

**"SHEHNAI MAESTRO" KALAIMAMANI,  
KARNATAKA KALASHRI, Asthana Vidwan of SriKalahasti,  
Bharat Ratna Ustad Bismillah Khan Kala Samman Awardee**

## **PANDIT Dr. S.BALLESH**

**International Fame Acclaimed - SHEHNAI PLAYER**

**Hindustani Classical "A"Grade, Shehnai Artist, Hindustani Vocalist & Playback Singer**

### **LONG PROFILE**



### **BREIF INTRODUCTION :**

Name of Artist - **Pandit Dr. S.BALLESH (BHAJANTRI)**  
Main Genre - **Hindustani Classical "A" GRADE SHEHNAI Player**  
Other Genre - **Classical Hindustani Vocalist, Playback Singer & Musician, Sufi-Ghazal Singer**  
Son of - **"Shehnai Samrat" Pandit Sanna Bharamappa Bhajantri (Shehnai player)**  
Date of Birth - **1-04-1958, Age 64 years**  
Caste - **Scheduled Caste, (SC), Koravar, Hindu, Koram Samaj**  
State - **M.K.HUBLI, KARNATAKA, INDIA**  
Shehnai Playing family - **4th Generation Shehnai players family from MK.Hubli, Karnataka**  
Performed Shehnai - **Classical Performing platform, All Over India & Abroad morethan 48years**

### **State National Awards- Pandit Dr.S.Balleshji is honored by FOUR (4) States Awards:**

- ❖ **Tamilnadu Government honored him and his son Dr. Krishna Ballesh with Tamilnadu State's Highest Civilian Award, Kalaimamani (Joint Award) in 2020, award given by Honorable Chief Minister Shri. Dr. Edappadi K. Palaniswami and Shri. Deva Chairperson of Eyal Isai Nataka Manram.**
- ❖ **Karnataka State Government honored him with Karnataka Kalashree Award in 2019 called as (Karnataka State Sangeet Natak Akademi Award), Given by the Honorable Minister for Kannada and Culture Shri. C.T. Ravi in presence of Vid. Anoor Anantha Krishna Sharma, Chairperson.**

- ❖ **Andhra Pradesh Government** conferred him with the **SriKalahasti Aasthana Vidwan Award** in **2006** at SriKalahasti Temple, in Chittoor by Deputy Commissioner.
- ❖ **Ministry of Tourism, Government of India** and **Uttar Pradesh, India Tourism Varanasi**, conferred **Ustad Bismillah Khan KalaRatna Samman 2021 Award** (Joint Award along with his son Krishna Balesh) in Benaras in association with Deepika Cultural Society of India, Varanasi U.P.,
- ❖ **Ministry of Culture, Government of India** conferred **Sanskriti Samman Samagam 2021 Award** (Joint Award along with his son Krishna Balesh) by **Shri. Kailash Vijayvargiya**, National General Secretary of Bharatiya Janata Party and **Dr. Bharat Sharma**, Executive Board Member - National Culture Fund.,
- ❖ **Andhra Pradesh Government** conferred him with **Ugadi Puraskarm 2006 Award** by Chief Minister **Shri. Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy** of A.P.
- ❖ He was conferred with **"The Honorary Doctorate" D.Litt. Award (Honoris Causa)** by The International Tamil University.

#### **Government invites to perform Shehnai :**

- ❖ **The Government of India, Ministry of Culture**, invited Pandit Balesh and his son **Dr. Krishna Balesh** for **Sangeet Sangam International Music Festival** in **2021** (Senior Musicians) organized **Kendra Sangeet Nataka Akademi, Delhi**,
- ❖ **Banaras Sabrang Utsav, India Tourism Varanasi, Government of India** and **Ustad Bismillah Khan's family** members invited Krishna Balesh to perform for **105th Ustad Bismillah Khan Birth Anniversary** in Banaras for Sabrang Utsav, along with Deepika Cultural Society of India, Varanasi,

#### **Worked in Many Hollywood Movies :**

- ❖ Pandit Balesh and Krishna Balesh (father-son duo) played Shehnai for **Oscar Winner AR. Rahman** in the **Hollywood movies** (International English Movies) **The Hundred-Foot Journey - 2014** for the track **"India Calling"**,
- ❖ He played Shehnai for **More than 55 years** from the age of **11 years**, accompanying his uncle and father, and later **Ustad Bismillah Khan Saheb**. He has played for many recordings for leading **Music Composers of India**, across **16 languages** from **1978 to 2021**, He has sung and played shehnai for more than **9,000 movies background-score's** and **45,000 film songs** in all languages and more than **50,000 devotional songs** in all religions, and he has also sung **Hindustani music Alaaps** for films and had also collaborated Shehnai with **International musicians and composers** in recordings.

## **Shehnai Guru &Gharana :**

As a third generation Shehnai Player- his first Gurus were his Uncle and Grandfather. He went on to learn from World renowned Shehnai Maestro “Bharat Ratna” Ustad Bismillah Khan Sahab, in the Guru Shishya Parampara and was under his tutelage for nearly 40 years, as his foremost disciple

## **Vocal Gurus &Gharanas :**

He started his vocal training as a disciple of “Padma Bhushan” Pandit Puttaraja Gawai of Gadag Veereshwara Punyashrama, as an 18-year-old and from Pandit Kodhand Salunke he learnt Patiala Gharana He is also blessed to learn from Padma Vibhushan Carnatic Genius Dr. M. Balamurali Krishna, Kalaimamani Vidwan B. A. Chidambaranath, a renowned Carnatic musician, Playback musician and Music composer, and trained in Carnatic music for many years.

## **Association with Composers :**

Pandit Balleash plays Shehnai for “Padma Vibhushan” Maestro Ilaiyaraaja, “Thenisai Thendral” Deva “Padma Bhushan” ‘Oscar Winner’ A.R. Rahman, Bahubali Music Composer MM. Keeravani, Laxmikant Pyarelal, Naadbrahma Hamsalekha & other Music Composers of South and North India, and currently he is playing for all 2021 new music composers from India.

