

SRI SHANMUKHANANDA NATIONAL EMINENCE AWARD



Dr. VYJAYANTIMALA BALI

Music is a representation of divine beauty. It is the harmonious voice of creation positioned between the regions of the mind and of matter, a mediator between the spiritual and sensual life. It is a universal language of emotions and a vehicle of human feelings, answering to various moods of the mind. Indian music has a very long unbroken tradition and is an accumulated heritage of centuries.

Shanmukhananda Sabha was founded in 1952 to preserve, promote, propagate and popularise the rich traditional culture of our nation in the field of Performing Arts.

For over five decades, the Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha has held the center stage in the country for promotion of Music in its widest import. The Institution is a part of the living history; a monument to cultural synthesis, one singular object in its multi-faceted dimensions and secular nature epitomizes the nation itself. The Shanmukhananda Sabha is a living tradition.

In Fine Arts, we have the closest approach to universality. It brings peace which passeth understanding. Its immortal spirit ministers to human need for sweetness and light. Sri Shanmukhananda National Eminence Award provides an institutional framework for honouring legendary and lifetime contributions in the field of Fine Arts.

Dr. Vyjayantimala Bali's name figures prominently in the ranks of those who have heralded the renaissance of Bharatanatyam over the last three decades. Born in South India, she hails from a conservative family, but one of distinguished scholarship and one that has patronized the traditional and classical art of the Thanjavur style. Her's is a background rich with our cultural heritage.

Her talents surfaced early in life when she danced before the Pope at the age of 5 and earned his benedictions. She performed before many eminent statesmen and dignitaries like President Dr. Radhakrishnan, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh, President Eisenhower and many other International Organizations.

She was first Indian Dancer to be invited to perform at the United Nations 20th anniversary celebrations of the Human Rights Day at the General Assembly in 1969. The audience was spellbound and gave her a standing ovation.

She has performed at the International Opera House - Sydney, the Adelaide Festival, the Royal Opera Rallst Festival-Stockholm, the Holland Festival-Rotterdam, the Autumn Festival-Paris and also in the United States, Canada, West Indies, USSR, Middle East and the Far East. Her outstanding performances reflect the glory of the great art and she has proved herself to be a cultural ambassador par excellence.

Vyjayantimala has to her credit a number of dance-dramas conceived, directed and presented by her. "ANDAL THIRUPPAVAI" Gurudev Tagore's "CHANDALIKA", Kavi Kunjara Bharati's "AZHAGAR KURAVANJI" "SANT SAKHU", "EKTA", multi-dimensional ballet which depicts the growth of the National Freedom Movement and "OM SANTHI SANTHI SANTHI" to convey the message of universal peace.

In recognition of her talents and her contribution to the tradition of classical dance, various honours have been conferred on her such as "NRITYA SIROMANI", "NATYAKALA SIKAMANI", "NRITYA NURUPAMA VISHARADE".

She has been conferred several awards and titles. Mention may be made of:

1968 - The title of PADMASHRI by the President of India., 1982 - Recipient of the Sangeet Natak Academy. 1995 - Degree of Letters (Honoris Causa), by the Annamalai University, Chidambaram, Tamilnadu. 2008 - Recipient of "WOMEN OF THE YEAR" representing India 2008 for outstanding contributions to Country as recognized by the American Biographical Institute.

The Shanmukhananda Sabha is privileged to honour the legendary **Dr. Vyjayantimala Bali** with **Sri Shanmukhananda National Eminence Award** for lifetime achievement in Bharata Natyam.

Given on Wednesday, the 19th day of January 2011 at Mumbai


President