



SADANAM P.V. BALAKRISHNAN
Akademi Award: Kathakali

Born in 1944 in Taliparamba village in northern Kerala, Shri Sadanam Puthiyaveetil Balakrishnan received his initial training in Kathakali from Shri Kurumathur Narayanan Namboodiripad at Kannur. Subsequently, he was trained by renowned gurus Shri Ramunni Nair and K. Kumaran Nair at the Gandhi Seva Sadan Kathakali Academy, Perur. Shri Kumaran Nair also guided him in choreography and direction in Kathakali idiom. He has specialized in the Kalluvazhi style, besides studying other styles of Kathakali.

Shri Sadanam Balakrishnan has excelled both in performance and teaching of Kathakali and has also worked towards its propagation outside Kerala. Proficient in playing different characters such as Nala, Srikrishna, or Ravana, he has won wide appreciation for his portrayal of the white-bearded character of Hanuman in plays like Kalyana Saugandhikam, Thorana Yudham, and Lavanasura Vadham.

After a short stint as a teacher in Kerala, Shri Balakrishnan joined the International Centre for Kathakali, New Delhi, in 1974, and took charge as its Principal and Chief Artiste in 1980. Since then he has performed extensively travelling to over twenty-five countries, trained and guided several artists, and scripted and directed several new plays. He has joined eminent artists in other dance styles in duet presentations, conducted workshops, and participated in seminars across the country and abroad. Shri Balakrishnan has also authored a book on Kathakali.

Among various honours and awards, Shri Sadanam Balakrishnan has received the Parishad Samman of Sahitya Kala Parishad, Delhi.

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