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Concert review: Erica Buettner at Rough Trade West

There is much to admire about this American singer-songwriter who, despite admitting that she is "no good at stage banter between songs", comes to the most intimate of venues to play through a handful of tracks from her debut album *True Love and Water*.

In truth, even referring to Rough Trade West as a venue feels overly generous as that word evokes images of a stage and perhaps a microphone – neither of which it possesses. So with no more than her un-amplified voice and acoustic guitar in hand Buettner has nothing to hide behind except her ability which, thankfully, she evidently has in excess. And don't let her nationality fool you, Buettner has been living in Europe for the past few years and her Parisian influences are unmistakable.



Opening track *Time Travelling* is six and a half minutes of delicately finger-picked arpeggios combined with haunting yet serene vocals in the vein of Leslie Feist, albeit delivered in a slightly less upbeat mode. *Our Most Fragile Things* is a simple, yet effective ballad built around an instantly appealing guitar line that further displays Buettner's deft playing ability (an attribute that should distinguish this talented songstress from the many other acts operating within the folk spectrum).

Midway through the set, an onlooker situated behind the counter is revealed as Buettner's cellist who begins to play alongside her, starting with *True Love and Water*. Even though a small technical issue resulted in the cello's volume being inconsistent, the moments of clarity saw it compliment Buettner's sound marvelously.

Playing an acoustic set in a shop has its disadvantages: the even quieter moments during songs are occasionally interrupted by the squeak of plastic-wrapped vinyls being leaned on by over-eager observers hoping for a better view. Yet despite these, there's a clear sense of artistic dedication, songwriting talent, and a sublime voice that's plain for all to see and will be hard to ignore.

Verdict: ●●●

Tom Yates

Photos: Andrew Collins

For further information about Erica Buettner and future events visit [here](#).



[Watch Erica Buettner perform Under the Radar here:](#)

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