



KANHAI LAL MAHARANA

Akademi Award: Seraikella Chhau, Jharkhand (Mask-making)

Born in 1933 in Seraikella, Shri Kanhai Lal Maharana belongs to a family of traditional goldsmiths of Puri. He received training in the art of making masks from renowned mask-makers of Seraikella including Prasanna Kumar Mohapatra and Maharaja Aditya Pratap Singh Deo.

Shri Maharana has worked in close association with the Government Centre for Seraikella Chhau Dance, which was established in 1960. The masks designed and made by him are works of exquisite refinement, invested with the symbolic character of the dance. His masks for the roles of Shakuntala, Dusbyanta, Nala, Damayanti, Urvashi, and Durvasa stand out among his creations for their artistry and theatrical appeal.

Shri Maharana has been invited to exhibit his art by organizations within and outside his own State. He has conducted workshops on mask-making at the Kalidas Academy of Madhya Pradesh, and has participated in the All India Art Conference held in Delhi. He has imparted training in his traditional art to talented young craftsmen in his region.

He has received the Award of the Ministry of Development of Bihar and the Best Artist Award of the Maharaja Purna Chandra College of Baripada.

Shri Kanhai Lal Maharana receives the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for his contribution to the mask-making tradition in the Chhau dance of Seraikella.