WE CAN WORK IT OUT!

We can work it out, song by the legendary Beatles in the late 60s, is apt for our city musicians who juggle between passion and work pressure. Given the time constraint these musicians have to deal with, there is a huge sacrifice that goes behind forming a group band. If the ‘Celebrate Bandra Festival’ is anything to go by, the quintessential Bandra’s inclination towards music has only enhanced. The seal with which local bands were received at the festival, ranging from various genres like Rock, Pop, Jazz, and Hip Hop, the encouragement was quite evident. Bands like WatEva literally swept the crowd of their feet with some versatile performances. Formed by college buddies Christopher Mendonca, Joslyn Braganza, Rohan Ferreira, Jerry Vivek Naik and Bryce Desa in 2003, the band with their repertoire of songs have entertained the audiences since then. But ask the 22-year-old Bryce, band’s lead vocalist, about forming a group band and he immediately shudders by explaining that forming a band is not an easy task as most of the members have their own commitments. Earlier we use to play for different bands as an when time demanded, all recently I met Christopher and decided to start a musical band by the name WatEva. “The reason behind forming WatEva was we wanted to do what we liked to do the most,” said Bryce. “I have been singing since childhood! The difficulty is not sparing time for our passion but it is our work which demands most of us,” adds Bryce who is currently working with an event management company called Fountain Head.

That’s precisely being one of the reasons why two members could not join in again, says Bryce, hence we introduced new members like Pradeep Matthew, Minelli Britto and Anjo John into the band. “Although we do not have enough time for practice we still make it a point to rehearse, at times individually,” says drummer Christopher who is working as a copywriter with Oriris - an online company. Likewise WatEva’s female vocalist Minelli who works for Lufthansa says, “I usually take time-off from work if there is a show. Otherwise I make it a point to practise during weekdays before leaving for work.”

The lack of seriousness towards the profession is the larger issue frequently faced by most musicians today. As Beven, a key board player puts it, “Being a full time musician does not help you anymore as also there is lesser importance given to western music in our country.” Having prepared jingles for various commercials, Beven also gives solo performances and equally manages his passion efficiently by playing piano on various occasions.

Another rock and roll group, The Works, is more passionate about music. The team of five - Shannon, Patbh, Mihir, Adil and Hansel - feels that although it’s not an easy task accommodating work and passion together given today’s hectic schedules but it’s not impossible task either. A student of Father Agnel College for Mihir singing pretty much started by performing with his college band Base 9, as he reiterates, “I have been in the music business for about three years now, and I have realised creating music is what I want to do, no matter how tired or disillusioned I am after work. Working with the band and making music is a lot more satisfying than just going home and doing nothing.” Apart from being the lead vocalist with The Works, Mihir is a promotional manager with EMI Music India and even works as a radio jockey for FM Rainbow. “The basic idea of performing for a band is to break the monotony of the people’s thought. Even getting a few hundred people to listen to you is a big achievement in itself,” adds Mihir.

Ultimately it is the dedication that shines through their efforts, no matter what the future holds for them - record deal, endless performances or playing just for one’s satisfaction; nothing beats their thrill to perform live and the contentment they tend to gain by expressing themselves through music. So, the next time you see a young soul behind the mike singing or strumming that guitar, it’s not just music or means of earning extra income – it’s a way life for them!

- Richa Desai
richadesai@gmail.com

Mumbai Bands

Bombay Black - Not exactly a band, Bombay Black is a community of musicians who get together and do music for music’s sake. Bombay Black music is eclectic fusion of various styles and art forms. The band includes six musicians, one female singer and Akash as the male lead - who also composes and mimics.

Akash Rock - Akash composes, writes and sings his original songs – rock and pop songs (English/Hindi), ghazals, bhondga melodies, etc. The band includes six musicians, one female singer and Akash as the male lead – who also composes and mimics.

Band of Boys - It comprises of four extremely talented boys and have been dubbed as ‘India’s First Boy Band’. The music for their 1st album ‘Yeh Bhi Woh Bhi’ has been composed by Leslie Lewis and all the tracks have been sung by the 4 boys. “Yeh Bhi Woh Bhi” obtained a phenomenal response with sales crossing 1,000,000 units in less than a fortnight of its launch!

Dementro - The band totally believes in originality. Some of their originals are “Mind of War”, “Bloodmoon”, “Hate”, “Hands of the Enemy” and “Strangled Hope”. Besides the band members have always considered their music as a “Hobby” never a “Profession”. DEMENTRA is the only band to be selected from Asia to be on the “THE UNOFFICIAL TRIBUTE TO JUDAS PRIEST” Compilation CD.