



I Am
Mohanlal Vishwanathan Nair
Film Actor

Hi!

Mohanlal made his acting debut at age 18 in the Malayalam film Thiranotham in 1978, but the film was delayed in its release for 25 years due to censorship issues. His screen debut was in the 1980 romance film Manjil Virinja Pookkal, in which he played the antagonist.[12][13] He continued to do villainous roles and rose to secondary lead roles in the following years. By the mid-1980s, he established himself as a bankable leading actor and attained stardom after starring in several successful films in 1986; the crime drama Rajavinte Makan released that year heightened his stardom.[12] Mohanlal prefers to work in Malayalam films, but he has also appeared in some Hindi, Tamil, Telugu and Kannada films. Some of his best known non-Malayalam films include the Tamil political drama Iruvar (1997), the Hindi crime drama Company (2002) and the Telugu film Janatha Garage (2016).

VIDEO

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Work

major success.^[28] Mohanlal's friends had sent his application in response to an advertisement released by Navodaya Studio.^[29] He auditioned for the role in front of a panel that included professional directors. Displeased with his appearance, two of them gave him poor marks, but Fazil and Jijo Appachan gave him 90 and 95 marks out of 100.^[30] In an interview with *Reader's Digest* in 2004, Mohanlal said that his looks as a young man might have fit the *villain's* image.^[31]

By 1983, Mohanlal was credited in more than 25 feature films, most of them had him playing negative (villain) roles.^[31] Films such as *Ente Mohangal Poovaninju*, *Iniyengilum*, *Visa*, *Attakkalasham*, *Kaliyil Alpam Karyam*, *Ente Mamattukkuttiyammakku*, *Engane Nee Marakkum*, *Unaru* and *Sreekrishna Parunthu* changed his image. Through Sasikumar's *Ivide Thudangunnu*, he became a successful hero with a "good heart". Mohanlal played his first comic lead role in an ensemble cast in the 1984 comedy *Poochakkoru Mookkuthi*, directed by Priyadarshan, as a young man in love with a girl whom he mistakenly believes to be rich.^[32] It also marked the beginning of the Mohanlal-Priyadarshan duo, who as of 2016, have worked together in 44 films.^[33]

In 1985, he recorded a song for the film *Onnanam Kunnil Oradi Kunnil*.^[32] *Uyarangalil*, *Nokketha Doorathu Kannum Nattu*, *Boeing Boeing* and *Aram + Aram = Kinnaram* were some of his films in this period.

1986–2000

During this period, Mohanlal played very different roles in films "made by the great masters", such as G. Aravindan, Hariharan, M. T. Vasudevan Nair, Padmarajan, Bharathan and Lohithadas.^[34] Mohanlal, along with actor and scriptwriter Sreenivasan, who played his sidekick in several films, showcased the angst of unemployed, educated Malayali youth forced to adapt to hostile environments in many realistic social satires,^[35] some of which were written by Sreenivasan himself.^[36]

In 1986, he starred in *T. P. Balagopalan M.A.*, directed by Sathyan Anthikad, for which he received his first Kerala State Film Award for Best Actor.^[37] He portrayed an unemployed young man who shoulders the responsibility of his family. His performance in *Sanmanassullavarkku Samadhanam* as a harassed house-owner won him the Filmfare Award for Best Actor (Malayalam) in the same year. Mohanlal was given the status of a new Malayalam superstar by the public after the box office success of *Rajavinte Makan* (1986), in which he played an underworld don, Vincent Gomez. He also starred in the tragedy *Thalavattom*, playing Vinod, a young man who becomes mentally ill upon witnessing his girlfriend's death. He played Solomon in Padmarajan's *Namukku Parkkan Munthirithoppukal*. Mohanlal's association with Padmarajan was very well noted because their films told stories that were well and truly ahead of their times and broke many conventional *stereotypes* prevailing during that time in the Malayalam film industry. In 1986 alone, Mohanlal appeared in 36 Malayalam films.^[34]

