

## Double the fun

Ronnie Taheny and the Georgia Germein Sisters

Saturday February 9, 2013.

Governor Hindmarsh Hotel. Adelaide, South Australia.

Here we are again; it's early February and time for another Ronnie Taheny show. This time, however, we are promised an extra treat; an opening showcase set from the highly regarded Georgia Germein Sisters.

I've seen award-winning songwriter Georgia Germein in solo mode, but this is the first time I've seen the band, which comprises Georgia and her two siblings, Clara and Ella. All frocked up and ready to rock.

The Germeins kick off with *Nice to See You* and *Take My Hand*; catchy pop songs that appear to show the desired musical direction of the band. The breathy vocals on *Time to Go Away* further serve to make the point. The short set changes gear for the slower, more plaintive *Please Be OK*, before finishing with another strong pop song, the curiously entitled *Da Da Doo*.

All the songs in the set are, I think, designed to please. They are well-constructed compositions, possessing most, if not all, of the hallmarks of contemporary pop.

Georgia Germein switches instruments throughout the five numbers – from acoustic guitar to electric guitar to keyboard. Clara and Ella are also obviously capable musicians, and the overall sound is full without being cluttered. The Georgia Germein Sisters appear to know where they want to be, and play with an accomplishment and confidence that suggests that they are already well on their way.

After a short pause in the evening's proceedings, Ronnie Taheny appears to an expected generous round of applause.

Taheny is a gifted songwriter; she's lyrically astute and a master of rhythm and melody. Her compositions are interesting and complex, without ever becoming overly obscure or self-indulgent. Quite the opposite; these are songs to be understood and enjoyed.

The set includes a selection of familiar numbers, adeptly presented in the manner to which regular gig attendees have become accustomed. The first half of the set offers *Cinderella*, *Letter to the Muses*, *Surface*, *Moving Door* and *Photograph*, all features of recent Governor Hindmarsh shows. And great songs besides...

Taheny's regular co-conspirator, Jarrad Payne, joins her on stage for the second half of the show. The pointed *That's Jesus* sees Payne on bass, drums and backing vocals. Payne is a devastatingly capable musician, and the impressive range of talent displayed when supporting Taheny only provides a glimpse of what he can do.

One of Taheny's on-stage strengths is her ability to spin a yarn or two, and tonight is no exception. She regales the audience with anecdotes, jokes and tales of her musical adventures, the funniest being about balancing the life of a late-night muso with that of a daytime teacher.

The deliberate ordering of the anthemic foursome *Wasting Away*, *Guardian Angel*, *Glacial* and the brand-new *Babel* raises and maintains the momentum of the set; the audience becomes increasingly engaged as the evening reaches its culmination. The applause is loud and sustained. Taheny tells us that the show is over and bids us a fond farewell, but we all know there will be more. We've been here before.

The encore features the jaunty spoken word *A Darcy Before I Die* before Taheny sits at the piano and presents another world-premiere song, entitled *Over*. To round off a very enjoyable evening, Taheny then invites the Georgia Germein Sisters back onto the stage to join Payne and herself in a performance of the Georgia Germein song, *Wake Up*.

The night's entertainment concludes and the audience has been treated, not once but twice. The Georgia Germein Sisters have shown that they have much to offer the audiences awaiting their upcoming performances in Europe. And it's not just been a Taheny greatest hits package either; the inclusion of two new songs shows that there are good reasons to expect more from this diminutive powerhouse sometime soon.

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