the tangoes of the record will be in a better condition to learn the dance, than he who cannot attain like results.

A Few Words on Control and Deportment in Dancing

Before entering fully into the minute explanations of the diagram, we would like to say a few preliminary words.

We believe that with the Cruz diagram, the booklet and the record, we have reached the maximum perfection as far as the teaching of dances by graphic means is concerned, and without the personal assistance of the professor, specially for those pupils, who already know something about dancing. The three things constitute the fruit of 15 year's experience and of study.

Nevertheless, in order not to abandon for one single instant our programme of perfect probity towards our

clients, we wish to state here honestly, something which the others try to conceal carefully, and that is that the best illustration and the best written explanation in the world on the practice of dancing, may very well fail in two essential points, namely:

1st: *leading, control or carriage, and*

2nd: *deportment,*

especially if the amateur is a beginner in the full acceptance of the term.

We can explain very well how to lead and how to obtain an elegant and correct "pose", and we are sure that the majority of those who dance already can profit by our explanations, but for the "beginners" the intervention of a professor who will instruct them as to the little secrets of control and "atmosphere", seems to us indispensable and certainly economical, since said intervention can save a considerable amount of time.

We also believe that even for skilled amateurs a demonstration of our diagram made by a competent teacher, may be very advantageous to aid them in visualizing the ensemble of the Tango, and in understanding rapidly the syncopation peculiar to each figure, specially as referring to the second figure of the diagram (Half Turn) and the fourth figure (Promenade).

In any case, these reservations do not diminish in the least the practical value of our diagram, since even supposing that the amateur may be obliged to have recourse to a teacher to use it with prompt efficiency, there is not the slightest doubt that in other conditions he would have needed 5 or 10 lessons to learn a tango, perhaps incorrectly, thanks to the diagram and its explanation, one demonstration will *surely* suffice him so that he will not forget the smallest details.

In conclusion, it is no doubt necessary to state here another important point; the ballroom tango is not the tango which is generally shown in the theatres. The stage tango is inadequate for a drawing room, as the ball room tango is certainly inadequate for the stage. The tango danced by Valentino in the film of the "Four Horsemen" is spectacular, but it is absolutely out of place for a ballroom. Consequently he who wishes to learn a ballroom tango, should learn it according to the standard of Mr. Cruz in order to obtain the desired result. We defy anyone to prove a fundamental falseness in said standard; as we defy anyone to prove to us that whoever may learn the Tango according to said standard will encounter any material difficulty in practising it wherever there may be music and dancing partners for the Tango.

THE DIAGRAM

The Tango diagram of Mr. Carlos Cruz, which we intend to explain in the following, was not made by more or less arbitrary methods; that is to say, it is not a conventional and fanciful drawing. This diagram shows exactly the four fundamental figures of the Tango, and the connecting step or link, such as were executed in full

action by Mr. and Mrs. Carlos Cruz. The fidelity of the document can be compared only to the fidelity of a roll of piano music which reproduces exactly the execution of a piece of music by a pianist. Thanks to a special process, which makes possible the direct impression of every movement made by a dancer on the floor, we believe that this is the first time that a graphic representation is offered to the public of a dance without alterations, corrections or other artifices.

The proof of this affirmation is that a small error appears in the diagram, although unimportant, the result of a slight nervousness on the part of Mr. Cruz's partner: In the fourth movement, the right foot of the lady should join the left foot exactly. In the diagram it can be seen that the fourth step of the lady is too far back, and consequently a little out of place. It would have been very easy to rectify said displacement artificially, but we have preferred to refrain in order not to attack in the very slightest way even the rigorous authenticity of the document.

Fundamental Figures and Fancy Figures

As we have already said, the *fundamental figures* of the Tango only appear in the diagram, with the *Link*, or connecting step, but without the addition of any fancy figures. Whoever knows said four figures well, is perfectly fitted to dance the Tango with the extremely elegant simplicity now in vogue in Paris, London and Buenos Aires. The figures called "fancy" do not belong to the "standard", or to the basic immutable part of the Tango, since every dancer can create fancy tango steps according to his capacity, without any more restrictions than his own powers of invention and good taste.

