

INDIAN

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MUSIC WORLD

Harmonium wizard

Born on 27th March, 1929, in the family of Vasudeo Chimote, at Naggur young Manohar had the natural advantage of imbibing the musical spirit from his artistic family. Beginning the harmonium playing by way of accompaniment in the daily singing of bhajans in his family at the age of six, Manohar soon took to serious learning of the harmonium.

He acquired, in a short period of six months, the basic techniques of harmonium playing from the late Pt. Bhimsrao Veda. Then migrating to Bombay in the early 50s, he soon developed close association with the late Pt. Laxmanprasad Jaipurwale and the late Ustad Amir Khan. Simultaneously, he continued to accompany on harmonium many stalwarts of the Indian classical music like late Ustad Bade Gulam Ali Khan, Ustad Salamat Ali and Nazakat Ali. He also had for a brief period a stint with the film industry.

However, he soon realised that this accompaniment business with no indication of how great a stalwart is, and that rendering of pieces in film music with no matter how great a music director is no substitute for innovation and creativity. At one stroke he decided to bid good-bye to these activities, even though this meant a great deal of economic hardship and addressed himself to what Panditje often calls "the exact demand" of one's own mind."



Pandit Manohar Chimoté

Then, he discovered in the unique arrangement of key-board of harmonium a vast potential of transplanting the techniques of other instruments. Accordingly, he adopted the techniques of sitar playing like jod-jala, Da-dir-dara. Similarly from the flute, he adopted the technique of maintaining continuity of sound and its tonal quality. In addition to this, he also ingeniously blended the cord system of Western music into the Indian classical music without destroying the innate character of the latter. In fact, if ever there is any case of East meeting the West, it is in the harmonium of Pt. Manohar Chimote.

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