



IMPACT OF INNOVATIVE CHOREOGRAPHY IN ALARIPPU

Dr K.Sahayaraani

Assistant Professor of Bharatanatyam

KalaiKaviri College of Fine Arts.

Tiruchirappalli

Abstract

Choreography in dance is an intricate art form that requires the thoughtful arrangement and composition of movements to create a harmonious and expressive dance piece. Choreographers, often considered the architects of dance, carefully select steps, patterns, and formations, weaving them together to convey a specific theme, story, or emotion. This creative process involves a keen understanding of musicality, rhythm and special dynamics, as well as a deep connection to the cultural or artistic context in which the dance is situated. Choreographers use the body as a canvas to communicate their ideas and narratives.

Alarippu is the invocatory dance in the recital, properly structured by Tanjore quartet. In modern days there are many innovations done in alarippu. Innovation plays a crucial role in dance by pushing boundaries, expanding creative possibilities, and bringing fresh perspectives to the art form. Innovation in dance can lead to the development of unique choreographic approaches. This paper discusses about a new innovative alarippu "Mrigaalarippu". A good innovative choreography creates aesthetic pleasure. Thus brings joy to the dancer as well as to the spectators.

Key words #choreography #innovations #tradition #alarippu #mriga.

Introduction

Choreography is the art of designing, representing an idea, physically through dance. It includes inventing or arranging movements into order and presenting it to the spectators. Choreographer creates new works with keeping tradition as their basic. In such case, tradition and innovation meets each other. Choreography comes from ones own observation, understanding, inspiration, interest and experience. While doing choreography, usage of body, action, space, time, energy plays an important role .

1. **Body:** The body is the physical form and instrument of expression for the dancer. Choreographers consider the body's anatomy, lines, and capabilities when creating movements. The body is manipulated into various shapes, positions, and alignments to communicate themes, emotions, or concepts.
2. **Action:** Action refers to the specific movements or sequences performed by the dancer. Choreographers use actions to build sequences and phrases that convey their artistic intent.
3. **Space:** Space refers to the area in which movement occurs and is a fundamental element in dance. Choreographers use space to create shapes, patterns and relationships between dancers or between the dancer and the environment.
4. **Time:** Time in dance relates to the duration of movement, the rhythm, tempo and the overall timing of the choreography. The manipulation of time allows choreographers to create dynamic and expressive

movements. Changes in tempo, pauses and rhythmic variations contribute to the emotional and aesthetic qualities of the dance.

5. **Energy:** Energy refers to the force applied. Choreographers use energy to convey emotion, mood or narrative within the dance. Varying levels of energy, from soft and flowing to sharp and powerful contribute to the overall dynamic range of the choreography.

choreographers are the architects of this artistic process .Body language, facial expressions, hand movements, foot movements are essential part of dancing. Dance which is well created, expressed and presented is known as dance choreography. It not only includes dance but also story or song, costume, makeup, instrument etc. Additionally choreographers may consider lighting, costumes and stage designs to enhance the overall visual impact of their creations. Choreography is a creative attempt that transforms the human body into a powerful medium of expression.

Body of the contribution

Some procedures for doing choreography :

1. **Choose a Song:** Start by selecting a song that suits the style and mood you want for your dance.
2. **Conceptualize the Dance:** Develop a theme or concept for your choreography. Consider the emotions you want to convey and any specific movements that align with the music.
3. **Create a Structure:** Divide the song into sections and plan corresponding choreography for each part.
4. **Warm-Up:** Begin with a thorough warm-up to prevent injuries and prepare dancers for the movements ahead.
5. **Teach Basic Steps:** Introduce the basic steps or movements that will be used throughout the dance. Ensure everyone is comfortable with these foundational elements.
6. **Build on Basics:** Develop more complex sequences by combining basic steps. Pay attention to transitions between movements.
7. **Coordinate Group Movements:** If working with a group, focus on synchronization and coordination. Ensure everyone is moving in harmony.
8. **Add Dynamics:** Incorporate variations in speed, level changes and dynamics to keep the dance visually interesting.
9. **Refine Transitions:** Smooth out transitions between different sections of the dance, ensuring a seamless flow.
10. **Rehearse:** Practice the choreography multiple times to refine movements, timing and overall execution
11. **Receive Feedback:** Share the choreography with dancers and gather feedback. Make adjustments as needed to enhance the performance.
12. **Finalize and Polish:** Once satisfied with the choreography, polish the details, paying attention to facial expressions, musicality and overall performance quality.
13. **Costuming and Props:** If applicable, plan and incorporate costumes or props that complement the dance theme.
14. **Technical Rehearsals:** Conduct rehearsals with lighting, sound and any other technical elements to ensure a smooth performance.
15. **Perform:** Showcase your choreography to your intended audience, whether it's a live performance or recorded video.

