

A Study on the Dance Form of Yangko in Changli, Hebei, China

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Abstracts

The emergence and development of Yangko are closely related to human activities. Initially, Yangko was a piece of music that people hummed during the process of labor. In later development, it further absorbed various arts such as agricultural songs and folk art, gradually becoming a folk dance with performance characteristics. Yangko is a very typical folk dance of the Han ethnic group and an important component of their daily life. Hebei Province, China is one of the important birthplaces of Yangko art, with unique and diverse forms of Yangko. Among them, Changli Yangko is the most regional and was selected for national intangible cultural heritage protection in 2008.

This article adopts a combination of theoretical discussions and case analysis methods, and proposes its own views and insights through the sorting and analysis of relevant theories and research results. Case analysis is an in-depth study and analysis of the performance of Yangko in Changli, exploring the artistic forms, characteristics, and connotations of Yangko. In terms of research content, this article takes Changli Yangge in Hebei Province as the object of investigation and research, and takes the dance form characteristics of Changli Yangge as the starting point to explore the interactive relationship between Hebei Yangge and rural society and rural life, revealing the mutual influence of Yangge art and social culture.

Keywords: Changli Yangge; Dance form; Labanotation

Introduction

In traditional Chinese culture, dance is an important way of expression, and Changli Yangko, as a representative folk dance form in Hebei, has strong local characteristics and rich cultural connotations. Changli Yangge originated in Changli County, Hebei Province, China. It is a traditional dance performed by local people during important festivals and celebrations such as harvest and prayer. With the development of modernization, many traditional cultural and artistic forms are facing the risk of loss and disappearance. Therefore, studying the dance form of Changli Yangko can promote the protection and inheritance of traditional culture, and enable it to be better disseminated and developed; It also helps to deepen our understanding of local folk culture, explore its status and role in local social life, as well as its impact on the emotions, beliefs, and traditional customs of the local people. Through in-depth research on dance forms, we can better understand and inherit the important folk art form of Changli Yangko. Therefore, the research background of the form of Changli Yangko dance involves cultural protection, folk cultural inheritance, and the dissemination and development of local cultural characteristics, which is of great significance for promoting the inheritance and development of traditional Chinese culture.

This research project is based on literature research and field investigation to understand the living environment of Changli and the appearance of folk Yangko; Secondly, draw objective conclusions from field investigations, analyze the dance forms of different characters, and explore the causes behind the movements; Finally, the dance form of Changli Yangge is presented through the Laban dance score, and the agricultural culture represented by it is discussed, providing theoretical support for the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage dance.

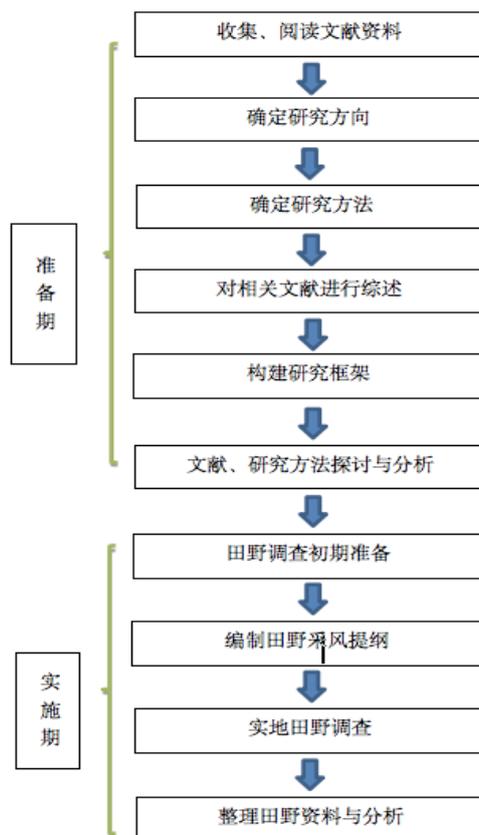


Figure 1 Research flowchart

Research subjects

Changli Yangge dance is a traditional folk art form that originates from the agricultural culture in northern China and is mainly spread in Changli County and surrounding areas. This study focuses on Changli Yangko as the main research object, studying dance movements, rhythm and rhythm, performance style, dance costumes and props, etc. It can comprehensively and deeply understand the unique characteristics and artistic value of Changli Yangko dance form, and provide theoretical support and practical guidance for the inheritance and development of this traditional folk art.