**Association with Singers :** Pandit Balleash has played Shehnai and Sung with Kannada superstar Actor Dr. Rajkumar, PB. Sreenivas, KJ Yesudas, Kishore Kumar, S.P. Balasubrahmanyam, Lata Mangeshkar, S.Janaki, P. Susheela, Asha Bhosle, Vani Jairam, K.S. Chitra, Bombay Jaishree, Chitra Visweswaran & Malaysia Vasudevan.

## **Collaboration with International musicians**

Pt Balleash & Shri. Krishna Balleash duo played Shehnai in the Hollywood movies (International English Movies) “The Hundred-Foot Journey -2014” for the track “India Calling” and he has also worked for many background scores for several Hollywood movies named “Blinded by the Light - 2019, Viceroy’s House - 2017, Pelé: Birth of a Legend - 2016, The Hundred-Foot Journey - 2014, A Million Dollar Arm - 2014, People Like Us - 2012, 127 Hours - 2010, Couples Retreat - 2009” for A.R. Rahman. He had collaborated Shehnai with Hungarian musicians in several recordings, albums, live in concerts in India and Abroad for Maestro Ilaiyaraaja, and he has worked with Chicago Symphony Orchestra (USA), Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra (Austria), Toronto Symphony Orchestra (Canada), Budapest Symphony Orchestra, Hungary.

## **ABOUT PANDIT Dr.S.BALLESH :**

“KALAIMAMANI” & “KARNATAKA KALASHREE” & “Shehnai Chakravarthy” Pandit Dr. S.Balleash (Ballappa Sanna Bharamappa Bhajantri) is a shehnai artiste following the Benares gharana style. He is also a Patiala gharana Hindustani vocalist and ghazal singer, an Akashvani All India Radio and Doordarshan “A” Grade Hindustani Classical Shehnai Artist.

He was blessed to be the foremost disciple of world renowned Shehnai Maestro and BharatRatna Ustad Bismillah Khan, and carries forward his legacy of Benares Gharana Style today.

Pt. Balleash hails from a family of renowned Shehnai players from M.K.Hubli (Belgaum District), Karnataka- tracing back to Court musicians to the ruling Lingaraja Dynasty, with a performance history of over 30 decades (300 years).

Initiated into music by his father- Pandit. Sanna Bharamanna Gawai, he continued to learn under the guidance of his uncle Pandit Dodda Bharamanna Gawai. He further trained under Guru Dr D.P Hiremath - Kirana Gharana and Patiala Gharana from Pandit Kodanda Singh Salunke Maharaj. He was blessed to train under the guidance of Padma Bhushan Pandit Puttaraja Gawai (gadag) Gwalior Gharana- Kirana Gharana.

Balleesh was then accepted by Shehnai virtuoso “**Bharat Ratna**”**Ustad Bismillah Khan Saheb** as his disciple, and is one of the five, and only surviving direct disciple of the maestro.

Following the traditional Guru Shishya Parampara, he served his guru Ustad Bismillah Khan for 42 years. He has accompanied ‘Ustad Bismillah Khan’ Saheb on several occasions and has received worldwide acclaim for his illustrious career as a Shehnai Vidwan, spanning over five decades.

### **Ustad ji had bestowed the title of “Dakshina Bharat Bismillah Khan” on Pandit Balleesh.**

He is also renowned Hindustani classical vocalist and Ghazal singer and has been the preferred musician for many music Directors in Bollywood, Kollywood and all languages across India (such as Maestro Naushad Ali, Maestro Ilaiyaraaja, Oscar winner AR Rahman and MM. Keeravani) He has also played for Hollywood music directors.

As a performing musician - he has played in many prestigious Music Festivals and collaborated with senior musicians for Jugalbandis - both Carnatic and Hindustani Notably, Padmashri Ustad Shahid Parvez Khan (sitar), Padma Bhushan Pandit. Vishwa Mohan Bhatt (Mohan Veena) Pandit. Atul Kumar Upadhyay (violin), Ustad Shafique Khan (sitar), Vidwan G J R Krishnan (violin).

**Karnataka State Government** has co- opted Pandit Dr. S.Balleesh as member of the **Honorary Board of Karnataka State Sangit and Nritya Academy (2016 to 2018)** and **T. Chowdiah Award Selection board in 2017** which decides on the music awards presented by the state.

### **SHEHNAI STYLE OF PT.S.BALLESH :**

Known for bringing the sweetness and flexibility of his vocals in his shehnai vadan, Pt. Balleesh can play on his Shehnai, Aalaap like khayal singing, Jhala like Sitar, Sarod, the Tatkar bols like kathak-dancers, Harkats like sarangi & violin, continuity of tone (Meend) like Been and the adorability of Bansuri to all these.

Due to his ability to straddle the worlds of classical, folk and popular music with equal ease and distinction, he is well recognized and sought after artiste, globally in both Hindustani classical circles and film circuits for his mastery over the Shehnai. **He is the only artist who can play all scales on a Shehnai instrument.**

### **VOCAL STYLE OF PT.S.BALLESH :**

Equally, accomplished vocal artiste, Pt. Dr. S. Balleesh is a member of the Ganayogi Panchakshara Gawai & Puttaraj Gawai brotherhood and is one of the famous scholars of **Sri Veereshwara Punyashrama.**

He received Hindustani vocal training in KiranaGharana from Dr. D.P. Hiremath, Patiala Gharana from Pandit Kodanda Singh Salunke Maharaj & Pt. Prakash Singh Salunke and Gwalior gharana from Padma Bhushan Pt. Puttaraja Gawai (Gadag).

His gayaki style is inspired from Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, Ustad Salamat Ali Khan and Ustad Nazakat Ali Khan.

### **PRESERVING SHEHNAI CRAFTSMANSHIP :**

Pt. Balleesh remains one of the few musicians with equal skill in crafting the instrument. He is from the Shehnai - Bhajantri (Karnataka) Vajantri (Maharashtra) is a community famed for the Shehnai vadan and crafting skills.