While doing choreography, several elements are crucial to create a successful and impactful dance piece:

1. **Creativity:** Choreographers need a strong creative vision to design movements that are innovative and expressive.
2. **Musicality:** Understanding and interpreting the music is essential. Choreographers must synchronize movements with the rhythm, melody and dynamics of the chosen music to create a harmonious dance piece.
3. **Technical Skill:** A solid grasp of dance techniques and styles is vital. Choreographers should be well-versed in the technical aspects of the dance forms they are working with to create movements.
4. **Spatial Awareness:** Considering the arrangement of dancers in space is crucial. Choreographers must be mindful of formations, patterns and the overall use of stage space to create visually fascinating compositions.

5. Emotional depth : Infusing the choreography with emotional depth adds a layer of resonance. The ability to evoke emotions through movement enhances the audience's connection to the performance.
6. Collaboration: Effective communication and collaboration with dancers is essential. Choreographers work closely with performers to bring their vision to life, ensuring that movements are executed with precision and convey the intended emotions.
7. Storytelling: Whether abstract or narrative, choreography often tells a story. Clarifying the intended narrative or theme helps in creating a coherent dance piece.
8. Adaptability: Choreographers should be open to adjustments and refinements during the rehearsal process. Being adaptable allows for the organic development of the choreography and often leads to improved results.

By balancing these elements, choreographers can create memorable dance compositions.

Innovation in dance refers to the introduction of original and creative ideas, techniques, movements. Essentially, innovation in dance involves the imaginative and inventive evolution of choreography, contributing to the evolution and diversity of the art form. Sometimes, it may result in deviation from traditional norms.

New innovations results in :

1. Creativity (results in fresh,uniqueideas,movements and styles)
2. Artistic expression (communication of emotions through artistic point of view)
3. Evolution of new dance (results in reshaping of dance styles and forms)
4. Audience engagement (innovations creates curiosity, interest, engagement in audience)
5. Influence on other artists (innovations and new ideas inspire other choreographers and dancers to experiment and explore new ideas).

Innovations can have both positive and negative aspects.

Positive aspects in innovation:

1. Individual exploration : It fosters creativity and allows individuals to explore unique ideas.
2. Diverse style and techniques: It introduces diverse styles and techniques, enriching the dance repertoire and providing dancers with a broader range of artistic choices.
3. Audience Engagement: Innovative performances capture the audience's attention, making dance more engaging and appealing to a wider spectrum of viewers.
4. Technological Integration: Incorporating technology enhances dance presentations by offering new possibilities in lighting, sound and interactive experiences, creating more immersive and dynamic performance.
5. Cross-Cultural Fusion: Innovation in dance often involves the fusion of different cultural elements promoting inclusivity and fostering a sense of unity across diverse dance traditions.
6. Career Opportunities: Embracing innovation opens up new career opportunities for dancers choreographers, and professionals in related fields, contributing to the sustainability of the dance industry.
7. Educational Advancements: Innovative approaches to dance education, such as online platforms and virtual learning, make dance education more accessible and adaptable to different learning styles.

Negative aspects in innovation :

1. Resistance to change: Traditionalists may resist innovative approaches, leading to a divide within the dance community and potential marginalization of certain styles or practitioners.
2. Barrier for some artists: Advancements and complex choreography may create barriers for some dancers, particularly those with limited resources or physical capabilities, limiting their participation in innovative practices.
3. Exclusion of Traditional Forms: Innovation may inadvertently sideline or overshadow traditional dance forms, risking the loss of cultural heritage and diversity within the dance community.
4. Increased Pressure on Artists: Constant pressure to innovate can be stressful for dancers and choreographers, potentially hindering their creative process and leading to burnout.
5. Lack of Standardization: Rapid innovation may result in a lack of standardization, making it challenging to establish clear criteria for evaluating the quality and impact of new dance forms.

