

BOOK-REVIEW

A peep into Bollywood

Parvez Dewan

Book: Bollywood Odyssey
Author: Ajay Mankotia
Language: English
Publisher: Readomania, New Delhi
Year: 2023
Price: Rs 699
Pages: 332

In Ae Dil Hai Mushkil (2016) there was a scene in which the Ranbir Kapoor and Anushka characters wander through the streets of Paris, listening to a Rafi song from An Evening in Paris on their headphones and acting it out as in the 1968 original.

But you and I did not see this sequence. All we got were a few snatches from that song on the film's soundtrack. The film's makers deleted the scene since the film had already become too long.

That is also why K Asif retained only 12 of the 20 songs that Naushad had composed for Mughal e Azam (1960). Raj Kapoor shot Mera Naam Joker as a 6-hour film. When he shortened it to 4 hours, he deleted some excellent songs, notably the majestic Mukesh-Sharda duet, Gao Gao.

Ajay Mankotia's encyclopaedic Bollywood Odyssey not only has a chapter on all his favourite music directors and singers of the 1950s, 60s and 70s, but it also has chapters on themes like songs that had to be deleted from the final version of the film.

Before starting his own tax advisory committee, Mankotia was a top-ranking officer of the Indian Revenue Service. However, he had music in his blood and was trained in music at home. His uncle Satish Bhatia scored the music of V Shantaram's popular Boond Jo Ban Gayi Moti (1967) and his mother Usha Bhatia was a singer for All India Radio in the 1950s. As a result not only can Mankotia play music, as a child he had often sung on the stage, especially if his uncle had composed the music. When he grew up he would be on the stage in his own right and came to be known as the Singing Taxman.

This meant that Mankotia grew up amidst family friends like Jaidev, of Hum Dono fame, and singer Jagjit Kaur, who later married Khayyam. Mankotia not only had access to famous musicians and singers but also to unique insights.

For instance, OP Nayyar once told him that though Asha Bhosle ruled his rival Rahul Dev Burman's studio and heart, RD gave his best songs to Lata Mangeshkar. This was extremely evident and yet this conclusion occurred to very few outside the industry.

Mohammed Rafi ruled the music charts in the 1950s and 1960s. In the top rung, he had no competition at all. Mukesh was an extremely distant number two till 1968 when the public started lending its ears to other male singers as well. Kishore Kumar, Mahendra Kapoor and Mukesh sang the no. 1, 2 and 4 most popular songs sung by male singers that year. Rafi only made it to no.3. When Kishore's Aradhana stormed the nation in late 1969, it was Rafi's turn to be wiped out. For almost five years nothing worked out.

Mankotia tells us that it was music director Usha Khanna

who helped restore Rafi's self-confidence in 1974 by getting him his first film award since perhaps 1967, for the song Teri galiyon mein (Hawas).

Mankotia also reminds us that the Indian Army has been a contributor of sorts to the Indian music world, giving us lyricist Anand Bakshi and music director Madan Mohan. Khayyam had been a member of the army cultural troupe during World War II, a unit headed by none other than Faiz Ahmad Faiz.

Mankotia covers artists from India as well as Pakistan. Apart from individual chapters about masters like Mehdi Hasan and Ghulam Ali, he has a chapter on songs sung for Indian films by Pakistanis and songs sung for Pakistani films by Indians.

In the process, we get to know that ghazal singer Mehdi Hasan's father and uncle had been singers of dhrupad in Rajasthan, a pure form of Hindu devotional music sung mainly in royal courts and temples.

Naushad once caught Mukesh drinking alcohol during the daytime. He reprimanded him, saying that he had proved himself as good a singer as KL Saigal with the song, Dil jalta hai. Did he now want to prove that he could drink as well as Saigal, too? (Alcohol had famously destroyed Saigal's life.)

Mukesh was the playback voice of Raj Kapoor for most of his career. However, Manna Dey got to sing some songs for Shree 420 (1955) and all the male songs of Chori Chori (1956), because during that period Mukesh was bound under a contract to Mashuqa, a film in which he played the hero. In 1969 Raj Kapoor brought Manna Dey back for the main song of Joker.

