

NUANCES OF A SUCCESSFUL DANCE PERFORMANCE: RULES, SEQUENCE AND PRECAUTIONS

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ABSTRACT

Indian dances are an ancient dance forms whose beginning can be traced to 'Natya Vedas'. Bharat Muni has explained in detail the art of dance in 'Natya Shastra'. Initially, the object of dance was only spiritual elevation and the performance was only to worship gods. Such dances are called 'Margi' dance. Additionally, another dance style was also common called 'Desi' which was for public and audience show case. Margi and Desi dances have evolved into today's classical dance forms. The whole universe is bound by certain rules, even nature works according to those rules, even the Sun and the Moon rise and set timely, according to the rules of nature success can solely be achieved by following these rules. A thing or a task which is bound according to time, from the beginning to the end, is joyful to experience, this was why 'Shastras' were written. The author of 'Natya Shastra', Acharya Bharat Muni has stated many rules in 'Natya Shastra' for art and its succession. Following the said rules properly is the core duty of every artist. No artist can make their performance look impactful or noble if they don't abide by rules. Hence, while performing an artist should keep in mind the rules and regulations stated in their 'Shastras' to make their performance influential and impactful.

Keywords: Margi, Natya Vedas, Natya Shastra, Desi.

Introduction

Every art has to be exhibited according to certain set rules. The artist, who performs according to rules of art, would be able to impress the audience. For successful dance performance, it is necessary that the artist make all efforts in advance for its success. Every artist should understand this ground rule for successful performance.

According to Muni Bharat, the success of dance performance depends mainly on three factors; these are dance experiment and prosperity. Wherever these factors combine, the success of performance will be ensured.

Essential Points for Successful Performance

Now, describing about the proper flow of your performance. These are the essential points you should follow:

The night prior of the performance, you should focus on getting adequate amount of rest as it is necessary for a concentrated and one-track mind which will eventually lead to a better performance. As we talk about taking care of our mental health the night prior, another important chore is to organize your costume and jewellery to avoid hassle when getting ready.

On the day of your performance, Make sure in the morning to revise your dance routine enough times, your routine should be clear to you and you should be comfortable with it. Keep your dance routine always at the back of your mind. On the day of the performance, keep a clean and positive aura around yourself, stay away from negative thoughts.

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At least 3 hours before you should visit your theatre, inspect the stage and memorize the prospective of the theatre. It is very important that first and foremost you check your stage that it is properly cleaned and maintained so there is nothing present on stage that could harm you or distract you while performing. Another important task would be to talk with the technical crew, inform them about the light arrangement at what particular time you would be needing different light arrangements according to your performance like needing spot light or full light or colourful lights etc, check the proper functioning of the mic and mark the places where you will be needing a foot mic and where you will be needing a standing mic. You should take the crew under your confidence, so they will be concerned and will help in any technical issues. Take under consideration the places where your musicians will be seated.

Now that you are confident with the technical side, it should now be about your attire. An hour and half before the showcase, start with your make-up, remember to make it prominent and your make-up should compliment what you are about to perform. At last you should secure your costume in place with pins so it's neat and perfect like securing your jewellery, and your '*Dupatta*', It's very important to keep in mind that your jewellery should not be too heavy and should compliment what you are wearing. In the end of your makeover, wear your *Ghungroo*, your *Ghungroo* should be stacked evenly one upon the other and they shouldn't be too tight or too loose.

A small Brief on 'Kathak'

'*Kathak*' is a word of Sanskrit language and it literally means story or story teller, one who reads aloud '*Puranas*' (Scriptures) that is '*Kathakar*'. It is from the word '*Katha*' the word '*Kathak*' emerged and became popular which means a caste engaged in singing, playing instruments and dancing.

It is evident that the dance *Kathak* relates to story and the tradition of story-telling which is quite ancient according to Indian History. This dance form has its origin to the period of Lord Rama.

During the last few decades, the attitude of our society towards *Kathak* has undergone a positive change and with the establishment of several music institutes, the image of Kathak has outshined. As a result many girls from a young age and even boys have shown interest and have been attracted towards this dance form.

Kathak is the classical dance form of Northern India. In the performance of *Kathak*, The artist enjoys a lot of freedom usually not available in other dance forms. Each *Kathak* dancer begins the dance in their own unique way and organizes the performance according to some basic rules and nuances.

Now it's about time your performance starts, once the anchor has announced your arrival, enter the premises keeping a smile on your face. First and foremost thank your '*Guru*' (mentor) for their efforts that they have put into you and your performance. Followed by thanking the organizers for inviting you then move on to introduce your musicians to the audience as they will support your performance and enhance it as not having a good accompaniment can't give you the complete success of your performance. After that, start with addressing the technical crew, the media and the sound panel by showing your gratitude towards them, followed by that should be greeting the audience and thanking them for attending your performance.

Right before the commencement of your performance, the instrumentalists occupy their appointed place and thereafter either on *Sarangi* or on *Harmonium*, *Lahra* is played in '*Vilambit*' *Laya*. Thereafter *Tabla* or *Pakhavaj* players play an '*Uthan*'.

After this, the dancer enters the stage and starts the performance with a **Stuti** (a devotional poem of gods and goddesses for the success of the performance). The artist also prays to God for purifying the heavenly and natural disturbances.

After offering prayers to the god, the dancer strikes an initial pose and starts with **Amad**. Followed by *Amad*, Dancer displays the **Thath**- the most beautiful moment of your dance performance, *Thath* are usually performed in '*Vilambit*' *Laya*. Thereafter, the dancer performs '**Tode**' '**Tukde**' '**Paran**' and '**Chakkardar Paran**' and displays complex '**Layakaris**' through footwork which impresses the audience. It is necessary for the artist to recite, whatever he or she wants to perform by giving '**Taal**' by hand and thereafter dances the same.

