



## UTTARA ASHA COORLAWALA

Akademi Award: Creative and Experimental Dance

Born in 1945 in Hyderabad, Shrimati Uttara Asha Coorlawala initially trained in Yoga under Shri B.K.S. Iyengar, and in Bharatanatyam under Gurus Kadirvelu Pillai and Thankamani Nagarajan. Moving to the United States, she graduated in theatre studies with dance as a major component at Smith College in Massachusetts. She took her Master's degree, followed by a PhD in choreography and performance, at New York University. Securing merit scholarships, she acquired professional training in dance at the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, the American Dance Festival, the Juilliard School, the Martha Graham School of Contemporary Dance, the Dance Theatre of Harlem, and the Cunningham Studio.

During her career in dance spanning more than four decades, Shrimati Asha Coorlawala has won wide critical acclaim as a dancer and choreographer. She has presented her work at prestigious dance festivals all over the world, and has also danced with several New York-based choreographers. She is known for her creative and experimental works based on Yoga, Bharatanatyam and Modern Dance.

She is also a well-known teacher, and has worked as professor of dance at universities in the United States and Europe. Among her prominent students are Astad Deboo and Shiamak Davar.

Shrimati Coorlawala has received several awards for her work. These include the Phi Sigma Psi Arts Award of Smith College, her alma mater (1967), the Jon Higgins Award, (1990), the Graduate Research Award of the Congress on Research in Dance, USA (1994), and the Dadabhai Naoroji International Award (2001).

Shrimati Uttara Asha Coorlawala receives the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for her contribution to creative and experimental dance.