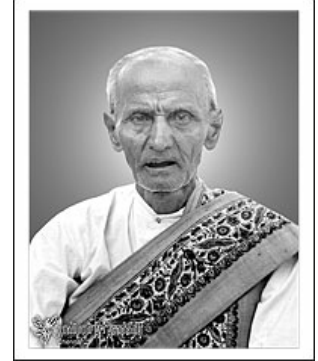


Vedantam Lakshmi Narayana Sasthry (1886 - 1956):

Son of Smt. Savitramma and Sri Venkatesam, Lakshminarayana Sastry learnt dance from Sri Vempati Venkatanarayana and with great ease and class performed Bhamakalapam and Gollakalapam

A master in both theoretical and Practical aspects of dance, music and talas. Lakshminarayana Sastry is credited for introducing solo system of dance in the otherwise traditional dance drama form of Kuchipudi. An original thinker right from his young age, he choreographed several solo numbers, like Astapadis, Padams, Jawalis, songs from Krishna Karnamrutham and Pushpabana Vilasam which have an ample scope for Saathvikaabhinayam



Lakshminarayana Sastry's teaching were unique, he trained his disciples with individual care and attempted to bring out the deepest talents in them, some of his talented disciples were Vedantham Jagannadha Sarma, Vempati Peda Satyam, Vempati Chinna Satyam and Ayyanki Thandava Krishna. He also trained the temple dancers, who include Duggirala Jagadamba of Mandapeta and Srirajitham. Non-Kuchipudi artistes like T. Bala Saraswathi, Ramayya Pillai, Mylapore Gouri Amma and Tara Chowdary came to him for training in Abinaya.

In the early thirties when the art form was facing a crisis, he along with his son Jagannadha Sarma, one of the most popular female impersonators of the time and Ayyanki Thandava Krishna extensively toured India performing Kuchipudi. Lakshminarayana Sastry was also pioneer in introducing the dance form to women, which till then was restricted only to men.

An incomparable performer, Guru and Choreographer, he unfortunately did not get the deserved recognition in his times, though he received few honors like the Andhra Nataka Kalaparishad, Gudivada (1945) and the presentation of Simhathalaatam by Justice P.V. Rajamannar at Madras (1948) are a few that are worth mentioning.