4. Living Space for Changli Yangko

Changli County is located in the southeast of Yanshan, adjacent to Jieshi Mountain in the north, Bohai Sea in the east, and the Luan River system in the west of Qilihai in the south. It is under the jurisdiction of Qinhuangdao City in Hebei Province, meaning "prosperity of Lishu". The land resources are mainly cultivated land, gardens, and forests, with abundant tourism resources. It has a unique natural environment and rich cultural resources, and is known as the "Eastern Hawaii" and "hometown of flowers and fruits". This superior natural environment provides favorable conditions for the development of local agriculture and agricultural culture. Changli County is mainly a rural society, where farmers form a closely connected and interdependent community. As a form of collective dance, Diyangge has been widely inherited and performed in rural society.

The Artistic Expression Forms of Changli Yangko

Changli Yangge is a folk dance with strong local characteristics, originating from Qinghuangdao, and is one of the intangible cultural heritages of Hebei Province. Diyangge, with its unique artistic expression, showcases the local people's customs and cultural traditions. The following will elaborate on the artistic expression forms of Changli Yangko from the aspects of action characteristics, clothing and props, music accompaniment, dance arrangement, and performance content.

5.1 Action characteristics

The performance content of Changli Yangge mainly comes from local customs and cultural traditions. In dance, dancers showcase various aspects of life such as labor, love, and family through various movements and changes in formation. At the same time, dancers also convey joyful and enthusiastic emotions through their expressions and movements, allowing the audience to deeply feel the emotional world and cultural connotations of the local people. The movement characteristics of Changli Yangko are mainly manifested as "twisting, trembling, and bumping". Among them, "twist" refers to the graceful and graceful curves exhibited by dancers through the twisting of their waist and hips; "Trembling" refers to the continuous vibration of the knee during the movement of dance steps, making the dance movements more lively; "Tiao" refers to the continuous movement of the foot dance during movement, giving the dance a sense of jumping motion.

The characters in Changli Yangko are divided into four major professions: Niu (girl), Kuai(wife), Chou (old man), and Gongzi. The characters cooperate with each other and their movements are unique. Niu is usually a young girl between the ages of ten and twenty. Previously, Niu's role was mainly played by men in reverse, but now it is performed by women. Niu's characteristics are beauty, charm, elegance, beauty, shyness, spiciness, and stability. Kuai mainly plays the role of a witty and humorous wife and an older woman. She shrugs her shoulders and extends her neck, walks slowly, and her eyes are vivid. She maintains a calm and composed demeanor, with a playful appearance on her face. Chou is the core figure in the performance of Diyangko, with its unique style and characteristics. It combines movements such as bending knees, crouching, stepping on feet, and shrugging with rich facial expressions to express the humorous and witty image of the clown. The author will use the Laban notation method to record typical movements of Changli Yangko, and use professional dance notation terminology to explain them in writing. The movements of each character will be recorded in the form of dance notation, and the factors that form the movements will be analyzed.

As shown in Figure 2, the basic step of "front kick" is a score example.

Preparation: Keep your feet in place and keep your knees relaxed and trembling. Weak start: the right foot is in its original position high, and the left leg is forward low.

First shot: In the first half of the shot, keep your feet in place and bend your legs 1 degree. Take the second half of the shot, with the left foot in place high and the right leg forward low.
Second beat: In the first half, keep your feet in place and bend your legs 1 degree. In the second half, raise the right foot in position and lower it in front of the leg.
Third and fourth beats: Repeat the actions of the first and second beats.

