

## Entertainment

Afternoon Despatch & Courier

### « EVENT: THE BANDSTAND REVIVAL PROJECT



# THE BANDSTAND REVIVAL

The Bandstand Revival Project is all set to give the city a taste of the old with a dash of the new says

Glynda Alves

In an age where the significance of 'music' is restricted to Bollywood, the Bombay Chamber of Commerce and Industry presents an alternative: a colourful mélange of music by the youth bands of Mumbai, through its Bandstand Revival Project. Thousands of Mumbalkars will get the chance to experience the old world charm of live music in a bandstand.

And the third year of the Bandstand Revival Projects aims to be bigger and better this time round. The project aims to extend across the city with performances in Malabar Hill, Dadar Chowpatty, Carter Road Amphitheatre and many other places. The main aim of the project is to promote traditional and cultural links in the city by recreating an environment from the 1800's, by

reinstating live bands performances in open areas during the evening hours. Besides it is also an attempt to encourage outdoor gigs in the city, other than those at commercial establishments.

Project Manager (and a member of the band Something Relevant) Stuart D'Costa, tells us, "I wish I was around back in the day when these all the bandstands were active, I would have loved to watch a concert at the Cooperage Grounds. This brings us a step closer. Some of the artists in this year's programming are new-comers to the music scene, and I am really excited to see them, alongside some pretty established bands. This time round, we have 3 bandstands next session we will try and open up a few more." So if you want a little outdoor entertainment, you know where to go.

#### EVENT PROGRAM

**PRADAKSHINAM & BOMBAY BASSMENT**  
March 12 at Kamala Nehru Udyan, Malabar Hills

**DISCHORDIAN + RANG**  
March 19 at Kamala Nehru Udyan, Malabar Hills

**MCQM BAND + ANKIT DAYAL + VASUDHA SHARMA**  
April 2 at Kamala Nehru Udyan, Malabar Hills

**POLICE BAND + ANKUR TEWARI & GHALAT FAMILY**  
April 16 at Veer Prabhu Deshpande & Sant Dyaneshwar Udyan (Dadar Chowpatty)

**SOMETHING RELEVANT + AIRPORT**  
April 30 at Veer Prabhu Deshpande & Sant Dyaneshwar Udyan (Dadar Chowpatty)

**POLICE BAND + SPLIT**  
May 7 at Carter Road, Bandra

**SLOW DOWN CLOWN + SHOR BAZAAR**  
May 14 at Kamala Nehru Udyan, Malabar Hills

**THE COLOR COMPOUND + THE PULP SOCIETY**  
May 21 Carter Road, Bandra

**FINALE (TBC)**  
May 28 at Kamala Nehru Udyan, Malabar Hills

Concert timings: 5.30-8pm

## Police band to rock the city

At Bandstand Revival Festival Season Three, bagpipers in uniform will perform alongside city bands

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Bandstand Revival Festival returns with Season Three. This year, it will be spread over three months, and will be held at three bandstands across the city — Malabar Hill's Kamla Nehru Udyan, Dadar Chowpatty bandstand and Carter Road Amphitheatre in Bandra.

The Mumbai police band is among the 17 city bands taking to stage. Organiser of the festival, and Something Relevant's bassist, Stuart Da Costa explains that the bands will play into the sunset at the age-old structures, constructed to host live gigs, but have now become redundant in the wake of nightclubs and indoor 'live' gig venues.



Police band

"We got a great reception last year when we held the gig at one venue at Malabar Hill. This year we are including other venues so people can revisit these historical spaces and enjoy live music," says Da Costa.

The programming of the festival is different this year with a mix of different genres

**i** Catch the Bandstand Revival Festival from March 12 to May 28, 5.30 pm onwards. For schedule, log on to <http://tinyurl.com/tobandstand>

coming together and the gigs will be eco-friendly. "We are using low watt lights, less power and organising more intimate gigs. We're also promoting on our Facebook page that people should walk to the venue instead of driving down. It's also not that hot yet, so the season is perfect for evening walkers," he adds.