6. Risk of Cultural Appropriation: Innovation that involves integrating cultural elements without proper understanding or respect may lead to cultural appropriation.
7. Collaboration of many styles:
Innovation may also result in fusion of many styles leading to the exploitation of the original style.

Findings

The Tanjore Quartet played a crucial role in shaping the Alarippu, providing a structured and foundational piece that continues to be an integral part of Bharatanatyam performances today. Alarippu is a dance sequence that primarily focuses on intricate footwork, rhythmic patterns, and graceful movements. It serves as a warm-up for the dancer, gradually building energy and setting the tone for the performance. The Alarippu incorporates various adavus, which are basic dance units in Bharatanatyam. These adavus include specific footwork patterns, hand gestures (mudras) and body movements. The dancer performs these adavus in a structured and rhythmic manner. Jathis are rhythmic syllables that accompany the footwork patterns. Jathis add complexity to the dance and showcase the dancer's proficiency in maintaining intricate rhythms. While Alarippu is primarily a pure dance sequence, dancers often infuse it with subtle expressions of bhava (emotion).

Innovative choreography in alarippu yields several significant outcomes:

1. **Artistic Evolution:** The introduction of innovative choreography in alarippu signifies a progression in the art form. Choreographers explore new movements, formations, and interpretations, pushing the boundaries of traditional Bharatanatyam. This evolution ensures that the dance remains a living, dynamic expression of artistic creativity.
2. **Expressive Range:** Innovations in alarippu allow for a broader expressive range. Choreographers can infuse the traditional movements with new emotions, narratives, and thematic elements. This expanded expressive palette enhances the communicative power of the dance, connecting more deeply with audiences.
3. **Relevance to Contemporary Audiences:** By incorporating contemporary elements, themes, or cultural references, innovative choreography in alarippu maintains relevance with modern audiences. This connection helps bridge the gap between the rich cultural heritage of Bharatanatyam and the contemporary sensibilities of spectators.
4. **Audience Engagement:** Creative choreography captivates and engages audiences. Innovative alarippu sequences can surprise, delight, and captivate viewers, fostering a stronger connection between performers and spectators. This engagement is crucial for the continued appreciation and popularity of classical dance forms.
5. **Educational Significance:** Innovative alarippu serves as an educational tool within the Bharatanatyam community. It encourages dancers, students, and practitioners to explore their own creativity while adhering to the fundamental principles of the classical form. This educational aspect fosters a culture of continuous learning and experimentation.
6. **Diversity in Influences:** Choreographers often draw inspiration from diverse sources such as other dance styles, music genres, or cultural traditions. This infusion of varied influences enriches the alarippu, which reflects the interconnectedness of artistic expressions across different domains.
7. **Contribution to Dance Discourse:** Innovative choreography in alarippu contributes to the broader discourse within the dance community. It sets benchmarks for creativity, inspiring other dancers and choreographers to experiment and contribute to the ongoing development of Bharatanatyam as an art form.
8. **Cultural Innovation:** The infusion of innovation into alarippu contributes to the cultural innovation of Bharatanatyam. This not only ensures the preservation of tradition but also allows the dance form to adapt to changing cultural landscapes, keeping it vibrant and responsive to contemporary societal dynamics.