Be it understood that the "fancy steps" must never eliminate any fundamental figure, but must be *interpolated* between them from time to time. At the end of this booklet the reader will find a more ample reference to this particular point.

In principle, it is convenient to consider also as "fancy" all the little differences of detail in the execution of the fundamental figures by different exponents. The principal differences to which we are alluding will be found set forth in the explanation of each movement which follows.

How the Diagram Should be Used:

Before beginning to practice the mechanical part of the figures, you should observe carefully the diagram itself. In the first place, you will observe that all steps and figures are enclosed within an oval line. Said line marks the "direction of the dance, and its normal progress on the floor". All movements develop from "right to left". Naturally, said development may follow a more open, or a more closed line, according to whether the floor be larger or smaller, which is at disposal, with the express condition that no movement must be "backward" under the penalty of running into the pair who are dancing behind you.

It is true, on the other hand, that this rule need not be rigorously applied to the "fancy" figures, but in this case the excuse is that he who creates "fancy steps" does so, because he is sufficiently master of the dance not to be mistaken in respect to the room at his command, and that in no case will he molest the other dancers, taking for himself a space which should remain free.

What has been said, is equivalent to the following premise: A good dancer should abstain from executing any steps "backward" when he does not dispose of sufficient space on the floor, which is generally the case in all the dancing places in New York, or Paris, and *which is the chief reason which has determined the present simplification of the ballroom tango.*

Another observation which you should make is that all the diagram appears divided by five lines traced across the printed footsteps: said lines show the "completion" of each figure and of the connecting step or link, this movement, which as its name indicates, serves to unite the fourth figure to the first, thus assuring the repetition and rotation of all the dance.

The third observation is that the diagram shows nineteen numbered movements: said nineteen movements are those which correspond to the four fundamental figures and to the connecting step or link.

- 4 movements for the 1st figure
- 6 movements for the 2nd figure
- 4 movements for the 3rd figure
- 4 movements for the 4th figure
- 1 movement for the connecting step or link.

The four steps which follow the connecting step in the diagram, are nothing more than a repetition of the first figure, to show exactly how the union of the figures takes place.

The four unnumbered impressions which are seen at the beginning of the diagram (two for the gentleman and two for the lady) indicate the "starting position".

In order to assure better balance and control, the gentleman and the lady should, before beginning to dance, take the position indicated in the diagram, the gentleman placing the weight of the body on the left foot, and the lady placing her weight on her right foot. From this position, the gentleman moves his right foot forward; to this movement corresponds a backward step of the lady with the left foot, thus the first movement of the dance is ended, and the first figure.

The shaded footprints indicate "weight on", and correspond to each "pause". The "pauses" in the Tango are of considerable importance, as will be seen later. Naturally, when the gentleman places his weight upon the right foot, the lady should then rest her weight on the left foot. "Weight on" in dancing supposes that the next movement will be executed with the opposite foot to the one sustaining the weight of the body. The diagram will make the example very much clearer.

Our diagram is large enough and clear enough so that no confusion may be possible when it comes to repeating the movements which it shows. However, in order to make its practical use even easier, it suffices to enlarge it to "full size". Mr. Cruz, in considering the case of the majority of his clients of the future, has printed the diagram in the space of a room of ordinary dimensions, so that if the diagram be enlarged to "full size" according to the proportions of the scale, 1/10 by 1 foot, anyone can dispose of sufficient space to arrange it conveniently.

The advantage of an amplification to "full size" is that the pupil can follow each movement putting his feet on the impressions traced by the feet of Mr. Cruz, or Mrs. Cruz, according to whether the pupil be a gentleman or a lady.

We advise two means of making this amplification: On a solid cloth when it is a case of an amateur; directly on the floor when it is a dancing school.

EXPLANATION OF THE 19 MOVEMENTS

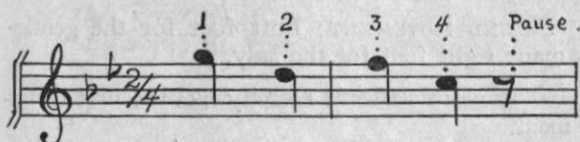


FIRST FIGURE: "THE MARCH"

MOVEMENTS 1, 2, 3, 4 and pause.

