

TRADITIONAL DANCES

Clown dance

The clown dance is form of the humorous dance performed by both genders. It is one of the most ancient traditional theatrical humorous dance performed by means of nonverbal communication e.g. gesture, body language and facial emotions. It is performed in the weddings and has great regional varieties, which testifies of its historical and contextual development and evolution.

The themes in clown dance are drawn from the societal occurrences and it involves also habitual practices of the people in their environment. For example, the obesity, laziness, being lame or bold is some forms of the social shortcomings that are performed by the dancers in metaphorical and realistic critical way. The performer wears old costumes and headgears with soot being used to decorate their faces.

In different parts of Tajikistan clown dances are designated according to the geographies of their origin e.g. Kulobi, Badakhshoni and Hisori etc. Further the clown dance is divided into mountainous and valley. The clown dance is accompanied by the music of different metrical units e.g. in Kulob 2/4, 5/8, 6/8, 7/8 in Sughd province in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4 and in Badakhshon province in 2/4, 6/8.

In Badakhshon province this dance is performed by two male dancers one of whom performs a female personage wearing women clothing. The man imitates the women's dance and makes gestures and movements specific to women with a veil covering part of his face leaving only his eyes visible. In this dance the impressions of women form of walking small steps, shaking head and blinking eyes.

The whole philosophy of this dance is humor. For example, there is a theme of a horse

rider meeting women in the road. The rider moves his horse towards the women and tries to remove the veil from her face to see her and she tries resisting it. Soon she will involve in dancing with him and will try hard to hold her veil and at the end she will let the veil go and of



course the dance is a man and this is a climax as in this clown dance both dancers are men. And of course in addition to be humorous this dance also has a moral story line.

There is a similar dance where women dance wearing men's clothing and obviously in this form of dance they do impressions of men. The movements in this dance are that of men's dance displaying braveness and other masculine

qualities including the odd nature. During the dance the audience will join in making comments or trying to dance with a 'man' dancer.

One of other forms of clown dance is that «Kočbazai» which can be performed in pair by either gender.

The clown dance in recent years has found their place in republican theatrical contests as well.

