

Dance Performance by Shovana Narayan (Padmashri)

Arranged by the VIJYOSHI 2017 and SPIC MACAY



Shovana Narayan, a name synonymous with Kathak, is the celebrated outstanding doyen of this art form. Breathing the spirit and ethos of Indian spirituality, classicism and artistic excellence, for her outstanding, consistent and trend-setting pioneering works in Kathak, she has been awarded the prestigious Padmashri Award by the President of India in 1992 and the Sangeet Natak Akademi award for 1999-2000 in 2001. Recipient of over 30 national and international awards, they also include Delhi Govt's Parishad Samman, Japan's OISCA Award, Bihar Gaurav Award etc. She has been conferred D.Litt (HC) besides holding 2 (two) MPhil degrees (Defence & Strategic Studies and in Social Sciences), and a Master's degree in Physics. She was also shortlisted for the Distinguished Alumni Award, University of Delhi, 1997.

Shovana is multi-faceted and a pioneer as she has left and is leaving her indelible imprint as a performer, choreographer, Guru, researcher, organiser and author. Her pristine and sparkling performances while steeped in classicism and tradition yet breathe fresh air of artistic innovations and social consciousness. Her performances in the last over five decades in several national and international Festivals and before several Heads of States and Governments have been mesmerizing.

Shovana has spearheaded and produced international collaborative works with nationally and internationally known Indian and western dancers and musicians and with special children. She has been Creative Director-choreographer of several international events such as the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of 6th

International Abilympics 2003, Commonwealth Games 2010, Ter-Centenary of Guru Gobind Singh Khalsa panth 1999, classical dance segment of Golden Jubilee Celebrations of Indian Independence at National Stadium 1997.

Author of 14 books and numerous articles including for INTACH, UNESCO and such other prestigious organisations, these well researched publications based on study of epigraphical research are valuable sources of information that have demolished several pre-conceived notions. Her deep research has led to the discovery of 8 Kathak villages. She has also made a film on the philosophical aspect of Khajuraho titled "Dance of the Temples".

She is also a visiting lecturer to several Universities in India and abroad and has given several hundreds of lecture demonstrations and motivational workshops all over India and across the globe. She is a central figure in ongoing discussions in the cultural field as participant in countless symposia and seminars. She has guided research students for award of PhD degree in the field of dance.

Shovana is a guru of standing whose disciples are adorning the world of classical dance. As a dedicated guru, she lays stress on not only imparting correct techniques with keen in-depth knowledge of the shastras but also on the intangible spirit and ethos of Kathak in the true Guru-Shishya parampara. She is imparting free training to over 50 students of the underprivileged class for the last several decades and her choreography with 600 "specially abled " students in the 6th Abilympics held in 2003 that won her international accolades, yet again showcased her sensitivity and pioneering works. An organizer too, she also holds two annual festivals 2 well known annual Festivals for the past several years.

Musicians accompanying Shovana Narayan (Padmashri)

1. Ustad Shakeel Ahmed Khan (tabla)

Belonging to a family of traditional musicians and table players of the Ajrara gharana, Shakeel is today a tabla player of great repute. He received his early training from his father, Ustad Ramzan Khan and his uncle Ustad Chhama Khan. He has performed widely in the last two decades and has provided tabla accompaniment to most of the leading Kathak dancers, Hindustani vocalists and instrumentalists in various National and International Festivals within India and all over the globe. He is presently a staff artiste at Kathak Kendra, a premier government organization in Delhi.

2. Madho Prasad (music composer - vocalist)

As is the tradition in India, Madho is carrying on the family tradition of vocal music. His father Pt Jwala Prasad and grandfather Pt Shiva Prasad are well-known names in the music arena. Endowed with a rich and mellifluous voice, he has provided vocal accompaniment to a number of leading Kathak dancers. His

musical compositions have also been very well received. He has also traveled for performances in various countries outside India.

OR

2. Imran Khan (Classical Vocalist - music composer)

As is the tradition in India, Imran is carrying on the family tradition of music. Endowed with a rich and mellifluous voice, he is a versatile Hindustani classical vocalist who is also proficient in Sugi and Ghazal gayaki. He has provided vocal accompaniment to a number of leading Kathak dancers. His musical compositions have also been very well received. He has also traveled for performances in various countries outside India.

3. Azhar Shakeel (violin)

As is the tradition in India, Azhar is carrying on the family tradition of music. A gifted violinist, he has performed widely and has accompanied vocal artistes and Kathak dancers.