



ARUNA MOHANTY

Akademi Award: Odissi

Born in 1960 in Bhubaneswar, Shrimati Aruna Mohanty stepped into the realm of performing arts under the guidance of her father, Shri Kamala Lochana Mohanty, a well-known theatre personality. She acted in several Oriya plays and films in the mid-1960s in children's roles.

At a later stage, Shrimati Aruna Mohanty started learning Odissi dance under gurus Srinath Rout and Govinda Pal.

From 1972 onwards she was a disciple of Shri Gangadhar Pradhan, who groomed her as a dancer, teacher and choreographer. She also had the privilege of receiving guidance in the art from Gurus Pankaj Charan Das, Kelucharan Mohapatra, Sanjukta Panigrahi and Sonal Mansingh. She also trained in Odissi music under Shri Nirmal Mohanty and Shantanu Das.

An outstanding exponent of Odissi dance, Shrimati Aruna Mohanty has won renown both as a performer and teacher. She has performed extensively, participating in prestigious dance festivals in India and abroad. She has trained several young dancers of promise at the Orissa Dance Academy, Bhubaneswar, where she has worked as Member-Secretary since 1993. She has also undertaken research on dance, covering topics such as representation of the male dancer in classical sculpture and evolution of Odissi in the post-Independence era. She has been guest faculty at several U.S. universities including the universities of California, South Carolina, and Cornell.

She has received several honours for her work including awards from the Guru Pankaj Charan Odissi Research Foundation and the Sanjukta Panigrahi Memorial Trust. Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, has also accorded recognition to her work in dance. She is at present Vice-President of the Orissa Sangeet Natak Akademi, Bhubaneswar.

Shrimati Aruna Mohanty receives the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for her contribution to Odissi dance.