



**UPPINAKUDRU KOGGA
DEVANNA KAMATH**

I present to you, Sir, Uppinakudru Kogga Devanna Kamath

□ Born in 1921, Shri Kogga Kamath belongs to the South Kanara district of Karnataka. He comes from a family which has a long tradition of over three hundred years in the art of puppetry. His great grandfather Lakshman Bhagavatha first started the puppet troupe in which he was ably assisted by his nephew Nagappa Bhagavatha (Shri Kogga's grandfather) and a cousin Narayana Kamath. Shri Kogga Kamath received his early training in the art from Nagappa Bhagavatha and his own father, Devanna Padmanabha Kamath. The troupe, unfortunately had to close down in 1941 and Shri Kogga was forced to migrate to the city. In 1955 he returned to his village and with the help of his father, he repaired and renovated the 300 puppets in their possession, but it was only in 1966 that the All India Handicrafts Board set up a training centre for puppetry in Coondapoor. In 1966

Devanna Kamath received the President's Award which helped to focus attention on this art. After his father's demise in 1971, Shri Kogga Kamath took over the running of the Centre, the Shri Ganesha Yakshagana Gombeatta Mandali. The Mandali performed in Delhi at the "Masks and Puppets" Festival organised by Sangeet Natak Akademi in 1972. He also won the first prize at the Seminar and Festival organised by Dr. K. Shivaram Karanth under the State Akademi in the same year. The troupe participated in the Fifth Traditional Arts Festival, France in 1978 and performed at the Royal Tropical Institute of Amsterdam in 1979. For his eminence in the field of puppetry and his contribution to its enrichment, Shri Uppinakudru Kogga Devanna Kamath receives the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for puppetry for 1979.