Alarippu, a traditional dance element in Bharatanatyam, typically follows a pattern of movements that serve as a warm-up for the dancer. While the core structure remains consistent, there can be variations in the way it is performed. Here are some variations:

1. **Speed Variation:** Alarippu can be executed at different speeds, ranging from slow and controlled to quick and dynamic. The choice of speed can add a unique flavour to the performance.
 2. **Mudra Variations:** Incorporate different hand gestures (mudras) to add complexity and artistic expression. Experiment with variations in hand movements while maintaining the basic alarippu structure.
 3. **Directional Changes:** Introduce changes in the direction of movement. Dancers can move diagonally, in circular patterns, or change facing directions to make the alarippu more visually engaging.
 4. **Incorporate Adavus:** Experiment with various adavus (basic steps in Bharatanatyam) within the alarippu, showcasing the dancer's technical proficiency and versatility.
 5. **Expressional Elements:** While alarippu is primarily a technical piece, dancers can infuse subtle expressions or facial nuances to convey emotions, adding a layer of depth to the performance.
 6. **Use of Space:** Explore the entire performance space. Utilize different levels, such as sitting, standing, or low-floor movements, to make the choreography more spatially dynamic.
 7. **Rhythmic Patterns:** Play with rhythmic variations, emphasizing certain beats or introducing syncopated rhythms within the alarippu structure.
 8. **Incorporate Innovations:** Choreographers may introduce innovative elements like incorporating elements from other dance forms or blending traditional movements with contemporary twists.
- Innovations in Alarippu:

Innovative choreography in alarippu brings about a rich tapestry of artistic evolution, cultural relevance, and educational significance. It propels Bharatanatyam forward while preserving its essence, making it a dynamic and living tradition.

Innovations in Alarippu can manifest in different ways, showcasing the creativity and individuality of dancers. Some examples of variations might include:

1. **Rhythmic Innovations:** Dancers may introduce unique rhythmic patterns or complex footwork sequences while still adhering to the fundamental beats of Alarippu.(panchajati alarippu,108 thalaalarippu, saptathalaalarippu, alarippu in 175 and 35 thalas ,leading to creation of various jatis and gatis)
2. **Mudra Exploration:** Variations may involve experimenting with different hand gestures (mudras) to convey nuanced emotions, enhancing the expressiveness of the dance.(hasta alarippu, mayuraalarippu, garudaalarippu, krishnaalarippuetc)
3. **Tempo Changes:** Dancers may choose to perform Alarippu at varying tempos, adapting the pace to suit their interpretation and artistic expression (dwithalaalarippu, Chandathalaalarippu, thalamalikaalarippu,chaaputhalaalarippu, usialarippu, tri kala alarippu, dwikalaalarippuetc)
4. **Stylistic Interpretations:** Individual dancers or schools of dance may have unique stylistic preferences, influencing the overall presentation of Alarippu. This could include variations in posture, movements, and presentation styles.(navarasaalarippu, nrittakelialarippu, vahanaalarippu, dasavatharaalarippu, arghanareeshwaraalarippu, brahmarialarippu,panchaboothaalarippu, kalinganarthanaalarippuetc)

Mriga Alarippu

"MrigaAlarippu" is a stylistic interpretation of Alarippu in Bharatanatyam. The term "Mriga" translates to "deer" in Sanskrit. In MrigaAlarippu, the movements and expressions of the dance often draw inspiration from the graceful and delicate qualities associated with a deer.

In this variation, dancers may incorporate stylized depictions of deer-like movements, using fluid and agile gestures to emulate the elegance of a deer. The choreography might include elements such as gentle leaps, gliding steps, and hand gestures representing the characteristics of a deer.

Conclusion

Impact of innovative choreography in Alarippu is profound, breathing new life into this traditional Bharatanatyam dance element. Through creative exploration, choreographers infuse fresh perspectives, introducing variations in movement, rhythm and expression. This not only engages contemporary audiences but also revitalizes the classical art form, allowing it to evolve while retaining its cultural essence. Innovative choreography in Alarippu serves as a bridge between tradition and modernity, fostering artistic diversity and

expanding the boundaries of this dance form. As dancers explore inventive approaches, they contribute to the dynamic and ever-evolving landscape of Bharatanatyam, ensuring its continued relevance and resonance in the world of performing arts.

Dancers often use variations to showcase their individual artistry, skill, and interpretation of the traditional form. It adds dynamism to the dance and allows for personal expression within the established framework, making each performance unique. However, it's crucial for dancers to maintain the essence and integrity of Alarippu while incorporating variations. Striking a balance between tradition and innovation ensures that the dance remains rooted in its cultural and historical context while also evolving with the creativity of the performers.

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Link

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