## **Research and Development in handcrafting the Shehnai :**

1. With every endangered art, the other aspect is preserving the instruments. Pt. Balleesh is also a renowned Shehnai Craftsman, making his pipes from the finest sesham, burma teak, ebony and rosewood to the Benarasi reeds, bringing alive the mesmerizing sounds of Shehnai.
2. The process involves preparing the wood, whittling it to fashion a pipe,
3. preparing the “Nali” i.e. silver pipe which involves tempering the silver metal to right thickness, soldering the silver to the wooden pipe, drilling the holes, attaching the Shehnai ka Pyala which gives the unique sound.
4. Uniquely hand-crafted the Shehnai has the best reeds from Ganga- - conditioning it to get the right tautness and stretch for the wind instrument - a specially made Sui - or needles for opening reeds made by bronze metal, and Bamboo- - used for flattening the reeds.
5. The Bronze cups or Shehnai ka Pyala- has come about after years of research and development and are designed for melodic output and tone. The tone varies with the diff cup size.
6. All this is made with specialized handcrafted drilling rods and tools to create the unique sound
7. The crafting skill is also passed from generation to generation.
8. Many of the Shehnai vidwans in the country use the handcrafted Shehnai made by Pt. S. Balleesh
9. Having mastered the art, he is the only player to use ebony shehnai - a rarity in this field.

## **AWARDS / RECOGNITIONS Received by Pandit Dr. S.Balleesh :**

Because of his accomplished performances, dedication and commitment towards music, He has received numerous Awards and to mention few,

### **STATE AND NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AWARDS :**

1. **Sanskriti Samman Samagam 2021 Award** (Joint Award along with his son Krishna Balleesh) from **Ministry of Culture, Government of India** conferred by **Shri. Kailash Vijayvargiya**, National General Secretary of Bharatiya Janata Party and **Dr. Bharat Sharma**, Executive Board Member - National Culture Fund,
2. **Ustad Bismillah Khan KalaRatna Samman 2021 Award** (Joint Award along with his son) in Benaras by **India Tourism Varanasi, Government of India** and **Deepika Cultural Society**, Varanasi, U.P.
3. **Kalaimamani 2020** (Joint Award) with **Dr. Krishna Balleesh** Tamilnadu State’s Highest Civilian Award Given by Tamilnadu Government by Honorable Chief Minister **Shri. Dr. Edappadi K. Palaniswami**, in presence of **Deputy Chief Minister O. Panneerselvam**, Tamil Development and Official Tamil Culture and Language **Minister K. Pandiarajan**, Information Minister **Kadambur Raju** and **Chief Secretary Rajiv Ranjan** and **Chairman of Eyal Isai Nataka Manaram, Thenisai Thendral Shri. Deva**
4. **Karnataka Kalashree 2019** called as (**Karnataka State Sangeet Natak Akademi Award**), Given by **Karnataka State Government**, honored by the **Minister for Kannada and Culture Shri. C.T. Ravi**, Carnatic Vocalist **RK. Padmanabha** and **Chairperson Vidwan, Shri. Anoor Anantha Krishna Sharma**, (Karnataka Sangeetha Nritya Academy)
5. **SriKalahasti Aasthana Vidwan Title 2006**, (Joint Award) **SriKalahasti Temple**, Chittoor Andhra Pradesh Government
6. **Ugadi Puraskaram 2006** Andhra Pradesh Government honored **Shri Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy**, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh

## **STATE LEVEL & NATIONAL LEVEL CLASSICAL SANGEET SABHAS & CULTURAL AWARDS :**

7. **SangeetKala Bhushan 2021** Sivagami Academy Awards 2021 **Kallakurichi** District, TN
8. **Pandit Puttaraja Gaan Maharishi Samman 2020** SadhuBhoowa Gaana Kala Kendra, Bhopal, MP
9. **Mahatma Gandhi Award 2019** Gandhi 150th International Peace Festival, Gandhi World Foundation Chennai Award given in presence of Our Excellency **Governor Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit ji**
10. **Chennai Kannada Rajyotsava Award 2018** Karnataka Rajyotsava Samithi Chennai, Karnataka
11. **Bhimsen Samman Award 2017** KalaVikas Parishad Gadag Karnataka
12. **Manju Das Award 2017** MohanTarangini Sangeeta Sabha, Badravathi, Karnataka
13. **Certificate of Appreciation 2017** given by Ambassador of India to Romania
14. **Smt.Leena Gupta Memorial Award 2016** given by Leena Gupta Memorial Music Foundation, Assam
15. **Nudisiri Award 2016** from 13th Kannada Nadu-Nudi-Culture Conference, The Annual Kannada Literary and Cultural Meet of Alva's Education Foundation, Mangalore
16. **Shree Baba Harivallabh Sangeet 2015** honor from **Satguru Uday Singhji** in 140th Shree Baba Harivallabh Sangeet Sammelan in Jalandhar at Shri Devi Talab Mandir, Punjab and Haryana
17. **Bijapur District Navaraspur Utsav Sangeet Sanskriti Award 2015** Kannada and Culture Depart Govts Given by District Commissioner of Bijapur, Karnataka
18. **Kittur Chennamma Sangeet Sanskritka Award 2014** Kannada & Culture Depart Govts Given by District Commissioner of Belgaum, Karnataka
19. **Sangeet Ratna Award 2014** from Bhimsen Music Foundation, Gadag, Karnataka
20. **Shehnai Nadabrahma Award 2014** Given by Sri Dasa Maha Vidhya Peetam Trust Chennai, Tamilnadu
21. **Shehnai Samrat Award 2014** Given by Dharwad Bhajantri Sangha R Dharwad, Karnataka
22. **Siddheshwar Ratna Award 2013** Siddadeshwar Samithi Vijapaura, Karnataka
23. **Sangeet Seva Ratna Award 2013** by **Kamalakara Lalithakala Bharathi, Hyderabad**
24. **AsthanaVidwan Award 2013** Given by Sri Gnana Advaita Peetam, Chennai, Tamilnadu
25. **Bagalkot District Raan Vaibhav Sanskritka Award 2012** Kannada & Culture Depart Govts Given by District Commissioner of Bagalkot, Karnataka
26. **Excellence In Instrumental Music 2011** Dr.MGR University Chennai Award given by Er. A.C.S. Arun Kumar Pro Chancellor, Tamilnadu
27. **SanadiAppanna Kalashree Puraskar Award 2011** SanadiAppanna KalakarSangha, Bagalkot, Karnataka
28. **Sangeeta Kala Prathibha Puraskar 2011** Sree Poornathrayeesa Sangeetha Sabha Kerala & Jalandhar
29. **Sangeet Kalashree Bhushan 2011** Lions Clubs International Chennai, Tamilnadu
30. **AsthanaVidwan Award 2010** Sri Sripuram Peedam Award given by PujyaSri Sri Sakthi Amma, Vellore Sripuram, Tamilnadu
31. **Swara Gangadhara 2009** Amruthavarshini Cultural Association, Hyderabad
32. **Lifetime Achievement Award 2009**, Master Ratan Sangeeta Sabha (Regd) Naya Nangal, Punjab

