



VEMPATI CHINNA SATYAM
Akademi Fellowship

Born in 1929 in Kuchipudi village in Krishna district, Andhra Pradesh, Shri Vempati Chinna Satyam is among the illustrious masters of Indian dance. Belonging to the traditional community of Kuchipudi Bhagavatars, he was trained in the art by Gurus Tadepalli Sastry, Vedantam Lakshminarayana Sastry, and Vempati Peda Satyam. As a young dancer he played many important roles in Kuchipudi Yakshaganas and subsequently moved to Madras where, in 1963, he established the Kuchipudi Art Academy.

An exceptional teacher and choreographer, Shri Vempati Chinna Satyam has made a significant contribution in the development and propagation of Kuchipudi dance. He has brought about considerable stylization in this traditional form of dance-drama, moulding it into more evolved artistic expression in solo as well as dance-drama form. He has applied intellectual and artistic rigour to the art he had inherited, and has created a large corpus of compositions. He has groomed many dancers of excellence, including such artists as Vyjayanthimala Bali and Shoba Naidu. Through his extensive performances he has won wide acclaim and popularity for Kuchipudi dance.

Apart from setting up the Kuchipudi Art Academy in Chennai, a premier dance institution, he has set up teaching centres in Hyderabad, Visakhapatnam and Mumbai. More than a thousand workshops under his guidance have been conducted in India and abroad. His lifelong mission in the cause of Kuchipudi dance has been extensively documented and written about.

Guru Vempati Chinna Satyam is an Asthana Vidwan of the Thirumala Devasthanam. His various honours include the Kalaprapoorna title from Andhra University (1980), the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (1981), an honorary doctorate from Sri Venkateswara University (1983), the Kalidas Samman (1992), and the Kalaimamani title from the Eyal Isai Nataka Manram, Tamil Nadu (1994). He was conferred the Padma Bhushan in 1998.

For his contribution to Indian dance, Guru Vempati Chinna Satyam is elected Fellow of Sangeet Natak Akademi.

Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards 2001