

1. My experience of Lec-demo at school

While doing Lec-demo in a school with standard of 4th to 8th class, I had some mixed experience which I want to share with you. I found the boys are actively participating in the process of dance. There are keen in imitating which I was demonstrating. But to my surprise, sometimes most of the girls are not interested. They are busy with their activities while I was talking about Odissi Dance.

Yes, some of them were answering my questions. I know the answers were silly, but I was just asking them just to involve them in the learning process of Dance. Some of the questions were Do you heard about Odissi Dance? How many types of classical dances are there? From which state Odissi Dance belong?, Have you visited Puri Jagannath temple? & have you visited Konark Temple Etc.? While question answer session one boy asked me, who performed the first Odissi Dance? Can we mix Odissi dance festival with food festival?

School teachers thought that I am here to Market about the Odissi. I have no option but have to accept it. Because it is our duty to propagate this beautiful dance form and see that it should reach to our next generation with its purity form as our great gurus have done this through their entire life.

It is really a challenged for me to show the Odissi classical dance to young students. So at first I show them how different animals walk and how we intimate it in Odissi dance form. Actually these are the ten Gatibhedas of Abinaya Darpana. But I simplify them as walks of Lion, Horse, Dear, Snake, Frog, elephant, peacock, swan, brave man and lady. Then I explain them about the 4 bit and 7 bit Tals and how to recite them, also practically teach them to do in their hands.

After that I have to explain them all the eight classical dance form of India and how Odissi is different from Kathak and Bharatnatyam etc because so many students are learning other classical dance forms.

I explain them the 5 torso movements.

1. Dakhya Chalana
2. Bama chalana
3. Uchalana
4. Prustha Chalana
5. Prachalana

Then, I explain, how we use Lasya in Odissi, which is originated by 'Devi Parvati' who taught this to 'Usha', a daughter of 'Vanasura' and who then taught it to the ladies of Saurashtra. After that I explained Abhinaya, small introduction of 'Bhava' i.e, facial expression, 9 Rasas etc.

I just ask them, can we touch electricity?, all the students loudly say no. But still we can feel its presence through a bulb and the cool air of a fan. Like that we can experience Rasa. It is the mode of communication between a dancer and audience. With all the *hasta Mudras* both *Asanyukta* (single hand) and *Sanyukta* (double hand) gesture, head movement, eye movement, neck movement & their uses, with the inclusion of *Bhava, Rasa, Nayaka-Nayika bheda* we can demonstrate *Abhinaya* in Odissi dance.

I explain it by example of two characters i.e. *Rama* and *Ravana*. To depict these two characters we use *Katakamukha* and *Shikhara* for *Rama* and *Pataka* for *Ravana*. Also the body movement is according to the character. Similarly children can distinguish the character of '*Sita*' and '*Mandodari*' from their walk. With all these descriptions of characters I tried to inculcate the interest in Odissi Dance in the children.

I also tried to compare the High-tech computer with dance. As our body with hardware of computer, mind with operating system & soul with RAM

I believe I also learn much with the interaction with the students. Thanks to all who have given me the opportunity to grow as an Odissi guru in Gujarat, the land of Garba.

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