DIRECTION: *Forward on the part of the gentleman; backward by the lady.*

TIME: *The whole figure in two bars.*



Starting position

1ST MOVEMENT: Walking step forward with the right foot for the gentleman; backward with the left foot for the lady; the movement should be feline to a certain extent, rythmic not *staccato*.



Second Movement

2ND MOVEMENT: Left foot for the gentleman; right foot for the lady.

3RD MOVEMENT: Exactly like the first movement.



Fourth Movement



See Note

4TH MOVEMENT: Half step; left foot for the gentleman, right foot for the lady. The two partners terminate the movement with the feet together. Weight on the right foot for the gentleman; on the left foot for the lady. Completion of the first figure.

(NOTE: The lady may terminate this figure in a different manner than that indicated in the diagram and in the explanation which preceeds. Instead of placing the right foot on the level of the left foot, she can cross both legs, *and put the right foot behind the left foot, on the left side*, as seen in the illustrations of the 4th movement, resting only the tip of the right foot on the floor. This "fancy step" has the advantage of animating the pose.)

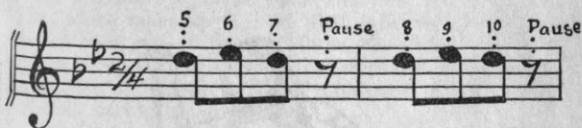


SECOND FIGURE: THE "HALF TURN"

MOVEMENTS 5, 6, 7, *pause*; 8, 9, 10 and *pause*.

DIRECTION: *Turning movements, exactly like the "reverse" of the Waltz, save for the difference in time and syncopation.*

TIME: *The whole figure in two bars.*



The movements of this figure are twice as rapid as the movements of the first figure.

IMPORTANT NOTE: At this point, it is essential to take note *that the second figure is begun with the same foot with which the first figure was completed* (left foot for the gentleman; right foot for the lady). In other words, *two consecutive movements are executed with the same foot*. Some exponents of the Tango are accustomed to eliminate the fourth movement of the first figure and the pause, in such a way *that the fourth movement is converted into the fifth, or say, the first of the second figure*. In this way, the first figure and the second are confused. Mr. Cruz, advises practising the figures, as the diagram shows, because it is the most typical manner, and besides because difficulties are thus avoided in the computation of the musical cycles which correspond to each figure.



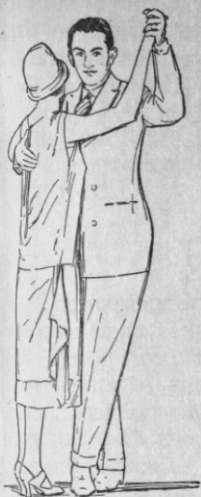
Fifth Movement

5TH MOVEMENT: On the part of the gentleman: with the weight on the right foot, the figure is begun with the left foot, turning the whole body slightly as in the reverse of the waltz.

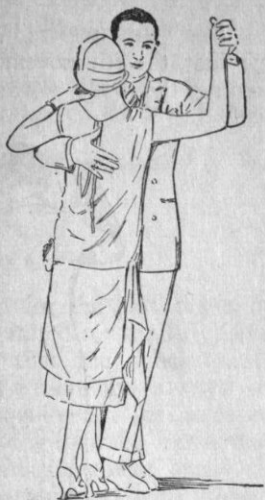


Sixth Movement

6TH MOVEMENT: The right foot takes the position which the diagram shows at the same time as the left foot terminates the "pivot" of the 5th movement.



Seventh Movement



See Note

7TH MOVEMENT: This movement is taken up in bringing the left foot of the 5th movement to the 7th. The 7th movement is a "pas-croisé" (crossed step) the left leg crosses the right ahead and the left foot is placed on the right side of the right foot, *which has meantime corrected its position* while the left foot has executed the 7th movement.

In this position takes place the first pause of the figure, which takes up $\frac{1}{2}$ beat, that is to say, the same ratio as each one of the last three movements. Also it must be noted that when the 7th movement is completed the position of the pair is just the opposite of that which they held during the first figure.

