



RAM GOPAL
AKADEMI FELLOWSHIP

Born in 1917 in Bangalore, Shri Bisano Ram Gopal received his training in Bharatanatyam from the great master of his time, Shri Pandanallur Meenakshi Sundaram Pillai. Besides, he was trained in Kathakali under Guru Kunju Kurup and in Kathak under Pandit Jai Lal.

In the contemporary history of Indian dance Shri Ram Gopal has played a pioneering role as a performer. From the '30s, for over two decades, he regaled audiences in India and the West as a dancer of unparalleled excellence and beauty. The grandeur and elegance of the Pandanallur style found a true representative in Shri Ram Gopal, who was also among the earliest artistes to present Bharatanatyam abroad. Apart from performing Bharatanatyam, Shri Ram Gopal also created several works of contemporary nature based on classical-dance technique—solo, duet, ensemble—which won him wide popularity and a large following in the West. *Garuda : The Golden Eagle, The Dance of the Setting Sun, and The Legend of the Taj Mahal* were some of his outstanding creations.

Through his choreographic work Shri Ram Gopal introduced to audiences talented artistes who were later to become important dance personalities of India, among them Shrimati Mrinalini Sarabhai, Shrimati Kumudini Lakhia, Shrimati Chandrabhaga and Shri U.S. Krishna Rao. After briefly teaching dance at his institution in Bangalore, Shri Ram Gopal settled in Europe and continued to work for the propagation of Indian dance. He has to his credit three publications including an autobiography: *Rhythm in the Heavens*.

For his contribution to Indian dance, Shri Ram Gopal is elected Fellow of Sangeet Natak Akademi.

Akademi Awards 1990

