



Renowned Art Director & Padma Shri Awardee Thota Tharani Conferred with France's Chevalier Award

Published On: 17-11-2025

In November 2025, Renowned Indian Art Director and Padma Shri Awardee **Thota Tharani**, was conferred with the **Chevalier de L'Ordre Arts et des Lettres** (Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters), one of France's highest civilian honours in the field of arts and culture, by the **French Government**.

- Tharani formally received the award from **Thierry Mathieu**, French Ambassador to India, at a ceremony held at the Alliance Francaise of Madras in Chennai, Tamil Nadu (TN).
- Following this honor, Thotta Tharani now joins a list of Indian film personalities like: famous Tamil actor Sivaji Ganesan (1995), M. Balamuralikrishna, Kamal Hassan (2016), Aishwarya Rai Bachchan (2012), and Kalki Koechlin (2018), who had previously received the award.

About Thota Tharani:

Career: Tharani started his career as an art director with Singeetam Srinivasa Rao's Telugu film '**Sommokadidhi Sokokadidhi**' in 1978.

Notable Work: With a career spanning over 40 years, Tharani created set designs for some of Tamil films like: 'Nayakan', 'Indian', 'Thalapathi', 'Dasavatharam' and 'Ponniyin Selvan'.

Civil Honour: In 2001, Tharani was honoured with **Padma Shri**, India's 4th highest civilian honour in the field of 'Arts and Culture'.

Other Awards/Accolades: He received various other national and state honours like: two National Film Awards for Best Art Direction for films 'Nayakan' (1987) and 'Indian' (1996).

- In 1992, he received the Kerala State Film Award for film 'Abhimanyu' in the category of Best Art Director.
- In addition to these awards, he was also honoured with two TN State Film Awards and 3 Nandi Awards.

About Ordre des Arts et des Lettres :

Overview: The Order of Arts & Letters (Ordre des Arts et des Lettres) is a French order of merit awarded by the French Ministry of Culture. The award, started in 1957, has since honoured people who have made great contributions to arts and culture.