

T. K. Mahalingam Pillai



I present to you, Sir, Shri T.K. Mahalingam Pillai.

Shri T.K. Mahalingam Pillai was born in 1917 at Thirumalairayanpattinam, Tamil Nadu, in a famous family of Nattuvanars. He was initiated in the Tanjavur tradition of Bharatanatyam by his illustrious father the late Vidwan T. Kuppiah Pillai and his uncle T.S. Govindaraja Pillai. His lessons in Carnatic Music came from Pandanallur Gnani Pillai.

An eminent Guru, Shri Mahalingam Pillai has trained a large number of Bharatanatyam dancers, notably in Bombay, transmitting the purity of style and eclectic approach inherited from his mentors. Shri Pillai has, in addition, contributed original compositions to the Bharatanatyam repertoire, choreographed dance-dramas and individual numbers from the Tamil classics, and adapted Hindi verses for Bharatanatyam. Now Principal of Shri Rajarajeswari Bharata Natya Kala Mandir, Bombay, Shri Pillai received the title of Kalaimamani from Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Manram in 1972.

For his eminence in the field of Dance and his contribution to its enrichment, Shri T.K. Mahalingam Pillai receives the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for Bharatanatyam (Guru) for 1985.