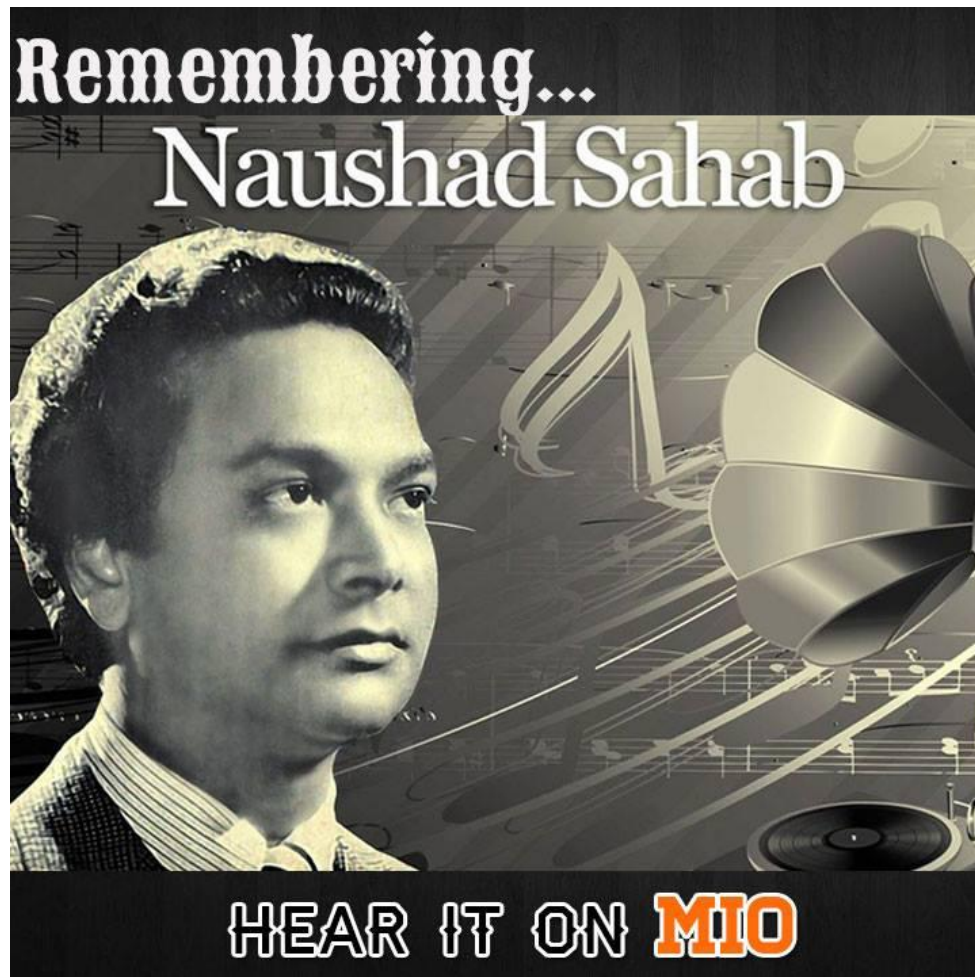


REMEMBERING MUSIC MAESTRO NAUSHAD



By Abdulrazak Fazal Updated: July 2020



► [Wikipedia on Naushad Sahab](#)

The very first 'Film Fare' award in the 'music' category was won by Naushad Ali for the film 'Beju Bawra' in 1954. His music was divine. I'd taken an instant liking to him. Hailing from an orthodox family listening to music was strictly forbidden in our house, even seeing movies. My music listening was restricted to those old gramophone records being played at the relatives' weddings or the melodious lilt resounding through the gullies in the serenity of a Zanzibar evening. Also, the Arabic songs by Umme Kulsum, Abdulwahab and Farid al Atrash being played on radios in those Washihiri restaurants sounded pleurably melodious. So did the 'Tarab' music

emanating from Arabic music. I started seeing films only after the passing away of my father, my very first film being 'Diyare Habib' (a Muslim plot film) at Zanzibar's Majestic Cinema in 1956. My father's death had meant certain liberty, also the Grundig radio found its place in our house and thenceforth my addiction to Indian music of that era. None of the various 'aapki farmaish' programs would be missed out despite my mother dissuading me from it. Some of Naushad's numbers sounded strikingly similar to the mournful marsia that we recite in the month of Muharram, a clear manifestation of Naushad/Anis Lucknow heritage.

