



## THONNAKKAL PEETHAMBARAN

Akademi Award: Kathakali

Born on 2 December 1939 in Thonnakkal village in Thiruvananthapuram district of Kerala, Shri Thonnakkal Peethambaran received his initial training in Kathakali under Pirappankodu Kunjan Pillai and Oyoor Kochugovinda Pillai. At a later stage, he was trained by Kalamandalam Krishnan Nair, and took his Diploma in Kathakali at the R.L.V. Fine Arts College, Thripunithura.

Shri Peethambaran has performed extensively within and outside Kerala as a member of troupes led by Guru Gopinath, Kalyani Kutty Amma, and other artists. He has excelled both in Pachha and Kathi vesham, and received critical acclaim in his roles as Vishwamitra, Parashurama, and Nala. He has made a significant contribution as director of several new Kathakali plays such as *Veenapoovu*, *Gurudeva Charitham*, and *Chathante Salgathi*. He has conducted workshops for new artists at several Kathakali clubs in Kerala. In furtherance of his art, Shri Peethambaran has undertaken research on Kathakali and has authored a book titled *Kathakali Padanam*. A documentary film on his life and work – *Swamiyam Akannoru Udyanam* – has been produced by Soorya Deva Creations.

For his service to Kathakali, Shri Peethambaran has been honoured with the Acharya Puraskaram (1994) conferred by the Krishna Gana Sabha, Chennai, and the Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Akademi Award (2003).

Shri Thonnakkal Peethambaran receives the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for his contribution to Kathakali.