

702 Mr. Bojangles

Jerry Jeff Walker was inspired to write this song while in jail for public intoxication in 1965. There, he met a homeless white man, a tap dancer who called himself "Mr. Bojangles" to conceal his true identity from the police.

*Played in
3/4 "waltz time"*

I knew a man Bojangles and he'd dance for you, in worn out shoes,
 With silver hair, a ragged shirt, and baggy pants, the old soft shoe,
 He jumped so high, jumped so high, then he lightly touched down,
 I met him in a cell in New Orleans I was, down and out,
 He looked to me, to be, the eyes of age, as he spoke right out,
 He talked of life, talked of life, he laughed, clicked his heels and stepped,
 He said his name "Bojangles" and he danced a lick, across the cell,
 He grabbed his pants for a better stance, oh he jumped so high, then he clicked his heels,
 He let go a laugh, let go a laugh, and shook back his clothes all around,
 Mr. Bojangles, Mr. Bojangles, Mr. Bojangles,
 Dance!
 He danced for those at minstrel shows and county fairs, throughout the south,
 He spoke through tears of 15 years how his dog and him, had traveled about,
 The dog up and died, he up and died, after 20 years he still grieves.
 He said I dance now at every chance in honky tonks, for drinks and tips,
 But most the time I spend behind these county bars, 'cause I drinks a bit,
 He shook his head, and as he shook his head, I heard someone ask him please,
 Mr. Bojangles, Mr. Bojangles, Mr. Bojangles,
 Please dance!