Beny Ruben of 'Star & Style' in a feature on Naushad (in the 60's) had come up with some interesting revelations about him. On the occasion of Beju Bawra's 'Silver Jubilee' celebrations at Broadway Cinema on Dadar, Maestro Naushad's entry was greeted with applause by the onlookers. Overcome by emotions he momentarily turned around and stared fixedly at the footpath right opposite there where he'd spent his earlier days after his arrival from Lucknow and those memories came flooding back.

I'll always cherish the 'Yaade Shakeel Nite' that I'd attended at Shanmukhanand Hall (1970). After paying tribute to his companion Shakeel Badayuni Naushad took command of his orchestra and then Rafi gently walked on to the stage to render 'suhani raat dhal chuki' (Dulari), 'oh duniyake rakhwale' (Beju Bawra) and 'yeh zindagike mele (Mela), all of them penned by Shakeel. There was pin drop silence and Shanmukhanand vibrated with Naushad's soulful music and Rafi's lilting melody.

Seeing on NDTV Dilip Kumar and Sairabanu paying their tribute to Naushad on his demise in 2006 was heartrending. Saira reminisced those days of Dilip, Naushad, Shakil and Rafi. Then Dilip hummed Lata's soulful 'uthayeja unke sitam...' from Andaz and literally wept. So sad! Those were the days when the Indian Film Industry revolved around them.

In the annals of 'black & white' films (40's & 50's) the name 'Naushad' symbolized music. The success of films like Anmolgadi, Andaz, Beju Bawra, Deedar, Dulari, Dillagi, Mela, Shabab, Amar, Mughle Azam and many more was mainly due to Naushad's divine music. Mehboob Khan's Aan which was the first Indian film in colour had also music by Naushad. Mother India, Gunga Jumna, Mere Mehboob, Paalki, Dil diya dard liya, Aadmi and others including Pakiza (initially composed by Ghulam Mohammed but Naushad providing its final touches) followed and will also be remembered for their tuneful music. It should be noted for those keen on Indian music that the critics of classical music term Naushad's earlier films more melodious than the later ones.

As I write this my mind turns to the good old days when on Saturday afternoons the Zanzibar streets and gullies vibrated with the 'Aapki Farmaish' songs presented by Zarina Patel and Faruk Malik. Mostly the songs that received the highest number of farmaish were tuned by Naushad and repeated week after week - tu gangaki mojme

(Rafi/Lata, Beju Bawra), do sitaroka chaman (Rafi/Lata, Kohinoor), dekhliya maine (Rafi/Lata, Deedar), tu kahe agar (Mukesh, Andaz), jawa hai mohabbat (Noor Jehan, Anmol gadi), meri kahani bhulnewale (Rafi, Deedar), ho durke musafir (Rafi, Uran khatola), uthaija unke sitam (Lata, Andaz), janewalese mulakat (Lata, Amar), gaija geet milanke (Mukesh, Mela), tu mera chand mai teri chandni (Shyam/Suraya) and many more. No doubt the greats like C Ramchandra, S & J, SD Burman and several others had their share but Naushad reigned supreme. S & J with hits from Barsaat, Awara, Shree 420, Chori Chori, Anari and many others were equally popular and had huge following.

Similarly, the theaters played again and again Naushad's classic musicals. I remember seeing Beju Bawra at Sultana, Uran Khatola at Majestic and Kohinoor at Empire. The film would begin with its titles and Naushad's tuneful background music amid deafening cheers from the audience. The 'Cinema Poster Corner' at Zanzibar's Darajani Market publicized the various cinema shows including morning, matinee (afternoon), zanana (ladies) and the 'one shilling all round' for the entire week.

If not mistaken even BBC World Service in the 50's at times played the 'dekh liya maine sajan tera wada' (Deedar) tune for a minute or so at around midnight before the World News. I've its vague recollection and could be wrong. Naushad visited Dsm in the late 60s and had put up at the late [Ahmed Husain Shariff's \(Bawlo\)](#) place. Beny Ruben in that feature on Naushad quotes the maestro as saying that Ahmed had the most distinct collection of his. Those were the days when the present-day electronic gadgetry and 'YouTube' were unheard of and yet to be innovated. Sadly, today's Indian music lacks that tuneful melody of the past and for the old timers no more addictive as in the past. They still listen to the old music and rave about it.

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