

Rare disability does not hinder local musician Work described as acoustic soul



Backbeat

**Kathryn
Dunmore**

POST CONTRIBUTOR

Rare disability does not hinder local musician.

Her bones may easily break but her spirit is indestructible. Local musician AaLia Kesari has Osteogenesis imperfecta (OI), leaving her with brittle bones, but not a disability in her opinion. Born with 28 broken bones, she spent so much of her childhood in the hospital that she has long lost count of visits.

When she was 10 years old and once again in hospital, she woke up to find a guitar next to her bed. "I prayed for one," said Kesari. "I've always had a vision, since I was a little girl, to be a singer but I didn't know it would be what I ended up doing. Someone must have heard me mumbling in my sleep and left it for me; I don't know who.

"I have this distinction but I'm not disabled; it doesn't stop me from doing what I want to do."

Kesari plays on Sunday, Oct. 19 from 2-6 p. m. at the Legendary Red Rooster Cafe as part of her Bridge Project foundation, which she organized to raise funds for those with genetic diseases.

"Being a musician and physically distinct, I started the foundation to network with musicians for people with needs." She describes her music as acoustic soul, pulling from her life experiences and obstacles overcome to create her songs. "One of my songs is about how pain is perception", explained Kesari. "Being so different at 4-foot-2, I've learned not to let the world beat me down and to try to be an inspiration. I try, in my way, to let creativity inspire others to be free no matter what you have to deal with; there is no good in being bitter."

Kesari is currently working on her debut CD, *Soul Deep*, which she hopes to release later this year or early next year. The album will tie in with the autobiographical book she is also currently writing. "Each chapter is a song I've written on the CD," explained Kesari. "Each song relates to a chapter of my life. I plan to attach the CD at the end of the book."

Money raised from the Oct. 19 show will go toward funding for a disability van. "I can go wherever I want to go but a van would make it easier. I would like to start funding research as they are close to finding a gene to cure this bone disease."

Although she has lived all around North America like New York, Los Angeles and British Columbia, Kesari said Burlington reminds her of the nicer places she has lived in. "Burlington reminds me of Montreal," she noted. "The attitude here is a lot more free thinking." The places she has lived also influence her songwriting.

"I have so many songs I will be writing this winter that it will be fun," said Kesari. "I'll be focusing and concentrating on what I need to do to finish my CD." For more information, visit www.aaliakesari.com .