



**P.V. VIJAYAKUMAR**  
Akademi Award: Kathakali

Born on 20 July 1940 in Vazhenkada village in Palakkad district of Kerala, Shri P.V. Vijayakumar received his initial training in Kathakali at home from his father, Vazhenkada Kunchu Nair, the first Principal of Kerala Kalamandalam.

Advancing in his learning, he continued to train under his father at the P.S.V. Natya Sangham in Kottakkal for a period of five years. Subsequently, he studied at Kerala Kalamandalam, Cheruthuruthy, for four years and joined the Kalamandalam faculty on completion of his studies in 1971. He was appointed Principal of the institution in 1993 and served in that position up to 1996. He is better known today as Kalamandalam Vijayakumar.

Shri Vijayakumar is among the reputed artists and teachers of Kathakali today. He has excelled in *Pachha*, *Kathi* and *Vellatadi veshams*, and roles that dovetail the *veera* and *veera-sringara rasas*. Thus he has received critical acclaim as Ravana in *Ravanotbhavam* and *Thoranayudham*; Hanuman in *Thoranayudham* and *Kalyanasouhandigam*; Narakasura in *Narakasuravadham*; Duryodhana in *Duryodhanavadham* and *Uttaraswayamvaram*; and Sisupala in *Rajasooyam*. He

has performed these roles mainly as a member of the Kerala Kalamandalam troupe touring the country. Besides various towns and cities in India, tours have taken him to Europe, North America, Australia and the Far East. Besides performing and teaching at Kerala Kalamandalam, Shri Vijayakumar has conducted workshops for new artists at several Kathakali clubs in Kerala.

For his service to Kathakali, Shri P.V. Vijayakumar has been honoured with the Kerala Kalamandalam Award (2001), the Pattikkamthodi Smaraka Kathakali Puraskar (2007), the Kerala Kalamandalam Fellowship (2011), and the K.N. Pisharadi Smaraka Kathakali Puraskar (2011) besides several awards from Kathakali clubs.

Shri P.V. Vijayakumar receives the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for his contribution to Kathakali.