



CHANDRALEKHA
Akademi Fellow

Born in 1928 in Maharashtra, Chandralekha is among the foremost choreographers in contemporary dance in India. A student of Guru Kanchipuram Ellappa Pillai, she initially attracted attention as a Bharatanatyam dancer, but was soon to give up a promising career in classical dance. Twelve years later, she returned to the field as a choreographer. In this chapter of her life in dance, she has sought to reinvestigate the classical form, and interpret its beauty and energy in performances by her own company of dancers.

Utilizing the resources of Bharatanatyam, Kalarippayattu, and Yoga, Shrimati Chandralekha has created a contemporary dance language. Her choreographic works, invested with a modern sensibility, have received wide acclaim both for their challenging themes and their impeccable production. Angika, Navagraha, Lilavati, Prana, Sri, Yantra, Mahakaal, Raga, Sloka, and Sharira are some of her principal works.

Featured in national and international dance festivals, Chandralekha has worked with dancers of traditional training, as well as modern dancers and actors from the West in major experimental productions. She is a creative writer, with publications such as Fire Counter Fire, One More News, and Rainbow on the Roadside to her credit. She also has the distinction of being a graphic designer. Several documentary films have been made on her work in dance. Myth of Women and Hastas are films she has made herself.

Chandralekha is a recipient of several honours and awards such as the Gaia Award conferred by the International Gaia Society, Italy (1991), the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (1991), and the Kalidas Samman (2003).

For her contribution to Indian dance, Chandralekha is elected Fellow of Sangeet Natak Akademi.