



### KALAMANDALAM LEELAMA

Akademi Award: Mohiniattam

Born in 1952 in Mattakkara village in Kottayam district of Kerala, Shrimati Leelama received her training in Mohiniattam at Kerala Kalamandalam, Cheruthuruthy. Her principal teachers there were Kalamandalam Satyabhama and Kalamandalam Chandrika. She also trained in Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi at the institution under Kalamandalam Leelamani and A.R.R. Bhaskar Rao. A leading performer of the Kalamandalam dance troupe as a student, she was appointed an Instructor in 1973, and Professor in 1998. She also served as Reader at the Sree Sankaracharya Sanskrit University, Kalady (1995-98).

An outstanding exponent of Mohiniattam, Kalamandalam Leelama has received critical acclaim for her interpretation of padams of nayikas and sakhis. She has also made a mark as a composer for creating dances on new themes. She has performed in many festivals in India and abroad, and has been featured in a documentary film by Adoor Gopalakrishnan. Besides teaching dance at Kerala Kalamandalam, Shrimati Leelama has been grooming young talent in Mohiniattam at her own institution, Swathi Chithra, at Athani in Thrissur district. She continues to be associated with Kerala Kalamandalam as a visiting professor.

For her work as a teacher and performer, she has been honoured with the Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Academy Award in 1990, Natya Mohini title by Kunchan Nambiar Smaraka, Government of Kerala and the Kerala Kalamandalam Award in 2007.

Kalamandalam Leelama receives the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for her contribution to Mohiniattam.