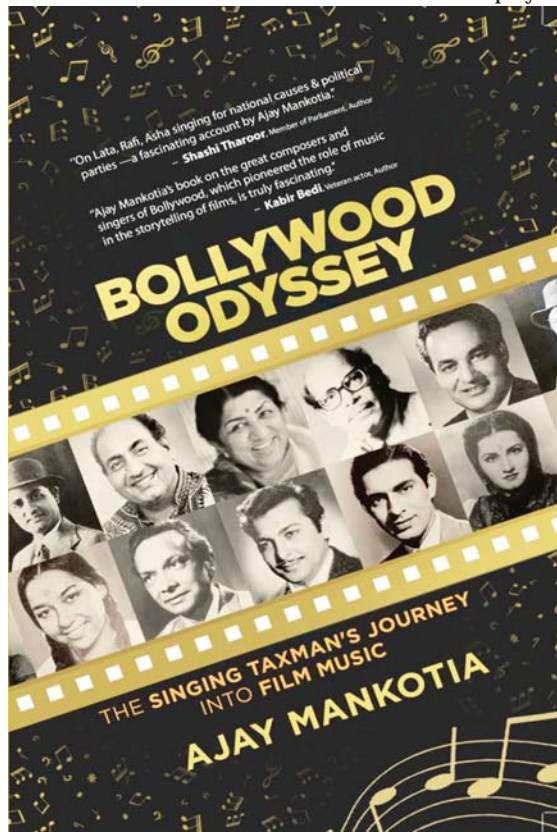
Similarly, the films of Kapoor almost always had music by Shankar Jaikishan. However, Phir Subah Hogi went to Khayyam on the recommendation of Sahir Ludhianvi. The film was based on Crime and Punishment by Dostoevsky, a novel that Sahir felt Khayyam understood better.

Among the most rewarding chapters of Bollywood Odyssey are those based on themes such as popular songs being cited in court judgements of courts including the Supreme Court itself. Sahir has been one of the most cited poets. His Jinhen naaz hai Hind pe (1957) was mentioned by the SC in the case Buddhadev Karmakar vs State of West Bengal (2011). Also in 2011, a chief magistrate metropolitan magistrate quoted his

Woh afsana jise anjaam tak lana na ho mumkin in his judgement discharging Ottavio Quattrocchi. Later that year this song got cited by an additional sessions judge in a dowry harassment case.

In 2016, the Delhi High Court cited Gulshan Bawra's famous patriotic song Merey desh ki dharti in its judgment in the case of Kanhaiya Kumar versus State of NCT of Delhi. In 2018 the Supreme Court quoted Anjan's song Rotay hue aatey hainsab from the film Muqaddar ka Sikandar.

Mankotia's scholarship is amazing. Despite his very Dogra name and origins, he manages to spot Tamil and Malayalam songs cited by the courts.



BOLLYWOOD-BUZZ

"I've always tried to do films which have social relevance"

Actor Raveena Tandon says she has always tried to pick socially relevant stories with strong female characters and the Padma Shri award is a recognition for her body of work in cinema.

The actor, who was recently conferred with the Padma Shri, India's fourth-highest civilian award, starred in critically-acclaimed movies like "Maatr", "Satta", and "Daman" in her over three-decade long



career. Tandon, whose filmography boasts of commercial entertainers as well as off-beat movies in the '90s and early 2000s, said her endeavour has always been to associate with films that speak of women empowerment.

"I have done films which have a social relevance, and have a message of women empowerment. My choices have always been like that. Whether it is 'Jaago', 'Maatr', 'Satta', 'Shool' or 'Daman'. All these films have dealt with issues of women that were strong," the actor told in an interview here.

"The reaction mostly on my Twitter was: 'this was long overdue' because there are younger actors, who came after me, like Priyanka (Chopra) and a lot of them, who got awards much before I did. It (award)

is an accumulation of my work," she added.

Tandon most recently starred in Netflix show "Aranyak" and "KGF: Chapter 2". The actor believes female artists have better opportunities than they had in the '90s, an era dominated by male stars.

"There was always a struggle. According to me, the 90s was male dominated, whether it was media or movies, what the hero said, happened," she said, adding that over the years things have changed for the better.

