8. Laya



Sanskrit Meaning: The word **Laya** means *rhythm, tempo, or the flow of time in music and dance.*

Definition (English) Laya is the **speed or tempo** at which music or dance movements are performed, maintaining a steady and continuous flow of rhythm.

Types of Laya:

Traditionally, there are **three main types of Laya**.

1. **Vilambita Laya** (विलंबित लय) Slow tempo

The rhythm moves **slowly and calmly**, allowing detailed expression and graceful movements.

2. **Madhya Laya** (मध्य लय) Medium tempo

The rhythm flows at a **moderate speed**, neither slow nor fast.

3. **Druta Laya** (द्रुत लय) Fast tempo

The rhythm moves **very quickly**, showing energy and speed.

In **Bharatanatyam**, dancers often perform **Adavus and Jatis in three speeds**, called **Trikaalam**:

1. **First Speed** – Basic tempo
2. **Second Speed (Dugun)** – Double speed
3. **Third Speed (Chaugun)** – Four times speed