



SHASHI SANKHLA
Akademi Award: Kathak

Born in 1948 in Jodhpur, Rajasthan, Shrimati Shashi Sankhla trained in music and dance under several gurus at the Rashtriya Kala Mandal in Jodhpur. She learnt Kathak first from Pandit Mool Chand Gometi in that institution and later studied the dance under Pandit Kundan Lal Gangani. She trained in vocal music under B. N. Kshirsagar, in Pakhawaj under Pandit Badrinarayan Pareek, in Bharatanatyam under Shrimati Pratibha Pandit, and folk dances under Master Kasimji. Briefly, she also took training in Kathak under Pandit Mohan Lal. She obtained Sangeet Alankar degrees in Kathak in 1965 and in music in 1971 from the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya, Miraj. In 2003, she qualified for a doctorate in anthropology from the Inter-Cultural Open University, Netherlands.

Shrimati Shashi Sankhla started her career as a teacher at the Rashtriya Kala Mandal in 1967. She joined the Kathak Kendra at Jaipur as a Nritya Guru in 1978 and served that institution as Principal from 2003 up to 2006. Subsequently, she established her own dance institution, Tilak Sangeet Kendra, where she has groomed many dancers including her own daughters. An accomplished performer and teacher, Shrimati Sankhla has conducted several workshops and seminars on Kathak dance, travelling widely in India and abroad. She has won critical acclaim for her work in Kathak using the Mand song-form of Rajasthan, and has published a book on the subject titled *Mand: Kathak Nritya mein Abhinay ka ek Sashakta Madhyam*.

She has received several honours including the Rajasthan Shree (1997) conferred by the Rajasthan Diwas Samaroh Samiti, Jaipur, and the Rajasthan Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (2001).

For her contribution to Kathak dance, Shrimati Shashi Sankhla receives the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award.