

Lush review – pithy indie chroniclers stage a confident comeback

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This is Lush's first show in almost 20 years, so the nerves are understandable. "I was shitting myself yesterday," admits singer and guitarist Miki Berenyi, still swearing like a trooper. Really though, you wouldn't know she's spent most of the intervening period [as a magazine subeditor rather than a hard-gigging frontwoman](#). It's a crisp, confident comeback from the early-90s indie stalwarts.



Berenyi's [trademark fluorescent barnet](#) is now a sober jet black – "no red hair, deal with it!" – and Justin Welch (once of Elastica) has replaced drummer Chris Acland, whose tragic suicide precipitated Lush's split back in 1996. Otherwise, little has changed. Maybe because they haven't spent the last two decades acquiring annoying muso habits, Lush sound almost exactly like they did when they were last in circulation. De Luxe remains brilliantly confounding, [Hypocrite](#) charmingly venomous, Lit Up a hit of pure sugary goodness.

[Watch the video for new song Out of Control](#)

New song [Out of Control](#) slips into the set so snugly you'd be hard-pressed to tell it apart. The compliment is faintly double-edged – Lush have always written to a formula, albeit a pretty good one: off-kilter pop songs, distinguished by wobbly high harmonies and a glittery guitar haze. Despite being signed to 4AD, they were never too precious about their sonic cathedrals. It's the quality and consistency of their songwriting that shines through here, and that's without even playing Britpop-era hits [Single Girl](#) or 500 (Shake Baby Shake).

Songs such as [For Love](#) and the dreamy, tormented [Desire Lines](#) may no longer represent the lives of Berenyi or her fellow frontwoman Emma Anderson, but they are reminders that Lush were pithy and vital chroniclers of the young female experience in the overwhelmingly blokey domain of alternative rock. It's hard to tell at this stage whether Lush's career will gain a prolonged second act, but this underrated band still have the power to inspire.

- [Lush play Coachella festival, California on 16 and 23 April](#), then [touring the US](#)



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_↙ i Lush ... from left, Emma Anderson, Justin Welch on drums, Miki Berenyi and Phil King. Photograph: Lorne Thomson/Redferns