



Creating a common musical ground

Brothers Andrew and Jonathan Kay were in town recently generating a better auditory spectrum for the world

Ayesha Sultana Mohiuddin
Born in Canada, Andrew and Jonathan Kay, nephews of world famous trombone player Alastair Kay, recently performed on their saxophones at ICCK, giving Kolkata a taste of John Coltrane's Indian tunes. The Monsoon Duo or the Saxophone Brothers, as they are called both picked up the saxophone in Class VII. "Well, I basically followed in my elder brother's footsteps and music being a part of my family already, it didn't take either of us time to pick up the saxophone. Having had a keen interest in music ever since we were kids, both of us decided to go to college and do degrees in music too. So we went to Humber College in Toronto and enrolled into a music programme. As time went by, I started getting more involved in Indian music," says Andrew Kay, the younger brother.

Having found similarities between Indian ragas and jazz, Andrew decided to start listening to people like Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, Ustad Bismillah Khan, Ustad Allah Rakha Khan and many others. "I started listening six years ago and Johnathan after me. I liked this kind of a musical culture even more than our own. So there was this new kind of an influence that had got hold of me and soon I started attending all the Dover Lane music conferences. In college I began taking an interest in the traditional bebop jazz music but by the second year, this creative and artistic change to learn something new had taken over. After all, jazz music is improvisational and so is Indian classical. I have been listening to Coltrane ever since I was 13 years old and I could understand India had influenced Coltrane," continues Andrew.
The concert witnessed people like Subhojit Guha on the tabla, Pandit Gopal

Burman on the khol and Ratul Shankar on Latin percussions, along with the two brothers. The brothers, like Coltrane, have been influenced by India and decided to find out the real meaning of Coltrane's spiritual music, its deep spirit and enigmatic strains. "Coltrane's music was a mix between the saxophone and an emotional take on the ragas. This is a different kind of traditional music. But the problem is that I think this kind of a jazz combination is appreciated only by people who have a true understanding of Coltrane's tunes.
The people who came to the concert will not know how powerful, wonderful and personal his tunes were. The reason why we decided to allow three percussionists to accompany us was also because we wanted the Indian people to realize how beautiful both sounded together. But it didn't work out as expected. You see the problem with most Indian musicians including the bigger stars is that they don't think beyond themselves. But in the west we are taught to blend in with the rest right from the beginning," points out Andrew.
True to his saying, the Indian percussionists did not blend in, creating an almost harsh sound drowning the soft and smooth tones of the alto and tenor saxophones, in its cacophonous rumbles. "We are here to help create a common ground between western and eastern musicians. We need the knowledge to play better as much as they need the knowledge to understand western music. The setup that we had was very good but it didn't work out because of the lack of understanding. It should have been smooth because the real beauty of music in general lies in harmony. All we want to do is create a better spectrum for the world," he concludes.



Pic: Debasish Bhaduri



Gems set to become Kolkata's best friend

Our Correspondent

A dazzling evening marked the jewellery industry's celebration in the city with Tollywood actress-model Parijat Chakraborty walking the ramp. Organised by All India Gems and Jewellery Trade Federation, the fashion extravaganza Alankarik, held on Saturday, celebrated the 100 per cent rollback of excise duty on gems and jewellery.

The event felicitated individuals from the jewellery industry for their valuable effort in promoting the industry. The people felicitated by Bachhraj Bamalwa, Chairman of the Gems and Jewellery Federation (GJF) and Suvro Chandra regional chairman, GJF, Kolkata included Subir Sen of the Swarna Shilpo Bachhao Committee, Bimal Jain of Calcutta Johri Mandal, among others. The event was conceived with an aim to give jewellers exposure to the eastern Indian market and to keep them abreast of the craftsmanship's paradise. Forevermark, Derewala, P&S Jewellery were among the brands who were present on the occasion. Sachin Jain, MD, Forevermark, who was present at the event, talked about his expansion plans in eastern India. Forevermark diamond brand from De Beers group, which made its foray into Kolkata last year through retail partners like Sawansukha Jewellers, India Gems & Jewellery and B Sethia & Sons, completed its first season in Kolkata. "The experience in the last season has been very good and we are looking forward to the next season. We are present in over 50 doors across 36 partners and in 6 cities and we will be expanding in Bhubaneswar," said Jain adding that his new brand is not in any hurry to capture potential markets.

Pic: Dehabrata Biswas



Yoga and kickboxing under one roof

NIAS, a management institute in the city, recently launched its fitness facility named Terminator 9 in Salt Lake. The facility, which hopes to cater to the local community as well as corporate commuters alike, was inaugurated by Indian cricketer Lakshmi Ratan Shukla and Tollywood actress Nusrat Jahan. Apart from the usual state-of-the-art exercising equipment, the fitness centre will also offer yoga and kickboxing facilities.

Pic: Shuvo Roy Chaudhuri

Happy b'day to Mir's band

Television anchor, comedian, and RJ Mir and his band Bandage celebrated the band's sixth birthday at a city mall on Sunday. On the occasion, the band enthralled the audience with its music while funnyman Mir had the audience in splits with his witty humour. Tollywood actor Rajatava Dutta dropped in to congratulate the band and its main man.