"Today there is a positive change, women are at the forefront, whether as director or producer or as heads of programming in OTT or in the TV industry. I am very positive that things will become better in every way, including pay parity." Over the years, the actor said, she has realised that acting is a craft that one never stops learning.

"I still don't think I am a successful actor because acting is something that you are learning every day, you are evolving every day. The day you think, 'I know it all and I have learnt it all', I think that it is the beginning of the end." Tandon, 48, said even now she gets "butterflies" in her stomach before a difficult shot.

"That feeling is good because it makes you give your best." The actor said receiving the fourth-highest civilian award from President Droupadi Murmu was a moment of pride for her and her family.

"I was just very thankful and grateful. What made my day was receiving (the honour) from the President herself and very sweetly she said, 'I am so happy to give you this award, I have seen all your work,'" Tandon recalled.

"She was so humble, sweet and kind. I told her 'I am honoured to receive the award from you'. And the minute I took the award and turned and looked I could see my husband, my son and daughter beaming," the actor added.

Tandon's upcoming slate of films include Arbaaz Khan-backed social drama "Patna Shukla" and romantic-comedy "Gudchadhi" with Sanjay Dutt.

PERSONALITY

Zeenat Aman: A sensation on Instagram

Harihar Swarup

Laughing at the places life takes me. Why hello there, Instagram. Thus began the Instagram takeover of Zeenat Aman, whose bio reads: "Actor mother, Maverick". Accompanying the caption was an image of the veteran actor seated at her home on "a lovely sunny afternoon", wearing; grey-and white-cord set and sporting a silver bob.

The post began a talking point as it marked the screen sensation's return to a public platform over half a century after she burst into popular consciousness playing a troubled young flower child in Hare Rama Hare Krishna (1971). Holding a marijuana pipe, she was seen in iconic Dum maar odum song. Comfortable in her own skin, the model-turned-actor was hailed as 'game changer', an unconventional heroine with western looks.

Now 71-year-old actor has reclaimed the game changer tag. This time around, the moniker has come as a recogni-

The answer to how the veteran actor is making better use of Instagram than most new age users, probably lies in the fact that whatever she does, she gives it her best.

tion for her remarkable use of social media. A rare dignified presence on it, her nuanced posts offer perspective, nostalgia and charm. Aman might have unwittingly ushered in a new chapter in social-media engagement by celebrities.

Even as Aman is wowing legions of fans on social media, making connection with Gen Z, and adding grit to contemporary discourses, those who have known her over decades are hardly surprised. "She has always been an exceptionally intelligent and articulate person. It can only come from her. It's not like she has been tutored. I don't think even she could have imagined such a response". Says author-columnist Shobha De who has known Aman since their modelling days when they did several ad and fashion photo shoots together.

Aman, too, in one of her press posts confessions to being "god smacked by the sheer geographic diversity" of her followers and the appreciation that her Instagram handle--@theenatanam - has been receiving. Yet, she was quick to realize the significance of her social media presence. In about 22 posts (and counting) the self-confessed "notoriously private person" has covered a gamut of issues-from advocating adopting "a dog from a shelter or the streets" to com-



menting on how "social worth" of women in association with their "youth and physical beauty"; from older women missing in the public eye to the need to respect the private lives of celebrities and putting the onus on men to ensure their female co-worker are paid fairly. The posts have duly received applause as well as glowing praises from many including Zoya Akhtar, Kojol, Manisha Korala, Richa Chadha, Sweta Bachan and Shipla Shetty.

The answer to how the veteran actor is making better use of Instagram than most new age users, probably lies in the fact that whatever she does, she gives it her best. At a special conversation hosted by Algebra, an art and ideas club in Gurugram, in November 2018, Aman said, "I was raised to be an achiever. I worked very hard - whether at school (St. Joseph's Convent, a girl's boarding school in Panchgani) when I won scholarship to study (journalism) in America. When I was not sent to Miss World, but to Miss Asia (competition), I said to myself, I have to win the crown. So, I came back with Miss Asia Pacific and Miss Photogenic titles. When I was in the (films) business I wanted to be the best". (IPA)

BEAUTY TIPS

Homemade hair rinses during Summers

Shahnaz Husain
Find it tricky to style your sweaty hair during the summer?

