

## Musical Instruments of ODISHA



Music and dance are an integral part of Odisha. The diversity in the landscape - the vast fields, jungles and temples with the waves and winding roads from the hills to the village huts prompted to bring out sound generating devices that move and throw along the moods and feelings of its people. The Changu, Nisan, Khanjani, Dholki, Madala, Ghumura and Pakhawaj denote the different sounds of its people.

### **The different sounds of Odisha**

Each community in Odisha has devised ways and means to commemorate a function. Temple surroundings, villages, and markets are places to perform with all free expressions. The different sounds of the 'Ghantas', tinkling 'Ghungurs', 'modals' and



bellowing Dhols all attract ones attention.



There are instruments which attract the different birds and animals also. A Morchang of the Soras recall the voice of a quaking bird. A cobra remains still before a Nageswar enabling the charmer to engage it.

The conch shells usually represent good omens and played in marriages to invoke the deities.

The stringed musical instruments like veena, Kendra, Sarangi, Ektara, Behela, Dhenka are well-known and one can find them all over the state. They have evolved from the early man's harp made of wood or bamboo shafts connected with fibrous strings of the jungle creepers. The instrument Dhenka is responsible for the composition of a number of poems by Kavisurya Baladeva Ratha through its novel melodious tunings.



Lastly, there are the modern musical instruments believed to be modifications of the older specimens. They are the Bongo, Meracus and the like.

### Musical Instruments used in Dances

No songs are sung in Chhau of Dhenkanal but the music is based on traditional tunes of Odissi Songs. The main accompanying musical instruments are the 'Dhola' (the drums) and the 'Mohuri' (the blowing instrument like 'Shehnai'). The other instruments which are also used apart from these two are the 'Bada Baja' (the big drum) the 'Turi' and 'Kahali' (Like clarion and trumpet without reed) and



the 'Jhanja' (Brass Alloy cymbals).



There are a number of musical instruments used to accompany the Odissi dance. One of the most important is the pakhawaj, also known as the madal. This is the same pakhawaj that is used elsewhere in the north with the main difference being that the right head is a bit smaller than the usual north Indian pakhawaj. This necessitates a technique which in many ways is more like that of the tabla, or mridangam. Other instruments which are commonly used are the bansuri (bamboo flute), the manjira (metal cymbals), the sitar and the tanpura.

### **An article worth a Read**

[http://www.telegraphindia.com/1150220/jsp/odisha/story\\_4418.jsp#.Vs1ew1961s](http://www.telegraphindia.com/1150220/jsp/odisha/story_4418.jsp#.Vs1ew1961s)

### **ACTIVITY**

1. List the different types of musical instruments that are used on different occasions.
2. List some instruments that are used by the tribals.
3. Find out the different types of musical instruments that are used in the different dance forms. Chhau and Odissi are mentioned above.

### **References**

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