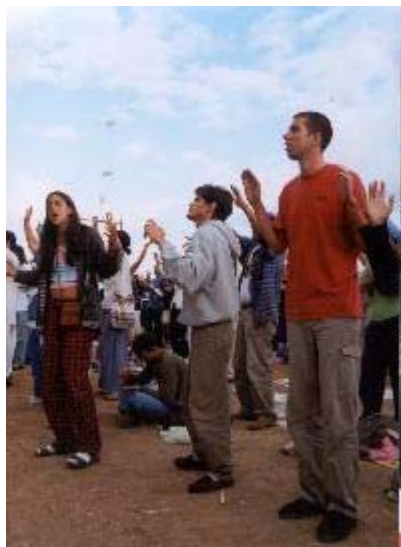


Kiirtan is usually accompanied by Lalita Marmika, a simple and ancient dance done with upraised arms and a gently swaying motion of the body. The movements of the dance open the heart and create a feeling of surrender and joy.



Arms are held out above the horizontal level of the heart, with palms upward. This represents surrender to the Cosmic Consciousness. The hands should not go below the level of the elbows. If the hands are not up in the air, then they are kept clasped or cupped at chest level or may be used for clapping or playing instruments, particularly percussion

instruments such as small drums, cymbals, triangles, bells, maracas and the like.



The feet should move alternately, placing the ball of one foot near or behind the heel of the other foot. The step is 1-2-3. That is, begin to raise the toes on the first foot (1) to start, move that foot behind the heel of the other foot (2), and bend the supporting knees (3) of both feet slightly; then as you move the first foot back to its original position (1 or 4), start 1-2-3-etc on the other side of the body.

Everyone should keep step together. When done in akhanda kiirtan (ie kiirtan in a circular movement) this creates a nice swaying flow as the dancers move counter-clockwise in a circle.

When done in straight lines it creates a sense of harmony of movement.