Although it's a wonderful season filled with sunshine, the worst thing about summer is the heat.

Summer spells disaster for your precious tresses. As if the sweat and grime weren't causing enough trouble to your scalp, the sweltering heat can end up frying your hair and creating loads of hair problems. Hair care can be tricky during summer because not one size fits all. Hair problems like dandruff, frizz, dryness, flaky scalp, and hair fall are very common during summer since your hair comes directly in contact with dust, sunlight, pollution, and nasty chemicals.

And that is why having a tried-and-true hair care regimen is important for maintaining its health and shine. A hair rinse is an essential part of any hair care routine and can solve many of your hair problems during Summers.

A hair rinse is essentially the last step of washing your

wash off the beer or else you will end up smelling like a brewery when it dries

Lemon: Add the juice of one lemon to a mug of water and use it as a last rinse. This helps to reduce oiliness and adds shine to the hair.

Marigold (Gaienda flowers): Add a handful of fresh or dried marigold flowers to two cups of hot water. Allow it to stand for one hour. Strain the water and cool it. Use it as a hair rinse.

Hibiscus (Javakusuma): Javakusuma, which is also called "gurhal," has been traditionally used for hair care. The leaves and flowers can both be used. Make cold and warm air rinses. Hibiscus not only conditions the hair and adds lustre, but is particularly useful in preventing dandruff. For hot infusions, add the flowers and leaves to hot water and leave them for 10 hours. Strain and use the water as a last rinse. For cold infusions, the flowers and leaves are allowed to stand in cold water in a ratio of one to six. They are then lightly crushed with the fingers in the water and strained. The water may then be



hair. It's super simple and hardly takes a couple of extra minutes.

Apple cider vinegar rinse: It works by balancing the scalp and hair pH, removing product build-up, and treating dry hair and dandruff.

Apple cider with its acetic acid excellently removes the build-up of residue on the scalp.

It works for your hair if they are too dry or too oily. It also seals the hair cuticle, helping hair to retain moisture and in turn, allowing the hair to shine to its full potential. Simply dilute 2 tablespoons of apple cider vinegar with 2 cups of water and use it as a last rinse. Your hair will shine!

After doing your usual shampoo and conditioning regimen, pour the Apple cider vinegar into your hair and let it sit for about 30 minutes to an hour, depending on your scalp requirements. Rinse with cool water and scrub well to get the vinegar scent out. You can use it twice a month

Beer: Even teetotalers can't deny the beauty benefits of beer. This fizzy, alcoholic drink is a tried-and-tested remedy for giving body and shine to your hair. Flat beer is a popular rinse to get glossy locks due to its sugar and alcohol content.

Once you have shampooed, Rinse your dull, unmanageable hair by pouring the flat beer throughout your hair right from the roots. Let it sit for a few minutes and wash it away with cold water. Make sure you thoroughly

used as a rinse.

Tea & Lemon: To add shine, you can give the hair a tea-water and lemon rinse after shampoo. Boil used tea leaves again in enough water. After boiling, you should have about 4 cups of tea-water. Cool and strain it. Then add the juice of a lemon and use it as a last rinse after shampoo. Tea contains tannin which adds shine to the hair and makes it silky.

Fenugreek (Methi) Seeds: If there is dandruff, there is nothing like a fenugreek or methi seed rinse. It is also said to help hair growth and add shine. Soak 3 tablespoons methi seeds in a mug of water and soak overnight. Next morning, strain the water and use it as a last rinse.

Neem leaves: Add two handfuls of neem leaves to four cups of hot water. Let it stand overnight. Next morning, strain the water and use it to rinse the hair. It relieves itching and keeps the scalp healthy and free from infections. It is useful in dandruff.

To remove odour from the hair: For a fragrant hair rinse, add the juice of a lemon and half a cup of rose water to a mug of water and use as a last rinse after washing the hair.

Diet: Include fresh fruits, raw salads, sprouts and curd in your daily diet. Sprouts are very important for healthy and shiny hair. They contain amino acids, which are very beneficial for good health and healthy hair.

(The author is a beauty expert)