33. **Ganna Kala Samrat 2008** Greater Indianapolis Telugu Association, USA
34. **Ustad Bismillah Khan Memorial Award 2008** from Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh
35. **Abhinav Ghantasala 2007** Padmasri Dr. K. Viswanath, Veteran Director of Telugu Cinema from Telugu Association of North America and American Telugu Association, New York, USA
36. **Shehnai SwarSamrat 2007** by Telugu Literary & Cultural Association) of New York, USA
37. **Asthana Vidwan Award 2007** Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam Award given by Pujya Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji Association of Hindu Dharma, Tamil Nadu
38. **Andhra Pradesh Kalavedika Puraskaram 2006** Ghantasala Cine Geetha Vajrotsavam Hyderabad
39. **Ugadi Puraskar 2006 & Rastriya Vikas Shiromani Award** by Delhi Telugu Academy, Hyderabad, AP.
40. **Gaana Tapasvi 2006** Telugu Literary and Cultural Association of New York, USA
41. **Bharat Sangeet Kala Ratna Award 2006** Poona Sangeetha Sabha, Pune, Maharashtra
42. **Shehnai Chakravarthy Award 2005** Sri Guru Ganayogi Panchakshara Trust Chennai, Tamilnadu
43. **Shehnai Ratna Award 2004** SGGPY Trust Chennai, Tamilnadu
44. **Ganna Gandhara 2004** Telugu Association of Boston, USA
45. **Gaurav Kala Ratna Puraskar Award 2003** Kala Pradarshini Chennai, Tamilnadu
46. **Asthana Vidwan 2003** of Sri Sharadha Peetham, Sringeri Math, Karnataka
47. **Life Time Achievement Award, 2002** American Telugu Association
48. **Gaana Kala Kaustubha 1999** by Alchor Andhra Association, Qatar
49. **Kala Tapaswi 1993**, Telugu Academy, Andhra Pradesh
50. **Shehnai Naada Bharama Award 1990** Madras Telugu Association, Chennai
51. **Surmani Puraskar Award 1986** Sur Singar Academy Bombay Award given by Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma Ex Hon'ble Governor of Maharashtra and former President of India, Maharashtra.

## **FILM MUSIC AWARDS :**

52. **Excellence In Music Award 2019** ZeeTv Awards, Chennai, Karnataka
53. **Mellisai Mannar M.S.Viswanathan Memorial Award, 2018** Parinati Productions
54. **Man Behind 150 Million Streams 2018** Celebrating Meesaya Murukku ThinkMusic Award given by Actress Kushboo
55. **KIMA Awards Kannada International Music Awards 2015** for Outstanding Contribution Organized by Taurain Bangalore Award given by Film Director and Actor T.S. Nagabharana
56. **Mellisai Mannar Award 2013** In Appreciation for outstanding contribution and dedicated services to Indian Cinema Award presented by Mellisai Mannar M. S. Viswanathan
57. **Radio Mirchi Jury Award Winner, 2009** Radio Film Music South Award given by Music Composer Nada Brahma Hamsalekha
58. **Dr. T. Subbarami Reddy Shashtipurthi Puraskaram 2003** for contribution to Telugu cinema Visakhapatnam
59. **G. Ramanathan Award 1999** Given by Cine Musicians Union, Chennai

## **HONORARY POSTS SERVED ON GOVERNMENT BODIES TO PRESERVE AND PROMOTE ART & CULTURE :**

1. Vice President of Cine Musician's Union, (CMU) (2020 - 2022) Chennai
2. Vice President of Cine Musician's Union, (CMU) (2018 - 2020) Chennai
3. Former Board Member(2016 to 2018) of Karnataka Govt. Sangeeta Nirutya Academy where government honors a musician with Karnataka Kalashree Awards for notable musicians and also creates performing platform for upcoming musicians
4. Former Board Member of Selection Committee 2017T Chowdaiah National Awards which decides on the music awards presented by the state by Chief Minister
5. Former Board Member of Selection Committee 2016State Sangeetha Vidwan National Awards which decides on the music awards presented by the state by Chief Minister or Cultural Minister in Mysore Dasara in Mysore Palace
6. Former Board Member of Selection Committee 2014Tansen Samman National Awards which decides on the music awards presented by the state by Chief Minister or Cultural Minister in Tansen Music Festival Samaroh in Gwalior Palace

## **RECOGNITIONS :**

1. Pandit. Dr. S.Balleash has been conferred The Honorary Doctorate, D.Litt., award (Honoris Causa) from The International Tamil, University United States, Maryland 2017 along with Legendary Playback Singer's Dr. SP. Balasubrahmanyam, Dr. KS. Chitra, Drummer Dr. Sivamani, Dr. Nagoor Babu (Mano) and after his son Dr. Krishna Balleash in 2019.

