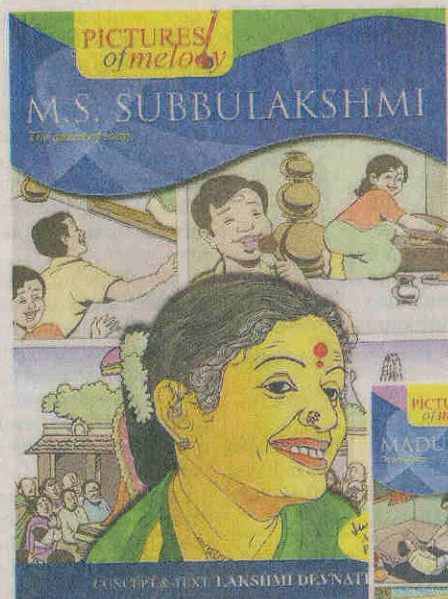


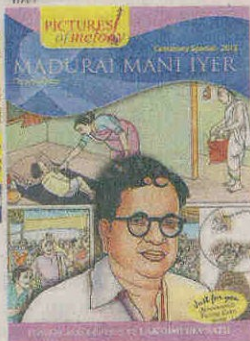
Rhythm & Raga

PUBLISHERS TARGET YOUNGER READERS WITH GRAPHIC NOVELS ON FAMOUS PERFORMERS

# Music drifts from stage to page



**PEN PORTRAIT:** Graphic novels and comics on Carnatic singers M S Subbulakshmi and Madurai Mani Iyer are out on book stands



Singh, spent time in Chennai with those associated with MS.

Last year, 55-year-old Chennai-based Lakshmi Devnath, who has a degree in Carnatic music, focused on MS and the late vocalist G N Balasubramaniam as it was his centenary year. This year, Devnath has released a graphic novel on singer Madurai Mani Iyer and will soon be releasing one on vocalist T Brinda, both of whose 100th birth anniversaries are being celebrated this year. Brinda's student KiranaVali Vidyasankar, who

is based in the US, is also writing a book on the teacher and vocalist.

Priced at Rs 125 and an easy read, Devnath says the books are popular especially with younger readers. "It is difficult to write a graphic novel on a life dedicated to music. There is no adventure. It is

just a life in the arts. Still, my novel on MS is going into reprint this year," says Devnath, whose 400-page biography on violinist-vocalist Lalgudi Jayaraman will be published by Harper Collins next month.

It's a busy year too for Lalitha Ram, a Bangalore-based aerospace engineer, who also writes books and makes documentary films on Carnatic greats. The Tamil book he wrote in 2006 on G N Balasubramaniam was released in English as an e-book this year. His feature documentary on painter-musician S Rajam, made in collaboration with director S B Khanthan, will also hit the sabha stands. "Fortunately, I got to interact with Rajam before he died in 2010," says Ram, who has also written a book on mridangist Palani Subramaniam Pillai. Up next is a documentary on the nadaswaram and its exponents.

Kamini Mathai | TNN

With graphic novels, e-books, and two full-fledged biographies on musicians ready for release, Carnatic music seems to be the flavour of the season not just in the sabhas but on the stands too.

On December 14, Amar Chitra Katha will release a graphic novel biography of the late vocalist M S Subbulakshmi, which will focus primarily on her childhood. "For years, we have been bringing out graphic novels on prominent people in India's history and culture. This year, we decided to extend it to the arts. M S Subbulakshmi is truly the most inspirational person to start this series with," says Reena Puri, editor, Amar Chitra Katha. "Since the target audience is children between eight and 14, the novel focuses on her childhood," says Puri, who adds that the novel's author, Aruna Balkrishna