



M.V. NARASIMHACHARI & M. VASANTHALAKSHMI

Akademi Award: Kuchipudi

Shri M.V. Narasimhachari and Shrimati M. Vasanthalakshmi, the well-known duo in Kuchipudi dance, have been at the forefront of their chosen field for many years. Shri Narasimhachari was born in Chennai in 1942 and Shrimati Vasanthalakshmi in 1954 at Kanigiri, Andhra Pradesh.

Shri Narasimhachari was initially trained by his father Satyanarayanachari, a performer and teacher of Kuchipudi dance, and later by masters including Pasumarti Venugopala Krishna Sarma and Mahankali Satyanarayana. He also trained in Bharatanatyam under Shrimati N.S. Jayalakshmi and Rukmini Devi Arundale at Kalakshetra, Chennai, where he participated in some major dance-dramas of the institution. Further, he learnt Mridangam playing under Shanmukhananda Pillai and Karaikudi Krishnamurthy, and vocal music from M.D. Ramanathan and S.R. Janakiraman.

Shrimati Vasanthalakshmi received her training, in Kuchipudi dance under Pasumarthi Venugopala Krishna Sarma, Mahakali Satyanarayana Sarma, C. R. Acharyulu and M. V. Narasimhachari. She also trained in Bharatanatyam under S. Bhoopal, Adyar K. Lakshmanan and M.V. Narasimhachari, Kathak from Vishnu Vaichalkar, Odissi from Ramani Ranjan Jena, and Mohiniattam under Vasantha Arvind. Further she learnt to play the Veena from Kamala Ashwathama.

Shri Narasimhachari and Vasanthalakshmi married in 1969, and went on to establish their institution, the Kalasamarpana Foundation, soon after. Here, they have imparted training to young dancers for many years. The couple have performed widely in the country and outside, and have received high appreciation for their dance-dramas including *Tirukeoneswaram*, *Meghasandesha*, *Siva Leela*, *Kalidasa*, and *Landscape of Emotions*.

They have received various awards including the Kalaimamani conferred by the Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Manram (2003) and the Nritya Choodamani conferred by Srikrishna Gana Sabha (2004).

Shri M.V. Narasimhachari and Shrimati M. Vasanthalakshmi receive the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for their contribution to Kuchipudi dance.