Figure 2 "Niu" Forward Kick Step



Figure 3 "Kuai" Action Element 2, Score Example.

Preparation: Hold the stick with both hands, keep both feet in place and arms low in place. Keep your legs and knees relaxed and trembling.

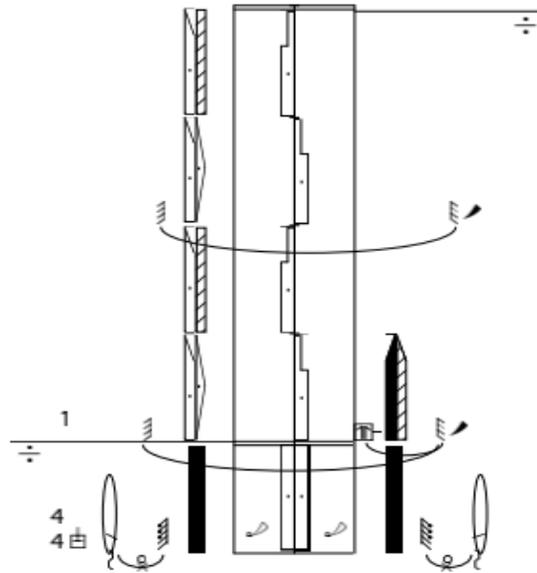
First shot: Right foot front center. The right forearm is tilted low to the right front, the right forearm is tilted high to the left front, and the right hand is holding a stick to touch the right shoulder. Left forearm tilted towards the left front center, left forearm positioned towards the right side center, left hand holding the stick and tapping the right stick.

Second beat: Left foot in front of the center. Maintain and make contact with the right arm, with the left forearm tilted towards the center and the left forearm positioned high in its original position.

Third and Fourth Beats: Same as the first and second beat movements.
Repeat the first to fourth beat movements.

Figure 3 "Kuai" Action Element 2

Figure 4 shows the basic movements of the ugly "little waist swaying", with a score example.

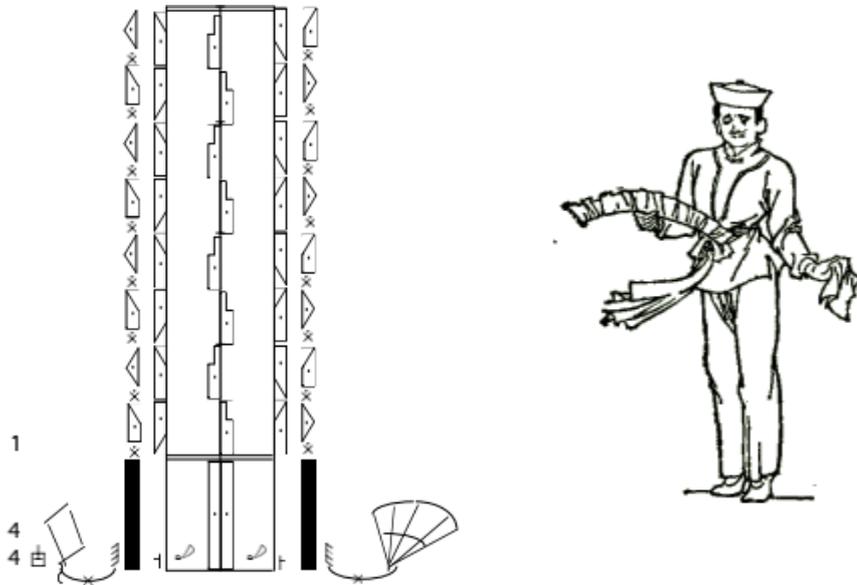


Preparation: Hold a fan in your right hand and a towel in your left hand. In the original position of both feet, the arms are in the original position low, and the knees of both legs remain relaxed and trembling. The left arm is tilted low in front of the left and bent at one point. The right arm is tilted low in front of the right side and bent at one point.

