



New series of Other Voices kicks off on RTE2 ++

BRINGING THE XX FACTOR TO KERRY

Thought that being in buzz band was glamorous? Not if The XX in Dingle was anything to go by. The group jetted to Kerry from New York via Cork and were consequently spaced out and/or sleeping any time they weren't being filmed.

When they were woken up at 5am to catch a flight to London, frontman Oliver Sim was so tired he couldn't be woken up, the poor guy. But looking back on the experience, there are no complaints.

"Other Voices was really good, although it was made weird because I'd basically just woken up," says the curly haired percussionist Jamie Smith.

"I had to drink warm whisky to get my voice back because of all the airplanes," says frontlady Romy Croft.

"I was really nervous the whole way through the recording about staying awake and not coughing, and to make things worse I forgot the words at soundcheck."

They needn't have worried — not only did they manage to stay upright, but they gave a spellbinding performance in Kerry's St James' Church.

RETURN TO THE CHURCH OF NOISE

OTHER Voices is back this Wednesday for its sixth year.

Look out for a host of top performances from the likes of Florence & The Machine (right), Bell X1, Brett Anderson, Temper Trap and Snow Patrol.

As well as the line up of white hot

bands, you'll also see great new acts such as James Vincent

McMorrow.

The series was filmed once again in St James' Church in Dingle, and at other Kerry locations.

Other Voices runs for six weeks from Wednesday on RTE1 at 11.25pm.

It was just one of the highlights in a phenomenal year for the band, thanks to the release of their debut album.

Taking minimalism to new heights, their stripped-down sound, whispery girl/boy vocals and atmospheric electro beats have found favour with cooler-than-cool types.

It's little wonder they topped plenty of end of year polls. They're accolades that go beyond their dreams.

Another highlight for them was appearance at Electric Picnic in September. The group played to a packed tent and while we may have thought it was yet another show, they were hugely appreciative of our reception.

"That was our biggest festival show," says Romy. "We played to around 8,000 people. When we were playing most of the festivals last summer, the album hadn't come out. We played Leeds and Reading Festivals and people had just started to become aware of us and they were great shows. Then we played Electric Picnic and it was huge for us. It was so cool."

Their meteoric rise to fame didn't come without hurdles. Most notably, they lost band member Baria Qureshi in November, who quit under growing tension while on tour. The foursome, from London's leafy south west suburbs, had been friends since they were 11 but had grown apart over time (they're now 20).

"We hadn't toured as intensely as we have the last few months, and in doing that it brought to light that we'd grown apart as people," explains Romy. "It was a sad realisation, but we knew it would be better to carry on as a three-piece."

This turn of events is yet another to have led to their unique musical direction.

Romy explains: "Nothing we've done has been pre-mediated — it's happened naturally. Like even the reason we use electronic drums is because Jamie wouldn't play live drums for us, even though he can."

"Everything that's happened to us since is more than I could have ever hoped for. It's completely blown me away."

● New single VCR is out now. Catch The XX on Other Voices next month.



DARK: The XX rocked Dingle

