

Talamaddale

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COVID-19 and lockdown have forced artists of different streams to explore digital platforms and social media to reach out to art lovers and Talamaddale is not an exception. It is an **ancient and traditional art form of India** and a **variation of the Yakshagana theater**. A performance of the art which involved artists from Udupi, Mysore, Uttara Kannada and California went virtual.

Difference between Yakshagana and Talamaddale

Unlike the Yakshagana performance, in the conventional talamaddale, the artists sit across in a place without any costumes and engage in testing their oratory skills based on the episode chosen. While the music is common for both Yakshagana performance and talamaddale, the latter has **only spoken words without any dance or costumes. Hence it is an art form minus dance, costumes and stage conventions.**

Features of Talamaddale

- It is popular predominantly in **coastal Karnataka** and is called Koota (gathering) as against costumed performance ata (play).
- **Bhagavatha (singers), Maddalegara and Chandegara (drum beaters) and Arthadaari (actor-narrator) are the performers.**
- Talamaddale has 3 levels of text.

Prasanga text, which has the description of various characters and the artists have the freedom to read between the lines and bring new ideas.

Musical text, which involves the orchestra of Bhagavatha and Maddalegara (Horizontal drum) and Chandegara (Vertical

drum).

Verbal text, which involves the actor developing the skeleton of verbal and musical texts into visual dramatisation through interpretation and dramatic talent.

- The most interesting aspect of this otherwise actionless artform is the **logical and dramatic dialectic between the roles**. It includes questions and replies, accusations and counter accusations and charges and justifications.
- Bharatha's anguish over Rama's exile, Karna-Arjuna encounter, Krishna-Duryodhana encounter are some of the common themes explored.
- One of the famous examples is **Devidasa's Krishna Sandhana**. Krishna who is representing the Pandavas' viewpoint is being questioned. Some of the charges would be if Pandavas left the kingdom or abandoned it, or if sharing of kingdom is permissible or if they would agree to live with Kauravas.