

## 24.6 Paper Presentation IX “Sustainability”

### **Virtual Presence: Dimensional Shifts of Kathakali Performance and Viewership**

**By Akhila Vimal C**

Kathakali is regarded as one of the classical dance forms of Kerala, India. It is an art form that demands live percussion, larger-than-life figures, and an informed audience. The costume, makeup, and even the acting style of Kathakali are projected to deal with a live audience in close proximity ‘in front of a lamp’. This paper explores the dimensional shifts of performance, viewership, and space of performance in Kathakali during post-Covid scenario, where the liveness of performance got altered with virtuality. The performers are facing challenges and a dip in income as their livelihood depends mostly on temple festivals and cultural events which came to a halt during the pandemic. The covid restriction led Kathakali enthusiasts to create virtual venues for performance. The virtual-space acts as a safety valve to escape state-imposed restrictions. Here, I will try to analyze the nuances of viewership shifts of Kathakali in the current scenario.

### **Dance it Out: Free Body Movement as a Healing Tool of Emotional Contagion**

**By Deepshikha Ghosh**

This paper will explore dancing body not merely as art enhancing the pleasure of mind, but as a vehicle for channelizing emotional contagion. Schachter and Singer argue on emotional contagion that “both mind and body make a critical contribution to emotional experience.” Today, when our everyday movements are curtailed so much, John Blacking’s words become more relevant that “feelings which people express or receive through the medium of dance are drawn from a report of collective sentiments as much as from personal experience and that people learn ways of talking about feelings as well as discover ways of acting them out.” The paper will not only investigate how free movements aim at bridging the gap between mind-body and verbal-nonverbal but will also search for dance’s identity within the context of the cultural-pedagogical agenda, how these embodied practices help in channelizing contagion of thoughts towards more meaningful, holistic, social, emotional well-being.