



## VARANASI VISHNU NAMBOOTHIRI

Akademi Award: Music for Dance (Kathakali)

Born on 20 January 1937 in Mavelikara village of Alappuzha district in Kerala, Shri Varanasi Vishnu Namboothiri was initiated to Madhalam drumming by Karuvatta Kumara Panicker and Vennimala Rama Warriar. Later, he received his training under Kalamandalam Appukutty Pothuval and Kalamandalam Nambeesankutty at Kerala Kalamandalam, and Chalakkudy Narayanana Nambeesan at Unnai Warriar Smaraka Kalanilayam. He has also studied the art form under gurus Kadavallloor Sankunni Nair, Kalamandalam Narayanan Nair and Kadavallloor Aravindakshan Nair.

Shri Varanasi Vishnu Namboothiri won renown as a Madhalam player for Kathakali, accompanying leading dancers such as Kalamandalam Krishnan Nair, Chengannur Raman Pillai, Mankulam Vishnu Namboothiri, Kudamaloor Karunakaran Nair, Guru Gopinath, Champakulam Pachu Pillai and Kurchi Kunjan Panicker. He has also travelled extensively with Kathakali dancers across the country for performances in the prestigious dance festivals. Shri Varanasi Vishnu Namboothiri has also been a member of the Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Akademi.

Shri Varanasi Vishnu Namboothiri has been honoured for his contribution to the art form with the Kalaratnam conferred by the Travancore Devaswam Board (1972), Kerala Kalamandalam Vadya Award (2009), and Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Akademi Guru Pooja Award (2007).

Shri Varanasi Vishnu Namboothiri receives the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for 2014 for his contribution to Music for Kathakali.