Vidwan Dr. R.S.Nanda Kumar, D.Litt.,

Senior Exponent in Karnataka Music

An Introduction

R.S.Nanda Kumar [b. 1960, Bhadravathi, Karnataka] is a Natural Musician. He is a fourth generation musician in the *parampara* of St.Tyagaraja: Great grandson of the great *Pallavi Ramalingayya*, grandson of musician couple *Ramaiah – Varalakshmi*, son and disciple of *Mahamahopadhyaya Dr.R.Sathyanarayana*. His paternal uncles include Vocalists, Composers, Veena players, Painter, Sculptor, and Modeler etc., of national stature.

Nanda Kumar's music has many unique features: rich, rangy, supple voice engineered by himself; extensive conventional repertoire; he is unique in the whole of India in resurrecting and reviving the beautiful and ancient wealth of song heritage of Indian music of more than a thousand years ago; he presents them in attractive contemporary settings on modern platforms. Eg. Svaranka, Panchabhagi, Umatilaka, Srirangs, Kaivara, Sukasarita etc,. He has carried out extensive research into the musical heritage of the great Haridasas of Karnataka; he has thus restored to the present such precious, rare and exquisite forms as Gadya, Dandaka, Suladi, Vrittanama, Bhramaragita, Kriti archetypes, Mundige, Gundakriya etc,. He is the only person in India to sing these in their full *shastra*-ic authenticity. He is again unique in India in composing and rendering highly learned and complex *Avadhana Tala Pallavis* in both suladi as well as desi talas. He is also unique in authoritative performance of the ancient musical forms: *Ragalapti* – *Rupakalapti*, *Chaturdandi* music etc,.

Nanda Kumar has extensively traveled and sung all over India and abroad. He has held high the banner of Indian music in UK and USSR with concerts and lecture demonstrations. He was invited by the Indian Embassy in Germany (Berlin) to give concerts. He was also invited by many universities in Germany and

United States of America to give Lectures on Indian Music and Dancing. He has performed extensively in all these places. In India too he has given numerous concerts and lecture demonstrations in National music festivals, conferences, seminars, workshops etc,. His research articles on the Mysore School of Bharatanatyam have secured for him a high place in the creative and critical scholarship. He is a Senior Research Fellow of the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India, New Delhi to do research on the Ancient Prabandhas, Ela Prabandhas of Indian Music and contemporising them. His D.Litt Thesis on the subject of 'Sripadaraya: a Musicological Study' submitted to Hampi Kannada University has been awarded D.Litt Degree. This study is very important to the contemporary status of Karnataka Music because it establishes its origin, both in formal and style content, to $15^{th} - 16^{th}$ cent.

Nanda Kumar has sung in the National network of Doordarshan, the CPC and other popular networks. He has published many audiocassettes and CDs. He broadcasts frequently from All India Radio. He has conducted the famous Indra Dhanus Orchestra of the Youth at the World Kannada Conference and was felicitated by the Govt. of Karnataka. He has received high honor from Jagadguru Peethas. He is the Asthana Vidwan of Kanchi Kamokoti Peetham, Tamil Nadu. He is recognized as an Outstanding Musician of our country by the ICCR, New Delhi. His prestigious All India Radio Feature 'Vachana Pada Vaidya' won the 1st Prize. He has set to Karnataka Music all the Dohas of the Buddha tatva and has sung them before the great Urgyen Trinley Dorje, 17th Karmapa and inaugurated its singing during the Karmapa 900 International festival that was held in Bodh Gaya and New Delhi. He is the very first Karnataka Musician to set to music and sing them authentically after reconstructing it from the Charyageetis that were prevalent in Karnataka during 13th cent. Nandakumar is the very first Musician to Contemporize and perform the Word Famous Tirupati Tirumala Rock Inscriptions on the Tirupathi Tirumala Hill Temple, Andhra Pradesh in India.

Nandakumar was instrumental in successfully conducting many National Seminars, Workshops, Festivals and *Vaakyartha sabha*s that have illuminated many aspects of Indian culture in general and Karnataka music in particular.

Nandakumar has also served as the NGO Coordinator for the Common Wealth Games held in Delhi and the troupes he sent won the National Awards for Best Performance.

He was columnist in the Kannada Daily News paper Prajavani wherein he is wrote about music and dance forms of our country under the pseudonym 'Swarasana'.

He has served as a co-opted member of Sangita Nrtya Akademy, Govt of Karnataka. He is also served as the Hon. Director for Prasaranga, Karnataka State Dr.Gangubai Hanagal Music and Performing Arts University, Mysore besides being a senior faculty in its Karnataka Music Department.

Nanda Kumar has many interesting dimensions: he is adept in yoga, in Srividya Tantra {Kadimarga}, a wizard in predictive Astrology etc. He is presently working on the Pooja Siddhi Kalpa of the Indian Ritualistic practices for soul enrichment.

