

# AKADAMI AWARDS 1957

At a colourful function held at the Vigyan Bhawan, Delhi on 31st March the Rashtrapati, Dr Rajendra Prasad presented the Sangeet Natak Akadami annual Awards to the nine distinguished artists of the year in the fields of music, dance, drama and films.

Speaking on the occasion the Rashtrapati said that some time ago there was a fear that the progress of art in this country might be retarded owing to various difficulties, but with the formation of the three Akadamis by the Government, great encouragement was given to art. "The Akadamis" he added, "have also helped in bringing together artists and men of letters from different parts of the country and in making the common man get better acquainted with them." While congratulating the artists of the year he remarked "talent now is rewarded not by an individual nor an institution but by the nation....."

Earlier Mr. Justice P.V. Rajamannar, Chairman of the Akadami, welcoming the Rashtrapati, referred to the awards as something to be greatly valued in the country, and as such they were not given on competitive basis.

Reading the citations Kumari Nirmala Joshi requested the Rashtrapati to honour the artists of the year who have rendered singular service to the cause of art.

The programme ended with short recitals of music and dance by the recipients of the awards.



*Musiri Subrahmanya Ayyar*

## RECIPIENTS OF THE AWARD

### For Music

A shawl, a gold shrinkhal and a sanad each were given to the following artists as a token of their recognition as musicians of the year:

#### Smt. Rasoolanbai

SHE is the pupil of Ustad Shammu Khan, who is an acknowledged master in the "Tappa" style. Her main forte is the Thumari and her gayaki belongs to what is known as "Purab ang Tappe ki Thumari" of Banaras.

Possessing a rich, resonant, and melodious voice, she is an outstanding exponent of this style, and unlike most singers her taans are noted for their grace and lucidity. She has complete mastery over what is termed as "Tappe ki-taan". Her gayaki is dignified, enchanting, full of depth and feeling, which is a source of great aesthetic satisfacton. She is 55 years of age and has distinguished herself in many



*Rasoolan Bai*

mahfils.

### Shri Musiri Subrahmanya Ayyar

HE is a pupil of Shri Sadesh Iyer, a disciple of the great Mahavaidyanaath Ayyar.

He has been a singer of peerless popularity and fame for about four decades. The Sampradaya have acknowledged him as a Lakshana-Vidwan of the highest class. He has distinguished himself as a great teacher and contributed a lot for the revival of Karnatic music.

While maintaining the purity of the raga, he has been responsible for popularising some of the lesser known ragas of Tyagaraja.

Fiftynine years of age, he is at present the Principal of the Central College of Karnatic Music, Madras.

### Shri T. Chowdiah

BORN in 1895 at Tirumakudlu, in Mysore district of Karnatak State, Shri Chowdiah zealously and assiduously practised the art of playing the violin for over 20 years.

He is the pupil of Asthan Vidwan, the late Bidaram Krishnappa. His merits as a musician were recognised very early, and he has now developed a new technique by adding three more strings to the existing four-stringed violin, and has also invented a nineteen-stringed violin, which he plays with great dexterity. He is endowed with a creative faculty. His solo performances command great appreciation and respect. He is also an excellent accompanist. He was made Asthan Vidwan in 1939 and was again awarded the title of 'Sangeet Ratna' by the Mysore Darbar in 1940.

He is the founder of two colleges of Music—one at Bangalore and the other at Mysore.

### For Dance

A brocade Angavastram, a gold mala and a sanad each were awarded to the following artists as a token of their recognition as dancers of the year :

#### Smt. Rukmini Devi

SMT. Rukmini Devi, comes of a family with a traditional background of learning and music. From her early life she was deeply



*Rukmini Devi*

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 the 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.

#### Shri Baijnath Prasad

SHRI Baijnath Prasad, popularly known as Lachhu Maharaj, belongs to the traditional family of dancers known as "Lucknow Gharana" and is the son of the late Kalka Prasad and

nephew and pupil of the late Bindadin of Lucknow. He is the brother of the late Acchan Maharaj, a great teacher.

Shri Lachhu Maharaj, a living repository of the art of Kathak, is a creative artist and a master of Bhavapradarshan. He has continued the family tradition of the great Kalka-Bindadin School of dance. He has been a teacher of dance and has also composed dances in the Kathak technique for many films. He is also president of the Cine Dance Directors Association.

## For Drama Production and Acting

A brocade Angavastram, a lotus embossed leaf in gold and a sanad each were awarded to the following artists for their pre-eminence in the field of drama production and acting:

### Shri Jaishankar Bhojak

His merits, as a producer, were recognised very early and he has been associated with dramatic organisations for the last fifty years. He has also produced Hindi and Urdu plays.

Popularly known as 'Sundari' for his appearance on the stage in female role in "Soubhagya Sundari", he was an outstanding personality on the stage till his retirement.

He is still active in the field and working hard for the revival of stage and drama and is the Director of Nat Mandal, Ahmedabad, an institution for dramatics.



*Chintaman Kolhatkar*



*Jaishankar Sundari*

### Shri Chintaman Ganesh Kolhatkar

SHRI Kolhatkar has been on the stage for the last 48 years. He has dominated the Marathi Stage for three decades and is an actor of extraordinary merit. He has appeared on the stage and screen in many Marathi, Hindi and Urdu plays. He is also an accomplished director, producer and play-wright and has devoted his life for the progress and development of the stage.

## For Film Direction and Screen—Play Writing

A shawl, a lotus embossed leaf in gold and a sanad each were awarded to the following for their pre-eminence in the field of Film-Direction and Screen-Play Writing:

### Shri Debaki Bose

BORN in 1898 he hails from Burdwan in West Bengal. He left College while in the B.A. class to join the Non-Co-operation Movement in 1921.

Shri Bose has been in the field from the days of silent pictures and has been responsible for directing outstanding pictures, such as 'Chandi Das', 'Vidyapati', 'Meera Bai, and 'Apna Ghar'.

In all, he has directed 39 pictures in Hindi, Bengali, Marathi and Tamil, including 4 silent pictures.



*Debaki Bose*



*Lachwoo Maharaj*

The film 'Seeta' produced in 1934 under his direction was the first Indian film to be exhibited abroad and was awarded a certificate of merit at the International Film Festival at Venice.

He was one of the founders of Bengal Motion Picture Association and became its first Secretary in 1938. He was elected first President of the Bengal Film Producers Association in 1951 and was also President of the Cine Technicians Association of Bengal for two consecutive years.

Owing to ill health Shri Debaki Bose was unable to come to Delhi and receive the award in person.

#### **Shri Gajanan Digambar Madgulkar**

**B**ORN in 1919 in South Satara Shri Madgulkar occupies an outstanding position among screen play-wrights and has written over 40 screen plays. He is also a poet, producer, actor and song writer. He is responsible to a great degree for the new and realistic trend in the stories of the Marathi films.



*Madgulkar*

*Chowdiah*

