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Vista Kicks & Bad Suns Concert Review

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Vista Kicks & Bad Suns

By Issadora Tulalian

On February 27th, 2019, Kortney Burton and I attended a Bad Suns concert in Sacramento, California at Ace of Spades. The opening band was known by the name of Vista Kicks and was from Roseville, twenty minutes from the venue. The concert tickets were only \$25 dollars a person. The actual concert venue was unlike any place I have been before. The walls were lined with red velvet, large ace of spades cards, vintage posters, and more. There was a small area for seating; however, it looked to fit merely a dozen people. Near the entrance of the venue, there was a separate room that is a more secluded bar, and an additional bar upstairs overlooking the entire venue. The stage is in the far right corner. However, it is set up as a cater-corner which I've never seen before. The night of the concert, the venue was sold out. Though the experience was enjoyable, it was hard to see considering you were back to front with every person and the majority of the people were taller than me so I was unable to physically see the band for the majority of the show. However, when pertaining to the location of the performance, I truly enjoyed this venue and I would definitely come back to watch another show here.

To start off with the actual performance, as sad as it is to say, I truly enjoyed the opening band Vista Kicks more than the headlining band, Bad Suns. Even though they are a local band, I have heard of Vista Kicks' music prior to this performance, yet was unaware they would be performing tonight. Most of their songs are already on several playlists of mine so perhaps I came into the concert with a biased view, favoring Vista Kicks over Bad Suns considering I have never listened to Bad Suns prior to the concert. Vista Kicks opened with their most popular song entitled, "Marceline." Throughout the opening act, the band engaged very well with the audience. In addition, none of their songs sounded remotely the same. Each was a new experience and I fell in

love with every song and the band itself. Throughout their performance, I noticed people in the audience started writing their lyrics down on their phones, videotaping the band, and beginning to dance more to the music. They closed their set with a song from their most recent album entitled “Twenty-Something Nightmare.” The song lasted almost ten minutes; however, it was extremely engaging. Many people related and laughed to the lyrics, “Boy why did you grow your hair out? Man you look like a woman. Boy you’re really gonna blow it. Man you better get your head out of your ass and settle down.” These four lines made the crowd scream and since the concert, I have had this song on repeat everyday. This alternative Indie rock band is very relatable to many audiences, particularly college kids. In all the concerts I have ever attended, this is the first opening band I have become a fan of. It was also nice to hear the band talk about the memories they had made considering they too grew up around Sacramento.

After the headlining band performed, the main band, Bad Suns, took the stage soon after. Prior to attending the show, I was able to find the setlist of Bad Sun’s performance online. However, during the concert I found it hard to decipher which song was which considering all the songs were too similar. Each song almost had the same four chords playing, and similar tempo. In addition, because they decided to perform 22 songs, the band rushed through their set and rarely ever engaged with the audience. Other than the lead singer saying small phrases like, “Clap your hands,” or, “We love you, Sacramento,” there was never a moment they would stop playing and just talk to the audience. Vista Kicks conversed with the audience about the area and growing up here and discussing how grateful they are to see where music has taken their lives which made the experience more meaningful and intimate compared to listening to song after song with no break during Bad Suns’ set.

Despite their lack of connection with the audience, Bad Sun had a few memorable moments. For instance, during the song “This Was a Home Once,” the lead singer, Christo Bowman, decided to walk off the stage and into the crowd trusting that his fans would hold him up as he performed. I have never seen a performance where a member of the band has come off the stage and into the crowd, almost crowd surfing. Nowadays, many venues, including Ace of Spades, banned crowd surfing because of the risk factor and danger. In addition, the lighting cues made for this show was definitely visually appealing. There was many uses of blue, red, pink, and green lights and the visuals behind the songs definitely set the mood and atmosphere of the song to convey particular emotions. Two fan favorites that the crowd screamed intensely for were the songs “Cardiac Arrest” and “We Move Like The Ocean.” In my opinion, I believe “We Move Like The Ocean” was the band’s best performed song, because they engaged with the audience very well and had the crowd join and sing certain lines accompanying the lead singer. The band closed the show with the song “Heartbreaker”; however, encored with the songs, “Rearview” and “Salt.”

After the concert, I ended up talking to the lead singer, Derek, and the guitarist, Sam, of the band Vista Kicks. They sold me a t-shirt for \$20 when the price was \$25, and also included a CD of their album *Twenty Something Nightmare*, which they signed. When I talked to the band, they were very friendly and did not seem full of themselves. It was humbling talking to them and learning about their journey in music. In addition, they talked to me about being their photographer and cinematographer for their merch and helping to edit and direct their music videos. It felt surreal discussing working with this band considering they’re artists I listen to, and now I am getting to know on a personal level. Overall, I think the price for the ticket was worth it. I think both bands were good and though there was a fourth wall with Bad Suns, both bands had incredible musical delivery and gave the fans a memorable performance.

BAD SUNS SETLIST 02/27:

1. Away We Go
2. Daft Pretty Boys
3. Swimming in the Moonlight
4. Transpose
5. Sleep Paralysis
6. This was a Home Once
7. Hold Your Fire
8. Maybe We're Meant to Be Alone
9. Patience
10. Outskirts of Paradise
11. Cardiac Arrest
12. Disappear Here
13. Violet
14. We Move Like The Ocean
15. One Magic Moment
16. Take My Love and Run
17. 20 Years (Intro Only)
18. Off She Goes
19. Heartbreaker
20. (Encore) Rearview

21. (Encore) Salt