



Artwork by George Gingras

J is for Jig

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J si poor la jig

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Métis jigging originated in the **Red River** area (now southern Manitoba and northern North Dakota). It is a combination of **First Nations step dancing** and Scottish and French-Canadian **reel, jig**, and **quadrille** steps. Some of the more popular jigs are the "**Red River Jig**," the "**Rabbit Dance**," the "**Broom Dance**," and the "**Sash Dance**."

The Métis are well known for their celebrations. At every one of these celebrations you will always hear fiddle music, and you will see people jigging. There are often competitions held to see who is the best jigger. These events allow people to have fun and to visit with family and friends. Each performer has developed unique steps. Over time, a person's steps change from watching other jiggers, or by simply inventing them. To be a good jigger, your upper body has to remain straight while you move your feet to create steps. Some people can even tell where a person is from based on their steps. Each community and some families have unique jigging styles.

Other Resources:

Arcand, John et al. *Drops of Brandy Vol. 1 and 2*. CDs. Saskatoon: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2002.

Dorion, Leah et al. *Drops of Brandy: An Anthology of Métis Music*. Saskatoon: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2002.

Roy, Sylvie and W. Burton. *Let Me See Your Fancy Steps—Story of a Métis Dance Caller. The Story of Jeanne Pelletier as told to Sylvie Sara Roy and Wilfred Burton*. Saskatoon: Gabriel Dumont Institute Press, 2015.

The Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture (www.metismuseum.ca).

