

musicissimo

Sibling savvy

Melbourne brother and sister music duo Belle Roscoe love the inspiration and energy Paris gives them, writes **Ruby Boukabou**.



Photo: Olivia Rutherford

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Two labels they had signed with liquidated in six months costing them time, money and heartache.

Cover photo: Oliva Rutherford. Below: Brother and sister music duo Julia and Matty Gurry with interviewer Ruby Boukabou. Photo: Elise McLeod

After recently launching their second album *Boom Boom* home in Australia, indie rock/pop band Belle Roscoe have returned to Europe where they have spent the past five years. Time to lounge with friends in Parisian bars and snooze off the jet lag with lazy afternoons?

Not for siblings Julia and Matty Gurry. They've headed straight to Belgium to record.

"I've just woken up in my room at ICP studios in Brussels, trying to shake off the jet lag and adapt to the climate change from 30 to 5 degrees," Matty tells *Issimo*. "I am expecting four hours' sleep a night to squeeze every minute into our time here. Five songs in five days!"

Three of these songs are part of their Serge Gainsbourg project, an homage to the French icon and the band's flourishing in his homeland. "We had always been fans of Gainsbourg but only truly discovered his brilliance and virtuosity in 2010 when we were asked to reinterpret some of his songs to celebrate the release of the film about his life," says Matty.



“We got really into him at this point: his story, his music, his life ... So the challenge was difficult to come up with some arrangements that did him justice.”

Turns out they achieved this and the band were asked to perform the songs for French TV and make special festival appearances. “Everyone asked where they could find these songs, so finally we’ve found some time to record them.”

While they have had many successes in France, playing festivals including The Cannes Film Festival, The Biarritz Rip Curl festival (to an audience of 25000) and prestigious Paris venues including Divan du Monde, Le Nouveau Casino and Le Maroquinerie, their French stint wasn’t always easy.

Two labels they had signed with liquidated in six months costing them time, money and heartache. They decided to stick it out during one long winter and write their way through, sleeping on friends’ couches. Julia nearly gave up. But this is where the sibling support came through.

“I spent a couple of days crying and packing my bags,” admits Julia. “But Matty just told me to harden up and save my tears for the Grammys!”

They set about raising money to finance their second album (with Cox), a recording experience that has been a career highlight. “We actually felt grateful that the labels had terminated our contracts as we were convinced that we would not have been so free in writing and recording *Boom Boom*,” says Julia.

Boom Boom (recorded in Paris, Malta and Belgium with their Gainsbourg project producer Luuk Cox) was released in Australia in October 2013 with an extended summer tour of Melbourne, Sydney and the East Coast, and shows at The Australian Tennis Open in January. “You know you’re back in Oz when you feel that heat of the sun on stage,” smiles Julia.

“In France and Europe, audiences are less rowdy to a degree, which is strange to get used to,” says Julia.

“Sometimes the faces are so vacant that you assume you they are not really into your music, but then the song finishes than the appreciation becomes obvious. They love



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to focus first and applaud after.”

Matty ads: “Aussie crowds can talk and murmur throughout the show, but in approval. There is a real culture and humour when it comes to heckling in appreciation!” Which do they prefer?

For now they can enjoy both! Belle Roscoe play shows in Australia from March until June then performs the European festival circuit in July and August. ■

A poster advertising a Belle Roscoe performance.

See details on belleroscoe.com and facebook.com/belleroscoemusic



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