

## *Vedantam Ramakrishnaiah (1886-1971):*

Son of Smt. Paavathamma and Sri janaardhanayya, and adopted by Vedaantham Parvathaalu and Chandramma, Ramakrishnaiah learnt dance from Chintha Venkataramayya and his elder brothers Venkatachalapathi, Venkateswara Sastry and Lakshminarayana; he was trained in music by Venkateswara Sastry (his brother) and Challapalli Sitharamayya; started his career at the age of ten playing the minor roles of LAVA, KUSA, LOHITHAASYA, PRAHLADA and DHARMAANGADA; he was popular for his roles as hero in various dance draamaas namely DEVENDRA, ANIRUDDHA, GAYA, SRI KRISHNA, RAAMA, LAKSHMAN and DHARMARAJA; endowed with a good voice he brought ease and originality to the roles he played; his role as HARISCHANDRA, according to the critics is unsurpassed till date; in 1935 he acted as DHARMARAJA in the film MAAYAABAZAAR; worked with D.V. Subbarao in the Indian Draamatic Companyat Machilipatnam; he also headed the group VEDAANTHAM VAARI MELAM for a long time giving performances and training students in dance, music and dramatics encouraged and brought up many young aspirants into the dance field; tried to bring in appropriate costumes and stage decor in his dance draamaas.

Honoured by several Estate Zamindaars such as Elamaru in Krishna District (1934), Challapalli and others; special honour was conferred by Andhra Pradesh Sangeet Natak Akademi in 1964 on the eve of All India Dance Festival at Hyderabad.

