

Stubb's Waller Creek Amphitheater Becomes A Queer Oasis

Austin queers join Sammy Rae & The Friends on international tour "Camp"

Christina Lopez

Hundreds of Austin's girls, gays and 'theys' made their way to Stubb's on Tuesday night, painting the venue rainbow for a show that is exceptionally gay, in both senses of the word. Sammy Rae & The Friends brought their fans to a summer camp for the LGBTQ+ community, offering a safe space to dance, sing and be unabashedly queer.

The Brooklyn band jauntily bounced and twirled their way through their sporadic discography for around 90 minutes against a cartoonish campsite backdrop, starting the night with their 2018 release, "Talk It Up."

Many songs strayed from their studio versions, improvising new and sometimes off-key vocal runs while enhancing the saxophone solos that honked with soul and exuberance. Max Zooi (tenor saxophone) and Kellon Anderson (alto saxophone), stole the show as they kicked off the seven-piece ensemble's masterful fusion of disco, soul and jazz in "Follow Me Like The Moon," and "Jackie Onassis."

Following the former first lady namesake, frontwoman Samantha Bowers (Sammy Rae) fanned the flames of the campfire by proclaiming, "I love being queer!" The crowd could not agree more.

'The Friends' sat around the Connecticut native as if listening to their counselor at the sing-along during a cathartic and soulful piano solo rendition of "Living Room Floor." Bowers's gritty scatts, yodels, and cheesy 'la la la's' throughout the show encouraged the audience to "*get lost in the feeling*," taking them on a relaxed and carefree journey as they sang along to every word.

The millennial musicians filmed the crowd for the music video of their upcoming single, "Thieves," a cringey rock groove fit for a Ford commercial.

The cliché lyrics in closer "Coming Home Song," visibly resonated with the audience as camp came to an end, leaving listeners with a satisfying sense of joy and hope on their journeys home.

Set List

"Talk It Up"

"Follow Me Like the Moon"

"Jackie Onassis"

"If It All Goes South"

"Creo Lo Sientes (feat. C-BASS)"

"Living Room Floor"

"The Feeling"

"Kick It To Me"

"Thieves"

"For The Time Being (feat. Will Leet)"

"Denim Jacket / Good Life"

Encore

Any Man Of Mine (Shania Twain cover)

Coming Home Song