



**I**N a world dominated by hip hop, rap and rock here is a band of Chennai based young, fusion musicians, who have had their fair share of success. This band which calls itself Oxygen, is the new face of fusion music in India today.

There's Girinandh on the keyboard, V. Harish on the Carnatic keyboard and melody, P.T Prithvi on drums, K.S. Ramana on mridangam, Anirudh Athreya on Kanjira, S.Karthick on violin, Navin Iyer and T. Suresh on the flute, Videep Vijaykumar on guitars, Raghuram and T. Bharathram on the bass guitar.

It is a large contingent with loads of talent. This band, which came together in 2003, when Girinandh the founder rounded up like-minded youngsters like himself, has two albums to their credit. The youngsters all aged between 17-22 years, are committed young men, who aim to take fusion music to a different level. "Oxygen's forte is their ability

# Breathing music

*Nanditha Suresh* meets Oxygen, a young fusion band in Chennai. They are the new face of Indian fusion

to blend the skill of the human hand and the imagination of the human mind to design exquisite aural motifs," says Girinandh in an interview to *Yes*.

The band may be relatively new in the business but they are collaborating with established singers like Naresh Iyer of the *Roobaroo* fame, Sikkil Gurucharan, Pradeep Kumar and with artists like Pt. Janardhan Mitta (sitar) and Keith Peters (bass guitar). They have not just teamed up with well-known musicians but they have already released two albums *Oxygen - Breath of music* and *Dimensions*.

What has made them a

band to reckon with is the fact that they are being acknowledged as the youngest fusion band in Asia. If that isn't enough, this band has toured the country and performed in concerts in London and Birmingham at the World

## MUSIC INTERVIEW

Music Festival held in the year 2006. The interview:

### ● How do you cope with the pressure of being a young band?

There is no major pressure on us to perform. We took it up as a challenge to show the world the talent we possess. Encouragement is flowing in constantly. It really

has not been a rough ride with strong support and encouragement from parents.

### ● What are the biggest challenges you face?

The band seriously strives to promote live instrumental music. And the challenges we face now is to promote the essence of live music (music without the aid of sampler softwares) in a field where software music is growing.

### ● Who is the major inspiration for the music Oxygen makes?

All the band members are deeply inspired by the works of A.R. Rahman and Ilayaraja

### ● What is the future of fusion music?

Hip hop is essentially electronic, while world and fusion music is a mixture of both electronic and instrumental. So, with these advantages, we get great response and encouragement for our kind of music. After all, fusion music is soulful, will anyone ever tire of soulful tunes?

### ● What is the main goal of the band?

Our main goal is to excel in music as well as our studies and come up with more albums in the future. We are also coming up with our third album called AURA, which will be released during February this year.

### ● What is the message to aspiring musicians?

Never loose your temper and it may sound like a cliché but hardwork pays. Experimenting is something that musicians should not stop doing. Most importantly, follow your heart