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## Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards- 2018

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Recently, the General Council of the Sangeet Natak Akademi has announced its awards in the **field of performing arts for the year 2018.**

The awards are: Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowships (Akademi Ratna), Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards (Akademi Puraskar), and Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar 2018.

### Sangeet Natak Akademi

- The Sangeet Natak Akademi is India's national academy for music, dance and drama.
- It was created by a resolution of the (then) Ministry of Education, Government of India, in 1952 with Dr P.V. Rajamannar as its first Chairman.
- It is presently an **Autonomous Body** of the **Ministry of Culture, Government of India** and is fully funded by the Government for implementation of its schemes and programmes.
- The Akademi **establishes and looks after institutions** and **projects of national importance** in the field of the performing arts. Few important ones are:
  - National School of Drama, New Delhi was set up in 1959,
  - Jawaharlal Nehru Manipur Dance Academy in Imphal- 1954,
  - Kathak Kendra (National Institute of Kathak Dance) in New Delhi- 1964.
  - National Projects of Support to **Kutiyattam (Sanskrit theatre of Kerala)**, Chhau dances of eastern India, Sattriya traditions of Assam, etc.

### Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowships (Akademi Ratna)

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- The Akademi conferred this award on **four eminent personalities**:
  - **Zakir Hussain: Tabla**
  - **Sonal Mansingh: Indian classical dancer (Bharatanatyam, Odissi, Manipuri, Kuchipudi)**
  - **Jatin Goswami: Sattriya dance and music**
  - **K.Kalyanasundaram Pillai: Bharatanatyam**
- The Fellowship of the Akademi is the most prestigious and rare honor, which is

restricted to 40 numbers at any given time. By the election of above four fellows there are presently forty Fellows of Sangeet Natak Akademi.

- The honour of Akademi Fellow carries a purse money of Rs.3,00,000/- (Rupees three lakh) along with a Tamrapatra and Angavastram.

## Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards (Akademi Puraskar)

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- These awards have been given to forty-four artists from the field of Music, Dance, Theatre, Traditional/Folk/Tribal Music/Dance/Theatre, Puppetry and Overall contribution/scholarship in the Performing Arts.
- These forty-four artists include three joint awards as well.
- **Diwan Singh Bajeli (Theatre)** and **Puru Dadhich (Author/ Kathak)** have been selected for the Akademi Award 2018 in the field of **Overall Contribution/Scholarship** in the Performing Arts.
- Akademi Puraskar carries Rs 1,00,000/- (Rupees one lakh) along with a Tamrapatra and Angavastram.

## Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar

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- The academy has **selected 32 (Including one joint Awards)** artists of India who have made a mark as **young talents in their respective fields of the performing arts** for Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar 2018.
- It is conferred upon **artists below the age of 40 years** with the objective of identifying and encouraging outstanding young talents in diverse fields of performing arts and giving them national recognition early in their lives, so that they may work with greater commitment and dedication in their chosen fields.
- Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar **carries a purse money of Rs 25,000/-** (Rupees twenty five thousand only).

### Ustad Bismillah Khan

- Ustad Qamruddin "Bismillah" Khan's name is synonymous with the **Shehnai (a wind instrument)**.
- Born in 1916 at Dumraon in Bihar, he is regarded as one of the best classical musicians India has ever produced. He died in 2006 at Varanasi, U.P.
- He was awarded **India's highest civilian honour, the Bharat Ratna, in 2001**, becoming the third classical musician after M. S. Subbalakshmi and Ravi Shankar to be awarded Bharat Ratna.
- Bismillah Khan had the **rare honor of playing his Shehnai on the eve of India's independence in the year 1947**. He performed at the Red Fort in Delhi and since then, continued to play every year on the 15th of August, right after the speech by the Prime Minister of India.

- In **2007**, **Sangeet Natak Akademi** came up with '**Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar**', given to young performers in the field of dance, music and theatre.