

The History of Lao Dance

1. Classical dance

The classical dance was exists since the 14th century. This dance was composed in honor of Nang KeoKengya, the daughter of king of Angkor and wife of King FaNgum who unified the Lao territory within the kingdom of Lan Xang (the land of millions of elephants). The Nang Keos dance is celestial being with slow, Gracious and hieratic gestures. The dance represent peace and Kindness in the Lao land.

2. Folk dance

Folk dance refers to all kinds of dances that are passed on from one generation to another and that are often linked to an ethnic group's traditional ceremonies. The folk dance are performed at religious ceremonies, festivities, and for leisurely entertainment. Folk dances were performed in the village or public areas at times of birth, marriage and after harvesting.

Folk dance are highly spirited dances that follow popular themes with lively movements and gestures. Dance motifs are usually based on local legends and the everyday life of the people .

Background of the National School of Music and dance

The first School of Music and dance was found in Vientiane in 1958 it was under the Ministry of Education Department of Fine Arts. It trained the students mainly in the folk or national art styles. After the revolution in 1975, it was administered by the Ministry of Information And Culture. The students at this school trained to become professional, the courses take 7 years to complete. Beside the national School of Music and dance at present there is one college call teacher training School is under the Ministry of education, this college trained the students to become the teacher at the elementary and secondary school .

The basic of exercises

Exercises are necessity for the fitness of the human form. They are aimed at conditioning the body for a given activity in this case, Lao traditional dance. For maximum effect, the body should warmed up and flexible as a result of the exerci ses.While Lao dance can be taught by begining with dance movements, it is considerably easier to master those movements if one has developed flexibility, control and strength

in the initial stages of dance training through appropriate exercises. Hence, primacy has been given to the exercises in the manual as an essential preparation to learning Lao dance.

These exercises are in 6 categories:

Silence conditioning exercises from the head to the feet.

Arm and hand exercises to facilitate the co-ordination of hand gestures which is an essential part of the choreographic expression of Lao dance.

1. Hand bending
2. Leg bending
3. Foot position
4. Head position
5. Body position
6. Hand gestures