

## Jack vs Ellie: The 1975 @ Manchester Academy 28/11/15

Nouse Music deputies Jack Davies and Ellie Langford bring a review with a twist as they lay down their differing opinions of The 1975's hometown gig

By [Eleanor Langford](#) and [Jack Davies](#)

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PHOTO: The 1975/Facebook

JACK'S RATING: ★★☆☆☆ – ELLIE'S RATING: ★★★★★

**JACK:** The 1975 have divided opinion throughout the musical world. There is their surprisingly large legion of fans who hail the band as magnificent purveyors of indie-pop, and then there's a large portion of naysayers who dismiss the band as uninteresting, with little variation throughout their relatively small back-catalogue. Prior to this gig, I entered Manchester Academy considering myself much more within the latter camp rather than the former; I wasn't expecting to be writing a positive review about their show, put it that way.

**ELLIE:** In less than a year The 1975 went from playing 50-seater venues to selling out Brixton Academy overnight, and they have jumped from success to success on the strength of their self-title debut. They've got the formula right from day one with their smooth style, roguish frontman, chart-ready tunes and a vibrant performance style. There are many who dismiss them but, no matter what people say about The 1975, nearly all of us know the chorus to 'Chocolate'.

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**JACK:** As a supposedly impartial reviewer, I stood back with Ellie, my Nouse colleague (and, as we found out, 1975 fangirl) and watched what was an impressive and enjoyable performance from the Manchester band playing a hometown gig at the end of what has been a year of non-stop touring for the four-piece.

**ELLIE:** I have never stood up as a diehard fan of The 1975, but that debut album has proved quite the companion on long car journeys and late nights. My cover was blown, however, when turned out I knew all the words to every song.

**JACK:** They opened with 'Love Me', the superb brand-new single that marks their first new release in over a year, and, more importantly, an interesting change in sound for the band. The track itself owes a significant amount to David Bowie's 'Fame', the funky guitar lines making for a delightful, bombastic opening to the show. Naturally, an ecstatic, packed-out hometown crowd already knew all the words. They continued impressively, professionally rattling out tracks from their self-titled 2013 debut album. There was little room for anything massively exciting happening on stage; the band were slick and rehearsed. But an enthusiastic audience that never let-up in their singing/dancing/bouncing depending on the song allowed for a good atmosphere throughout the venue.



PHOTO: The 1975/Facebook

**ELLIE:** If ever there were two words that did not describe lead singer Matt Healy, it's slick and rehearsed. One minute the 26-year old singer is swaggering down the stage, the next he is jumping on the set, and seconds later he is cuddling up to the bemused bassist. Whilst his band mates hold up that slick sound, Healy brings the vivacity and the boyish charm that sets The 1975 apart. After opening with something new, the fans are given what they want in the form of 'Heart Out', 'Settle Down' and 'The City', and there was hardly a body in the house not singing and dancing at every opportunity. What truly brought the evening together, however, was the stunning geometric backdrop that projected endless aesthetic porn (textures, patterns, gradients, etc.) to match the smooth progression of the night. Rarely have I seen such an enthralling set up for a show, and never have I seen one used more effectively.

**JACK:** Even such an engaged crowd were not immune to a mid-set lull from the band, though. Lead singer Matt Healy announced "put your phones away" to allow everyone to "share the moment" of one of their slower ballads, resulting in a slight loss of interest from the crowd. Furthermore, one cannot escape from the fact that simply, a lot The 1975's songs sound incredibly similar. After you've heard what sounds like the same song for the fourth time of the evening, you're bound to be a bit disinterested. Not that this spoiled the evening for any of their more fervent fans.

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**ELLIE:** After a bouncy and vibrant start to the set, things got turned down a notch as the band played their most atmospheric and enthralling tracks. It was a moment of reflection created to bring the assembled together, and it worked wonders. The sea of phones – a constant presence at nearly ever gig these days – vanished at Healy’s command and everyone (except Jack, apparently) was lulled into a relaxing stupor under the influence of ‘fallingforyou’, ‘Me’ and new track ‘Somebody Else’.

**JACK:** A closing encore including favourite hits ‘Chocolate’ and ‘Sex’ breathed new life into their set and reinvigorated the audience. This made for a strong climax to an enjoyable but not spectacular performance from a band that can look to put on a top-class live show if they can pack as much energy into the rest of their set as they did their opening song.

**ELLIE:** The arrival of ‘Chocolate’, ‘Sex’ and ‘Girls’ (my personal favourite) marked the end of a truly incredible evening. The 1975 provided all present with a rollercoaster of a night that went from upbeat and energetic to meditative and enthralling. One thing that cannot be denied is that they had their audience wrapped around their little finger from the first note, and they gave their hometown a fantastic show that won’t be forgotten soon.

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