

Since its release, the EP has managed to do rather well on the Bangalore rock music scene, selling far more copies than the band ever imagined. In fact, when the first batch of 250 CDs was released, every single copy was gone in less than 24 hours. Since then, the album has moved at quite a steady pace, with close to 1,000 copies already sold. Interestingly, the band never really planned for *Hallucination Theory* to do so well. "The EP was just an attempt to make a permanent record of our music that we could keep with us even after we all went our separate ways," explains Subramani Ganesh, Black Earth's drummer. "It was actually a lot of peer pressure that forced us to record it after three years of playing together."

Indeed, in the three years since Black

INTOXICATING TUNES Who needs a drug high when you've got music, ask the band members

Earth was formed in early 2003, it has acquired a significant fan following on the college music circuit. That comes as no surprise, however, since the band has done admirably well for itself, with a number of wins at high profile competitions such as National Law School's Strawberry Fields, I.I.T. Madras's Saarang, N.I.T. Suratkal's inter-collegiate fest, Bangalore Central's Battle of the Bands and a whole lot more.

Having grown and ripened over three years, in which the band has had many ups and downs, the sound of the album has had a very organic evolution. According to guitarist Vikram Sekar, all three originals have changed radically since they were

first written. And as a result, all have a certain open-ended feel, particularly lyrically, that has worked well for the band. "A lot of people have come up to us and explained a lot of different meanings that they got out of the songs," he says.

What is also interesting about the album is the no-drugs disclaimer that appears along with the credits. "Who needs a drug high, when you've got music?" asks the band's crooner Dennis Ostern. Vikram adds that none of the band members even really drink or smoke, and that it's only about the music. The band does appear to have gone that extra mile for its music. Subramani reveals that the band members

themselves paid for all production and distribution costs of the album. "Every bit of labour that has gone into it is also ours, right down to sticking the labels on each CD." One of the reasons the band hasn't put out a full album, he adds, is that they really don't have the resources.

In fact, the band is even doing its own distribution, as it hasn't yet managed to work out a distribution deal with any music company as yet. If you're looking to lay your hands on *Hallucination Theory* (priced at Rs. 50) contact the band at blackearthindia@gmail.com, and they'll rush a copy right out to you.

RAKESH MEHAR