## **Felicitated by :**

Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, Ex Hon'ble Governor Of Maharashtra and Former President Of India  
Sri. P.V. Narasimha Rao, Former Prime Minister Of India  
Sri Krishna Kanth, Former Vice President Of India  
Sri Sushilkumar Shinde, Former Governor Of Andhra Pradesh  
Dr. N.T. Rama Rao, Former Chief Minister Of Andhra Pradesh  
Smt. Rama Devi, Former Governor Of Karnataka State  
Sri C. Vidyasagar Rao, Governor Of Maharashtra & Tamilnadu  
"Bharat Ratna Pandit Ravi Shankar, International Sitar Player  
Dr. Akkineni Nageswara Rao, Eminent Artist Of Telugu Cinema  
Gnanapeeth Awardee Dr. C. Narayana Reddy, An Eminent Poet Of Telugu Literature  
Sri Bandaru Dattatreya, Union Minister, Govt. of India  
Sri G.M.C. Balayogi, Former Speaker Of Indian Parliament  
Sri Ch. Ramoji Rao, Chairman, Ramoji, Group of Companies.  
Padma Bhushan Dr. Rajkumar, Super Star of Karnataka in Bangalore, Chennai  
"Padma Bhushan" Dr. Chiranjeevi, The Mega Star of Telugu Cinema  
"Padma Bhushan" Sri Rajinikanth, Tamil Super Star, at Visakhapatnam

## **NURTURING GENERATIONS OF SHEHNAI PERFORMERS :**

Pt. Dr. S. Balleash has significantly contributed to preserving the Shehnai an endangered musical instrument by inspiring and nurturing new talent by training in the gurukula mode, nurturing the legacy of Ustad Bismillah Khan Saheb and keeping the Shehnai Vadan tradition alive.



In a milieu in which academic and corporate pursuits are preferred over music as a career, Pt. Balleesh has inspired his three sons to take a musical career even after qualifying in professional spheres like engineering and Management and holding corporate positions.

**All three are accomplished Shehnai players & vocalists.,**

His son Surmani Dr. Krishna Balleesh apart from accompanying, has also grown into a solo performer, following in his father's footsteps.

Prakash Balleesh and Shivanand Balleesh are also accomplished artists who accompany their father and other renowned musicians with Dukkad, Harmonium, tabla etc. apart from playing the Shehnai and vocal.

The Village Mugut Khan Hubballi from where Pandit Balleesh hails, has over - 20 scholars with different levels of proficiency - who have learnt shehnai vadan art from him and are performing artists in local and national arenas.

### **NURTURING MUSICAL TALENT AMONG DIFFERENTLY - ABLED YOUTH :**

Following the tradition of his Gurus and pioneers of the **Veereshwar Punyashrama, Gurus Padma Bhushan Pt. Puttaraja Gawai, Ganayogi- Pt. Panchakshara Gawai and Shivayogi Shri. Hanagal Kumaraswami, Pt. Dr. S. Balleesh** volunteers time at the Ashram, as alumni - teaching differently abled youngsters Vocal and Instrumental music.

Most of these students are from economically backward families, who have been able to lift their families out of poverty, with the skill of music. They have found gainful employment as performing musicians, teachers in Government schools and recording artistes.

Tansen Academy, founded by him holds individual classes for **Autistic childrens, Physically Challenged and Special Needs** (Blind Born Childrens) for a very negligible and nil guru dakshina (**NO FEE**), teaching them for Sangeet Seva.

Ganayogi Utsav organized annually, under the aegis of the music school, provides a platform for upcoming musicians and **differently abled musicians** of all age groups to perform in concert.

### **PHILANTHROPY :**

Pt. Dr. S. Balleesh is also known for his philanthropy. He along with his team of musicians have performed several music concerts to raise funds for construction of Temples, and to help religious Mutts and for Masjids with their operations. A true follower of Bharat Ratna Ustad Bismillah Khan Saheb, he performs at both Hindu and Muslim ceremonies and promotes religious harmony.

### **CONTRIBUTION TO THE SOCIETY :**

In a digital world without borders, the biggest challenge is in absorbing new cultures and traditions without losing one's own identity.

In this challenging environment - Pt. Dr. S. Balleesh has made the most significant contribution towards Preserving Classical Traditions and Nurturing Environment for Shastriya Hindustani Sangeet

**Pandit Dr. S. Balleesh** and Dr. Krishna Balleesh established the "**Tansen Academy of Music**" School in 2011 and has been teaching Hindustani, Carnatic, Playback music, devotional songs and musical instruments to over **1000 students** in Chennai, Trichy, Coimbatore, Bangalore and around the worldwide (online).

Shehnai Maestro Pandit S. Balesh Bhajantri (MK.Hubli, Belgaum District, Karnataka State) 09884295357/09381027573  
The school teaches classical Carnatic, Hindustani and screen music songs to Differently abled, Visually handicapped and Autistic Spectrum children. All of them are given the opportunity to perform at the annual Ganayogi Sangeet Utsav.

Every year, Tansen Academy school students organize an event called "Rus Barse" in memory of Guru Ustad Bismillah Khan. The school aims to preserve the legacy of the illustrious Gurus and propagate the traditional styles all over the world.

At Tansen Academy, people between the ages of 6 and 70 (including IAS Officers, Retired Judge, Police, Lawyer, Playback Singers and Musicians) learn music with full devotion. All Students including upcountry branches at Trichy, Coimbatore, Madurai, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Dharwad are given the opportunity to sing on stage every year.

In addition to the School of Music, the Academy hosts **6 major events** to promote the Shastriya Sangeet and to preserve the rich cultural heritage of their gurus.

## **EVENTS ORGANISED AND AWARDS CONFERRED BY PANDIT BALLESH, FOUNDER OF TANSEN ACADEMY OF MUSIC® :**

With Preserving, Nurturing and Promoting the legacy of the Gurus are the DNA for this endeavour, the academy also organizes an Annual event **Ras Barse Utsav, Ganayogi Sangeet Utsav.**

The Academy organises Ganayogi Utsav - in honour of Gurus of VeereshwaraPunyashrama, Gadag- Shivayogi Hanagal Swami, Pt. Panchakshari Gawai & Pt. Puttaraja Gawai. Most of the Hindustani Musicians of Southern India & Maharashtra and North India are trained in this gurukul - notable among contemporary vocalists and Shehnaiplayer being Pt. Dr. S Balesh, Pt. Dr. Venkatesh Kumar and Pandit Somnath Mardur. Every year in **VeereshwaraPunyashrama June-July Gadag's Ganayogi Panchakshara Sangeet festival starts with Shehnai recital of Pandit Balesh and Party**, in coincide of GadagGanayogiFestival, Balesh celebrates same festival in Belgaum, Dharwad, Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad, Delhi & confers **Ganayogi Kala Ratna Award** to leading musicians.

