

## Indian band that rocks the world

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From Delhi to Edinburgh, Mrigya has travelled a long way. Creating music that appeals to sensibilities irrespective of the geographical boundaries, this nine-member Indian band has many credits to show. It created history at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, UK, 2001, by becoming the first Indian band to get a four-star rating in the Scotsman, Scotland's leading daily. It also brought home glory by winning the "The Herald Angel Award" presented by The Herald for excellence in music, dance and theatre at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival last year.

After hitting the international scene with music that is a unique blend of the blues, funk, folk, Latino, jazz and Hindustani classical, Mrigya, that stands second only to the famous Euphoria, is now all set to storm New Zealand with its musical finesse. In the city today on a private visit, Sachin Gupta, lead guitarist of the band, talked Chandigarh Tribune about Mrigya and described it as an entity that emerged from music and ended with it.

"It was a long journey for all of us. The nine-member band has six instrumentalists and three vocalists, who converged after years of detouring in the world of music. Some of us came from the already established Parikrama. As we got together, we realised that our music could create a universal impact. It had that kind of soulful touch. We began with blending jazz and rock with Hindustani classical music and shared the results with Indians and foreigners. Our music appealed to everyone alike."

Some time ago, Mrigya played for communal harmony in Ahmedabad when it was reeling under communal violence. Sachin, who is already making jingles for some UK agencies said: "We played for Sehmat, a group dedicated to communal harmony in Ahmedabad. We have often played for a cause and used music of different genre to make appeals for peace. "No wonder Mrigya bagged the 2002 "Tap Water Award" given by the 'Out of The Blue Trust' for music that promotes communal harmony.

Having performed at the Dubai Jazz Festival with the world's leading Jazz bands at Jazz Majlis, 2002, Mrigya believes in bonding through music. As Sachin said: "We all came from different backgrounds and found musical diversity to be our greatest strength. Just as diversity breeds cohesion within our band, we wish our music breeds peace internationally. We have performed with Sting and many other leading musicians of the world. Our message, every time, has been peace."

Mrigya has released an album on the theme of universal brotherhood. Titled 'Vasudev Kutumbakam', the album unleashes a sound that cuts across cultural divides. Sachin says: "Our music reflects aspirations of people, notwithstanding cultures and nationalities. Crossover Music is what we have perfected with years of research and dedication. It is earthy, soul-lifting, yet sensuous."

Mrigya has Sharat Chandra Srivastava on violin, Gyan Singh on tabla, Rajat Kakkar on drums, Indraneel Hariharan on bass, Sachin Kapoor on keyboards, Rajshree for Hindustani vocal, Sachin Gupta on guitar, Tara Baswani for jazz vocal and Ghulam Qadar, the qawwal.