

The Foxtrot Project's Second Innings

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The Bodhisattwa Trio from Kolkata. Photo: Courtesy of the artist

At a time when Kolkata's musicians may feel a scarcity of support in their city, Amuze Records is pushing ahead to prove its mettle. For founder Arijit Chakraborty, it's about the supply of encouragement if he's expected to provide it back. After the first volume of his jazz compilation *The Foxtrot Project* ^[1] released in late 2015, Amuze are set to release a new volume inviting previous and new artists from across the country for *The Foxtrot Project V2.0*, which releases on May 21st in Kolkata, followed by a multi-city tour through May and June.

The 13-track compilation features seven artists that range from the experimental to the traditional, including returnees from the first edition such as [The Bodhisattwa Trio](#) ^[2]. There's also New Delhi jazz band Syncopation, who missed out being on the first edition, Dutch-born and Chennai-based saxophonist Maarten Visser, Rohan Ganguli Quartet (led by rock 'n' rollers [The Supersonics](#) ^[3]' guitarist), The Neel Sarkar Project, singer-songwriter Rahul Guha Roy (from rockers Cassini's Division) and friends and contemporary jazz artist Shonai aka Arunava Chatterjee. "I made sure I only pick those artists who can invoke imagery in mind rather than requiring a visual support to make their compositions stand out," Chakraborty says.

The scope with V2 has expanded for Amuze to include more than just jazz. Chakraborty says, "It's more like a modern instrumental album covering everything from swing to rock n' roll. However, the feel or concept is still rooted in jazz." From a piano ballad by Shonai that was written for bebop legend Carlton Kitto to the acoustic "Niffari" by Neel Sarkar Project, there's a lot more diversity on the album, which was recorded starting December last year. Chakraborty is personally excited about Syncopation's laidback recordings: "They remind me of those Sixties and Seventies movies with upbeat music with a catchy tune that just gets stuck to your head and you kind of hum it all day long."

The Foxtrot Project V.2 will launch on May 24th at the Piano Man Jazz Club, followed by shows in Mumbai and Bengaluru, with a concluding launch at Kolkata's mainstay jazz venue Plush Lounge, which will include all seven artists performing. Chakraborty says just as V2 is a chance to achieve what he couldn't with the debut compilation, there'll be more in store. "Whatever I couldn't achieve this time, is fair, because that will probably drive me forward for the third edition."

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