The gigs will be held 5.30 pm onwards every Saturday, starting this weekend till May 28. The bands include local heroes like Da Costa's Something Relevant, Bombay Bassment and Dischordian.



Good Relations

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# Mumbai bands have left the buildings

The Bandstand Revival Project is paving the way for open-air entertainment, finds Joanna Lobo



For Arijit Datta, lead singer and guitarist of the year-old band Airport, his first-ever live gig as a part of the Bandstand Revival Project is his attempt to free music. "Music needs to breathe. It needs to be in our public space," proclaims the musician. This March, he will perform at the third Bandstand Revival Project, which will be held every Saturday till the month of May.

The Bandstand Revival Project was started with the aim of "using heritage structures for the entertainment of the public," according to Kavita Sharma, joint director, Bombay Chamber of Commerce and Industry, who organised the project. "These bandstands go back to the 1800s and are a feature unique to the city. They were constructed by the British to accommodate crowds that would gather to watch the brass band of an Infantry regiment perform for the governor of the city every evening," says Sharma. The project started out by showcasing the cultural heritage of the Indian states through their dance and music. But, three years back, in a bid to do something for the youth and provide people the chance to listen to live music they would otherwise not be able to afford, the Revival Project became a music event.

As Stuart DaCosta, the project manager for this year's event, explains, "This is a revival of the bandstand culture in

outdoor spaces'. This year, the revival will feature live band performances at Malabar Hill (Kamla Nehru Udyan), Dadar Chowpatty Bandstand (Veer Prabh Deshpande) and Sant Dyaneshwar Udyan) and Bandra (Carter Road Amphitheatre).

The six-month-old Bombay Bassment are no novices to playing in open spaces, having performed at Bandra's Amphitheatre, IC Colony and at BEC. Vocalist Robert Omulo credits his best performances to the fact that they were open-air ones. "If we perform at a paid gig in a club somewhere, there is a restriction in terms of the space available and the atmosphere. In an open-air scenario, you are at the mercy of the elements, but nothing is restricted," he says. The elements, say the musicians, just add to their performances, in the absence of fancy lights and special effects.

It's an experience that Datta believes every band, new or old, should compulsorily be a part of. "The bands need it. We are all being shoved into rooms. The city's music culture has been restricted to just clubs, which can get suffocating. It lacks oxygen and needs to breathe," says Datta, who hopes that projects like this have a domino effect.

DaCosta, who is also a member of the band Something Relevant, credits the originality of over 200 Mumbai bands for the popularity of such events. "Mumbai



The Bombay Police Band performed at a previous event held at Bandstand

owes this surge in live band culture to the dawning realisation that originality has a lot more character than its carbon-copied counterparts," he says. Audiences are no longer settling for just covers, they want original music, spanning different genres and hopefully, languages.

The lack of open spaces, silent-zone restrictions and high entertainment taxes are some of the hurdles faced by bands wishing to perform live. Although all the gigs at the revival are free gigs, money however, is still the biggest hurdle. "When budgets are low, you end up compromis-

ing. And we are only as good as our last show, so it has to be good," says Rehan Majumdar, member of band The Colour Compound, who will be playing at the revival. "We enjoy playing for new people; after all, we are making music to share it. But it needs to be a viable proposition; else we will love it a little less."

The live music culture may still be at a nascent stage, but there has been an increase in the events that feature live, open-air music. And the Bandstand Revival is, hopefully, just the start.

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BLAKC

## BRING BACK THOSE BANDSTAND MEMORIES



ON Saturday, 5.30 pm to 8 pm

WHERE Kamala Nehru Udyan (Hanging Garden), Malabar Hill.

Malls and movies, restaurants and reality shows — while entertainment has taken a different spin for us, our grandparents and their parents had it simple. As the sun went down over the India of the late 1800s and early 1900s, these large families would bundle up their kids in a tonga or walk it up to one of the six bandstands that dotted the city. Here, regimental bands played mostly patriotic songs, making it an evening of music and merriment for bystanders.

