

sa rē  
sā ma

L E G E N D S



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*Madan Mohan was the son of the illustrious Rai Babadur Chunilal, partner of the Bombay Talkies and Filmistan studios in Mumbai. In his youth Madan Mohan joined the army during the world war II. In 1946 he was employed at the All India Radio in Lucknow where he came into contact with such vocal geniuses as Bade Gbulam Ali Khan and Begum Akhtar. The latter speaks in the anthology with flamboyant fondness about how after hearing a particular tune she rang up Madan Mohan and made him sing the whole composition over the telephone line.*

*Begum Akhtar isn't alone in her high regard for this juggernaut composer. The 5CDs are lavishly laced with heartfelt compliments paid by stalwarts of show world like Manna Dey, tabla maestro Zakir Husain, Ghazal singer Jagjit Singh, Santoor*



*stalwart Shiv Kumar Sharma and of course the Nightingale Lata Mangesbkar. Her association with Madan Moban yielded what's perhaps the most bountiful treasure chest of immortal melodies ever composed and sung for our films.*

*Once O. P. Nayyar had spontaneously exclaimed, "It's hard to decide whether God created the voice of Lata Mangesbkar for the compositions of Madan Moban or vice versa." That throwaway statement comes back to haunt us as we listen to the tumble of ballistic Lata-Madan Moban melodies. Each, a Taj Mahal with inbuilt compartments of emotions in perpetual motion.*

*In the course of this timeless melodyessey Lataji takes time off to recall her first meeting with Madan Moban at filmistan studios. It was the year 1947 and the great composer Master Gbulam Haider had summoned the fledgling nightingale to Filmistan to sing a duet with a*



*new singer named Madan Moban for the film Sbabeed. Lataji had never seen or heard this wannabe crooner. All she knew was he was the son of the studio owner. The song they sang together was recorded. After the recording the handsome young man told Lataji that he was soon going to become a music director. "You must sing in my first film as composer," Madan Moban made the nightingale promise.*

*She was unable to sing in Madan Moban's first film Aankhen. But Lataji made this sensitive and gentle giant of a composer her brother for life. Together the siblings created more than history. They created scoops of immortality that mankind will hum as long as there's a place for beauty harmony creative integrity and existential truth in our galaxy.*

*Can we ever tire of hearing Lataji sing Madan Moban Saab's Aapki nazron ne samjba pyar ke qabil mujhe? Colleague Nausbad*

*was one of the millions of melody enthusiasts who was spellbound after hearing this glorious Gbazal. "Give me this Gbazal and take all my compositions in exchange," Nausbad Miyan exclaimed generously after hearing Apki nazron ne samjba.*

*It's hard to believe that the inspiration for this peerless melody came to Madan Moban in the lift which took him from the groundfloor to his residence in an apartment block. His sons recall how he would be humming tunes constantly. Creating Taj Mahalian melodies was almost second nature to Madan Moban.*



*So was cooking and physical fitness. Madan Mohan took as much care of his physique as he did with his songs. He could brook no imperfection let alone mediocrity in any aspect of his life.*

*There's this widely reported incident during the recording of the song Nainon mein badra chhaye where the perfectionist smashed the glass partition in a studio when a musician played the wrong note. That level of creative commitment alone could afford a composition as complete and flawless as Nainon mein badra chhaye.*

*The composition in Raga Bhimpalasi spreads itself out like a veneer of talcum. Soft, sensitive, gentle, fragrant and health inducing. Despite his unfamiliarity with ragas Madan Mohan was always raga-perfect. Getting the sur right and the raga right were not a feat for this Gbazar Ka Badsbab. The tune came first. The nuances and details simply followed.*



*Music was a passion a junoon for Madan Mohan. There were no side attractions or fringe tunes in a Madan Mohan score. Every tune had to be just right. Every note had to fall just-so and every word had to fit flawlessly into the design of the compositions. Madan Mohan's quest for lyrical perfection was almost as legendary as his search for compositional excellence. Legendary wordsmiths like Rajinder Krishan, Raja Mehdi Ali Khan, Kaifi Azmi and Majroob Sultanpuri toiled tirelessly to titillate the tunesmith's titanic efforts. After pleasing this super perfectionist the partners in the composing venture were always amply rewarded.*

*After Majroob Sultanpuri who passed away recently wrote Teri aankhon ke siva dunia mein rakha kya hai, Madan Mohan first showered affectionate blows on the poet's stomach and then*

*dragged him home for a meal cooked by him. When Lataji sang Lag ja gale se, the large-hearted creative colossus immediately gifted his nightingale with Rs 1000.*

*Lag ja gale se ranks today as one of the singer's won favourites. It's hard to select one out of the parade of memorabilia that Madan Mohan Saab orchestrated in Woh Kaun Thi. How do you choose Lag jaa gale se over Jo humnein dastaan apni sunayee?*

