

## **Analytical and Intuitive Learning: Combining Pedagogy and Improvisation in a Teaching Format**

(movement workshop in Iranian Urban Dance)

Traditional Iranian dances are based on improvisation (which relies heavily on moving intuitively) and have historically been passed on through cultural immersion, either within family rituals and celebrations or in master-apprentice sessions. In both settings, knowledge is transferred orally and through practice, without the use of an established analytical teaching method. This seems to be true of the West until the 16th century when systematic processes became the main approach for teaching and learning dance. Hence, pedagogical teaching is often recognized as a Western way of teaching dance and a Western-imposed process on the teaching of non-Western dance forms.

I argue that although the idea of pedagogical teaching may have been a Western phenomenon, it is now part of a modern-day global perspective. Also, improvisation as a learning tool is being recognized in the West as more attention is paid to the different learning styles. Dance educators trained in analytical teaching methods sometimes use improvisation as a teaching tool, and similarly, teachers of traditional dances may use pedagogical teaching methods. Furthermore, with a culture-conscious approach to teaching, the essential cultural elements of a dance form can be included in the systematic transmission of knowledge, preventing the potential loss of essential cultural elements of the dance.

In this movement workshop I will use a combination of pedagogy (using my format: Shahrzad Dance Technique) and improvisation, with analytical comparisons of aesthetics in various Iranian arts, to teach Iranian urban dance, to show that both analytical and intuitive teaching approaches are important in transmitting and embodying cultural information.