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Occupation: Musician, presently Music faculty and additional

charge of Hon. Director, Prasaranga (publication wing) of Karnataka State Dr. Gangubai Hanagal Music and Performing Arts University, Mysore

Qualifications : general : B.E.(Civil)

Music and Dance music: Intensive traditional training and

grooming in *shastra* and *pryoga* music by his

Guru Mahamahopadhyaya Dr.R.Sathyanarayana

Senior Fellowship from Min. of Culture,

Govt. of India, New Delhi,

Outstanding musician status in ICCR,

External Affairs, Govt. of India, New Delhi

Fourth Generation musician in St. Tyagaraja

Parampara

Awarded D. Litt by Kannada University in

Hampi, Karnataka

Work and Dedication:

• Served as a Member in Statutory Committee and Academic Committee to Gangubai Hanagal Music and Performing Arts University, formed by Karnataka Government. Served as member of Emblem and Dhyeyavakya committee, Examination and other academic council as member. Presently he is serving the University as Hon. Director of Prasaranga and teacher for Karnataka Sangita.

• Was invited by the Indian Embassy in Germany (Berlin) and other universities in Germany and USA to give performances, Lectures and Demonstrations on Indian Music and Dance.

- Has performed the world famous 'Tirupati Tirumala Inscription' music that was found on the wall of the Champaka Pradakshina on the Tirupati Tirumala Temples in Tirupathi. His performance of these compositions are hailed as a pathbreaking in the field of Karnataka Music and a pioneering venture in singing ancient music for the first time.
- Served as a co-opted member of Karnataka Sangita Nrtya Academy
- He is also the Chief consultant for the formation of Chintalapalli Open University for Karnataka Music, that will be started in a short time to come.
- Music Examination Paper-setter to IKSV, Madhyapradesh, India
- Founder trustee of Brahmavidya ®, Mysore, Foundation for Indian Arts and Culture (now affiliated to Dravidian University, AP)
- Has published innumerable music cassettes and CDs
- He has sung the Inaugural Concert at Bodhgaya for the world wide festival "Karmapa 900" to commemorate the 900th year after the birth of the Tibetan Karmapa Lineage in the Buddhist Tradition. He set Music on the lines of "Charya Geeti' (under the direction of his guru and mentor Mahamahopadhyaya Dr. R.Sathyanarayana) to 21 Slokas of Tillopa the originator of that great tradition. The original was in Apabhramsha and he translated it to Samskrita, in which it was believed to be originally composed.
- Has directed music for many musical plays, dramas, multimedia publications etc.
- Has won First Prize for All India Radio Music Roopakas for innovative 'Vachana Pada Vaidya' this year.
- Performed music concerts all over India, UK, Russia etc
- Composer of music for successful and experimental bharatanatyam choreography
- Vaggeyakara: has composed many Kritis, padavarnas (in Kannada) and many other compositions including his latest Dance Drama "yudhishthira and draupadi".
- Talavadhani (expert in Avadhana Tala)
- Is instrumental in organizing many National level seminars, Art-workshops, Festivals etc. for IGNCA, New Delhi
- Contemporized many ancient prabandhas so that they could be performed on Indian Music platforms, Authentic performances of Suladi, gundakriya, etc of the haridasas of Karnataka.
- Regular art-columnist for Prajavani Kannada Daily Newspaper, many research papers and lecture demonstrations on Indian music and dance in India and abroad.
- Invited by Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, New Delhi for important meetings and seminars (the latest amongst these invitations is 'Agama Seminar' conducted in New Delhi where a unique Agamic Music and Dance Ritual 'Dikpala Nrtya' was choreographed and presented by him, much to the acclaim of Scholars of our country)

- Has successfully and effectively completed many prestigious Music projects for Dept. of Culture, Ministry of Culture, New Delhi.
- Has Co-worked with his Guru and Mentor, Mahamahopadhyaya Dr.R.Sathyanarayana in many musicological and danceological works.
- Has published two works and innumerable articles on Indian music that are published and well received by the scholarly fraternity of our country and abroad.
- Also served as NGO coordinator for Common Wealth Games Closing Ceremony celebrations. The Troupes sent have won best performance Awards.
- Was awarded the prestigious 'Sushameendra Prashasti' by Sri Mantralaya Matham of Mantralaya, AP
- He has receved the prestigious 'Shastra Kausthubha' Award from Ananya, Bangalore.

Awards and Titles:

- ❖ Asthana Vidwan of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, Kanchi, Tamil Nadu, India
- Sushameendra Award, Sri Raghavendra Swami Mutt, Mantralaya, Andhra Pradesh, India
- ❖ Ananya Award, Ananya GML, Bangalore
- Gayana Gandharva Title Award by Sri Raghavendra Swamiji of Anathasevashrama, Malladi Halli, Chitradurga Dist. Karnataka
- Arabhata Award 2003
- Sangita Parampara Nidhi Title by Chintalapalli Parampara Trust, Bangalore
- ❖ Sadhana Tapasvi, Title by Vipra Foundation
- Sangita Kala Tapasvi, Title by Sri Tyagaraja Purandara Celebration Committee, Karnataka
- Nrtyalaya Trust, Mysore, Award for Excellence in Music.
- Sandesha Pratishthana, Mysore: Award for Dedicated Service to Music.