

Madhavas- The Rock Band

This article is based on an interview of the Madhavas rock band by the writer Premanjana Das(Pranjal Joshi).The purpose of interviewing Madhavas is to honor them for the valuable service they have been doing to spread the holy name of Shri Krishna using their talent of music in serving the Lord.Madhavas also serve as an icon for many devotees.This write-up is an attempt by the writer to bring out the facts and details of the Madhavas rock band for those who are interested in music and also for those who want to know more about the ways devotees are spreading Krishna consciousness.Madhavas present an example to the devotee community about how the Lord can be served using the talent one has.

Before reading this article I would request the readers to go through the following quotes of Srila Prabhupada where he instructs on using one's talent in Krishna's service.



"I am so glad you are playing music for Krishna. It is a great service of your talent. Anyone's special talent should be engaged in the service of the Lord, and thereby becomes successful in his life. I think that you can go on playing on your guitar and make it successful for Krishna kirtana. You do not require to learn freshly about sitar. We are not meant for learning something new for the service of the Lord; but we have to engage whatever talents we have already got. Our life is short but any type of education is great and long; so the best part of valor is to utilize properly whatever qualifications we have got for the service of the Lord."

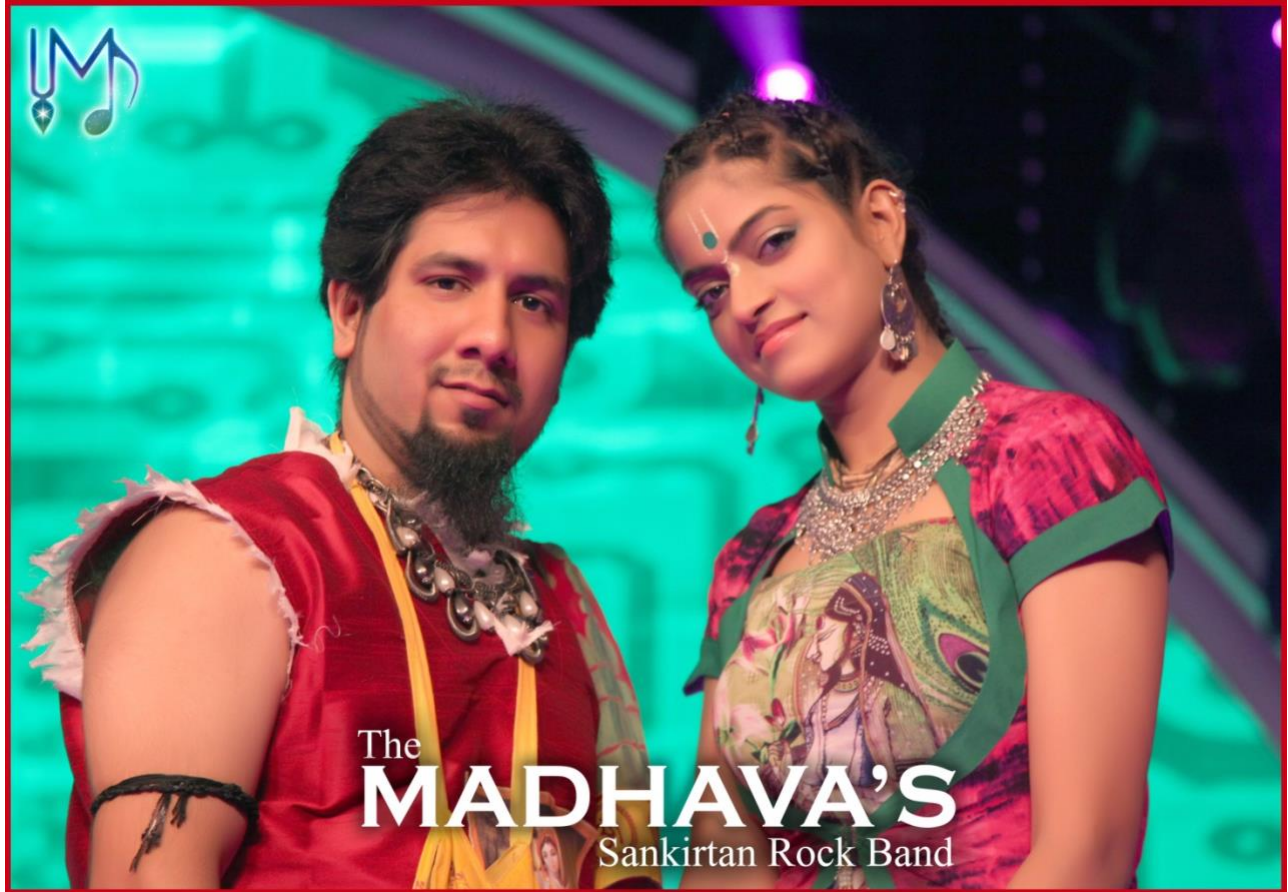
(Srla Prabhupada's letter to Murari— Vrindaban, 3 August 1967)

"In all departments you can use your talents and thus do the greatest benefit for the entire world."

(Srla Prabhupada's letter to Danavir —Mayapur, 17 October 1974)

"So our movement is based on practical activity. Whatever talent you have got, whatever little strength you have got, education you have got... You haven't got to learn anything. Whatever you have got, in whatever position you are, you can serve Kṛṣṇa. Not that you have to learn something first and then you can serve. No. The service itself is learning. The more you try to render service, the more you become advanced how to become experienced servant. We don't require any extra intelligence."

