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Valentine's Day With Faye

Emma Jaber & Claire Needs, Arts & Entertainment Editor & Contributor

Valentine's day is arguably the most appropriate day of the year to attend a Faye Webster concert. Performing two shows back to back on the North American leg of the "I Know I'm Funny... HAHA" album tour, Faye Webster and her band performed to a packed house at Neumos on Feb. 14th and 15th. Alongside her was opener Kate Bollinger, a singer-songwriter from Richmond, VA. A culmination of tracks from her various EPs and single releases, Bollinger's sound is reminiscent of bedroom pop, but can be categorized as alternative/indie alongside Faye.



Webster's new tour is an amalgamation of new and old songs that transcend time. While her first record was released in 2013, Webster possesses a unique style of indie rock, folk and a hint of jazz that provides a cohesive narrative through her entire body of work.

Monday's show opened with the first song on her new record, "Better Distractions." The show progressed with predominantly new songs from her 2021 album, which take on a lighter feel in comparison to her previous work. The lightness is appreciable through the airy melodies, accompanied by the twang of steel guitar and comedic lyricism, ranging from topics of bad landlords, drinking beer in the shower, and Linkin Park. Whether in attendance alone or with a valentine, the charming undertones of her third studio album were palpable and comforting.

Webster and her band also performed a special number as a tribute to Faye's new tour hobby: Super Smash Bros. According to Faye, a Nintendo Switch doubles as an i-Pod if you listen to the Super Smash Bros original soundtrack on loop. You may even hear the song she covered: 7 PM from Animal Crossing. The beloved track was amplified by Webster's jazz-influenced guitar and an especially pertinent keyboard performance, creating an appropriately nostalgic and funny (haha) performance.

Webster's unique vocals stood out against the succinct quality of the percussion in her band, all painted nicely against the backdrop of keyboards and steel guitar. The contrast between the driving force maintained with the bass and drums versus the fluid, melodic movement of the steel guitar offered her ample room to play with her melodies and the sense of time in her vocals.

This ambiance seemed to relax the crowd while leaving everyone hanging on her last lyric. The show was well balanced, which can be difficult with a slower set, but with her tracks "I Know I'm Funny Haha," "Right Side of My Neck" and "In a Good Way" spaced throughout, the anticipation for the hits was apparent. For long-time Faye fans, a performance of "Johnny" and "Johnny (Reprise)" from her 2019 album "Atlanta Millionaires Club" was a welcome surprise, and connected well with the show's feel as one of her more jazz-influenced songs via saxophone and violin acoustics.

Perhaps Faye's most memorable performance was "Half of Me," the final song of the show and the last song on her new album. The entire band exited the stage, leaving Webster to give an intimate, solo acoustic performance. The crowd fell completely silent for the first time and listened to the devastatingly beautiful tune. While perhaps not the most festive song for Valentine's day with the opening lyrics being "alone, alone...", the emotional lyrics seemed to connect with the singles in the crowd.

Under the iconic Neumos twinkling disco ball light, Webster performed her #1 song, with over 44 million Spotify streams, alongside an equally enthusiastic crowd. The crowd livened up for the encore, the hit long awaited throughout the show: "Kingston." Retreating into the hallway adorned with signed photographs of past performers, Faye Webster left fans feeling lucky they had the chance to experience "I Know I'm Funny... HAHA" in such an intimate fashion.