

MANYA KHEMKA

<https://manyakhemka.in>

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STATEMENT

My dance practice is a meditation and discipline within the Indian classical dance form of Kathak, which allows me to become a *kathakar* or storyteller to depict legendary tales about relationships, love, and human emotions as they feature in the popular cultural landscape of Indian mythology. I process my choreographies and *nritya* by honing my craft in *chakkars* (pirouettes), *mudras* (postures) and gestural expressions alongside developing rhythmic patterns as they shape up with *ragas* (melodies) and musical accompaniments. In every movement, I find a personal connection through a rigorous rehearsal process, which ultimately opens up a portal for me to improvise and come closer to my own style within Kathak.

TRAINING

2012-Present

Performer, Kathak

Training professionally for Indian classical dance - Kathak - twice a week since the age of eight

DISTINCTIONS

Performer, Kathak

- Received Bachelor's Degree Diploma from Prayaag Sangeet Samiti, Allahabad 2023
- Placed in the First Division in Grade 6 Prayaag Sangeet Samiti Examinations 2023
- Best Performer Award at Gurukul Foundation Day 2022
- Best Performer Award at Delhi Kathak Mahotsav 2022
- Best Troupe Award at Nrityarath Annual Day 2020

KATHAK PERFORMANCES

2019-Present

Each performance mentioned below was a unique composition designed to suit the event and setting.

- Performed live at Taj Mahotsav in Agra under the choreography of Ms. Sakshi Sharma 2023
- Performed live at Delhi Kathak Mahotsav held at Kathak Kendra, Delhi 2022
- Performed twice at Gurukul Foundation Day for the organisation Gurukul in New Delhi 2021, 2022
- Performed live twice at Nrityarath Annual Day held in New Delhi 2020, 2019

COMMUNITY SERVICE

2022-Present

Mentor, Kathak

- **NGO, Prajna Foundation** (June, 2022-Present): I integrated Kathak with my social initiative Learnclusive by making it part of the curricula I designed for NGO Prajna Foundation. I have been conducting fortnightly dance sessions for students at Prajna since June, 2022. By teaching them Indian cultural values and morality using interactive methods like dance, I'm proud to have instilled a passion for learning within my mentees while providing them with a channel for self-expression.
- **NGO, Pratimaan Social Foundation** (February, 2023-Present): I collaborated with another NGO called Pratimaan Social Foundation which works with differently abled kids. Since February 2023, I have been conducting monthly workshops where I teach them how to express their emotions by introducing them to Hast Mudras (hand movements), Garud Hast Mudra (to represent birds), Pataka Hast (to say stop), Ardhachandra (to represent night). They picked up these movements quickly as I designed them similar to the sign language they use to communicate. I further combined my drama and theatre skills with dance movements to help these kids perform the story of Romeo & Juliet in Kathak style, using Bandishes (melodic composition in Hindustani Vocal) to communicate the story.