First shot: Right foot in front of center, left foot in front of center, alternating between the two feet moving forward. Right hip, right anterior oblique center, left hip, left posterior oblique center. Right arm, right lateral center, right anterior oblique center, 1 degree bent. Left arm, left anterior oblique center, left lateral center, 1 degree bent.

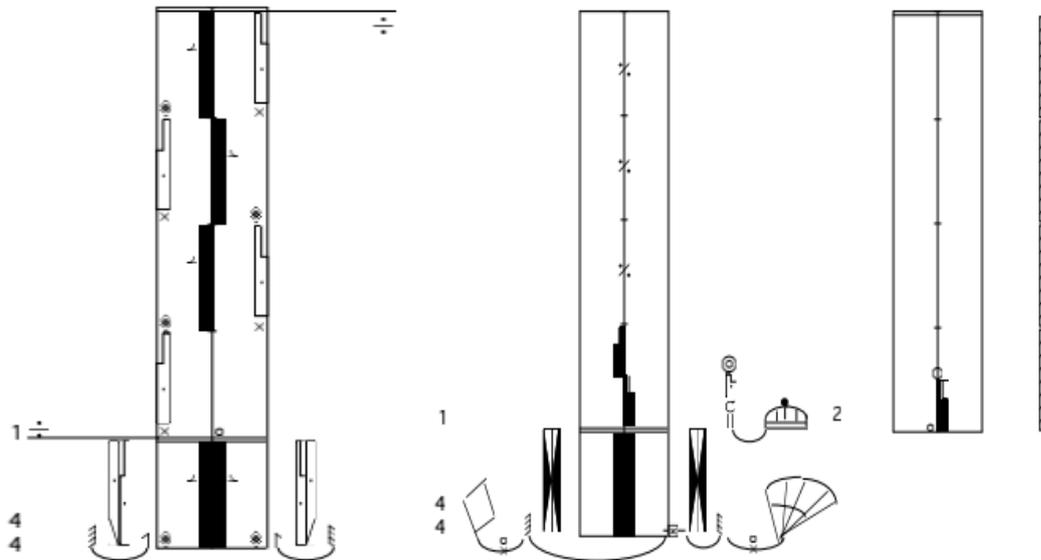
Second to fourth beat: the same action as the first beat.

Figure 4: Ugly "Little Swinging Waist"



As is well known, the development of Chinese dance has been deeply influenced by traditional Chinese opera, and folk dance is no exception. The performance of clowns plays a crucial role in Changli Yangko. Without ugliness, there would be no humor, and they are the core characters in Changli Yangko. In traditional Chinese opera, clowns often stand with their legs bent and knees bent, with a lower body shape and a smaller range of movements. They perform in a small, clever, and harmonious manner. "Dwarf step" (Figure 5, left) is a unique step for clowns, also known as "walking short". Bend your legs and squat down, tiptoe your heels up, stand up, lift your breath, and step forward with the soles of your feet (Huang Jun and Xu Xibo, 2009). "Dwarf step" is a necessary basic skill for clowns. It is named after imitating the form of a dwarf walking. Initially used in special performances, it has become a signature action of clowns after several generations of opera artists' development. "Dwarf" has two meanings, one is the height of the external body shape; The second is to showcase the lightness of the character's movements. Through the genealogy, it can be seen that the clown completes the external form of his body by descending in spatial position, making it a means of depicting the character's psychology. The characteristics of clowns in traditional Chinese opera also influence the performance characteristics of the "clown" in Changli Yangko. In terms of movement form, the "Dwarf Step" (Figure 5, right) in Changli Yangko reduces the amplitude of the bent knee and develops into a three degree bend of the knee based on the six degree bend of the "Dwarf Step" knee. The foot step is changed to a small fragmented step, and the front and back extension of the neck is added, making the changes and applications of flexion and extension more diverse. The makeup retains the traditional Chinese opera clown's "tofu block" shape, while the clothing adds a fur hat on the basis of short skirts and long pants. The forward and backward swinging movements of the fur hat enrich the body movements and add a comedic touch. The performance of the clown in Diyangge is full of drama, showcasing the character's relaxed and optimistic attitude.

