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Review: Lady Antebellum brings laid-back style to The Joint

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Vocal powerhouse Hillary Scott was the first member of award-winning country trio Lady Antebellum to take the microphone at The Joint on Thursday evening, and the spunk she brought to the group's platinum single "Downtown" set the tone for the night.

"We're so excited to be here tonight," Scott said to the full house of fans at the venue inside the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tulsa. "We want you to sing as loud as you can, so if you know the words speak up."

Great music and audience interaction were clearly the group's priorities for the 90-minute performance.

Charles Kelley, who took the vocal reins for the second song on the setlist, "Long Stretch of Love," seemed to especially enjoy the latter.

Kelley mixed up his time at center stage with several rounds of leaning off the platform's edge to interact and take selfies with fans who had floor seats. Midway through the show, he traveled through the seats on higher levels for more selfies and hand slaps.

Lady A sounds as good, or possibly even better, live as it does on its five studio albums. But something that fans get from the group during a live performance that doesn't come across as well on recordings is the strong and easy interaction that they have with one another onstage.

The relationship is especially strong between Scott and Kelley, who play off of each other like an unbreakable brother-sister team. During a cover of Justin Timberlake's "Can't Stop the Feeling," Scott and Kelley playfully divided the audience in half to see who could rouse the best "Dance, Dance, Dance" from their side of the audience.

Dave Haywood, the third member of the trio who plays guitar, piano and mandolin, and sings backing vocals, was especially impressive during the portion of the evening where Lady A gave its band a break and played an acoustic set. The unplugged portion of the set, which featured Scott and Kelley on vocals and Haywood on guitar, started out with the band musing over how far they'd come in the past decade.

"We have been a band y'all 10 years this year," Scott said. "I was like 13 when we started.

They also mused on the changes that have come to their personal lives. Before going onstage, Scott said, the band was dancing around to "Achy Breaky Heart" with her 3-year-old daughter, Eisele Kaye. The toddler's father is Chris Tyrrell, Scott's husband and the band's drummer.

They then launched into a cover of Billy Ray Cyrus' "Achy Breaky Heart," with Scott throwing a curveball and leading into Trisha Yearwood's "She's in Love With the Boy." Haywood didn't miss a beat on the guitar — he knew that song. He knows all the songs, Kelley said. The band then turned to their own music, treating the audience to "Goodbye Town" and "Hello World."

Other songs in the band's catalogue of hits that made it into the show included "I Run To You," the group's first No. 1 on country radio from 2009; "American

Honey,” which Scott described as one of their favorite songs; and probably the band’s biggest hit, “Need You Now.”

Kelley told the audience that the group is currently working on new material. So it’s likely that Lady Antebellum fans will get a followup to the 2014 album “747” fairly soon. Surely that will include more hits and, fingers crossed, bring on another Tulsa-area tour stop.