The Bombay Chamber of Commerce and Industry brings a twist to those sepia-tinted days by rehashing the extinct bandstand culture — only in the new technicolour age, the regimental bands will be replaced by city bands that play everything from Rock and Funk to Bollywood and Pop. This weekend, carry your picnic basket to Hanging Gardens where performing in the beautiful outdoors will be Blakc, a five-piece Hindi 'confused pop' band from Delhi, followed by Hip Hop band Bombay Bassment. Lay out the picnic mat, watch the sun go down over the city, enjoy the live music and to truly go back to the days of the Raj, don't forget the scones.

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# DYING BANDSTAND CULTURE GETS REVIVAL PANACEA

**Bombay business body organises a two-month-long fest in city to promote British era open-air evening shows**

**RINKITA GURAV**  
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CONTINUING its crusade to revive the near-extinct bandstand culture, the Bombay Chamber of Commerce and Industry has decided to take the British era open-air musical shows to different parts of the city and to a diverse audience.

The musical fest, which kicked off at Hanging Gardens in Malabar Hill on Saturday, will continue till May 28 when the finale is scheduled.

"Just when we thought the cultural spirit of the city was dying a slow death, it got a panacea in the form of the Kala Nehru Ghoda and Elephanta festivals, and now revival of after-dusk musical shows at bandstands



**PLAYING FOR A CAUSE:** 17 groups including police, army and MCGM bands will perform at the musical extravaganza at different bandstands across the city. FILE PICS



## EK CUTTING!

### Bandstand

The bandstand culture in Mumbai took birth during the 1800s wherein the regimental band would play for the governor in the evening at Harriman Circle. This eventually got deeply embedded with its cultured

across the city," said a band member.

MID DAY had earlier reported how various cultural festivals were vanishing from the city wherein we had mentioned all the near-extinct cultural fests and the reasons behind their slow death.

But the bandstand shows are back with a bang, much to the satisfaction of Mumbaikar, known for their love of such open-air evening musical

events.

The joint director of Bombay Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Kavita Sharma, said, "We also want to provide a platform for youth bands to showcase their creative skills to a diverse audience.

### Free entertainment

The fest will also provide free entertainment to people who cannot afford to visit pubs or

clubs to watch live performance."

There are 17 groups, including Police and MCGM bands, participating in this musical extravaganza being organised in different bandstands of the city.

Sharma said, "We are still awaiting a confirmation from the Navy Band to play on the finale day. They would give it the historic touch. Earlier only the Navy and the Army bands

played at the bandstands."

Unlike in the previous years when the programme was restricted to performances in Malabar Hill, this year the bands would be staging live performances at Kamla Nehru Udyan, Dadar Chowpatty Bandstand, Malabar Hill, Veer Prabhhu Deshpande and Sant Dyaneshwar Udyan, next to Kirti College, near Shivaji Park, and Carter Road Amphitheatre in Bandra.

## SCHEDULE

- >> Kamala Nehru Udyan (Hanging Gardens), Malabar Hill: March 12, March 19, April 2, May 14, May 28
- >> Veer Prabhhu Deshpande & Sant Dyaneshwar Udyan (Dadar Chowpatty): April 16, April 30
- >> Carter Road Amphitheatre, Bandra: May 7, May 21

## GIGS IN TOWN

**Jazz Concert, Tala Theatre, National Centre for the Performing Arts, Nariman Point, March 11, 7:30 pm**  
Africa Live and Grammy Award winner Angélique Kidjo will be performing live.

**Live Music, Blue Frog, Malabar Hill Compound, HM Joshi Marg, Lower Parel, March 11, 7:30 pm**  
Ayon Ghosh will sing live and entertain the audience with his music.

**Retro and Lounge Nights, Gadda de Vita, Novena Mumbai, Dadar Sahakar Marg, Juhu, March 11, 10 pm**  
DJ Akshay will spin some great old 1950s and 1960s music and show away the weekend stress.

