

'Kalaratna' Kalamandalam Vimala Menon

This is a pictorial compilation of her yeoman service and immense life-time contribution to the promotion and propagation of Indian culture and heritage in general and Indian classical dances like *Mohiniyattam*, *Bharathanatyam* and *Kuchipudi* in particular across India and globally.



Contribution as an Extra-ordinary Guru

- ❖ Taught more than 10,000 students and counting from 5 generations over a period of 6 decades.
- ❖ Many of her past students went on to achieve excellence in their chosen field spreading the beauty of Indian classical dances across India and world in turn inspiring new generations and more admirers globally.



Contribution as Performer

- ❖ Guru Vimala Menon lit up prestigious stages across India and abroad with her on-stage stellar performances entertaining and educating audience nationally and internationally on the nuances of Indian classical dances.
- ❖ She has exclusively composed and choreographed several Jathiswaram (16), Varnam (24), Padam (32), Sloka (10), Ashtapathi (4), Thillana (9) other than usual repertoire.





Contribution as Artepreneur

- ❖ Founded Kerala Natya Academy in 1972 in Thiruvananthapuram and later in Malaysia 2001.
- ❖ These institutions incubated, nurtured and blossomed 1000s of talented students over decades creating great performers receiving accolades from discerning rasika.
- ❖ Under privileged students with talents and promise were imparted training entirely free of charge.

Contribution as Choreographer/ Co-ordinator

- ❖ Opening ceremony of Asiad 1982.
- ❖ Apna Utsav 1986
- ❖ South Zone Cultural Festival 1986
- ❖ 110 Mohiniyattam dancers-Lasya Mohini - 2012
- ❖ 125 dancers on 125 Birth Anniversary of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru 2015
- ❖ 'Tripadi Lasyamrutham' 60 dancers at 60th Anniversary of Kerala 2016

Performances Abroad

- ❖ UAE (1984)
- ❖ Germany (1986, 1996)
- ❖ USA (1995, 2015)
- ❖ Qatar (1996, 1997)
- ❖ Bahrain (1997, 2000)
- ❖ Oman (1997)
- ❖ Australia (1997)
- ❖ Kuwait (1998)
- ❖ Switzerland (2000)
- ❖ Singapore (2001, 2003)
- ❖ Malaysia (2003)
- ❖ France (2011)



Contribution as an Innovator

- ❖ Bold and innovative changes in Mohiniyattam dance style without adversely affecting the sanctity and individuality of the art form.
- ❖ Transformed Mohiniyattam from solo to group performances making it more appealing to its audience.
- ❖ Inspired by Ravi Varma paintings introduced welcome changes in the design of costumes.
- ❖ Milestone changes in hairdo and jewelry styling.
- ❖ Pioneered to introduce Kerala Vadyas like Edakka, Timila, Maddalam and Takil to Mohiniyattam orchestra.

Contribution as an Author and Writer of Relevant Articles

- ❖ Lasya Mohini - A complete book on Mohiniyattam - 2012.
- ❖ Bhratanyavum Sastravum Charitrvum - 2015



Performance In the presence of then PM Dato Najib Tun Razak of Malaysia

Contribution through holding Key Positions, Leadership and Admin Positions

Organised many workshops, seminars, webinars and talk shows.



Workshop - Seminar in New Delhi Conducted by Kerala Sangeet Natak Akademi

Home-bred Talents

Dr. Vinduja Menon (Daughter) Armed with the training and inculcating true life values from mother, Vinduja created her own path in the field of dance in addition to portraying many memorable characters in malayalam films.



Dr. Vinduja Menon (Daughter)

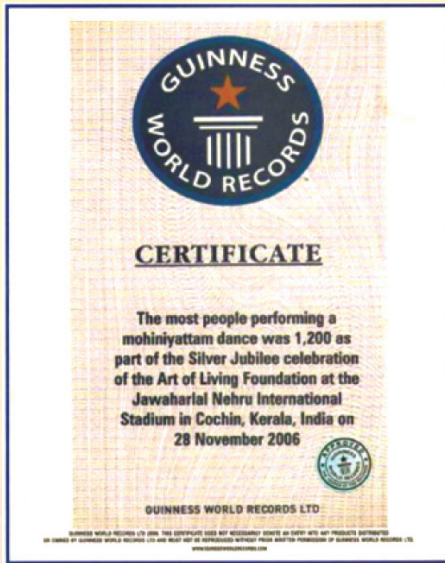


Neha Rajesh Nambiar (Grand Daughter)

Neha Rajesh Nambiar (Grand Daughter)

Neha is already showing the class of her pedigree.





Testimonials



I have pleasure to certify that Smt. Vimala Menon is known to me very well both as a dance teacher and as a personal friend. She is a gifted instructress who has helped me out on many occasions organising dance Dramas for the various associations with which I am connected. She is a very sincere and devoted worker whose unassuming disposition has endeared her to all who have come in contact with her. She will definitely be an asset to any institution. I wish her a bright and prosperous future.

Gouri Parvathi Bayi
H.H. The Sixth Princess of Travancore.

A perfectionist in the form of my Guru is what Vimala teacher is. The full credit of moulding me as a dancer goes to her who never praised directly but relished the same to all others. The Guru who is more like a family member still keeps her touch on my well-being and happiness.

Radhika Ramachandran, PhD (Retired Scientist, ISRO)

Discipline, dedication, hard work, and perseverance are the merits that came along as benefits of me learning dance under Vimala teacher. The whole colleges of Kerala were once under Kerala University when I achieved the 'Saravakalaprathiba' title for three consecutive years, which lead me to take dance more professionally. I wish there are more dedicated Gurus like my teacher who helps to identify and help to follow your passion.

Raji Gopalakrishnan

Perfect, sincere, dedicated, efficient, knowledgeable - and that's what my teacher is who refined the raw talent in me. She was adamantly particular about the perfection of the performances and we attained it after rigorous hours of practicing. Leading a prestigious government institution now, I get to employ my teacher's techniques for the betterment of my students.

Dr. S. Malini, Principal, Kerala State Jawahar Balbhavan

Any classical dance music instantly instills teacher amma's voice which still echoes in my ears and heart who engraved the splendor, discipline, the value of every lesson, rehearsal, and program. Her determination and my hard work got me numerous awards and given now an opportunity I will dwell into my childhood days to learn once again from the maestro.

Dr. Minu Philipose, Gynecologist UK

Cherished Moments



With Honorable President Dr. K.R. Narayanan at Rashtrapathi Bhavan (2000)



Kendra Sangeeth Natak Akademi Award from Honorable President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam (2006)



Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Academy Award from Minister Sri. T.M. Jacob (1992)



Venad Cultural Award from Central Minister Sri. Murali Manohar Joshi (2008)



With Guru Padmasri Kalamandalam Satyabhama

Contact Details:

Kerala Natya Academy

Sasthamangalam

Thiruvananthapuram

Pin 695 010

Kerala, India

Ph.: 0091 9446037878

vimalamenon7@gmail.com