

Student Review by Sarah

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Basset: A Look Behind the Curtain – Live Wire Basset Performance @ BSS

Live Wire hosted two-piece band 'Basset' at Bayridge Secondary School on Friday, October 24th for their first school concert of the season. The band performed a lovely concert for the students and answered many questions from their eager audience.

Basset formed in Toronto during their studies at university, performing in various open mics as they got started. Basset's wonderful acoustic performance at the school featured Yasmine Shelton's vocals and Sam Clark's vocals and guitar. The band was able to get a range of tones despite their minimalist instrumentation, the guitar at times an entire rhythm section, other times laying down a soft accompaniment or doubling the vocal melody. In 'Sail On', a more uptempo tune, the guitar strummed high and quick while keeping a solid bassline underneath. They performed their latest release, 'Oh California', with a slower current of fingerpicked guitar throughout. There was similar contrast in the vocals – sometimes hearty, sometimes pure and clear.

Though there was variation between Basset's songs, they all contained the through-line of longing harmonies and beautiful acoustic sounds. Their songwriting continually referenced winds, sands, and water, using different aspects of nature to illustrate the messages behind their songs. The way they performed each song was baked into the songwriting – the lyrics they chose to highlight with harmony or repetition were always intentional. These choices during their performance were an excellent demonstration of musicality for the students listening.

For both members of the band, music has always been collaborative, having performed in bands and orchestras from a young age – this clearly informs their sound and their songwriting. The band explained the push and pull of their shared songwriting process: one person writes the majority of a song while the other offers suggestions and constructive criticism. No final decisions are made alone, so each song is truly shared between them. Though their process has always been collaborative, it looks different every time, each song has its own unique process.

In addition to their expressive performance, Basset gave the young musicians at Bayridge Secondary School the opportunity to ask questions. The band connected with the students on their favourite styles of music, the forming of the band, and the songwriting process, as well as recording, releasing, and touring music in Canada. This unique opportunity provided by Live Wire and Basset gave the music students at Bayridge Secondary School a look behind the curtain of every aspect of the life of young working musicians in Canada, inspiring them with ideas for their own musical creations.