Figure 5 Dwarf Steps



5.2 Dance Forms

Changli Yangko can be divided into street crossing Yangko and field Yangko in terms of form. Field Yangko can be divided into large field Yangko and small field Yangko. The number of performers in large field Yangko ranges from hundreds to tens, with one person leading the dance and the remaining people "running a routine". When performing, attention is paid to composition and formation changes, with a large formation and strong momentum. Changzi Yangko is generally divided into "trilogy". In the "first part", the performance venue is created by using a walking chart to circle the onlookers to the periphery of the performance venue; The second part of Pingyangge is usually performed by two, three, or four people, with the main focus on teasing each other. It is often performed in impromptu groups. Nowadays, the main form of performance is a three person combination, and the character configuration is relatively fixed. The form of a three person combination is called the "Iron Triangle", and the performance of the Iron Triangle has no fixed pattern, with performers improvising. The third part is the performance of Yangge Xiaoxi, also known as Xiaochang Yangge, with more performances of "Chuzi Yangge". "Chuzi" is a highlight in the performance form of Changli Yangko. The small field Yangko in Changli Yangko has gradually developed into a more dramatic form of "Chuzi". The performance of other Yangko cannot form a complete "Chuzi", which is a characteristic that distinguishes it from other Yangko performances. Nowadays, most of the Yangko plays in Changli are developed based on the concept of "Chuzi". For example, "Pao lv" is performed by three people and depicts interesting events that occur on the way home for couples. "Jiu Qv" is performed by five people, and this dance combines the culture of Changli red wine industry. Through the humorous and witty performances of the actors, it praises the beautiful era of ancient art's rejuvenation.

5.3 Characteristics of Clothing Props

The costumes and props of dance are seen as the extension of the limbs, which can not only beautify the dance form, but also serve as a tool for expressing emotions in dance. It is also an important symbol to distinguish between different characters, and plays a role in embellishing character images and showcasing their personality traits. The types of props involved in Changli Yangko include daily necessities, labor supplies, etc. Props mostly come from production labor, such as colored fans (Figure 6), handkerchiefs, sticks and hammers (Figure 7), cigarette bags (Figure 8), and fan groups. This fully reflects the strong mass and self entertainment nature of Changli Yangko. From the types of dance props, it can be seen that these props are closely related to the lives of the people of Changli and are ubiquitous items in our daily lives.

Figure 6 Hammer



Figure 7 Color Fan



Figure 8 Smoke Bag



Figure 9 Fur Hat



The clothing mainly focuses on daily life attire. Later, influenced by traditional Chinese opera art, some Yangko costumes were replaced by traditional Chinese opera costumes. Nowadays, apart from traditional Chinese opera costumes, most Yangko costumes retain the style of daily life attire, with changes in clothing materials and color schemes. Due to social development and improved economic conditions, the demand for clothing quality has increased. The material used for clothing is silk, with colors such as red, yellow, green, and pink. Bright colors are the main focus, emphasizing the performance nature of clothing. The

expression of actions is more open, modern, and in line with the requirements of modern people. These changing factors are not only reflected in external factors, but also in the performer's own open mindset.

The traditional Changli Yangko characters are divided into Chou, Niu, Kuai, and Sheng (Figure 10), each with their own unique costumes and props. The traditional Changli Yangko costumes are costumes used for traditional opera performances. They are ugly, dressed in exaggerated clothing and colorful pants, with a fur hat on the head and holding a colorful fan and handkerchief. The ugly facial makeup is similar to the clown face in traditional Chinese opera, which is a small white block painted on the bridge of the nose between the eyes, also known as a "little flower face". Niu, dressed in traditional Chinese opera attire, with a big head, holding a colorful fan and handkerchief. Kuai Wear colored denier clothes and pants, wear a hood on the head, and hold a cigarette bag, fan, or hammer. Sheng, similar to the image of a young student or a young master in traditional Chinese opera, holds a colorful fan.