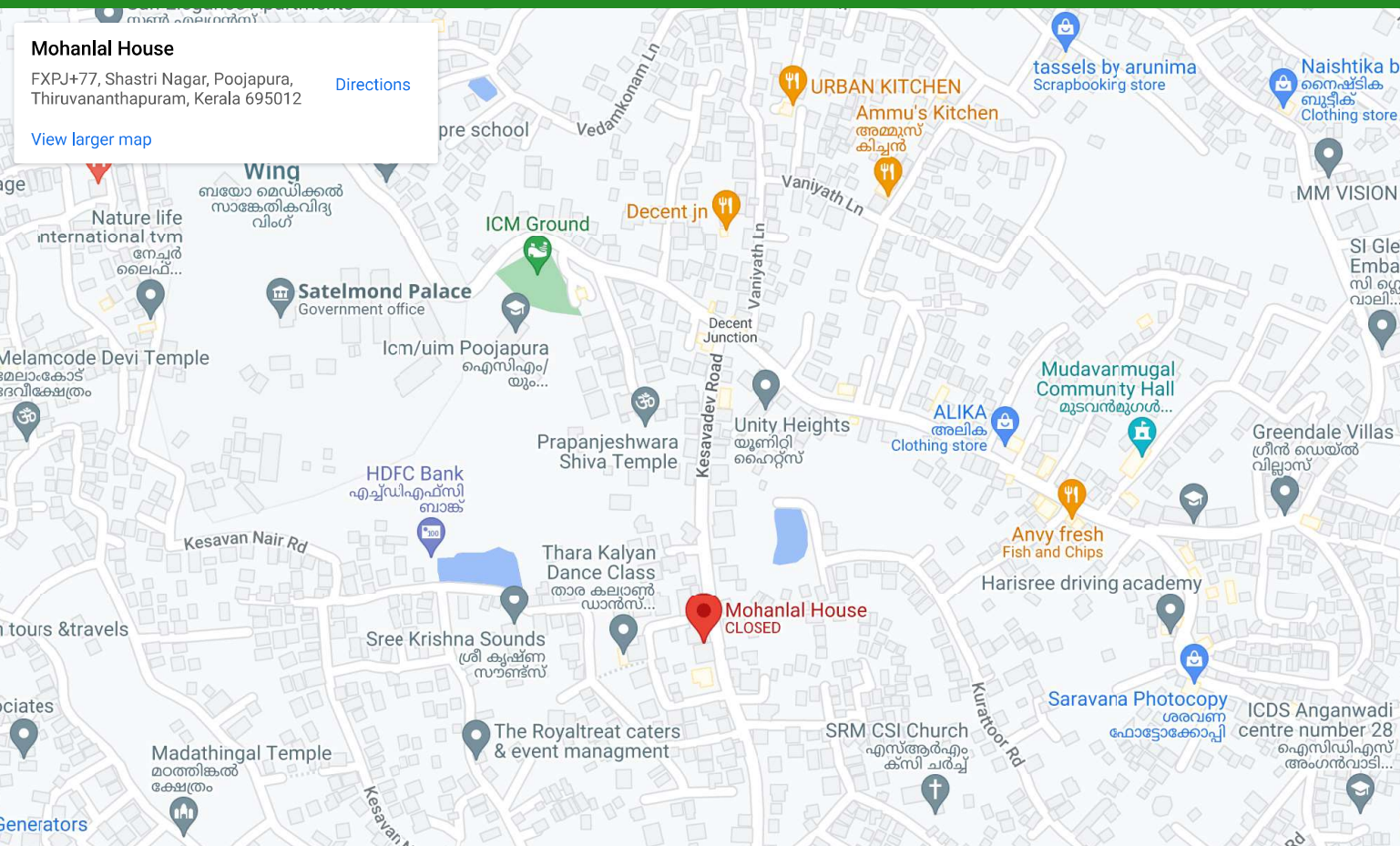
The following year, Mohanlal starred with Sreenivasan and Shobana in the Sathyan Anthikad comedy *Nadodikkattu*, which became a box office success. Mohanlal and Sreenivasan reprised their roles as the detectives Dasan and Vijayan respectively in its sequels; *Pattanapravesham* (1988) and *Akkare Akkare Akkare* (1990). *Thoovanathumbikal*, directed by Padmarajan, in which he portrayed a person torn between his twin love interests, broke many stereotypes in Indian films,^{[35][38]} such as, the leading man falling in love with a second woman immediately after he is rejected by the first, and of a man falling in love with a sex worker. The romantic comedy *Chithram*, released in 1988, played for 366 days in a theatre, becoming the longest-running Malayalam film.^[32] Mohanlal won a Kerala State Special Jury Award in 1988 for his acting in *Padamudra*, *Aryan*, *Vellanakalude Nadu*, *Ulsavapittennu* and *Chithram*.^[37]

In 1989, the combination of the writer Lohitha Das and director Sibi Malayil created the character Sethumadhavan, a person who dreams of becoming a police officer, but ends up as a criminal, in the tragedy *Kireedam*. The role earned Mohanlal a National Film Special Jury Mention.^[32] Mohanlal later recalled that his portrayal of Sethumadhavan's mental agony, commended as a natural performance, was spontaneous and that he "did what Sethumadhavan, my character, would have done in such a situation", adding that acting was "akin to entering another person's body."^[34] In the same year, he acted in a film which became a commercial success, *Varavelpu*, which tells the story of a man who earned money working in the Gulf and came back home to enjoy his life with his family. He bought a bus, which eventually gets him into trouble. The former Prime Minister of India, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, mentioned the film as an example of ignorance by Malayali towards global economic changes during the inauguration of the Global Investor Meet held at Kochi on 18 January 2003.^{[39][40]} In 1989, he starred in another one of Padmarajan's movies; *Season*.

In the early 1990s, Mohanlal acted in a number of commercial films, such as *His Highness Abdullah*, *Midhunam* and *No.20 Madras*

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Contact



✉ thecompleteactor.tca@gmail.com

📷 [Instagram](#)