(NOTE. — The lady may also use twist step in this movement, as shown in the illustration.)



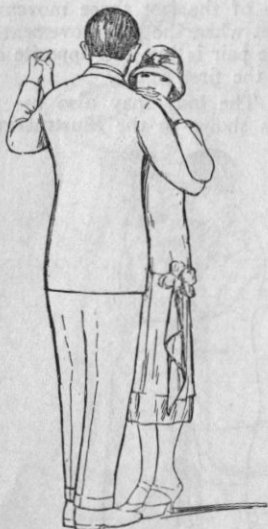
Eighth Movement

8TH MOVEMENT: With the weight on the left foot, the 8th movement is executed backward, turning the body towards the direction of the wall.



Ninth Movement

9TH MOVEMENT: The left executes a 9th movement, which is a side step which crosses in front of the right foot.



Tenth Movement

10TH MOVEMENT: The right foot executes the 10th movement, which is another side step.

going to join the left foot. The position of the gentleman in this *moment*, is facing the wall.

The second pause, which next takes place, after the 10th movement takes up the last $\frac{1}{2}$ beat of the 2nd bar.

The gentleman places his "weight on the right foot".

The Lady's Part

The explanation given for the part taken by the gentleman, is likewise suited for the lady, simply taking into account that the synchronized movements of the two partners are always reverse, that is when the gentleman for instance, executes with the left foot a forward movement, the lady executes the same movement backward with the right foot. The same occurs with the side steps: While the gentleman executes them from the left side, the lady executes them from the right side. So when the gentleman is facing the wall, the lady is facing the center of the floor. As for the rest, time and syncopation are the same for the gentleman and for the lady.

Consequently, the only special mention which we will make of the lady's part in the second figure is the following: The 7th movement, instead of being carried out by bringing the right foot to join the left, can be made by crossing the right leg behind the left, and putting the right foot perfectly flat behind the left foot, with the "weight on", as the 8th movement must be made with the left foot forward.

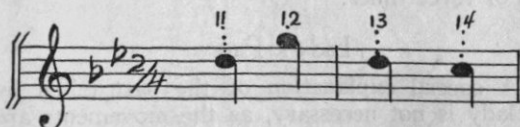
Remember the "Half Turn" of the Tango does not differ mechanically from the "reverse" of the waltz.

THIRD FIGURE: "THE LACE STEPS"

MOVEMENTS 11, 12, 13 and 14.

DIRECTION: *Side Steps.*

TIME: *The whole figure in two bars; each movement in one beat.*



This figure is developed entirely from the

side, like the following, or fourth figure. It has the same "time" as the first figure but without a final "pause". It is united to the fourth figure without break of continuity. Note that from the 9th movement, all the movements of the Tango are from the side up to the 18th movement. The 19th movement, or say the connecting step, gives the dancer a new direction towards the forward movements of the first figure.

Gentleman's Part

11TH MOVEMENT: This movement is executed by the left foot towards the left side.

12TH MOVEMENT: The right foot crosses in front of the left foot in the same direction.

13TH MOVEMENT: The left foot continues towards the left, behind the right foot.



Fourteenth Movement

14TH MOVEMENT: The right foot obliquely backward, always towards the left. Weight on the right foot.

The four movements are slow, rhythmic, but not *staccato*.

This movement can be repeated in practice, two or three times.

Lady's Part

A special explanation of the part taken by the lady is not necessary, as the movements are practically identical. When the gentleman uses his left foot, the lady should use the right foot. As

the gentleman executes the four movements towards the left side, the lady must execute them towards the right side. All movements must be just opposite those of the gentleman.

FOURTH FIGURE: THE "PROMENADE"

MOVEMENTS 15, 16, 17 and 18.

