

Irish boys fuse jazz with Indian classical notes

By Kritika Banerjee

IT'S NOT OFTEN that a jazz concert evokes the lines of W. B. Yeats. But the poet's words — "Come away, O human child, to the waters and the wild/ with a faery hand in hand, for the world's more full of weeping than you can understand" — kept coming back as the Irish band, White Rocket, played soulful jazz at the India Islamic Cultural Centre on Thursday night.

The band set the mood by starting with a slow, haunting number, and gradually upped its tempo to belt out some powerful music. By the time the band began playing its last number, aptly titled 'Burh', the audience was tapping its feet to pulsating rhythms.

Like the band members, the crowd could not care less about banal existential realities. All it wanted was a free fall into the deep gorges of jazz.

Seamlessly mixing jazz with Indian classical beats, the band members — Sean Carpio on drums, Jacob Wick on the trumpet and Greg Felton on the piano — experimented with sounds and led the audience spellbound.

Sean and Jacob drew from their training in Carnatic music, as Jacob's sombre trumpet provided the perfect balance to the concert. The band also dedicated a number to their late Irish fellow musician, Beverly O' Sullivan, who had died in a recent car crash while vacationing in India.

Later in an interaction after the concert, the trio opened up on their experience of



White Rocket's Sean Carpio on drums gave a spellbinding performance

performing for the first time here. "India has an unparalleled music tradition, so it's a challenge to play to Indian audiences," Greg said with a smile. On the looming presence of Indian sounds in their music, Jacob insisted, "But we are not trying to imitate Indian music."

To this, Sean added, "Our goal is to constantly challenge each other as musicians, and let the audience connect to the emotions we experience while playing." Well, they certainly did connect.

