



## MODERN CAIRO TECHNIQUE

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### ¥ INTRODUCTION

Modern Cairo technique, as with all belly dance, embraces the individuality and differences between the dancers. How can we characterise the dance style on the current Cairo scene? Perhaps by its sense of...

¥ STRENGTH ¥ FEMININITY ¥ RELAXATION ¥

### ¥ STRENGTH

Engage the core – use your stomach muscles and pelvic floor to help support you – imagine you're wearing a lightly laced corset. Use of stomach muscles also helps drive movements, including legs!

Modern Cairo style uses strong arms and legs, but NOT straight. Make sure your arms are relaxed, and fall from the shoulders to the wrists. Knees must remain relaxed to help with balance and mobility

¥ **Arabesques** – engage core, keep knees relaxed, so the lift is through the foot not through locking the knee. Use arms as if hanging from gym rope to support body and assist balance [Common to many dancers]

¥ **Jewels** – engage core, do a very small back/forward/back twist at the outside edge of an 8 or circle. Drive using your stomach muscles, not the outside of your hip. Keep move tiny and “gooey”. Feel how your leg lifts in response to control of stomach muscles – not by your leg muscles! [Common to many dancers]

¥ **8s over one hip** – engage core, transfer centre of balance completely over one side with leg bent knee over toe, extend other leg to side. Vertical 8 lying on side from front to back. Control using core. Stay lifted. [Dina, Randa, Yasmina]

¥ **Leg sweep** – from above position, use small hip circle to sweep leg around – lead from hips not leg. Make sure supporting foot is already pointing out with knee bent and pointing over foot. Stay lifted. [Randa]

¥ **Side steps with tuck** – travelling sideways, feet close together, lifting back foot but gliding front foot along floor. Using stomach muscles for pull back on back step OR tuck from under bum “cat's tail” +/- foot stamp at back. [Many dancers do stomach version. Randa does tail tuck, Camelia foot stamp]

### ¥ FEMININITY

Use your arms and hands softly. Hand waves with movements, don't allow your hands to become too static [Think Camelia!]. Use your upper body, and allow your head and shoulders to respond to movements. Add a feeling of “precariousness” to your dance!

¥ **Girly arabesques** – Lead through the shoulders rather than hip and fall forward. “Chase Mr Darcy”! Arms low and soft, imagine “stroking bosom” on side that shoulder is leading. [Many dancers, including Dina, Camelia]

¥ **Running arabesques** – Fast version of above, but flat footed. Don't "lift" on third step, but fall forwards with it, dragging rear foot. Keep steps small! [Randa, Dina, Camelia]

¥ **Stepping in circle** – Forward and back step on spot, with hip circle – shift weight out for precarious nature. Optional taq on front step [Asmahan, Camelia]

¥ **Camels stepping under arms** – Small camels stepping side to side (feet very close together), Keeping arms static as a frame above – ie isolate upper body. [Camelia]

¥ **Mini roll up** – Small roll up, with head throw back as if hit in face by bosoms! Watch your neck! Less scarey version of current head flinging trend! [Asmahan]

#### ¥ RELAXATION

Egyptian style dance needs to be relaxed – even when you're working hard! Make sure you're keeping your upper body (arms, neck, shoulders and head) relaxed and allow movement to travel. Don't allow arms to rise to high!

¥ **Rollercoaster 8s** – Front to back eight, turning into vertical eight as hip comes around front. Pull through core backwards. Really work at keeping upper body relaxed! [Everyone! Samia Gamal to Dina, via practically every cabaret dancer!]

¥ **Anti-arabesques** – Flat footed arabesque, but instead of lifting on third, keep knee relaxed and allow opposite hip to drop. [Leila]

¥ **Sha'abi vibe arabesque variation** – Step, jewel on lifted foot, step out with precarious feel. All flat footed. Make sure core is engaged and driving jewel to avoid "dog shaking leg" feel. [Don't know who else, but me!]

#### Music

¥ Misheet Khalas (Wael Jasser) – Warm up

¥ Law Terafo (Elissa) – Arabesques

¥ Salamit om Hassan (from Leila - Sukara) – Side Steps

¥ Helwa Dire Shabeka (from Leila – Om 'Al Dunya) – Running Arabesques

¥ El-Aneb (Saad El Soghir) – Anti Arabesques/Sh'a'abi

¥ Gamil (from Ahlan wa Sahlan Vol. 2) – Jewels and final dance through

