

Bedingfield gives dynamic, energetic performance during 'Less Is More' Tour

Written by By FAITH HUFFMAN, News-Telegram News Editor
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I set out for the July 6 concert at The House of Blues in Dallas excited to be hearing one of my newest fave chick singers, Kate Voegele, only to be blown away by the energy and passion of headliner Natasha Bedingfield.

The name of the tour is “Less Is More” and that’s precisely what we got — a handful of songs from Voegele and even fewer from opener Andy Grammer, but three times more of Bedingfield than anticipated. The first two acts were on stage for maybe a total of 45 minutes.

Grammer was a great opener. He’s a fresh face that several apparently were familiar with. Of course that could have something to do with the fact that his “Keep Your Head Up” video is currently getting plenty of play on VH1’s Top 20, ranked #5 as of July 9. And, I found myself clapping along with everyone else to one familiar tune. Keep your ears open. I expect you’ll be hearing more from Grammer. He just has that something extra that draws you in and makes you listen.

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Voegele played favorites from her first two albums, “Don’t Look Away” and “A Fine Mess” as well as a few numbers from her May 17 release, “Gravity Happens.”

Sadly, despite a lively showing, both openers’ received a lukewarm applause at best from the crowd, who made it quite clear who they were there to see — Bedingfield.

After seeing her live, I definitely understand why. She was on stage for nearly two hours belting out tunes, taking no more than 30 seconds between songs to gulp a drink of water and let her band shine, then was back at it, working the entire stage.

Aside from a few songs she sang seated atop a bar stool more than an hour after taking the stage, Bedingfield was on her feet — and a few times on her toes — jumping in the air in excitement. She worked magic in tall spikes which made her appear considerably taller than her 5-foot-6-inches — heels that would make even the most seasoned stiletto wearer cringe before it was all said and done.

Bedingfield really knows how to get and keep her audience’s attention. I’ve listened to her music off and on over the past few years, but to see her live is something else again. She’s nothing if not dynamic and energetic, adjusting the sound and music to fit her voice. At one point, it became apparent she was pushing herself, almost becoming hoarse, but got the crowd involved singing so she could down a sip of H2O before cranking up the sound as she kept going.

Listening to her speak, you’d never know Bedingfield had such powerful pipes — soulful, reaching down deep to add power to those catchy blues pop tunes that often feature a calypso or Caribbean beat, as well as “stripped” down so there’s no doubt there’s self truth in her music. Her band was awesome, especially the drummer and bass player.

All three performers sounded good with no electronic vocal distortions, although the sound crew could have done a quicker job tuning up before Voegele and Grammer’s brief sets.

The almost 45-minute delay after Voegele’s set ended was well worth the wait once Bedingfield and her polished sound took the stage shortly before 10 p.m.