

Rock assault set to leave Silchar 'thunderstruck'!



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Aiyushman Dutta 20 February 2010 24984 views

Last year around this very time, a new rock festival started off in Silchar. It was being organized by NIT and was labelled "Thundermarch". At that time, I was kind of apprehensive about the whole event and somehow could not link Silchar with rock. However, much to my delight and to the benefit of the rock scene in this corner of the country, I was proved wrong. Thundermarch 2009 truly struck Silchar in an unimaginable way and immediately ensured that the festival gets a place into the Northeast Indian rock calendar.

More than 20 bands from different corners of the region had competed with each other for the top prize. And to add further sheen to the entire festival were performances by Boomerang – the rock sensation from Mizoram, Breathe – the Pink Floyd tribute band from the United Kingdom and Demonic Resurrection. Needless to say, the electrifying performances of these bands along with the heavy dose of both rock and metal ensured that the two-day festival was a memorable one.

With the dawn of a new year, the festival is back again in the form of Thundermarch 2010, along with the promise to give the rock crazy people of Silchar another heavy dose of rock! As Harish, the organizer, said, “Thundermarch is back for yet another edition and it promises to be bigger and louder! This is a call to all the headbangers and music lovers to pack their bags and get ready for Silchar is definitely the place to be now!” Well, this festival is surely picking up and I feel that even the organizers have become more mature in the selection of their artistes and performers. The line-up seems to have a lot of variety genre-wise, which I am sure will go a long way in attracting different groups of people.

The artistes and bands performing this time around are Lou Majaw and Friends, Rampazee, Afflatus and Dream Diabolic.

I feel it would be pointless to deliberate on Lou Majaw for I feel most of us are pretty well acquainted with the grey-haired Khasi guitarist-singer in his trademark shorts and who can enliven any gathering with his rendering of Bob Dylan’s numbers.

Moving on to the rest, Rampazze would definitely be a band which both the younger as well as mature crowd can look forward to. Formed in the fall of 2006 in New Delhi, Rampazze is a classic rock outfit that is pretty popular across the national circuit. The band sticks to its bluesy roots while managing to deliver their music in an edgy fashion. With their impressive and groovy riffs along with their wild on-stage histrionics and tongue-in-cheek lyrics, the band is sure to set the stage on fire. The band was formed at the initiative of lead guitarist Abhishek Boro and Joshringdao Phonglo. Though there have been a number of changes in the line-up of the band, it finally settled on Himangshu Rava on the vocals and Nayan Gogoi on drums, besides the two founding members. They have released their 5-song Extended Play (EP) recently.

And then there is Afflatus – the all girl band from Shillong that is sure to raise a few eyebrows. Formed by Grace Miller (Vocals), Karen Donoghue (Guitars), Sharon Zadeng (Bass) and Mercy Miller (Drums), Afflatus is made up of experienced musicians in their own right with Mercy, Karen and Sharon having earlier been members of bands and Grace a vocalist in her father's gospel group since she was a child. The band's debut performance in 2004 won them a prize at a national-level competition, something which proved that they are not to be taken lightly. They lived up to that beginning as since then, the band has come a long way with a debut album in the making and after performing in a number of concerts. As a band member said, "We began our inspirational journey in 2004; a journey that has had its share of hurdles, obstacles and constraints though the band has never lost sight of the one thread, one passion, one love that binds them together... the love of creating MUSIC."

Dream Diabolic is another band to watch out for. The first progressive black metal band of Sikkim, the band is presently blazing across the national circuit. They have had a dream run since last year, having won the Campus Rock Idol (East Zone), IIT (Guwahati), IIT (Kharagpur) and having participated at Livewire in Mumbai, amongst others. The band has fond memories of Assam as its lead guitarist Tshering Sherpa was adjudged the Best Bass guitarist, while Tashi Nima Lama was chosen the Best Bassist in the Rock o Phonix programme of IIT – Guwahati.

It would be interesting to note if Thundermarch can deliver a thunder of the same intensity as it did last year.

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BY AIYUSHMAN DUTTA

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