PRESERVING OUR CULTURE THROUGH DANCE

by:
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In an era where everything is high-tech and the internet is part of our daily lives, it is easy to forget the traditions and ways of the past. It is great that the new generations are not confined by the rules of the old days and that they are free to be who they want to be but it is also very important that they become grounded and that they are still aware of the history that shaped the Philippines to what it is now.

One of the greatest reminisces of our country rich and colorful history is our culture which translates to our music and dances. The Philippines enjoys rich cultural heritage which includes a diverse collection of traditional dances. Each dance differs according to which region it is from. And it is brilliant that those dances are taught in school and it will not victim to the passing of time and the changing guidelines of the millennial generation. Of course we are all familiar with Pandango sa Ilaw, Sinkil, Tinikling, and other well-known folk dances but aside from those there are all many less-known dances which has rich origins and represents simpler lives of the people back in the days.

To name a few, there’s the Sayaw sa Bangko which originates from the area of Central Luzon mainly from Pangasinan. This dance requires profound sense of balance due to the fact that the dancers dance on top of a narrow wooden bench. It was said that it started as a festival dance which aims to entertain the crowd. The dance shows how social Filipinos are. Then there’s the mock war dance that uses coconut shells also known as the Maglalatik dance which is a type of thanks giving dance for the patron saint of Biñan, San Isidro de Labrador which is also known as the patron of farmers. There are also a lot of courting dances that represent the Filipinos romantic inclination one of which is the Kuratsa, often performed at weddings and other social occasions. The dance has three parts. The couple first performs a waltz. In the second part, the music sets a faster pace as the man pursues the woman around the dance floor in a chase on. The third part, the music becomes even faster as the man finally wins over the maiden. These kinds of
dances can embody the different aspects and views of Filipinos from the past which will serve as not a bind but an inspiration to young students. Teaching these dances in school hopes to guide students and teach them that even in the face of change and modernization the past can also hold relevance and culture will never be out of style.

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