### **1. RAS BARSE UTSAV**

The **Ras Barse Utsav** is conceptualized as a platform to present Music in the purest form as a tribute concert in honour of **Shehnai Maestro Bharat Ratna Ustad Bismillah Khan** and Shehnai Samrat Pt. Sanna Bharamanna Gawai, this event is organized every year by the academy students under the aegis of Tansen Academy and supervisory board of the BK Shehnai Foundation as it provides a medium to bring the **Best Top Musicians** of Hindustani Gharanas to perform at Belgaum, Hubli, Dharwad, Bangalore and Chennai and confers the **Ustad Bismillah Khan National award** to performing legends, **Gaurav Puraskar** for the musicians for their contributions and film music and **Yuva Kala Puraskar Award** on upcoming artistes.

This is a **daylong festival** - and we have multiple artists featuring in the show, paying homage to the great gurus. We have both instrumental and vocal music with focus on providing a vibrant platform and a genuinely interested and knowledgeable audience for the **unsung but highly talented artists and rare instruments, coupled with celeb performances in peak time.**

The third is **Taan Utsav**- an annual student showcase - We have a mosaic of student performances starting with **2-year-olds to 65-year-olds** - covering classical and semi-classical music. We also have many celeb students who are **playback artists in Bollywood and South India.**

### **2. GANAYOGI UTSAV**

Ganayogi Utsav is celebrated in memory of Shivayogi Hangal Kumar Swamiji, Gurudev Ganayogi Panchakshara Gawai and Padma Bhushan Danayogi Pandit Puttaraj Gawai (Gadag), continuing the traditional

Shehnai Maestro Pandit S. Balesh Bhajantri (MK.Hubli, Belgaum District, Karnataka State) 09884295357/09381027573 music, culture and legacy of our Veereshwara Punyashrama where India's leading musicians will be performing in Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad, Belgaum, Dharwad and Tansen Academy Senior Students will be sharing the stage.

### 3. GURU SAMARPAN

An annual tribute to Ustad Bismillah Khan Saheb - this is held in the Month of March- April to commemorate Ustad Ji Birth Anniversary. This is a short format - with 3 hours of Shehnai performance Solo or Jugalbandi with a visiting artist.

### 4. USTAD BISMILLAH KHAN SHEHNAI SANGEET MAHOTSAV

Ustad Bismillah Khan Sangeet Mahotsav is celebrated in memory of Bharat Ratna Ustad Bismillah Khan Sahab.

### 5. YUVA UTSAV

Yuva Utsav is celebrated for Indian Classical upcoming Musicians of India and invited to perform in Bangalore, Chennai, Hubli-Dharwad, Belgaum.

### 6. TAAN UTSAV

Taan Utsav is celebrated as the Annual Day of Tansen Academy Students and dedicated to Grandparents Smt. Ellamma Ammaji and Pandit Sanna Bharamanna Gawaiji, nearly 750 Students perform- Bhairav Se Bhairavi Tak . Conducted at Bangalore, Chennai, Hubli-Dharwad, Belgaum.

## POPULAR MUSICAL COLLABORATIONS :

### Shehnai In Popular Music :

Pt Balesh is also known for his extensive body of work in the non-classical circuit- taking Shehnai through popular music to familiarize, general public about the richness of this rare instrument.

He has been instrumental in taking the Shehnai music to masses through interpretation of films compositions of generations of music directors like Maestro Naushad Ali, Mellisai Mannar MS Viswanathan, Maestro Ilaiyaraaja & Oscar Winner AR. Rahman in various Indian Films & Foreign films.

Pt Balesh & Shri. Krishna Balesh duo played Shehnai in the **Hollywood movies(International English Movies)**“The Hundred-Foot Journey -2014” for the track “India Calling” and he has also worked for many background scores for **several Hollywood movies** named “Blinded by the Light - 2019,Viceroy's House - 2017, Pelé: Birth of a Legend - 2016, The Hundred-Foot Journey - 2014, A Million Dollar Arm - 2014, People Like Us - 2012,127 Hours - 2010, Couples Retreat - 2009” for A.R. Rahman. He had collaborated **Shehnai with Hungarian musicians** in several recordings, albums, live in concerts in **India and Abroad for Maestro Ilaiyaraaja**, and he has worked with **Chicago Symphony Orchestra (USA), Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra (Austria), Toronto Symphony Orchestra (Canada),Budapest Symphony Orchestra, Hungary.**

He played Shehnai in ‘Rockstar’ **Bollywood movie**, for the track titled The Dichotomy of fame“. Few more prominent tracks are "Ye Jo Des HaiTera" song from the movie “Swades”, Raanjhanaa movie, "Hamma" song from the movie “Bombay” for A.R. Rahman.He has played for many movies of **Karnataka Ratna Dr. Rajkumar** and also played for **M.M.Keeravani** for **Baahubali movie**, In **Baahubali Part 1 and 2**, He has sung and played Shehnai in Songs and Background Score. The **pathos-romantic Shehnai bits of Ilaiyaraaja** music like “Sundari Kannal Oru Sethi” and “Rakkamma Kaiya Thattu” the fourth most popular song in **BBC World Service** worldwide in 2012, song from the movie “Thalapathi”, “Ala pol Vela pol” song from actor superstar **Rajnikanth** movie “Ejaman”, “Gurucharanam Saranam” song from the movie “Guru 1997” and also for background score of the movie for **Malayalam superstar Mohanlal**were played by **Pt Balesh with Hungarian Solo musicians of Budapest Symphony Orchestra, Hungary**, music by **Maestro Ilaiyaraaja**. This was the first time in history in Indian cinema.

## **LISTING OF NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY IMPORTANT CLASSICAL CONCERTS :**

Early in his career - he single-handedly played shehnai in All India Music Conference held at Dharwad in 1975, in the presence of Pandit Bhimsen Joshi, Vidushi Smt. Gangubai Hangal & other eminent artists where he gave an outstanding shehnai performance and received standing ovation in the conference. Unlike vocals, performing solo on a word instrument like Shehnai is a real feat.

