



Munmun Ahmed

A renowned classical dancer specializing in the dance form of Kathak, Munmun Ahmed is an avid performer, teacher, choreographer and a television personality. She started taking Kathak lessons from Syed Abul Kalam in 1978, and after completing her high school in 1987, went to India. There she studied at the Ram Bharatia Kala Kendra under Ram Mohan Maharaj and Raj Kumar Sharma. In 1989, she became a student of Pandit Birju Maharaj in Delhi Kathak Kendra. She also runs a dance school and is a dance instructor at the Indian Cultural Centre. She has achieved many prestigious awards including National Award by Shishu Academy for Kathak Dance (1980), UNESCO Cultural Award (2000) and NHK Japan Award (2000). She has performed in the movies 'Ghetuputra Komola' and 'Amar Ache Jol' as well.

INSPIRATION

I think an artiste's first inspiration comes from the family. I am blessed with a mother who is my first source of inspiration. She introduced me to the graceful art of dance. If she had not brought me up to learn dancing, I probably could have never been a dancer. Additionally, I was inspired seeing the splendid performances of my guru. The love and appreciation from my family, friends, well-wishers and audiences have always been my inspiration as well.

PHILOSOPHY

A person's philosophy keeps changing with the overall situation one has gone through. In my opinion, physical and mental health together can make a person cheerful. I believe in honesty. My effort with honesty at my workplace gives me the highest possible gratification. Being an artiste, there is

no alternative to practice. Therefore, to be successful in life, everyone should work with sincerity, dedication and passion in their own fields.

VIEWS ON HER PROFESSION

Dance has a divine magnetism with me. It is mandatory for an artiste to be passionate to his art. I especially feel that the classical artistes treat their work more as passion than profession. I think that without passion, I wouldn't have been able to be a professional dancer. I also teach my students to wear the beauty of dance, which is possible only with sincerity, dedication, passion and continuous practice. My message to the young generation would be to not go through any shortcuts to attain a position. Currently, the newcomers are doing really well and my best wishes will always be with them. Even then, we have to do a lot more to

preserve and nurture this form of art. I think our government should provide more opportunities and take necessary steps to encourage the capable artistes, so that they can be self-reliant even in their unfavorable situations.

MUSIC

I always love listening to soothing songs. *Ami Eto Je Tomay Bhalobeshchechi*, *Koto Kal Pore Ele* and *Tere Mere Milan Ki Ye Raina* are some of the songs that enchants me the most.

FILMS

I have watched a lot of movies of different languages. The Hindi movie *Sparsh* is one of my favorite movies. The Bengali movies *Parama*, *Bajjaner Bioscope* and *Jalaler Golpo* are my favorites too.

BOOKS

Though I read all types of story books, I love to read the short stories of Rabindranath

Tagore the most. I also like the books of Humayun Ahmed. Moreover, I keep on reading the thematic stories which are needed for presenting my dance dramas.

FUTURE PLANS

I always keep myself busy with dance and my students. I have no specific future plan. But, one of my biggest agendas was to present some dance dramas in a regular basis and some of the participants would be honored by remuneration for their extraordinary presentations. By having enough sponsorship, we may start our project. We also are coming with some television shows and other programs.

IDOL

I can't state any specific name as the idol of my life. But, of course in the field of dancing, I found my guru as my idol.

By Shawreen Rahman