In the second stage the dancer increases the '**laya**' and demonstrates '**Farmaishi Tukde**' and '**Primulu**'. By the times the dancer achieves high level of activity and elasticity in the body.

Towards the end it's the initiation of '**Drut Laya**', here the performance covers '**Kavitt**, '**Thumri**' and '**Gat Bhava**' (A segment which showcases your acting skills), '**Chakaras**', various types of '**Tatkar**' (footwork), '**Palte**' – *The variations of Tatkar* and '**Ladi**'. *It's the most attractive and engaging part of the*

dance performance. Sometimes there are queries and replies between the dancer and the *Tabla* player by the medium of music and is called '**Jugalbandi**', this particular segment focuses on showing the importance of your '**Ghungroo**'. The amalgamation of sound produced by the *Pakhavaj*, *Tabla* and *Ghungroo* make an enchanting environment for the audience.

For successful performance, it is necessary that **Bol**' *Tukda*' etc are sequenced in the order of their increasing effectiveness, that it would be capable of entertaining the audience.

- Sometimes, audience does make noise during the course of performance due to which the dancer loses his or her nerves. However, the dancer should not lose their poise and work with patience and resolve their anxiousness.

Some Important Definitions

- **Laya**: The speed of time is called *Laya*. *Laya* are of three types viz. *Vilambhit*, *Madhya* and *Druta* (*Ekgun*, *Dugun*, *Chaugun*).
- **Stuti**: Remembering god at the beginning of every good deed is an Indian ritual, following that in *kathak* also, before starting their performance a performer remembers their deity. When a ballad dedicated to our gods like *Ganesh*, *Vishnu*, *Shiva*, *Saraswati* or even for their *Guru* is performed, that is known as a '*Stuti*', by this '*Stuti*' the performer starts their performance and prays for it to be successful.
- **Amad**: *Amad* means 'entry'. When the dancer performs a *Tukda* while entering the stage, it is called *Tukda of Amad*.
- **Thath**: In the beginning of dance when the dancer stands in a special pose and uses '*Kasak*' and '*Masak*' (soft body movements) in a *laya* then it's called *Thath*.
- **Toda**: The group of *Talabadha Bols* (notation) in the dance is called *Toda* which comprises of various *Layas* and *Tihai*.
- **Paran**: The group of powerful *bols* (*Dhage Tita*, *Dhita Dhita*) of dance which has 2, 3, 4 or more *Avruttis* (One full circle of a beat) is called *Paran*. When the same notation is repeated thrice then it's called **Chakkardar Paran**.
- **Tihai**: When in a dance, a group of *bols* are repeated thrice before arriving at the *sama* (The first beat of *tal*) it is called *Tihai* viz. (*TaThaiThaiTat*, *AaThaiThaiTat*, *Thai Ta Thai*)-3
- **Chakkardar Toda**: When the dancer repeats any *bol* three times and arrives at *Sam* then it is called *Chakkardar Toda*.
- **Primlu**: This is a distorted form of word *Primala*. When the dancer performs by mixing the *bols*, and *bols of pakhawaj* etc., is called *Primulu*.
- **Kavitta**: Any poem or *Pada*, which is bound by *Laya* and *Tal*, is called *Kavitt*. In the dance along with *Kavitta* its *Bhava* is also exhibited.
- **Gat**: It has no *Tukda* or *tihai* but through *Gat* a specific *Bhava* is expressed in the dance. In the percussion instruments a composition of soft *bols* is called *Gat*.
- **Gat Nikas**: *Nikas* is a movement from one *Mudra* (Hand Gestures) to another in the course of dance is called *Nikas*. The dancer emotively moves the body parts, strikes the ground in any *Matra* (Measurement of beats) of the *Taal* and moves from one place to another, adopts an attractive posture and stands. Some learned persons call the process of returning after conclusion of dance as *Nikas*.

While dancing, the dancer takes a particular *Hastak* and moves in a *Bhavapura* (with expressions) manner, this movement according to *Laya* is called *Gat Nikas*.

- **Gat Bhava**: During the course of dance, when the dancer takes up a short story line like that of *Makhan chori*, *Sita Swayambar*, *Shiva Pujan*, *Ahilia Uddhar* ect. and exhibits the same along *Laya* it is called *Gatabhava*.
- **Thumri**: It is a musical composition of Northern India in which nature of *Naiyika* (Heroine) or her condition is described. *Thumri* compositions are often chiefly *Shringarik* (Feminine beauty) on the basis of which dancers demonstrate *Bhavas* through *Abhinaya*.
- **Farmaishi Chakkardar**: When any group of *bols* with *tihai* are presented three times, then it is called *farmaishi chakkardar*.
- **Tatkar/Ladi**: In the course of dance the sounds which are produced by striking the feet on the ground are called *Tatkar* i.e. *TaThaiThaiTat*, *AaThaiThaiTat*.

Conclusion

In conclusion to this paper, Dance is not about just following mere steps but is a whole procedure where each and every step holds an importance. These are the nuances of dance that every dance performer should strictly follow in order to reach success. These are the antique details that adds the beauty to your performance and restrains it from being monotonous. The classical dance form is an art that comes from the heavens and is the easiest way of connecting you directly to the gods in these present times. Hence it is necessary to consider its importance and should be followed strictly for a complete success.

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