



**“ROMANCE”
THE HEART OF BALLROOM DANCING**

“Romance is the deepest thing in life. It is deeper even than reality.” G.K. Chesterton

The Heart of Ballroom Dancing at its root is the constant attraction and feeling of Romance. What do I mean by this? The heart of something is the core of it's being, what makes it come alive. In this article I want to take a look at this romance as it applies to the relationship of the female dancer and the male dancer. But first I want to ask you that are reading this a question. What were the things that attracted you to Ballroom Dancing to begin with? For me, it was a yearning that I had as a child that never left. My life as a child was difficult because I had a very sick father. I believe I wanted to escape to a place of peace, beauty, and love which I experienced as I began to dance to beautiful music. I started dancing ballet at three years old, and never stopped my romance and love for dance. Little girls want to be danced with by Prince charming, look at all the classic fairy tales that we know like Cinderella and Sleeping Beauty; so when I became a Ballroom dancer it was a fairy tale come true.

Now for the boys, years ago dancing was not a man's sport; but now it shows a man's strength. Think of the fact that the man leads, and presents himself as a stable partner to the woman. When I was teaching ballroom dancing in NYC, we used the terminology: the man is the frame and the woman is the picture. A frame is strong, it holds up the picture. When I became a Theatrical Ballroom Dancer, of course this term fit a lot, being that the man held the woman up in lifts. But in general as we think of the ballroom dances, their music, like Rumba, Paso Doble, Waltz, Tango, etc., they all have in them a feeling of romance in one way or another. Each dance gets portrayed in some type of choreography, which enhances the theme of each dance, as we watch the play-acting between each couple. The best ballroom couples dance from an inner self, or what I call from their hearts.

Ballroom dancing allows both men and women to become a person on the dance floor that they may never have been in real life. For instance, if a woman has been abused in some way in her life whether from her parents, boyfriends, husbands, etc., she can open her heart up to the music and dance from a beauty that is inside. The same for a man who has been abused, he might have been made fun of when he was a child, and now as he dances he becomes the boy/man of strength that he really is, regardless of his past. We all have places in our hearts that have wounds, and Ballroom Dancing I believe can help heal many of these places.

The beauty of a woman is first a soulish beauty, and the strength of a man is first a soulish strength. As we allow ourselves to get in touch with our souls, heal our wounds and most important our hearts, we start to reflect this in our appearance, and eventually in our dancing. If we do not allow healing to come into our souls and hearts, this also reflects in our appearance; for instance anger, bitterness, hatred can usually be seen in a person's face and or his body. Hardness appears and reflects everything that person does. Yet, if our souls and hearts allow love, forgiveness, compassion to fill us, this will reflect in our appearance also, and will enhance our dancing.

Recently I have been reading a book on unveiling the mystery of a woman's soul, "Captivating". This book has delved deep into the heart of women, and has gone deep into my soul. Every woman wants to feel beautiful. As I thought about Ballroom Dancing I realized how it gives women the opportunity to be beautiful, by the costumes a woman wears and the dances she dances. Each woman becomes that princess she dreamed about when she was a little girl. It is an amazing opportunity in the circle of life. In the same vein, every man in Ballroom Dancing is given the feeling of strength that perhaps he never felt in his life. He becomes the fantasy boy that he dreamt about, and in his own way symbolizes another form of beauty, a beauty of strength. Together a couple in Ballroom Dance symbolizes Romance, a place of Beauty that transcends beyond normal life. A place of music, enchantment, mystery, and dreams.

As I reflect on my own experience in Ballroom Dancing, many times I became the princess of my dreams in the many Ballroom Dances that I performed and competed in with my dance partner David. One of my favorites was a Theatrical piece called, "A Matador's Fantasy". We were invited to perform this piece in Blackpool in the Exhibition category. I won't tell you the year, because that will be dating me! This piece portrayed a matador who dreamt of his cape becoming a beautiful woman that he fell in love with and was swept off her feet. Literally I was swept off my feet, since during most of the performance I was in some type of lift. The piece ended in what we called the stomach lift, where David held me up in the air with one arm pressed into my stomach as I perched myself in a pose in his hand with my own cape opened up in the air in my two hands.



I am so grateful to have been able to be a Ballroom Dancer and have my fantasy of romance and beauty envelope my heart. May the Romance of Ballroom Dancing bring the heart of your childhood dreams alive and give you new beauty and strength. Live your dreams!