He has also performed in many Jugalbandhi concerts with Hindustani & Carnatic senior musicians like Padma Bushan Pandit Vishwa Mohan Bhatt (Mohan Veena), Ustad Shahid Parvez Khan (sitar), Pt Atul Kumar Upadhaya (violin), Ustad Shafique - Rafique Khan (sitar), Vidwan G J R Krishnan (violin) and on tabla accompanied by Pandit Yogesh Samsi, Pandit Subhankar Banerjee, Pandit Ravindra Yavagal, Pandit Raghunath Nakod, Pandit Vijay Gathe and with Padmashri Drummer Sivamani, Drummer Ranjit Barot, Pandit Ramesh Narayana (Kerala). He has also performed in India as well as many other countries.

Pt Balleash is also a renowned playback singer. He sang many Hindustani alaaps in the songs, background score for films and had also sung several songs along with noted singers like K. J. Yesudas, S. Janaki, P. Susheela, Smt. Vani Jayaram, S. P. Balasubrahmanyam, Laxmikant-Pyarelal, Maestro Ilaiyaraaja, G.K. Venkatesh, M.M. Keeravani, Hamsalekha and A.R. Rahman, He has sung and played shehnai for more than 9,000 movies background-score's and 45,000 film songs and around 50,000 devotional songs in all religions. He has also sung Hindustani music Alaaps for films and had also collaborated Shehnai with International musicians and composers in recordings. He has worked with Lakkavajhala Venkata Gangadhara Sastry, a singer and composer for Bhagavadgita project.

## **TAKING THE SHEHNAI TO A GLOBAL AUDIENCE :**

Pandit Balleash has extensively travelled in India and Abroad. His concert tours have included countries like the United States of America, South Africa, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, France, Belgium, Russia, Dubai, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Germany, Srilanka, Switzerland, Netherlands, Indonesia, Philippines and many more countries over a span of 45 years. On several occasions, he has been invited and sponsored by government music festivals.

On several occasions, he has been invited or sponsored by government music festivals. **He had collaborated Shehnai with Hungarian musicians in several recordings.**

### **1. IN KANNADA FILM MUSIC INDUSTRY :**

He has worked with G.K. Venkatesh, Hamsalekha, Upendra Kumar, Rajan-Nagendra, M. Ranga Rao, C. Aswath, Vijaya Bhaskar, V. Manohar, L. Vaidyanathan, Mano Murthy etc.,

### **2. IN BOLLYWOOD FILM MUSIC INDUSTRY :**

He has worked with O.P. Nayar, Naushad Ali, Laxmikant Pyarelal, Ravindra Jain, Jatin-Lalit, Kalyanji Anandji, Anand-Milind, R.D. Burman, Kailash Kher etc.,

### **3. IN TAMIL FILM MUSIC INDUSTRY :**

He has worked with KV Mahadevan, M.S. Viswanathan, Illaiyaraaja, Kunnakudi Vaidyanathan, Sankar Ganesh, Deva, A.R. Rahman, Vidyasagar, S.A. Rajkumar, Drums Sivamani etc.,

### **4. IN TELUGU FILM MUSIC INDUSTRY :**

He has worked with Chellapilla Satyam, Chakri (composer), Chakravarthy, M. M. Keeravani, Raj-Koti & S. P. Balasubrahmanyam etc.,

### **5. IN MALAYALAM FILM MUSIC INDUSTRY :**

He has worked with V. Dakshinamoorthy, Raveendran Master, G. Devarajan master, Shyam Joseph (composer), S. P. Venkatesh & M. Jayachandran etc.,

## **MAJOR PERFORMANCES :**

**NATIONALLY: CLASSICAL HINDUSTANI MUSIC.,**

**Government of India**

1. **Government of India, Ministry of Culture**, Sangeet Sangam International Music Festival in 2021 (Senior Musicians) organized Kendra Sangeet Nataka Akademi, New Delhi
2. Sabarang Utsav Benaras by **India Tourism Varanasi, Government of India** and Deepika Cultural Society, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh
3. **Festival of India** in the USA, Canada, Singapore, Malaysia and Australia,
4. Delhi Classical Music Festival, **Sahitya Kala Parishad, Delhi**
5. Shehnai Mahotsav, **Bharat Bhavan**, Bhopal

## India's Oldest Music Festivals

6. Sawai Gandharva Bhimsen Mahotsav (Pune)
7. Shree Baba Harivallabh Sangeet Sammelan (Jalandhar)
8. Swami Haridas Sangeet Sammellan (Mumbai)
9. Bhopal Bharat Bhavan Shehnai Samaroh (Bhopal)
10. Lokmania Ustad Bismillah Khan 100th Birthday Shehnai Mahotsav Pune Kolhapur Belgaum Goa Mumbai
11. Ganayogi Panchakshari Sangeet Sammelan (Gadag, Bangalore)
12. Tansen Sangeet Samaroh, Bhopal
13. Sur Singar Sansad Sangit Sammellan (Mumbai)
14. Thyagaraja Music Festival, Thiruviyaru
15. Sri Guru Ganayogi Panchakshara Trust Chennai, Tamilnadu
16. Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

## India's Sangeet Sabhas / Religious Music Festivals

17. Pandit Motiram Pandit Maniram Sangeet Samaroh (Ernakulam)
18. Bharat Kalachar Sangeet Utsav (Chennai)
19. Smt. Krishna Hangal Memorial Festival (Hubli)
20. Alva's Nudisiri Music Festival (Mudabidri, Karnataka)
21. Karkala Shastriya Sangeetha Sabha (Mangalore)
22. Tansen Sangeet Sammelan (Chennai)
23. Sangit Ratna Ustad Abdul Karim Khan Sangit Samaroh (Miraj)
24. Mudhara Sangeet Ustav (Chennai)
25. Raag Rangi Raat Sangeet Sammellan (Cochin)
26. Ustad Rahmat Khan Sangeet Ustav, (Chennai)
27. Kalarasana Music Festival, (Chennai)
28. Swarna Jayanthi Hindu Dharma Foundation, (Chennai)
29. RamaChandra Yavagal Music Festival, (Bangalore)
30. Gaanayogi Swar Utsava, (Dharwad)
31. Ras Barse Utsava, (Chennai)