**DJ Akshay, Aarav, Niharika**

**Katic, Juhu, Near road, March 11, 10 pm**  
DJ Akshay will get the crowd grooving with Electronic, House and Groovebeat Psychobilly kind of music.

**Hip Hop Night, Blue Frog, Lower Parel, March 11, 10:30 pm**  
DJ Mark De Spar will create magic on beats with various house genres like hip hop, reggae, rock and pop.

**Revival Of The Bandstand Culture in Mumbai, Kamla Nehru Udyan, HM Kher Road, Dadar South West, Malabar Hill (Hanging Gardens), March 12, 5:30 pm**  
Prakashram and Bombay Government will be performing live.

**House Music, Pastiche Lounge & Restaurant, Mumbai Malad Anandee building, Rastam Githers Marg, Fort, March 12, 9 pm**  
Kick up your heels and dance to the beat of house music brought to you by DJ Wilbur.

**House Night, Gadda de Vita, Novena Mumbai, Juhu, March 12, 10 pm**  
DJ Nishu will be spinning some real strong house music to get up your senses.

**Trance Music, Blue Frog, Lower Parel, March 12, 10:30 pm**  
DJ Raja Ram (DJR) will be spinning and performing live some awesome psy-trance to get the listeners feel burning.

**Electronic and Pop music, Blue Frog, Lower Parel, March 13, 10:30 pm**  
Deeptee Mishra Andy Fletcher will spread his unique blend of club classics, electro and house, blended in his band's sound.

**Darryl Warr (Houston Island), Blue Frog, Lower Parel, March 18, 10 pm**  
Darryl Warr will enthrall the audience with his Marathi fusion - a musical style among African, Madagascar and Indian origins.

**DJ Hank Shockles, Blue Frog, Lower Parel, March 17, 10:30 pm**  
DJ Hank Shockles will be playing the best of party tracks and remembering the listeners with his music and energy.



# Reviving bandstand culture – Part III

Mumbai Mirror Bureau  
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The revival of the bandstand culture was taken up by the Bombay Chamber of Commerce and Industry in 2007 and last year the concert at Hanging Gardens saw an unprecedented amount of success. With its soft rock lineup in the midst a sprawling garden, the gigs attracted not just the usual music punters but also joggers, walkers, picnic-ers, basically a diverse crowd that you wouldn't usually see at a rock gig. This year, they plan to take it to different bandstands through the city.

With live performances that will be held till the end of May, at three different locations — Malabar Hill - Kamla Nehru Udyan, Dadar Chowpatty Bandstand (Near Shivaji Park)

and Carter Road Amphitheater in Bandra.

The festival will feature a bouquet of sounds. There are hindi rockers like Pradakshinam, Rang, Ankur Tiwari and the Ghalat Family and Airport. Then there are alternative sounds by bands like Bombay Bassment and Vasudha Sharma. And finally, the actual 'bands' — the Police band and the MCGM band.

The performances will be held almost

every weekend with the finale on May 28.

Search for 'Revival of the bandstand culture' on Facebook or call 9819689544 for details



Bombay Bassment

# Bandstand festival spawns global talent

Bella Jaisinghani | TNN

Vaghela also gives credit to the Mumbai experience.

Mumbai: A young band of Hindi-Urdu musicians from Pune named Highway 61 received much appreciation when they performed at Mumbai's unique bandstand festival in 2010. Last month, they earned the rare honour of opening for Bryan Adams at his concert in Pune.

With the third edition of the Bandstand Revival Project beginning Saturday, the organisers have invited this band, a testimony of their success, to play at the grand finale. Highway 61's keyboard player Hardik

The Bombay Chamber of Commerce & Industry (BCC&I) will host nine concerts across three of the city's historic bandstands from March 12 through May 28. "The festival showcases the musical talent of upcoming bands and is open to the public free of cost. This year, the groups will perform at Bandra, Dadar Chowpatty and Hanging Garden," said Kavita Sharma, joint director, BCC&I. "We have invited the police and BMC bands and are trying our best to convince the prized Navy band to perform."