The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Tequilajazzz Reborn as 'Art Rock' Zorge

By Sergey Chernov

February 10, 2011



Yevgeny Fyodorov, right, with Zorge's drummer, St. Petersburg-based German Marc-Olivier Lauber. The group debuts in Moscow on Feb. 18 at 16 Tons. **Maxim Zurabiani**

ST. PETERSBURG — Musician Yevgeny Fyodorov, who disbanded his celebrated rock band Tequilajazzz last year, returns with a new band, not unlike his former one, despite the new name and new members.

Called Zorge, the new band's core is Fyodorov, who sings and plays bass, and St. Petersburg-based German drummer Marc-Oliver Lauber. Formed in September as a duo, it has since been expanded to feature Vadim Sergeyev, the guitarist with Morekorabli, Splean and Optimystica Orchestra, and guitarist Dmitry Zilpert of the Moscow indie rock band Tinavie.

"We must reassert our musical credibility — the fact that we're qualified heirs to Tequilajazzz. But now everyone will see that it is so. We're Tequilajazzz, only better," Fyodorov said.

Fyodorov announced the split of Tequilajazzz on the band's web site last July. The news came

as a shock to fans, who had grown used to the band being one of the staples on the indie rock scene since debuting in 1993.

"You know, it's like when you live with a girlfriend for a long time. You don't love her, and she doesn't love you. You are forced to go and visit parents together, pretend to be a happy family, and so on. We were very good at pretending," Fyodorov said of the group's unhappy dynamic.

Fyodorov first met Lauber some 10 years ago in Cologne, when the drummer played with the German version of the psychobilly band The Meantraitors, whose St. Petersburg frontman Stas Bogorad lived in Germany from 1999 to 2008. Lauber moved to St. Petersburg 2 1/2 years ago.

"It turned out that he lives here, and we found each other in a miraculous way, and launched a band with him as a duo in September. We didn't plan to expand for some time, but wrote a lot of songs straight away, and now we have material for a full album."

The new band's name is reminiscent of that of the Soviet spy Richard Sorge, who operated in Japan during World War II under the cover of being a journalist.

"I like books about spies — John le Carre, for instance — and I like spy movies a lot, whatever political force they work for. The life of a spy — a person immersed in an environment that is foreign to him — is the most extreme expression of loneliness on this planet."

Musically, the band's material sounds not unlike Tequilajazzz.

"This is modern guitar music that has been seriously influenced by all the music that has existed in the world before it, including punk rock and new wave and art rock," Fyodorov said.

Fyodorov said he was no longer afraid of describing his work as "art rock."

"We take pleasure in using certain things that were relevant for 1970s art rock bands. It seems that their time has returned — but without knights in cloaks or any Tolkien nonsense," he said.

"We're about music and a normal balance between various musical trends. You should not get fixed on rock 'n' roll just because you play the electric guitar. The electric guitar has many more possibilities than people usually think."

"What we're doing now is much more experimental than what my previous band had been doing for the past few years. ... Here we're talking not so much about radicalism of music as such, but about serious reconsidering of traditional forms of music playing within the rock idiom. And this is pop music, for us."

Zorge will play Feb. 18 at 9 p.m. at 16 Tons, 6 Presnensky Val. Metro Ulitsa 1905 Goda. Tel. 253-5300, www.16tons.ru.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2011/02/10/tequilajazzz-reborn-as-art-rock-zorge-a4927