

Award 1957

b 1904 d 24-2-1986 Dance: Bharatanatyam

Sir,

I have the honour to present to you Smt. Rukmini Devi, a foremost exponent of the Bharat Natyam style of dancing.

Fellow 1967

Smt. Rukmini Devi, comes of a family with a traditional background of learning and music. From her early life she was deeply interested in arts and her contact and friendship with Anna Pavlova started her on her career as a dancer.

She had her early training in dancing under Mylapore Gouri Amma and then under the late Meenakshi Sundaram Pillai of Pandanalloor. She has the distinction of being the first dancer outside the professional class to perform in public. She was responsible for many reforms in the dance and gave special attention to the music accompaniment, the choice of songs, costumes and stage presentation. She is also a composer of dance and dance-dramas. She established Kalakshetra in 1936 for the revival of Indian arts where under her direction eminent musicians, composers and dancers have been training artists of highest quality.

In recognition of her eminence as an artist and her services in the cause of Indian Art and Culture, She was nominated in 1952 by the President to be a member of the Rajya Sabha. She is a member of the Executive Board of the Indian National Commission for co-operation with the UNESCO. In 1956, the President was pleased to grant her the Award of Padma Bhushan.

For her pre-eminence in Bharat Natyam and singular devotion and services to its cause, I pray, Sir, that you may be pleased to grant her recognition as dancer of the year in the field of Bharat Natyam, and to award to her a brocade Angavastram, a gold Mala, and a Sanad in token of that recognition.