

After two decades, British band Lush returns to action

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Editor's Note: The story originally reported Lush 's upcoming Sunday, April 17 concert at the Warfield . That show has since been r escheduled to April 24. All tickets purchased previously will be honored for this new date. All refunds will be available at point of purchase.

[Miki Berenyi](#)'s voice had a spirited yet humble sound during a recent trans-Atlantic call. It may even have sounded a touch nervous as the co-lead singer and guitarist of Lush talked about the band's upcoming Bay Area show. But that's to be expected; she had been out of practice for nearly two decades.

"Aside from the odd mucking about with my kids, I haven't played guitar at all," says Berenyi about getting back into the groove after the band decided to make a comeback last year.

"What slightly helped was that I was never a virtuoso in the first place," she quips.

But don't be fooled. Berenyi helped the British band rise to fame from 1987 to the end of 1996, with hits like 1994's "Hypocrite," 1991's "For Love" and "Ladykillers," a track off Lush's last album before disbanding.

Primarily associated with shoegaze music, with its dreamy guitar reverb and ambient sighs, Lush also brought a spiky, tart and witty edge to its lyrics and sound. It's that sound that Berenyi and the band — a slightly different lineup — plans to bring back to San Francisco when it hits the stage at the Warfield on April 24.

Lush was originally set to perform Sunday, April 17 after a Saturday set during the first weekend of this year's [Coachella Valley Music & Arts Festival](#), but both shows were canceled "due to visa issues," according to press release sent Friday, April 15.

Fronted by Berenyi and her songwriting partner, [Emma Anderson](#), Lush has toured America multiple times, even scoring the opening slot on the second Lollapalooza tour in 1992. But the suicide of drummer [Chris Acland](#) in 1996 brought the band to an immediate halt, with Berenyi, Anderson and longtime bassist [Phil King](#) going their separate ways.

"There was quite a lot of agony about that — fears, worries, trying to get my head straight to separate the past from the future," she says.

When the remaining three Lush members decided to return to music, they recruited former Elastica drummer [Justin Welch](#) to fill Acland's role. A good friend of Acland, Welch is an "excellent drummer" in his own right, Berenyi explains, "but he wants to capture (Acland's) contribution" to Lush.

"The bits I'm valuing are his enthusiasm and love for the band, and his absolutely sweetheart self," Berenyi adds of Welch. "It has made it all so much easier."

With Welch completing the quartet, Lush has hit the road again, including appearances at both weekends of the Coachella Valley Music & Arts Festival this month, ready to showcase its latest tracks from "Blind Spot." Led by the song "Out of Control," the band's new EP — set to be released Friday, April 22 — shows the reconstituted group in fine form.

"It's lovely to see people responding. They're happy we sound the way we do," Berenyi says. "We were always going to sound that way. We're just picking up again."

It's been validating and a relief, she says.

“My thoughts going into the studio were the opposite of relaxed. It’s the first time I’ve had to do vocals in 20 years,” Berenyi says. “It could have been a disaster.”

With that crisis averted, Lush is excited to play its American dates, followed by others back home and elsewhere — then who knows what’s next.

“We have got kids, we have got jobs, and we’re just not able to have a three-month tour. It’s quite tricky to shoehorn these things in and make them doable and enjoyable,” Berenyi says. “It’s not like we have a grand plan. Most of the stuff just comes along, and we have to make a decision on the spot.”

Neg Raggett is a freelancer writer.

Lush: 8 p.m. Sunday, April 24. \$35-\$45. The Warfield, 982 Market St., S.F. (415) 345-0900.

www.thewarfieldtheatre.com. Watch the music video for “Out of Control” from the band’s new EP “Blind Spot” at www.youtube.com/watch?v=bD4O20ePnXo.