DIRECTION: *Side Steps.*

TIME: *The whole figure, with the "pause" and the connecting step, in 2 bars.*

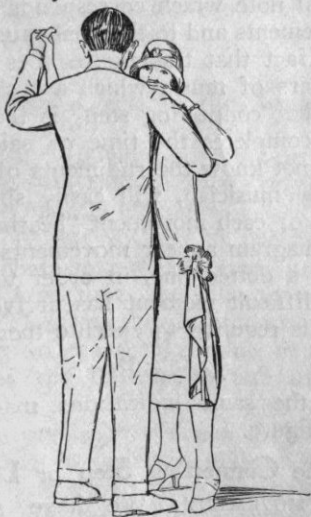


NOTE: (This figure is characterized by its special syncopation. The first movement should be made with a certain emphasis; the three following movements, short and "brilliant", they end in a "pause" which precedes the connecting step, which completes the two bars, as the music shows.)

Gentleman's Part

15TH MOVEMENT: This is executed with the left foot, exactly like the 11th movement, but somewhat more emphatically.

16TH MOVEMENT: Like the 12th movement, but more quickly.



Seventeenth Movement

17TH MOVEMENT: This is executed with the left foot, behind the right foot.



Eighteenth Movement

18TH MOVEMENT: This is executed with the right foot, joining the left foot. This step is particularly short. Weight on. Here occurs the pause which directly preceds the connecting step or link.

In order to grasp the exact syncopation of this figure, the best thing to do is to study carefully the musical note which corresponds to each one of its movements and to the final pause. We insist upon the fact that this figure does not use up the two bars of music which are shown above, and that the "connecting step" is the one which takes, or completes the time of said two bars. If you do not know the rudiments of music, any pianist, any musician, will easily show you the exact time of each movement "beating time".

In the diagram appear movements 16, 17 and 18, within a dotted line, in order to show that the most difficult moment has arrived and that more care is required to execute them.

Lady's Part

Follow the same indications made for the preceding figure.

The Connecting Step or Link

19TH MOVEMENT: We have said before what the office of this step is: To unite the fourth figure with the first and in this manner assure the repetition and regular rotation of all the other figures of the Tango.



Nineteenth Movement

The connecting step or link

This step does not differ in any way from the steps of the first figure, except that in executing it, the two dancers change direction. The gentleman, from the position at the side, passes to the front position; the lady turns her shoulders in the direction of the dance. The unnumbered steps on the diagram, which follow movement 19, or connecting step, are those of the first figure thus showing the rotation.

Musical Cycle of the Tango

The 19 movements and the four pauses of the Tango use up exactly 8 bars or 16 beats, as is seen in the musical examples.

If the diagram suffices in itself for teaching the mechanism of each step, its direction, and at the same time, the division of the four fundamental figures, the musical example in the diagram teaches exactly the value, or the time of each one of the movements and of the four pauses.

It is not precisely necessary to have a knowledge of music in order to understand this example; it is enough to know that each note corresponds to a step, and each pause to a pause of the dance, and with this, you have everything. A moment's help from a musician will suffice to learn how to "beat time".

FANCY STEPS

Some Fancy Figures Created by Mr. Cruz

"Fancy" figures generally require a different syncopation than the fundamental figures, and this is another reason why we recommend pupils not to give way to the desire to practise them before they have perfectly mastered the "standard" figures.

"Fancy" figures are interpolated between fundamental figures, without eliminating them. It may be said of them that they belong to the professional domain. An amateur dancer does not need to exhibit figures which are out of the ordinary. The simpler is his method of dancing the Tango, on condition that he dance it really well, the better and more discreet will it appear in the eyes of the person of good taste. Fancy figures always appear to have a measure of pretension, which is not suited to all ages.

Mr. Cruz is the creator of the most famous fancy figures, such as:

Vis-a-Vis

Open Turn

Double Open Turn

Open Link, etc.

The fancy figures of Mr. Cruz are characterized by the fact that they are all sufficiently compact to be practicable in a drawing room, even in the midst of many couples.

