

It is August 2018 when Sarita Rav and Otto de Jong meet each other in Sarita's hometown Jaipur, capital city of Rajasthan, India.

Sarita is a singer and teaches music classes to Indians and travellers from abroad, Otto is a drummer and one of those travellers who's interested in Indian music. After a few lessons, some little jams together and passionate conversations about each others musical cultures they decide to undertake an adventure, start a band and tour together.

In April and May 2019 they undertook their first tour. For a month they played in The Netherlands and France with an unusual and minimalistic setup of just vocals and drumset. Their pure and dynamic mix of North Indian songs and ragas and Western indie and jazz influenced drums was being received with great enthusiasm.

Sarita has a voice straight out of the Rajasthani desert, with a great melodic and dynamic range. Sufi songs, mantra's and bhajans are being sung by her in an energetic and raw fashion. A perfect match with Otto's dynamic and eccentric style of playing. Indian rhythms are interpreted freely with a robust sound and complemented with jazz-infused improvisations.

After the first tour Sarita and Otto decided to take this international project to a next level under the name of Jaipur Junction. In October and November of 2019 they were touring in Europe again. During this tour they played at the famous Le Guess Who festival as part of Lombok Festival in Utrecht (NL).

The tour was followed by the recording sessions for their first album with Utrecht based producer Erwin Tuijl. The album is called Kyon Nahin (Why Not?) and was released in October 2020. Both digitally and on vinyl.

All songs (except Utrecht Centraal) are minimalistic renditions of traditional compositions. The process is visualized in the video of Wah Wah Guzran Faqeeran Da, that was shot during the recording of the album.

By the end of Februari, start of March 2020 Jaipur Junction undertook their first tour in India. During two concerts they were accompanied by Aman Bhardwaj on guitar and Imran Khan on tabla (grandson of tabla maestro Ustad Faiyaz Khan).

During this tour they also shot the video for Mohe Apne He Rang Main in Amer and Jaipur, where Sarita and Otto met for the first time.

The first covid outbreaks occurred during this tour and just a week after Otto returned home the first lockdowns in both India and Europe started. A surreal place in time and a harsh confrontation with reality, the difference between the two countries Otto and Sarita live in.

Nonetheless, they managed to change this negative event into something positive and used the times of solitude to write their own music. In the summer of 2020 Sarita and Otto started composing new, original music, while living more that 6000km apart. Demo's were being send back and forth. Otto from his studio in a remote cabin near Utrecht and Sarita from her home near Jaipur. She would sometimes literally sing into a whatsapp voice message while listening to Otto's beats on another phone.

With some cut, copy and paste work these demo's became songs.

More than two years later, in the fall of 2022, Sarita came back to Europe again. This time Jaipur Junction stayed in The Netherlands, performing around the country. They played at The Gandhi Centre, a concert venue at the Indian Embassy in Den Haag and at the famous Le Guess Who Festival again, as part of U? around the city of Utrecht.

Besides touring in 2022 they also took their own compositions to studio Barn In The Meadow near Utrecht and selected a dedicated team to record a new album with.

Sarita had been writing Hindi poems for years, but she never wrote her own songs yet. Yet, as a singer she is used to improvise. She took the challenge while recording demo's and managed to merge her poems and improvisations together and thus she created her own songs, as if she had been doing so for years. There are still genuine vocal improvisations on the album, Raga Alaap for example, as well as a rap performance on the song Mann Mera.

Otto produced the album himself. He already wrote, performed and recorded the majority of the harmonies and instrumental melodies on the demo's. Some guitar and synth parts are even per-

formed by him on the album. Besides that he studies tabla and has been able to translate more sophisticated techniques and patterns to his drumset than before.

Coincidentally Imran Khan from New Delhi was in The Netherlands too for Indian classical concerts around Europe and thus he joined the band in the studio on tabla. Imran is a celebrated player of the classical school of New Delhi (Delhi Gharana) and has family roots in Rajasthan which can be heard in his folk grooves. Imran added some genuine tabla composition techniques to the songs and even composed, performed and recorded a jugalbandi together with Otto called New Delhi Railway Station.

Sahil Bahl from Den Haag played electric, slide and weissenborn guitars. Sahil is a perfect match for the band, he grew up in New Jersey (US), his family is from India and he moved to The Netherlands in his twenties. His style is as global as he is, having studied both Western and Indian classical music as well as rock, blues and Americana. The latter can be heard in his weissenborn guitar performance on Dhola Sa.

Erwin Tuijl from Utrecht took care of synthesizers and co-production. He was already familiar with the band, having recorded and mixed the first album. Being a professional piano and keyboard player too, Erwin joined the band in the studio in the first instance as a performer. This time he took the music to new harmonic and sonic levels with his sophisticated style of playing and cutting edge synth wizardry.

The new album will be called Sambhav and is recorded and mixed by Matthijs Kievit (Joneski) and mastered by Alex Geurink.

With their new, colourful album and positive experiences from the past, Jaipur Junction is ambitions to interact with an audience around the world.