Figure 10: Traditional Changli Yangko: Chou Niu, Sheng, and Kuai (costumes and props)

Source: "Integration of Chinese Ethnic and Folk Dance - Hebei Volume"



Nowadays, during the performance of Yangko in Changli, the costumes of each character have basically separated from traditional Chinese opera costumes, and most of them wear brightly colored Yangko costumes. In addition to the costumes of Niu Jiao's cross dressing performance, they are also generally consistent with the costumes of Qing Yi and Hua Dan in traditional Chinese opera, emphasizing elegance and beauty. The movements are also taken from traditional Chinese opera, often featuring crouching fish and cloud steps. The dance is graceful and the eyes are silent, the steps are light and agile, the waist moves like a willow swaying in the wind, and the posture is soft and semi reserved. There are basically no changes in the use of props. In terms of makeup, the clown retains a tofu block in the bridge of his nose, adds a red round face on each cheek, and a white lip shape in the middle third of his lips, making his makeup look even more pleasing. The makeup of other characters is more beautiful, in line with the current public aesthetic (Figure 11).

Figure 11: The costumes for Yangko performances in Changli today (from left to right are Chou, Kuai, and Niu, respectively)

Source: Changli County Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Center



5.4 Music accompaniment

Changli is known as the "hometown of three songs", with "three songs" referring to the local yangko, blowing songs, and folk songs. The music of Changli Yangko mainly comes from Changli's blowing songs and folk songs. Blowing songs mainly refer to the past drummers and trumpets, which were used in conjunction with the performance of Yangko. The characteristics of Changli County's trumpets are loud, high pitched, uniform, and lively in volume. Twisted Yangko matches the rhythm with the Yangko character, stepping on the rhythm, and the whole body is dotted. The original Yangko was sung in Yangko, but later developed into a combination of loudspeakers, particularly bright. There are three main forms of performance in Changli folk songs, namely Yangge tune, single tone, and paired tone. Among them, the Yangge tune is the music used in performing Yangge, also known as "playing the wind and flowing", with gongs and drums or accompanying words added at the end. The small brand of traditional Chinese opera, "Liuqing Niang", is a specialized adaptation of Yangko songs for performance.

To do Yangko, one must have a trumpet, which is the main accompaniment instrument of Changli Yangko and is commonly referred to as a large pole trumpet by the people. There are four types of speakers: one is one foot six, with a large opening and a large bowl; The second commonly used is the two horns; The third is a dual machine, small, two together; The fourth is the smallest one called Hai Di Zi, which is six inches. The commonly used sophomore speaker, with two or four people playing, or even one or two hundred people playing, creates a spectacular scene. Suona has the technique of blowing for one or two hours in one breath, with a "nose and mouth blowing" and circular breathing. In addition to accompanying Yangko, solo or ensemble performances can also be performed. Red and white

celebrations can also be celebrated. The playing techniques vary from place to place, such as the Yang song "Liu Qingniang", which can be played with more than ten different techniques. At the same time, any speaker with eight eyes can play "Liu Qingniang", and the modes are different. The ruler falling, the stuffy work tone, and the melody can be varied in many forms. The playing mode is casual, and farmers can use whatever they like to listen to. The music should be coordinated with the local yangko, the movements should be "paused", and the rhythm should be well coordinated with the trumpet. The music should be played with strong, weak, slow, fast, and emotional intensity

According to veteran artist Liu Rongde, Changli folk songs are very distinctive in the Hebei region, characterized by lyricism, delicacy, euphemism, colloquialism, and techniques (such as purring, snoring, dahua, throat ha, and heavy ending). Have your own "style zone". The melody is graceful and the form is complete, and it has developed to a higher stage. Due to the fact that Changli belongs to Northeast China in the ancient belt, many habits are the same, and Changli's folk culture has many colors of Northeast folk culture. Lulong, Funing, Qinhuangdao, Qinglong County and Northeast belong to the same language family with the same accent. Language determines art. The music accompaniment of Changli Yangko usually uses local folk music, such as "Flying Kite" and "Embroidered Lantern". These pieces of music have a bright rhythm and beautiful melody, providing a rich musical atmosphere for dance. Accompanying instruments mainly include traditional instruments such as suona, sheng, erhu, etc.