(Srla Prabhupada's lecture on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 7.9.9 — Māyāpur, 1 March 1977)



Nirdosh Sobti and his wife Neha Behl

1. Tell us something about yourself and how you came in touch with Krishna consciousness movement.

We (all members of the Madhavas rock band) were in engineering college when we formed a rock band. In those days, we used to spend a lot of time together to practice and improve our music. Our bass guitarist Naam Bhakti Devi Dasi (Namrata Sobti) had an inclination towards Krishna and by chance she once went to the ISKCON temple in Chandigarh. Gradually, she developed a lot of faith in Srila Prabhupada's teachings and started telling the same to rest of the band members. So, one by one each one of us started going to the temple. The band leader Nirdosh Sobti (now Nav Kishore Nimai Das) was the 'toughest nut to crack', so it took a bit of time for him to join others. Other band members knew that if he would build up faith in Krishna Consciousness then he would contribute a lot in the sphere of *sankirtan* music as he was the only one in the band who was gifted with loads of talent and was teaching other members the basics of music at the same time. He was one the best guitar players in entire North India at that time and later went to become of the best lead guitarist in India.

Here is an article on him - <https://goo.gl/aeQuw3>

2. Introduce the readers to the Madhavas Rock band and its members (mention their initiated and *karmi* names and the instruments they play).

Naam Bhakti Devi Dasi - Namrata Kaur (Bass/Acoustic Guitars)

Nav Kishore Nimai Das - Nirdosh Sobti (Band leader, composer/song writer/ singer/ recording engineer/ guitarist)

Nandrani Gopi Devi Dasi - Neha Behl (Female vocalist and she designs all our attire)

Braj Kishore Das - Brinderpal Singh (Video Director / Visual Creative Head)

As we were together even before we joined ISKCON the band then turned into a family. Naam Bhakti Devi Dasi and Nav Kishore Nimai Das are siblings. Naam Bhakti got married to Braj Kishore Das and Nav Kishore Nimai got married to Nandrani Gopi.

Earlier we had Ganga Priya Das - Gagandeep Singh with us on Rhythm Guitar and as a singer but under family circumstances he had to go back to his hometown to stay with his family. He still joins us for live shows whenever it is possible for him.

3. Tell us about the shows in which have performed so far and the response you got from the crowd.

Being a 'devotional band' we have performed in many *Rath yatras*, *Janamashtami* festivals, *Vyas pujas*, house programmes and devotee's wedding ceremonies. We always prefer to stand while performing *kirtans* and prefer that our audience also stand and dance as we perform. Our band gives 'high energy performances' as we are highly influenced from our early phase of rock music culture which we have used in our devotional projects too. We are glad that people like our music and happily accept it.

4. What are the different contests in which you have won?

* Madhavas were in top three acts of India's got talent season 3!! Got third rank!!

* Madhavas won best composition award from Shankar Ehsaan Loy and got equipment from Sennheiser in prize.

*Nirdosh from Madhavas Grabbed the best guitarist and band leader award on MTV rock in 2010!!!

* Nirdosh has also played music with many Bollywood celebrities and travelled across the world for many big projects.



5. What are your plans for future and how you plan to promote your band in this highly competitive world?

There is no competition as far as our devotional band is concerned. We are doing it as a service to Guru and Krishna and feel so blessed that somehow or the other we are able to do little service as per our capacity. We have released devotional videos on regular intervals on our YouTube channel which has been praised by thousands of devotees across the world and they encouraged us on every single release. Our aim has been to continue with our efforts of releasing new music videos keeping the youth in mind. Major part of our audience is youth and kids and our music not only cater to devotees but a lot of our followers are young and enthusiastic non-devotees kids who like the way we are fusing new age music with devotional essence. So our target is to reach such youngsters more and more to preach them through this strong tool.

All our devotional projects are basically non-profitable ventures. In our early phase it was difficult for us to produce devotional videos as they need a lot of funds and the monetary returns are not much. But gradually a lot of people started supporting us. We received money from people as donation with which we made more and more videos and will continue doing so in future as well.

6. What are the biggest challenges you faced as an artist. How your life changed after moving from Chandigarh to Mumbai (comparative analysis).

Struggle for existence is everywhere. Srila Prabhupada explains it very nicely. We are indebted to him to make us realize this fact. So now when we face challenges we know that this is nothing new, they will come and we must face it. There is competition in every field and in music there is competition beyond imagination. We just perform our music and have our own following from where we get regular work (most of it is commercial in nature and not devotional) may be in future if we start getting more of devotional assignments like wedding ceremonies of devotees, special programmes, festivals where we get to perform only devotional stuff and get paid too then we may think of taking up devotional band as a full time profession. It's just our desire but we just go with the flow of time and accept it as Krishna's plan for us.

7. Tell us about your albums and any particular incidence with a fan you would always remember.

We have released an Album called 'Prerna-The Timeless Inspiration' having 9 devotional tracks, it was released back in 2011 by His Holiness Gopal Krishna Goswami Maharaj (our spiritual master).

Apart from this we have released many videos on our YouTube channel.

Madhavas YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/Madhavasrockband>

We have been getting immense love and blessings from our music listeners from across the world. We always feel happy when we see them dancing enthusiastically when we perform live. As we have a lot of kids as our fans, we feel proud to see how energetic they are when they dance as they perform *kirtan*.

There was one incident where we got a call from a mother who wanted to give her daughter a surprise visit to Madhava's home. She brought her 7 years old daughter, who was a great fan of our music, to our residence without telling her and the moment that cute girl saw us right in front of her, she started crying in excitement and felt very happy to see us.

There are countless incidents where we have received immense love from our audience. All credit for this goes to Srila Prabhupada and Krishna. We really feel that we are just going with the flow of time and our efforts give us a lot of love in-return. We get so many blessings that we think we really don't deserve that much.

All Glories to Srila Prabhupada !
All glories to our Spiritual Master!
All Glories to Supreme Lord Krishna!

Give your feedback to the writer Premanjana Das (Pranjal Joshi) at
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