



**T. H. VINAYAKRAM**  
Fellowship of Sangeet Natak Akademi

Born on 11 August 1942 in Tiruchirapalli in Tamil Nadu, Shri T.H. Vinayakram is a leading percussionist in the field of Carnatic music. He received his training in playing the Ghatam initially from his father T.R. Harihara Sarma. Later, he received systematic instruction in the art at the Sri Jaya Ganesh Tala Vadya Vidyalaya, Chennai, in accordance with the Tanjore style.

Among the seniormost Ghatam vidwans of southern India, Shri Vinayakram has enjoyed a long and successful career as a professional musician. In playing the Ghatam, he has evolved a style that, though rooted in conventional technique, is highly individual in spirit. His is also a style that is responsive to other systems of music, accounting for Shri Vinayakram's success with Western ensembles. As an accompanist on the Ghatam, Shri Vinayakram has performed with a host of eminent Carnatic musicians, including greats such as Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, G.N. Balasubramaniam, Madurai Mani Iyer, M.S. Subbulakshmi, and Maharajapuram Santhanam. He has exhibited his improvisatory genius playing complex rhythms for various fusion groups such as Shakti, comprising the jazz guitarist John McLaughlin, violinist L. Shankar, and Tabla virtuoso Zakir Hussain; and for J.G. Laya, an experimental group of musicians including pianists and percussionists. Among musicians both of the West and the East, he is known for his crisp play and deep knowledge of rhythm. Shri Vinayakram has trained a number of students and lectured on percussion at institutions in India and abroad. He has briefly served All India Radio (1970), and has worked as Lecturer in Ghatam at the Center for World Music, Berkeley (1974). He has been Principal of the Sri Jaya Ganesh Tala Vadya Vidyalaya since 1978. Extremely popular with audiences, he has performed with éclat as a member of tala-vadya kacheris at the Festivals of India in England (1982), France (1985), and Japan (1988).

For his service to music, Shri Vinayakram has been honoured with a number of awards. These include the title Kalaimamani (1982) conferred by the Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Manram, the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (1988), the Grammy Award (1991), and the Padma Shri (2002). He is an Asthana Vidwan of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham.

Shri T.H. Vinayakram is elected Fellow of Sangeet Natak Akademi for his contribution to Indian music.