



## Role of Music & Musicians In Preserving The Environment

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**ABSTRACT**

In this contribution an attempt has been made to understand the role of music and musicians in preserving the environment. Musicians are the torch bearers of the society and many live with the endeavor of improving the environment around us. Music serves as the best tool to overcome any social issue and musicians can and are playing an important role in preserving the environment. Furthermore, music society is shifting towards organizing music friendly concerts which serve as the basis for other organizations as well to bring in the concept of green and clean planet.

**KEYWORDS**

Music, Environment, Musicians, Concerts

### INTRODUCTION

Today our planet is facing a severe environmental problem. Music can play a significant role in communicating the environmental significance to billions of people worldwide irrespective of their religion, race, gender or age. Top grade musicians, music labels, concert organizers and various other music organizations need to come together to be a part of a solution to the current environmental crisis. It is believed that when a thought or an idea is expressed amongst the common masses by the medium of music, it penetrates deep into the heart. In today's world, musicians have the responsibility to utilize their popularity in order to promote environmental awareness and respect for the environment amongst common people and especially youth. It is also important that the musicians and the music fraternity also contributes and assists in the process of "greening" of the music entertainment industry.

### Musicians and Environment

The legendary musician, composer, writer and performer Michael Jackson's "Earth Song"[1] is a brilliant contribution from the music fraternity to the environment. It is certainly the epitome of the atrocities that the human race has laid upon Mother Nature. This wonderful song with brilliant lyrics and a heart touching video has attempted to make a deep impact on the human society highlighting its ill treatment to the environment. The planet is sick today; sick of all the atrocities that the human race is laying on it and the natural disasters that we are witnessing today is just an indication, a warning. It's like a fever. It denotes that something is seriously wrong with the planet and if we don't amend our wrong ways of ill-treating the environment we will finally be at a point of no return. This feeling certainly depicts the intensity and deep impact that a beautifully made audio-visual musical piece can have on a common man.

Grammy award winner Justin Timberlake who is an American singer, songwriter, actor, and record producer is one of the many musicians who are helping to protect the earth and promote eco-friendly action [2]. Justin is funding a \$16 million eco-friendly golf course in the U.S. he is also honored with the Future Award at the 2011 Environmental Media Association Awards. The award is presented to a person "just hitting [his/her] stride in terms of environmental commitment and activism."

Ten times Grammy award winner John Legend is known widely as an environmentalist [2]. He performed at the Green Inaugural Ball, an event celebrating focus on sustainable energy. He also went for a super-green 2009 tour that included an investment in wind farms to offset the carbon footprint from

the tour.

On September 9, 2014 the legendary rock band "U2" [3] released its album titled "Songs of Innocence" online exclusively on Apple iTunes Store which is also believed to be the biggest album release ever in history. Such revolutionary steps of releasing music online need to be emulated worldwide for the betterment of the environmental crisis and for the greening of the music industry as well.

### Environment Friendly Music Concerts

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in collaboration with UNESCO is working hard on its "Music & Environment Initiative" in order to create a positive change amongst millions of music lovers across the globe on the degrading environmental conditions [4]. Many major "Music Festival" organizations across the globe are working hard towards finding better and sustainable methods that can help us preserve the environment to the fullest. The Hove Festival [5] organized in Norway has become the first Carbon Neutral Festival in Scandinavia. It is believed that each year the attendees camp in a Zero Footprint campsite on the island. The organizers of the concert hearten the audience to eat, travel and litter in an eco-friendly way. The organizers support the cause by providing recycling bins, organic food and more. The music industry across the globe is damaging the environment on a very large scale by producing CD's, DVD's and by other audio production aids.

A research & advisory body named "Julie's Bicycle"[6] in "UK" focuses on many environmental issues including the packaging impacts of CD's & DVD's. It is very important that now the music industry across the globe finds better and sustainable ways to produce and sell music and totally eradicate the use of CD's, DVD's and other audio visual aids because the plastic and other metal waste created by these ways of selling music is ultimately killing the environment. Releasing Albums and CD's online on the internet and totally prohibiting the use of CD's, DVD's etc can be an alternative way to deal with the rising problem.