*The anthologist solves the dilemma in the best way possible by giving us the most popular and the best Madan Mohan compositions in the most representational format possible. The thrill of hearing Lataji sing Lag ja gale se is on this occasion compounded by the pleasure of hearing Madan Mohan himself hum some lines from Woh Kaun Thi.*

*The landmark release digs deep into the late composer's private collection to emerge with snatches, interludes, stanzas and interjections that music lovers have never had the opportunity to relish and absorb before. The great composer's voice comes alive in the masterful anthology with great insight. Before Mohd. Rafi steps into the stunning soundtrack to sing Tum jo mil gaye ho, Madan Mohan Saab tells us that people think of this modern love ballad as being disparate from his customary style. But to this uncompromising genius music composition was about feelings not style.*



*And to think that Madan Mohan might have been absorbed in the army or into the business of looking after his father's*

*substantial interests in the movie making industry! Believe it or not the man who was born to make melody, even played bit roles in films like Sbabeed in 1948 and Munimji in 1955! But music and music alone was Madan Mohan Saab's true vocation. After assisting Sachin Dev Burman in Do Bhai and Munimji, the composer was launched as an independent music director.*

*Though Lataji didn't sing in his composing debut, she was there from his second score. The initial crop of films like Ada, Asbiana, Dhan and Railway Platform yielded hits like Sanwari surat man bhayi, Tum chand ke saath, Badi barbadiyan lekar and Chand madam bai. Railway Platform*





*with its parabolic structure and ensemble cast had tremendous scope for music. Madan Mohan grabbed the chance to give us what can be democratically termed as a national treasure. In Dekh Kabira Roya in 1957, Madan Mohan submerged his song-writing in the film's theme of art and humanity.*

*When in the first CD of this matchless melody pyramid Manna Dey pays handsome tributes to the man who brought manna (pun intended) down from heaven to earth, the singer's words aren't just empty noises.*

*Manna's Kaun aaya mere man ke dware in Dekh Kabira Roya amply disproves the myth that Madan Mohan was the master of the Gbazar only. Wrong! Put this all rounder into any composing situation and he emerges trumps in every sense of the word.*

*If Lataji sang many of Madan Mohan's most memorable Gbazals to eternal fame she also sang his straight forward love ballads like Tere bin saawan kaise beeta and Main to tum sang nain milake to everlasting fame.*

*The melodies simply flow into this fluent and wide-ranging album. And with the melodies come the feelings. Thoughts of love were shaped into sighs that never craved a destination, never knew a goal. A melody like Lag jaa gale se could never get wrinkled. The crease of time decreases with every listening of a Madan Mohan composition.*

*Did Sadhana, Nutan or Mala Sinha ever look as radiantly eloquent as they did while giving physical form to Madan Mohan's Naina barse. Aap ki nazron ne samjha and Sapnon mein agar mere? Every heroine's legendary status was enhanced when she*



*lip-synced one of Madan Mohan's expressive compositions in Lata Mangeshkar's voice.*

*Mala Sinha personalises the soundtrack with fond remembrances of Madan Mohan, how her father and the music composer would meet at the race course and listen to the composer's new creations.*

*A generosity of spirit underscored Madan Mohan's life and career. He never cared about accumulating the traditional luxuries of life. His songs were his luxuries and his life Rehana Sultan who had the privilege to lip-sync some of Madan Mohan Saab's best Lata-compositions Like *Batyyan na dbaro balma* and *Apki baatein karen* (both included in this collection) recalls how*

*Madan Mohan refused to take money when she signed him to score music in her home production *Dil Ki Raabein*.*

*His life long fans included every music enthusiast from Begum Akhtar to Rehana Sultan. Even Hridaynath Mangeshkar blessed with an awesome musical pedigree bowed to Madan Mohan's artistry. After he heard the songs of Jahan Ara, Hridaynathji made Madan Mohan Saab sign a copy of the long playing record from the film.*

*Listen to Lataji sing *Woh chup rabein to mere dil daagh jalte hain* and the composer's other favourite singer Talat Mahmood sing *Phir wohi sham, wohi gham wohi tanbaai bai* and you'd know why a composer as gifted as Hridaynath Mangeshkar fell for the*

*beguiling paces, bountiful graces and sonorous spaces in the historical soundtrack of Jaban Ara.*



*It wasn't easy for Madan Mohan to be part of the sham and shallowness of showbiz. He had to be comfortable with the set-up and the production house even if it meant settling for the second-row assignments. His favourite producers included character actor Om Prakash. Subsequently Om Prakash confessed he made much more money out of the music of his films than the films themselves. The trend continues. Madan Mohan's scores continue to score bull's eye in every nostalgia circle.*

*His songs can best be described as "progressive nostalgia". While on one end Agar mujhse mohabbat hai and Meri aankhon se koi neend liye jaata hai are soaked in the sublime sensibilities of unforgettable pain and longing, on the other end they are also compositions that sound as though they were composed four days ago instead of four decades ago.*

*The songs have been chosen to stress the composer's panoramic range. Madan Mohan could move from pain in Bbuli bui yaadon mujhe itna na satao in Sanjog to parody in Zaroorat hai zaroorat hai in Man-Mauji. Both the far flung moods-featured in CD2-are divided only n purpose, never in intention. Excellence was always Madan Mohan's goal.*

*To no one's surprise R. D. Burman, Gulzar and Asha Bhosle*

get together in this anthology to discuss the artistry of Madan Mohan in the fifth CD. Says Gulzar, "Just as Ghalib was the ustad of poetry Madan Mohan was the ustad of composition."

