

## **Guru Kula system of teaching in Manipuri dance**

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The Guru kula system of teaching is a very traditional way of learning. Before we start learning we did one Puja called Boriba after that the student was accepted by Guru. The Gurukula style of learning brought great clarity to the mind. The Manipuri student learning from a traditional guru is what we call guru Sisyua Parampara because we usually go to the house of guru to be adopted as his/ her student. It happens only when the student has spent 5 to 10 years with the guru and when the guru has recognized the ability of the student. It is only the guru offers his/ her entire knowledge to the student. There is a saying that if you serve a guru you will get the benefit. But it is different in the case of academic institutions like school and college. It is because in a school or college one has to learn just for a limited year or time and according to a fixed syllabus. The traditional method of teaching gave great importance to the discipline of the student and obedience to the guru. It was mostly an oral tradition, knowledge was shared in the mind and heart. Those days guru never gave them anything to write, but the observation was key to the way of learning. But sometimes teaching methods can be different from each other but understanding is the same. The guru devotes for teaching various techniques without having any loo photos until all the students satisfactorily learn their lessons. Teaching the subject dancing is even more special because it involves teaching of more qualities than those taught in general teaching. It involves teaching aesthetics, culture, morals and ethics, a philosophical and spiritual understanding and finally presenting all this through bodily expressions to an audience to elevate the society to a higher level of experience and culture. The dance forms of dance as we see today, their enchanting music we listen today the beautiful gesture and movement of the dancers we enjoy at present, the values underlying these dances are all to be regarded as the contribution of the dancing teachers whose priceless contributions brought them to the classical status.

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