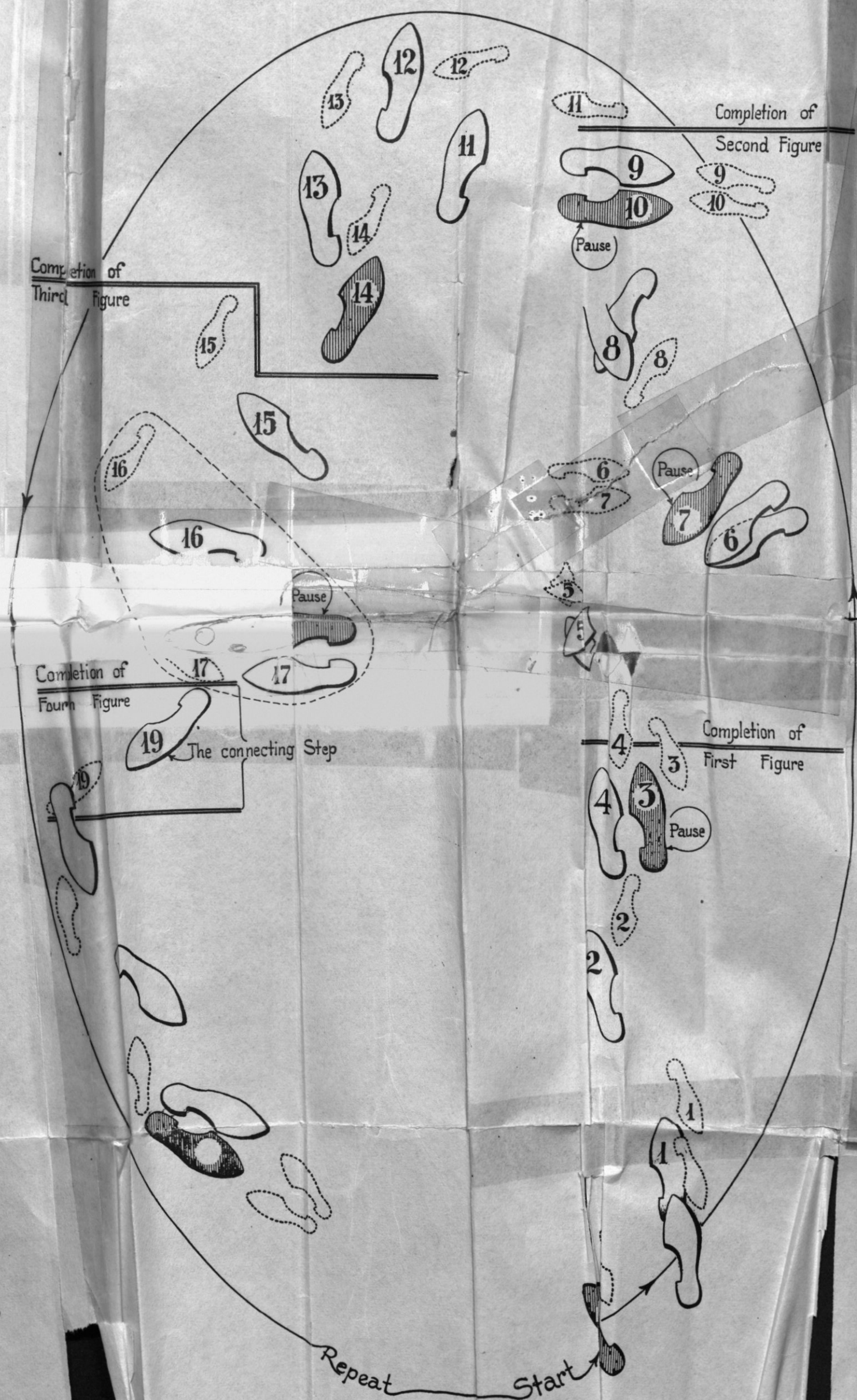
Further along we intend to do with the "fancy" steps what we did with the "fundamental figures", that is to say, fix them in a diagram and describe them "fully" in a pamphlet for the use of persons who may be interested in learning them.

Finally, every dancer who knows the "fundamental figures" well and really has mastered them, will one day, almost instinctively, create his own fancy steps, just as it is in the fox trot, waltz, or any other dance.

THE MODERN BALLROOM TANGO

STANDARD OF THE FUNDAMENTAL FIGURES

By
CARLOS CRUZ.



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By
CARLOS CRUZ
(C. BAREIRO-PEREYRA)
Scale 1/10 = 1 foot.

