

For Immediate Release

THE MAESTRO AND ME

**The Global Campaign to Save the Life's Work of Ali Akbar Khan,
Master Indian Classical Musician**

The Ali Akbar College of Music (AACM), in San Rafael, California, is stepping out of its comfort zone, the world of ancient classical music, and into the fast-paced network of modern social media by launching an ambitious campaign to bring awareness to the need to protect and preserve the vast materials left behind by India's genius musician, Maestro Ali Akbar Khan.

Khansahib, as he is respectfully referred to, had already been teaching at the college for 23 years when he was granted the MacArthur "genius" award back in 1991. He went on to teach for another 17 years until his death at the age of 87, even managing to teach one last vocal class at his home the evening before his passing. It is this devotion, love, and dedication to the music that has earned him a place in musician's hearts around the world. He is a true musician's musician, yet he always made himself available to students of every level. This humility and care is the inspiration for "The Maestro and Me" campaign.

As Mary Khan, the director of the AACM and wife of Ali Akbar Khan has said, "We know Khansahib has touched thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of people through his concerts, recordings, classes, and through students performing and teaching around the globe. If all of these people could be reached and told about this great need to preserve his work, I am sure we could complete this project without a problem. The question is how to reach everyone."

Influential musicians such as Mickey Hart, Swapan Chaudhuri, Derek Trucks, and Warren Haynes have added their voices to the campaign through videos describing their association with the Maestro. Many other musicians have pledged to offer their help. The videos are available on the campaign website www.themaestroandme.com, and on youtube. More videos will be added as they come in.

There is also a place for you to tell your story. The campaign is hoping people will add their own unique story to the campaign on youtube. How did you first hear the Maestro's music, and what does he mean to you? What are your favorite albums, classes or concerts? These are some of the stories the campaign is looking for. Upload your videos to www.youtube.com/group/yourvoicemaestroandm. Share your experiences with others.

Everyone is requested to pass the word on to all of their contacts about Khansahib's work and the vast treasure that is being archived at the college. Currently, we are preserving 40 years of class audio and videotapes—approximately 7,000 hours—and 1,000 concerts that Khansahib performed throughout India, Europe and the US. All of this material will be readily available in an unprecedented public library, for all to listen to and learn from.

The donation request is \$5. We know that people can and will give more, but our objective is to let the vast music community know that even the small gift of \$5 will go towards preserving a class or concert. Everyone can help save this music.

Contributors of \$5 are offered a free, MP3 download of "*Raga Chandranandan*," considered one of the Maestro's greatest recordings ever made. This download was re-mastered by audio legend Mark Levinson, a student of Khansahib for 40 years, using new technology that brings the music to life. For a \$10 donation you will be offered the MP3 and the book, *The First Forty Years*, which documents the AACM from its formative years, in 1967, up to the Maestro's 85th birthday in 2007.