



MAGUNI CHARAN KUANR
Akademi Award: Puppetry (Kandhei Nach, Orissa)

Born in 1937 in Keonjhar in Orissa, Shri Maguni Charan Kuanr belongs to a family of traditional puppeteers. He was initiated into the art of Kandhei Nach, which employs rod puppets, by his father Shri Baishnab Charan Kuanr. He has also learnt sculpture in clay, stone, and wood from Shri Bhagaban Jena, a traditional sculptor.

Shri Maguni Charan Kuanr has excelled in his vocation as a puppeteer and has contributed to the recognition of Kandhei Nach beyond Orissa. He has established a troupe of his own, the Utkal Vishwakarma Kalakunja Kandhei Nach, based in Keonjhar. Like many traditional puppeteers, he is the creator of his own puppets, the designer of costumes, and the narrator of the plays performed. To propagate his art, Shri Kuanr has participated in camps and workshops organized by Orissa Sangeet Natak Akademi and other institutions. His work has been documented by various agencies in India and abroad.

Among other honours, Shri Kuanr has received awards from the Orissa Sangeet Natak Akademi and the North Orissa University.

Shri Maguni Charan Kuanr receives the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for his contribution to the traditional puppetry of Orissa.