6 Cultural Interpretation of the Dance Form of Changli Yangko

Changli Yangge is a representative folk dance form in Hebei Province. Its dance form is not only an artistic expression, but also a profound reflection of local culture.

6.1 Presentation of Regional Culture

The dance movements and musical style of Changli Yangko have distinct regional characteristics, and it is a unique cultural phenomenon in the Changli region. This dance form is a manifestation of regional culture, reflecting the geographical, historical, folk and other characteristics of the region, and is a living fossil of regional culture.

6.2 Reflection of Social Value

The dance form of Changli Yangko also reflects strong social values. Through collective dance movements, it embodies the spirit of unity and cooperation; By depicting the dance movements of working life, we praise the hard work and perseverance of the working people. The form of dance is a reflection of social value, and it has a profound impact on people's values.

6.3 The crystallization of folk wisdom The dance form of Changli Yangge is the crystallization of folk wisdom. Both the design of dance movements and the creation of music melodies are full of the wisdom and innovation of folk artists. This dance form is a reflection of folk wisdom, which tells us that folk culture is a precious treasure of the Chinese nation that needs to be cherished and inherited.

In summary, the dance form of Changli Yangko is a fusion and embodiment of multiple cultural factors. It is a reflection of agricultural culture, a manifestation of regional culture, a transmission of folk beliefs, a manifestation of social values, and a crystallization of folk wisdom. Through cultural interpretation of the dance form of Changli Yangko, we can better understand the important value of this intangible cultural heritage and further promote its protection and inheritance.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The dance form of Changli Yangge has distinct uniqueness. Rich and varied in dance movements and steps, demonstrating a high degree of flexibility and improvisation; Changli Yangge emphasizes emotional expression, showcasing the inner world of characters through delicate facial expressions and body language. This intrinsic expression allows the audience to have a deeper understanding of the emotions and themes conveyed by the dance. Changli Yangko has unique features compared to other dances: Changli Yangko is characterized by narrative, telling storytelling content through the arrangement of dance movements and plots; Changli Yangko emphasizes the expression of emotions and the presentation of inner thoughts, showcasing the emotional world of characters through delicate dance movements and expressions, allowing the audience to feel profound emotional resonance; Changli Yangko also has distinct local characteristics and ethnic customs, reflecting the living customs and cultural traditions of the local people. These uniqueness make Changli Yangko stand out in dance art and have irreplaceable artistic value. Changli Yangge, as a traditional folk art form, has had a profound impact on the local social and cultural heritage. It not only enriches the spiritual life of the people, inherits the genes of national culture, but also promotes the formation of community cohesion and identity. By participating in and appreciating the performance activities of Changli Yangko, people can enhance mutual understanding and communication, and strengthen their connections with each other. This kind of cultural exchange and identification has to some extent promoted the harmonious and stable development of society. In addition, Changli Yangko also provides important resource support for local tourism and cultural industry development, attracting a large number of tourists to come and experience it.

In order to better promote and disseminate the traditional folk art of Changli Yangko, the following suggestions are proposed: first, strengthen publicity work, use media platforms and social networks and other channels to widely promote and improve the popularity and influence of Changli Yangko. Secondly, organize various performance activities and competitions, invite excellent performance teams to showcase and exchange ideas, and attract more audience attention and participation. In addition, integrating Changli Yangge into school education and local cultural activities, and cultivating more young inheritors through educational inheritance. At the same time, develop relevant cultural and creative products and tourism souvenirs to meet market demand while further promoting the cultural brand of Changli Yangko.

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