

SHEEHAN Perera is actually more than just an upcoming musician. That was clear upon meeting up with him during his vacation in Dhaka. Music happens to be the food of love, as Shakespeare mentioned about love or maybe about food. However, in the case of Sheehan Perera and Jonathan Krackehl, magic tricks fuel up the music from within musicians. Through their magic-cum-music show, telecast online, Real Magic TV is a favourite amongst many a rock music lover in the US and world-wide.

"It actually happened right after 'September 11' incident," says Sheehan Perera. "Jonathan would go around doing little magic shows in New York State, when he came across the now well-known rock band Sevendust on their tour bus. The band was also thinking of helping to comfort the traumatised society and combining a musical show with a magic show seemed to be a great idea. That's when Jonathan ended up showing them magic tricks for more than two hours and the band simply couldn't have enough of them!"

This relatively new web-based television production enables viewers to see a "magically" intimate side of their favourite musicians. Real Magic TV, found at <http://www.realmagictv.com>, allows the audience to actually go backstage at popular rock concerts to watch close-up magic and interviews with national recording artists. Master Magician and host, Jonathan Krackehl, created this programme after realising the powerful synergy of music and magic.

"This show was actually more of a college show, which premiered on television in the fall of 2002," Sheehan goes on. "There was a growing demand across the nation and also the world for Real Magic TV. That's when we started to webcast it world-wide." After the Internet debut, the show spread quickly throughout college television stations in New York, and almost instantaneously sparked a large (international) fan base online. The site gets an average of 10,000 hits everyday, where 30,000 people have signed up. "At least half a million people try never to miss the episodes, including people from Brazil and all the way from Malaysia," informs Sheehan.

The show's website provides a comprehensive source for the audience with information, photos, legal mp3s, and fan forums. Yet, it is the webcasting of interviews that has drawn audiences from over 100 countries to the programme. Krackehl, billed as the "musician's magician", uses his easygoing personality and close-up magic to create non-traditional, comfortable interviews that focus on both the music and the artists' lifestyles. "Fans have written saying that it feels like a friend sitting down and talking to every other favourite musician," smiles Sheehan. The audience is encouraged to get involved with the interviews by requesting bands that they would like to see on the show, providing questions for Krackehl to ask, and even entering contests to receive a surprise phone call from their favourite band.

The Magic of Music

ELITA KARIM



Both Sheehan and Jonathan happen to be musicians themselves and have established this comfortable and a non-traditional interview with the bands that focuses on the lifestyles of the musicians, rather than just their music alone. "There was this one time when Amy from the group Evanescence was literally laughing her head off at Jonathan's funny tricks and answering questions that her fans had sent in," says Sheehan. "She was actually very casual on camera and was very comfortable about saying certain things that she would never think of saying on MTV."

The program has also made a huge impression on Pierre Bouvier, lead singer of the certified-platinum band Simple Plan, who has taken up magic as a hobby due to his encounters with Jonathan. "He's been working hard on his card tricks and tries them in flights on bus rides," says Sheehan as reported by fellow band member Jeff Stinco. Recording artist Jason Mraz also mentioned Real Magic TV during an interview in Australia. In fact, many bands claim the interview to be the "most fun" or the "the best" that they have done.

Sheehan, with a Sri Lankan father and a Bangladeshi mother, yearns to listen and enjoy the new-age music