



GOPALAN NAIR VENU (G. VENU)

Akademi Award: Overall Contribution in the Performing Arts

Shri Gopalan Nair Venu (also known as G. Venu) was born on 1 July 1945 in Pappanamcode, Kerala. At the age of eleven, he began taking instruction in Kathakali from Keerickattu Sankar Pillai. Under Gopinath, he pursued his studies further and studied the nuances of the Kathakali mudras from Chengannur Raman Pillai. Under the guidance of Ammannur Madhava Chakyar and Ammannur Parameswara Chakyar, Gopalan Nair Venu joined a course in Kūṭiyāṭṭam in 1977.

Shri G. Venu has been credited by many for developing his own training methodology based on Navarasa (the nine *rasa*) for actors and dancers. He has trained several young actors at the National School of Drama, New Delhi, ITI, Singapore, and by conducting regular workshops. Shri Venu's adaptations of Mahakavi Kalidasa's plays *Abhigyan Shakuntalam* and *Vikramorvarsiyam* and Bhasa's play *Urubhangam* and *Dutavakyam* for Kutiyattam are considered as his major contributions to the art form. He was nominated as one of the honorary directors of the "World Theatre Project" in Sweden together with eminent theatre directors from around the world.

Shri Venu has received several honours and awards, which include Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Akademi Award (2007), Kerala Kalamandalam Award (2005), Nikkei Asia Prize for Culture (Japan) 2007, and Kerala Sahitya Academy Award (1977).

Shri Gopalan Nair Venu receives the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for the year 2023 for his Overall Contribution in the Performing Arts.