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LIBERATION IN LONDON: MUNA AT THE ROUNDHOUSE, 10/11/22

A NIGHT OF MUTUAL OBSESSION AND APPRECIATION



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MUNA, the 'greatest band in the world' kicked off their sold-out UK tour with a massive set at London's Roundhouse. Supported by Bimini, rocketed to fame during the second season of RuPaul's Drag Race UK, MUNA spearheaded an evening of queer liberation.

Opening with 'What I Want', their huge crowd pleaser about self-acceptance and revelling in the freedom to do whatever you want whilst on the dance floor of a gay bar, MUNA set the tone for the evening. One track in, they managed to create a place to be who you are, to embrace every fibre of your own being and just get lost in the delightful disarray of the crowd.

Without a moment of downtime, 'Number One Fan' hits with lead singing Katie Gavin announcing, 'So I heard the bad news, nobody likes me and I'm gonna die alone in my bedroom looking at strangers on my telephone', horrifically relatable deep to its core even in a room of thousands sharing in the experience. At this point, they know it's 'the loudest crowd they've ever had', as the audience is literally shaking the floor beneath them.

In a set spanning their career, we touch on a few ballads after the heavy hitters. MUNA can have you crying in the club, slowly swaying enveloped in the motions of love, or deeply reading into your psyche as they play 'Kind of Girl'.

'Home By Now' comes home to London, the first city they ever played it in, even if the lyrics are all about LA. Their wonder and appreciation for a crowd this engaged isn't lost. Clearly, the band is enjoying themselves as much on stage as the audience is, a crowd that battled Tube strikes to dance their evening away in a few moments of liberation. Love and appreciation for the audience is consistently vocalised for the band, as well as a cry to have fun, but to be safe. Though they know they're lucky enough to be able to trust their fans to create community wherever they go.

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Before dashing away pre-encore, the band end the initial set with 'I Know A Place', a song MUNA wrote as 'three queers in a college dorm room full of rage' about the inability to find a safe place to be comfortably be themselves. Five years on from its release, 'I Know A Place' has created the space they lamented not existing, Gavin talks about how much it just blows her mind to take this around the world to sing it to a sold-out crowd of around 3,000 echoing it right back.

Topping off the night with their incredible collaboration with long-time friend Phoebe Bridgers, Silk Chiffon, was the right decision. Guitarist Naomi McPherson stepped in for Bridgers' verse, alongside the crowd, as the Roundhouse erupted into what they call the 'joyful queer revolution'.

Watching artists do exactly what they're meant to do is forever a privilege, but to watch MUNA create a community of joy when in their element, that's the most special of all.

See the view from the pit, captured by Mattia Ghisolfi





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