

# British South Asian Dancers in an Age of Neoliberalism: Navigating the Challenges and Opportunities

British South Asian dancers have a long and rich history in the United Kingdom. They have played a significant role in shaping the cultural landscape of the country, and their work has been celebrated and enjoyed by audiences of all backgrounds. However, the impact of neoliberalism on British South Asian dancers has been complex and multifaceted.

Neoliberalism is a political and economic ideology that emphasizes the free market, deregulation, and privatization. It has been the dominant economic model in the United Kingdom since the 1980s, and it has had a profound impact on all aspects of society, including the arts.



## Flexible Bodies: British South Asian Dancers in an Age of Neoliberalism by Anne-Marie Brady

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In this article, we will examine the impact of neoliberalism on British South Asian dancers. We will explore the ways in which neoliberal policies and ideologies have shaped their experiences and practices. We will also consider the challenges and opportunities that neoliberalism has presented for these artists, and how they have adapted and resisted its effects.

## **The Challenges of Neoliberalism**

Neoliberalism has posed a number of challenges for British South Asian dancers. One of the most significant challenges has been the reduction in arts funding. Since the 1980s, the government has drastically reduced its funding for the arts, and this has had a devastating impact on many dance companies and organizations.

The reduction in arts funding has made it more difficult for British South Asian dancers to produce and tour their work. It has also made it more difficult for them to maintain their studios and training facilities. As a result, many dancers have been forced to give up their careers, and others have had to find alternative ways to make a living.

Another challenge that neoliberalism has presented for British South Asian dancers is the increasing focus on individualism and competition.

Neoliberalism emphasizes the importance of individual achievement and success, and this has led to a more competitive environment for dancers. Dancers are now under more pressure to stand out from the crowd and to achieve individual success. This can be difficult for dancers who come from marginalized backgrounds, and who may not have the same opportunities as their more privileged peers.

Finally, neoliberalism has also led to a more commodified and commercialized view of the arts. Dance is increasingly seen as a product that can be bought and sold, and this has led to a decline in the value placed on artistic integrity. Dancers are now under more pressure to produce work that is popular and marketable, and this can lead to a compromise in their artistic vision.

## **The Opportunities of Neoliberalism**

Despite the challenges that neoliberalism has presented, it has also created some opportunities for British South Asian dancers. One of the most significant opportunities has been the increased globalization of the arts. Neoliberalism has led to a more open and interconnected world, and this has made it easier for dancers to travel and perform internationally.

The globalization of the arts has created new opportunities for British South Asian dancers to reach new audiences and to share their work with a wider world. It has also led to a greater awareness of the diversity of South Asian dance forms, and this has helped to break down stereotypes and misconceptions.

Another opportunity that neoliberalism has created for British South Asian dancers is the emergence of new funding sources. While government funding for the arts has declined, there has been an increase in funding from private sources. This has given dancers more opportunities to produce and tour their work, and it has also helped to support the development of new dance companies and organizations.

Finally, neoliberalism has also led to a greater recognition of the importance of diversity and inclusion in the arts. This has created

opportunities for British South Asian dancers to participate in mainstream dance companies and organizations, and it has also led to the creation of new dance companies and organizations that are specifically dedicated to promoting South Asian dance.

The impact of neoliberalism on British South Asian dancers has been complex and multifaceted. Neoliberalism has presented both challenges and opportunities for these artists, and it is important to understand the ways in which it has shaped their experiences and practices.

Despite the challenges that they face, British South Asian dancers remain a vibrant and thriving community. They continue to produce groundbreaking work that challenges stereotypes and celebrates the diversity of South Asian culture. They are also playing a vital role in shaping the future of dance in the United Kingdom.

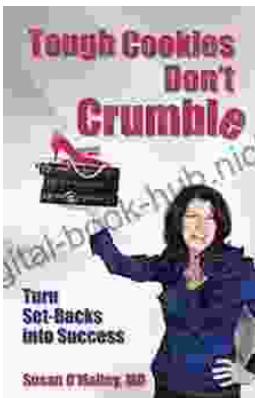
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