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When voices soar



A cappella is slowly making its presence felt at college culturals

A cappella, where just the human voice is used to create music, can lift one's soul and enhance one's spirits.

Once restricted to chapel choirs, a cappella is now popular in pop and western music.

More importantly, college culturals have begun to acknowledge the a cappella culture, giving participants the chance to use their talent.

Saarang, organised by IIT-Madras, has participants coming in from all over the country to exhibit their talents in creating magic using just the power of their voices.

“A cappella is not an art that was created to compete with music produced with instruments,” said Gayathri Pradeep, an a cappella singer from MOP Vaishnav College’s ‘Majors and Minors’.

“I believe that when a cappella sounds so close to music created with instruments that you can’t tell the difference, it is perfect. A cappella is beautiful by itself. But, it is cool that people have started appreciating a cappella pieces like they would, say, instrumental pieces. I have friends who YouTube a cappella songs and listen to them on repeat mode.”

The 2012 movie *Pitch Perfect* gave major mainstream, worldwide exposure to a cappella. It introduced viewers to unexplored areas in music and manifested the extent to which the human voice can be put to use.

“A cappella groups in Indian colleges are not as popular a concept, like they are abroad. The idea that people can make wonderful music without instruments is tough for a lot of people to grasp. But, at the end of the day, a cappella is an art; it’s a challenge to come up with different arrangements and be creative with songs. Being in my college a cappella group has been among my defining experiences,” says Subiksha Natarajan, a member of **Stella Maris**’ a cappella ensemble ‘Accastella’.

“A cappella is all about harmonising. It is the coming together of voices in unison, and leaves one spellbound. We loved what we did together, because we created harmonies and had fun doing so,” says Sneha John, a member of Ethiraj College’s Pitch Slap.

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