## Karnataka State Government Festivals Celebrated by District Deputy Commissioner's

32. Karnataka State Govt Sangeetha Nritya Academy Festival, Dharwad
33. Pandit Mallikarjun Mansur Sangeet Ustav, Dharwad
34. Pandit Kumar Gandharva Sangeet Sammelan, Belgaum
35. Pandit Basavaraj Rajguru Sangeet Sammellan, Dharwad
36. Hampi Utsav, Bellary
37. Sangolli Rayanna Utsava, Belgaum
38. Kittur Rani Chennamma Utsava, Kittur
39. Lakkundi Utsav, Gadag
40. Kadambotsava, Banavasi
41. Chalukya Utsava, Bagalkot

42. Banavasi Utsava, Banavasi
43. Belavadi Mallamma Utsava, Belgaum
44. Basava Utsav at Basavakalyan, Bidar
45. Navarasapur Utsav, Vijayapura
46. Kanakagiri Utsava, Koppal
47. Dharwad Utsav, Dharwad
48. Karavali Utsava, Mangalore
49. Veera Rani Abbakka Utsava, Ullal, Dakshina Kannada
50. Nalwadi Krishnaraja wodeyar Utsava, Mysore
  
51. Kempegowda Rashtriya Utsav 2017, Belgaum
52. Ranna Ustava Mudhol, Bagalkot etc.,

## **Uttar Pradesh Government**

53. Ganga Mahotsav UP. Govts (Varanasi)
54. Taj Mahal Mahotsav (Varanasi)
55. Kashi Vishwanath Festival, Benares

## **Andhra Pradesh and Telangana Government**

56. SriKalahasti Temple, Chittoor Andhra Pradesh Government
57. Nadaneerajanam, SVBC Tv, Tirupati Tirumala temple, AP Govt
58. World Wind Festival (Visakhapatnam), AP Govt,
59. Spirit of Unity Concert, Tirupati (Andhra Pradesh)

## **Tamilnadu State Governments Festivals**

60. Sri Sakthi Amma, Vellore Sripuram, Tamilnadu
61. Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji Association of Hindu Dharma, Tamilnadu

## **INTERNATIONAL : CLASSICAL HINDUSTANI MUSIC.,**

62. SwarSudha - Santa Clara, California, USA
63. Saaz Music Organization, London, UK
64. BharatiyaVidya Bhavan Music Festival, Florida, USA
65. Essential of Living Art Festival - British Council, Bristol, UK
66. World Music Festival, Chicago, USA
67. KhayalFEST, Nehru Centre, London

## **FOLK & POPULAR MUSIC PERFORMANCES :**

### **With Padma Vibhushan Maestro Ilayaraaja**

68. 14th Edition Of Angelica, Festival Internazionale Di Musica, With The L'Altro Suono Festival, 2004,
69. Raja's "Netru Indru Naalai", Jaya TV, October 16, 2005
70. Infotainment, Gachibowli Indoor Stadium, Hyderabad, On Saturday, October 22, 2005
71. Endrendrum Raja, Jaya TV Concert, Chennai 28 December 28, 2011
72. Bengaluru Ganesh Utsav, Bengaluru, September 23, 2012
73. Engeyum Eppothum Raja, Rogers Centre In Toronto, Canada, February 16, 2013
74. Engeyum Eppothum Raja, Newark, New Jersey, San Jose, Chicago, Los Angeles, California, Florida 23 February 2013
75. "Raja The Raja" Concert, The O2 Arena In London On August 24, 2013, Live In London
76. Ilayaraaja Live In Concert, USA Tour San José, Seattle, Dallas, Atlanta & New Jersey, 2016
77. Ilayaraaja Live In Concert, Hyderabad, October 2017,
78. King Of Kings - Singapore, Malaysia Tour, October 2017

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79. United States in Houston, Dallas, Chicago, San Jose, Connecticut, Washington D.C. and Toronto, March 2018
80. Raaja Raajathan, Australia Concert Series, 6 City Tour
81. Ilaiyaraaja Live In Dubai, Sharjah
82. Raaja The One-Man Show, Live In Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
83. Sydney Hillsong Convention Centre, Sydney, August 11, 2018
84. Singapore Star Performing Arts Theatre, August 18, 2018
85. Isai Celebrates Isai, in EVP Grounds, Chennai, 76<sup>th</sup> Birthday Of Maestro, June 2, 2019
86. Rajathi Raja, Codissia Grounds, Coimbatore, June 9, 2019

### **With Padma Bhushan A. R. Rahman**

87. RahmanUnplugged, Concert series across India
88. Netru India Naalai, India and USA, Multi City tour series
89. Nobel Peace Prize Concert, Oslo, Norway
90. A.R Rahman Live in concert, Jaya Tv
91. Rockstar AR Rahman, Live in Concert and many more.

### **PERSONAL DETAILS :**

#### **Academic Background :**

He has done his Sangeet Alankar in Akhila BharatGandharvaMahaVidyalaya, He has done his Karnataka State High Sec Examinations Hindustani Music Vocal and Shehnai - Junior Exam, Senior Exam, Vidhwat Poorna Exam and Vidhwat Athim Exam

#### **FAMILY:**

Pt. Dr. S Balleesh is married to Smt. Ratna, and is blessed with three sons - **Prakash Balleesh**- And accomplished Harmonium and Dukkad exponent, **Dr. Krishna Balleesh** - a Shehnai Vidwan & Vocalist, who accompanies him in all major concerts, and **Shivanand Balleesh**, Shehnai Vidwan and Vocalist. All three sons are actively involved in the day to day running of the Tansen Academy, based in Chennai, with branches in Bangalore, Coimbatore and Hyderabad.

### **PERMANANT ADDRESS:**

**Pandit Dr. S.BALLESH BHAJANTRI**

**BHAJANTRI GALLI**

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