The comparison would have pleased both Ghalib and Madan Mohan. The Ghazal was close to both the immortal artistes' hearts. By the time Dil dhoondhta bai phir wobi phursat ke raat din in Gulzar Saab's Mausam came out Madan Mohan was gone. He died on 14 July 1975. Madan Mohan Saab was only 51. In those 51 years he had achieved fifty lifetimes of excellence.



Upon his death the nation was swooning to the sounds of Bbupinder's and Lata Mangesbkar - Bbupinder's Dil dhoondhta bai. Which version of the same lyric does one embrace as a favourite? In a rare outburst of intimacy, the anthologist has included snatches of Madan Mohan rehearsing various other tunes for Dil dhoondhta bai as a preamble to the final version.

According to a conservative estimate Madan Mohan had five hundred ready tunes in his private music bank when death snatched him away so cruelly. In his lifetime he composed music for nearly 130 films. Today the world bums his creations with a possessive pride.

Every Madan Mohan composition seems to suggest a close link between mankind and divinity. With lata Mangesbkar and other singing bebemoths to carry Madan Mohan's messages across to

*the powers beyond the visible, we cannot help being entranced by the melodies of this 93-selection collection.*

*From Sanwari Surat man bbaye in Ada the collection takes us to Madan Mohan's last released film Cbaalbaaz in 1980 and beyond. Sensibly and inevitably the anthology proceeds to feature three bitberto unreleased solos of Madan Mohan sung by Lata Mangesbkar and Mohd. Rafi from shelved films.*

*That was the story of Madan Mohan's life. His quest for flawless melodies continued even beyond his death. Husn baazir bai from Laila Majnu released posthumously cracked open every chart in the country. It created a new market consciousness in the Hindi film industry.*

*Here we don't only get to hear the unabridged version of*



Lataji's *Husn baazir bai* we also get the singular honour of bearing the composer rehearse for *Husn baazir bai* as well as for that breathtakingly evocative Lata Mangeshkar solo *Musqil bai jeena bedardon ki duniya mein* from the unreleased Chetan Anand film *Sabib Babadur*.

Chetan Anand and Madan Mohan shared a very special rapport. Starting with *Haqeeqat* and in 1964 Madan Mohan scored music consistently for the director's films until *Hindustan Ki Kasam* in 1974. The quality of sound that accompanies the exquisite visuals of Chetan Anand's films are an indication of the depth and dimensions of Madan Mohan's music.

Think of *Haqeeqat* and the nostalgia-saturated sounds of *Zara si aabat hoti hai to dis sochta hai* floods our senses. Think of *Heer Ranjba* and the film's ethereal tunes like *Yeb duniya yeb mehfal* and *Meri duniya mein tum aaye* spread an ambrosial magic across our senses. Even the

bugely talented Sachin Dev Burman was compelled to admit that no one but Madan Mohan could have achieved the sublime heights of eloquence in a "difficult" score like *Heer Ranjba*.

Nothing was difficult for Madan Mohan. No theme was too large, no project too small to accommodate his prodigious talents. As the divine voice of Lataji comes on to sing a specially recorded version of the 1953 classic *Hamare baad ab mehfal mein* we feel a sense of longing affection and nostalgia for an era that nurtured a talent as fathomless and fabulous as Madan Mohan.

As Lataji sings *Hamare baad ab mehfal mein afsane bayaan bonge, Babaren humko dhoondegi na jaane hum kahan bonge...* we want to cling to this magical like-qualifying moment for as long as we can.

Come, re-live the most precious and cherishable moments of a

*talent that went far beyond the normal requirements of Hindi cinema to search for an exceptionally refined quality of melody. It could be Lata Mangesbkar bringing to life the non-Gbazar beauty of Kadar jaane na in 1956. Or it could be Asba Bbosle investing a sublimity into the Gbazar Jaane kya hal ho fourteen years later in 1970. Or it could be Bbupinder cutting nostalgic ice into chunks of pain and longing in Dil Dboondbta hai five years after Asba Bbosle's breatbtaking solo.*

*No era held down the aura of Madan Moban's creations. Matchless, timeless, peerless. This collection is a joy forever.*

*Subbasb K. Jba*



## *Legends*

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*Rajinder Krishan, Raja Mehdi*

*Ali Khan, Kaifi Azmi and Majroob Sultanpuri*

*toiled tirelessly to titilate*

*the tunesmiths titanic efforts.*

*HMV is proud to pay tribute to*

*Madan Mohan " The Unforgettable Composer "*

*through this special anthology.*