

DANCE with FIRE

Agnee trio on their self-titled album, influences and doing Bombay movies.. interviewed by Abishai Fernandez

Friday evening, their performance took everyone at a suburban mall by surprise. The Agnee trio Mohan, Koko, and Arijit dished out a few tracks from their new album *Agnee* to an unsuspecting the crowd that whistled, clapped and sang with them. Excerpts from a conversation:

What has been the response to the album?

Mohan: Good. We were number 3 on the charts last week.

Koko: We've been getting good reviews from the record label.

Why have you'll changed the band's name from Agni to Agnee?

Mohan: We thought of several names.. but couldn't think of something better. We liked Agnee the most. Apart from Koko from Agni, the whole style of Agnee is different.

Arijit: Metallica was taken (*laughing*). Agnee personifies our intentions and motives. We've come together because we have a burning desire to make music. Agnee best describes that.

Koko: Everything about the band

is new, except me.

Don't you think the new name can create confusion?

Mohan: Koko's sound is Koko's, that won't change. That's what we love. Even if he tried to play clean guitar, we'd like him to play grunge. Sandeep Chowta told him the same. We've to tell Koko to do what he does best. It might have worried us if our music wasn't appreciated. If there's any confusion, the confused are invited to watch us play.. they won't be disappointed.

How did Agnee start?

Arijit: Over the phone. Mohan was in Kolakata, Koko in Pune and I was in Mumbai. We met only at parties and jam sessions. It was Kokos idea to come back after the old band disbanded.

Koko: Agni was disbanded in 2001. It was almost 5 years since I had not played.

What genre would you categorize your album under?

Mohan: It's our influences that the album reflects. It's partly Indi-



MUSIC MEN - Agnee, Koko and Mohan

rock, *Kabira* is folk rock.

Weren't *Sadho re* and *Kabira* taken from the exotic 400-year-old lyrics of Kabir?

Mohan: Yes, *Sadho re* and *Kabira* are two sets of lyrics by Kabir. *Kabira* is an upbeat sing-along song. *Sadho re* is in your face.

Were there any differences between you'll?

Mohan and Koko: There were fist fights (*laughing*). We were at each other necks all the time. We'd get irritated with each other and we have screaming matches. Then we also makeup for the fight.

People tend to interpret the lyrics of *Sadho re* in their own way?

Mohan: True. The lyrics of Kabir are simply brilliant and open to

several interpretations. At the end of the day the meaning of the song comes out to us in a unified way.

How did the MTV *Roadies* theme track happen?

Mohan: MTV approached us for the theme. We *Karvan* suitable for the show. The channel felt the song needed to be edgy and bring out a sense of travel and competition. So, we made some changes after brainstorming and this time, it clicked.

What about your music videos?

Mohan: Rajat Nagpal shot them. The *Kabira* video will be out next week. *Sadho re* video was shot in Mumbai and Benaras.

Didn't you'll compose for Prakash Jha's *Dil Dosti etc*?

Koko: A friend referred us to the

executive producer. She heard a few tunes and wanted to have them for the film. We're ready for more.

Any more shows lined up?

Koko: We'll play at Indore and Bangalore.

I believe Sandeep Chowta arranged the music?

Mohan: He worked with us on *Sadho re* and *Kabira*. We had the songs ready. We recorded the songs at his studio. We earlier had a band concept in which five people play live instruments. The melody changed. We used processed sounds.

Are you guys releasing a new album soon?

Mohan: We're already working on a new album with eight tracks.