The Lollapalooza festival [7] organized in Chicago, Illinois (USA) is an outstanding example of how we can demonstrate our climate responsibility. The organizers of this three day festival rely on biodiesel run generators and light towers, recycling bins, biodegradable paper products, eco-friendly transportation and more and thereby contribute towards greening and preserving the environment. It's high time that the tradition is adapted by our Indian concert organizers and organizations as well.

In the year 2009 the "Peats Ridge Festival" [8] held in Australia was awarded as the "Most Sustainable Event in Australia." This festival was founded in the year 2004 with the motive of researching and educating common masses towards reducing their negative impact on the environment and finding better and sustainable methods to preserve it. This festival has the honor of being the first major event in Australia that runs entirely on renewable energy sources. 100% use of biodiesel, solar power, recycling, chemical free products, compostable cutlery and crockery & carpooling etc are some of its few initiatives towards greening of the music industry.

[8] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peats\\_Ridge\\_Festival](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peats_Ridge_Festival)

[9] [www.asef.org/images/docs/Culture](http://www.asef.org/images/docs/Culture)

[10] [www.vegetableorchestra.org](http://www.vegetableorchestra.org)

Another organization in Australia named SAAC (Sustainable Arts & Culture) [9] is in the process of developing a solar powered stage which will solely run on renewable off-grid energy. The sound and lighting systems will also be running on the same renewable solar energy. Another inspiring story comes from Austria where the world famous "Vienna Vegetable Orchestra" [10] performs on instruments made of fresh vegetables. The musicians of the orchestra mesmerize the audiences using carrot flutes, pumpkin basses, leek violins, leek-zucchini-vibrators, cucumberophones and celery bongos. The members of this orchestra obtain these vegetables from open markets and after the concert the left over's (vegetables) are used to prepare a luscious vegetable soup. The Vienna Vegetable orchestra apart from playing beautiful music also educates the audiences and makes them aware of the basic core problem of the degrading environment and creating awareness and by making them realize of the treasures that we have around us and how precious they can be. Musicians and music concert organizers across the globe are working hard to pave a new and greener standard for the music fraternity.

Now it is time when we Indians start to inculcate these greener habits into practice relating to the Indian music scenario as well. The organizing authorities in India need to fix and implement a new moral code by which the audiences can be educated to develop a better and greener way of enjoying music. Use of all kind of plastic materials within the concert halls should be banned and alternative arrangements need to be made to fulfill the basic needs of food and water serving. Full utilization of natural light sources and solar power should be inculcated into habit and practice in open and close concert arenas. Adequate amount of recycling bins in proportion to the concert venues need to be set up for the proper management of waste. Only then we will be able to mark our first step towards a better and greener musical atmosphere.

### Conclusions

In today's world of "Breaking News" it is evident that the news channels and mass media can also play an important role in the thinking process and its transformation in the society. It is important that now the mass media also realizes its responsibility towards the environment. It is important for the musicians and the news channels to collaborate and organize programs that can help create awareness in the society for the betterment of the environment and towards more environmentally sustainable ways of living. Good lyrics, beautiful music accompanied by a soulful music video certainly possesses the power to make a deep impact upon the psyche of the common man. Hence we can inarguably say that music and musicians have a very important role to play in preserving the environment. It is indeed a gift that a musician possesses to transform the society with his creative genius. Before we take our planet to a point of no return, it is very important that the musician realizes his responsibility and contributes his bit towards the betterment of the environment.

### References

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[3] [www.atu2.com/lyrics/tracks](http://www.atu2.com/lyrics/tracks)

[4] [www.unep.org/music\\_env](http://www.unep.org/music_env)

[5] [www.hovefestivalen.no](http://www.hovefestivalen.no)

[6] [www.juliesbicycle.com](http://www.juliesbicycle.com)

[7] [www.lollapalooza.com](http://www.lollapalooza.com)