

## *Pandit Ajoy Chakrabarty*



Pandit Ajoy Chakrabarty, born on December 25, 1952, is an Indian Hindustani classical vocalist, composer and lyricist. Although considered a doyen of the Patiala-Kasur Gharana (style), primarily representing Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan Sahib's gayaki, he can equally portray even the most subtle features of other major classical gharanas of India like Indore, Delhi, Jaipur, Gwalior, Agra, Kirana, Rampur and even Carnatic music of South India.

Pandit Chakrabarty was born in Kolkata, West Bengal. He graduated top of his class in music, both in B.A and M.A from the prestigious Rabindra Bharati University in Kolkata and joined the ITC Sangeet Research Academy in 1977. His father was his first Guru. He then studied with Pannalal Samanta, Kanaidas Baigari and Jnan Prakash Ghosh. Besides that, he had learnt from Latafat Hussain Khan, Nibruttibua Sarnaik, Hirabai Barodekar and in Carnatic styles from M. Balamuralikrishna, that kept enriching his musical expression and repertoire. Despite having such pure classical "taleem" in the Khayal genre, he also renders lighter forms such as Thumri, Tappa, Bhajan, Kirtan, Folk, Film/Non-Film and modern songs, in several different languages.

Pandit Chakrabarty has received several prestigious awards including the **Padma Bhushan in 2020, Padma Shri in 2011**, Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (Delhi, 1999–2000), Kumar Gandharva National Award (1993) and the Best Male Playback Singer Award (Bengali Film "Chhandaneer" 1990) ("For bringing the rare depth of emotion, adorned by his command on the classical idiom") and National Tansen Samman 2015. In 2015, he has received Guru Jnan Prakash Ghosh Lifetime Achievement Award. He also was awarded honorary citizenship in New Orleans, after performing with jazz musicians at Preservation Hall, the birthplace of jazz music.

Thus far, Pandit Chakrabarty has recorded over 100 albums, mostly published from India, the United States, Canada, UK, and Germany, composed of pure classical numbers including live performances and various other genres – Thumri, Dadra, Bhajan and other devotional songs like Shyamasangeet and many Bengali songs, including the songs of Tagore and Qazi Nazrul Islam.