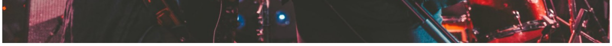
HANGING OUT WITH ROMES, KINGS OF THE INSTAGRAM STORY

SARA FEIGIN / AUG 24, 2017 / MUSIC

It's a rainy summers day in Manhattan when I go to meet Romes before their sound check for their gig at Baby's All Right in Brooklyn.

Romes are a band that I would've became a fan of solely based on how nice they are, but their live show blew me out of the water. It's official, I'm now a forever fan of this Toronto based foursome made up of brothers, Jakob and Nick Bitove, the singer and drummer respectively, and guitarist James Tebbitt and bassist Andrew Keyes.

When I escape the rain and walk into Baby's, I'm greeted with hugs from the whole band. Their excitement to see me and sit down and talk with me about what they've been up to since we first met a year ago is a such a nice environment to walk into. They've had an exciting year; they signed to a new label and have been opening shows for Rooney sporadically since the spring. They've also played a ton of shows in their hometown of Toronto and have been steadily growing a devoted fan-base. Andrew, the group's bassist smiles when I mention the band's fans, and recounts a story from a recent gig they played; *"We were playing in Toronto recently, and I was looking [at somebody in the crowd] cause he was really dancing. Then he when we kicked into 'Tryin' Be' he looked at his friend and was like screaming in her face and was like 'oh my god Tryin' Be' and was jumping around and stuff, that stuff has started happening and it's fucking great, it's just really cool."* The whole band is smiling coyly when Andrew shares this moment, and you can tell they all view this as a huge accomplishment. From their amazing live shows, humbleness and knowing how to get the most out of social media, Romes have all it takes to be the next big thing.



An album has been finished for a while now, but the band have decided to release it song by song rather than as a collection. *"I feel like in this day and age, unless you're like Kendrick Lamar or something, nobody's really going to sit down and listen to a record from start to finish."* Andrew explains, *"So this way at least people have a month to listen to one song and really enjoy it."* Drummer, Nick, adds, *"For example, we released a song called 'In The Wild' about a month or so ago, and there's no rhyme or reason to it, but people in Germany love it."* The momentum has been growing and they couldn't be more excited for where it will take them.

With Romes, it's almost a guarantee that there'll be an Instagram story to watch. Nick's tweets from the band account are always fire and his caption game on Instagram is some of the best I've ever seen. *"That's just who we are. It's fun to post things on our Instagram story that doesn't really fit into our feed. We'll just do it like us having a laugh in the van, just us being ourselves everyday. There's not a lot of thought going into our social media, we just stay active because we enjoy it."* The band tries to stay very engaged with their fans to make sure they feel involved in the process and like they're appreciated. *"If someone messages us, we definitely make our best effort to get back to them, we like to stay connected with everyone… It's not like we're consciously trying to build or make something, we're just filming things on a day to day basis, and there's a few people who are really into it, so why not talk back to them?"*

The more I talk to the guy of Romes, to clearer it is to me that they have the ability to create an empire of devoted fans.

WORDS BY SARA FEIGIN

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