

THE MEKAAL HASAN

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Name?

Mekaal Hasan

Age?

I'm 29.

Location?

Lahore (Part of the band is in U.K.)

Hobbies?

Listening to music, watching movies and hanging out with my friends.

Band?

Mekaal Hasan - Guitars, Composition, Arrangements and Production/Engineering.
Javed Akhtar - Keyboards and Composition.
Mohd. Ahsan Papu - Flutes.
Riaz Ali Khan - Vocals.
Pete Lockett - Drums and Multi-Percussion.
Mike Mondesir - Bass.

Albums?

There are 2 records both in the mixing stages, one is my instrumental record called Square One and the second is The Mekaal Hasan Band record, which features vocals and the classical fusion element. You can visit our websites www.mekaalhasanband.com and also Pete's website www.petelockett.com

Type of Music?

Rock / Jazz / Fusion

Music Education?

Berklee College of Music, Jazz composition major

Music Equipments?

P.R.S (Guitar)
Marshall 9001 (pre amp)
Carlsboro GLX85 Amp
Mesa Boogie V-twin (pre amp)
Lexicon PCM 80
Lexicon PCM 60
Ibanez TS-10 tube screamer
Dunlop Crybaby (wah pedal)
Peavey Stereo tube power amp Classic 50/50
Marshall (4x12 Celestions) Lead 1969-A
Guitar cabinet
Jim Dunlop Picks (big stubby 3mm)



Other Occupations?

Owner of Digital Fidelity Studios, Producer / Engineer.

Sources of inspiration?

Music, Art, Books and Great Personalities.

What drew you towards music?

Obviously the music itself. Should there be something else?

Type of Music you like?

Nearly any kind of music that shows that there is a creative and imaginative mind behind it, but in particular I like the music created by 'Weather Report' and a lot of the classical music from our subcontinent.

Type of Music you hate?

Nothing really. If I don't like something I always have the option of lowering the volume and not buying it.

What do you think about other Pakistani Artists?

Everyone's music is pretty personal, so I really don't have an opinion on anyone else's work.

Favorite musicians (Pakistani)?

Faraz Anwar, Hussain Buksh Gullo, Gumby and also the guys in my band because I think they are some of the best musicians I have had the good fortune to play with and to hear.

Favorite Song (Pakistani)?

I like Saagar by Fuzon, but I don't really listen to a lot of stuff anyways. However that is a good song, well sung, well arranged and well recorded. It's encouraging that quality music is finally being produced.

Music Recognition or Achievements?

Well, I think the kind of musical company I have kept is an achievement in itself. I have played and recorded with probably the best musicians on the planet like Pete Lockett, Mike Mondesir and Billy Cobham. And then of course our own local talents like Gumby and Faraz; they are great players and artist, as good as any elsewhere. Knowing those people like what one does is a big compliment to ones musicianship because these guys can virtually pick an indefinite list of people they can easily play with anytime. As far as achievement in terms of academia, I was the 1st Pakistani in the prestigious Berklee College of Music and when I left Berklee I was in the Dean's Honor Roll with a GPA of 3.42 (Pretty high for us musician types!). Also my records and tours have features World Class artists in their work. Square One features Mike Mondesir on Bass, Zoe Rahmen on Keyboards, Sovra Dickson on Violin and Gumby on drums. Mekaal Hasan Band features Pete Lockett on Drum and



Percussions and Mike Mondesir on Bass as well as Riaz Sahib and Papu on Flute. These are all serious players and it is a big achievement to work that kind of level. I believe no one from here has toured with musicians like Pete and Mike and our Square One tours in Jan2001 and in March 2001 was testament to the kind of art being produced.

How would you like to be remembered?

As a musician who tried to stay true to the art of honest expression without resorting to cheap gimmickry and who worked to bring people from different cultures together through music.

Any music tip?

There are no short cuts to being a good musician. My tip would be that if you seek instant gratification you should work at a bank or something.

Final Comments?

Well, I don't know if this will really help, but so much of music today is hype based. It's amazing that people who can actually play and write still have careers!! I would suggest that those of you who do call yourselves listeners, listen to music with a sense of knowing what has come before it. Since nothing exists in a vacuum. It is wise to know one's history and not just believe that the song of the month is the best-sliced bread. Therefore, one should listen to music from all ages and cultures. Since no one art form is oblivious to the influences of other arts forms. Just because some art form cannot have a video on Indus or MTV, it doesn't mean they are not to be listened to. Music to me is not a disposable commodity, so I would suggest that people start listening to music that has some depth and has integrity to it. There is much in the world of Jazz, Classical and Even Rock, which is really great, but if one does not make an effort to check it out, it will lie there unheard.

Thankyou Mekaal,

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