



T.N. SANKARANATHAN
Akademi Award: Puppetry

Born in 1926 in Kumbakonam, Shri T.N. Sankaranathan began his career in the performing arts by studying Carnatic music under the tutelage of the Violin Master, Shri Rajamanickam Pillai, and Shri C.S. Rajaraman. He later studied the art of puppetry – Bommalattam under the Guru, Shri A.S. Mani Iyer. He also learnt theatre and stagecraft from Shri E. Krishna Iyer.

Shri T.N. Sankaranathan is the founder and director of the traditional Bommalattam group - Sri Murugan Sangeetha Bommalatta Sabha. This group from Tamil Nadu has a repertoire of sixteen plays and has performed extensively across India. Their performances have been included in the films as well as in several Tamil television serials.

For his contribution to the field of puppetry, Shri T.N. Sankaranathan has received a number of honours and titles such as the Esai Thendral title from Patna Tamil Sangam (1981); Kalaimamani, the highest award of Tamil Nadu Government bestowed by the Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Manram (1992); the Mani Vizha Award by former President of India Shri R. Venkataraman (1997); the Naada Gana Sudaroli by Kudanthai Sangeetha Vidyalayam (1998); the Kaipaavai Kalaimani (2005); the Paavai Koothisai Kalaingar Mamani title by Kovai Thiruneria Tamil Mandram (2007); and the Kalai Kaveri Award by Trichy Kalai Kaveri Music College (2012). Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham gave Sankaran the title of 'Nathan' in 1968.

Shri T.N Sankaranathan receives the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for his contribution to Bommalattam – Rod and String Puppet Theatre of Tamil Nadu.