

THE BELLE SOUNDS BIO

Synth-pop quintet The Belle Sounds have been called “one of the best pop bands in Austin” (Austin American Statesman), “Best New Band” (Austin Chronicle) and have their own day named after them in their hometown of Austin, TX. Led by the husband-wife team of Noëlle Hampton and André Moran, they have been developing their evocative sound and each year the synchronicity between all five musicians shines through more and more. In 2020 they shifted gears from a more guitar heavy band to a synth-pop/alt-pop band with Hampton and longtime band member, Emily Shirley on synths and keys. Hampton also took on the role of producer, creating all of the musical parts, melody and lyrics for each song in highly detailed demos and then taking them to the studio to finesse with Moran. They released one song per month that year, making good use of the grant awarded to them by Black Fret by creating videos and new content. The momentum continued in 2021 with a brand new EP, *All About Love*. Their work garnered them a coveted spot on The Austin American Statesman’s Best of 2020 and Best of 2021 list, multiple spots on the KUTX Song Of The Day and a placement in the popular Netflix show, *Outer Banks*. In 2022 André took over the very established Cedar Creek Studio as head engineer/manager and they eventually began work on their newest EP, *Four Fathoms Deep* (out 6/30/23). It’s a lush and vibrant set of 6 songs, which includes their cover of the Talk Talk song, *Life’s What You Make It*. They will celebrate with a show at Pershing in Austin, TX on July 8th with Sabrina Ellis (Sweet Spirit/A Giant Dog) on the bill as well.

The band has yielded incredible opportunities onstage too, playing some of Austin’s finest stages including ACL Moody Theater, 3Ten ACL Live, Cheer Up Charlies, Empire Control Room, One-2-One, Pershing Hall, Scholz’s Garden, Saxon Pub and more, including opening for Bruce Hornsby at Kirk Watson’s Pre-ACL Fest Under The Stars Benefit in Zilker Park in 2019.

All the accolades are due to an ever evolving sound, now rich with lush soundscapes intertwined with effervescent harmonies and poignant lyricism. All the textured guitar sounds and layered synths are anchored by a reverence for good old fashioned hooks, a trait they share in common with their influences, which range from harmony-driven bands like Fleetwood Mac to 80s icons like Kate Bush, Depeche Mode, Tears For Fears, Peter Gabriel, Blondie and more.

While the creative duties are the domain of songwriter/producer/lead singer Hampton and co producer/engineer/guitar player Moran, they are joined by longtime band members Emily Shirley (keys/vocals), Greg Hagen (bass/vocals) and newest member Danny Piccuiro (drums/samples).

Noëlle and André met at a club in their then-home of San Francisco and it was love at first sight. Their personal and artistic chemistry flowed abundantly, so playing together came naturally and they quickly landed song placements and slots opening for everyone from Wilco, Chris Isaak and Pat Benatar to the great Bob Dylan on top of being featured in the very first iTunes commercial along with Iggy Pop, Jeff Tweedy, Ziggy Marley and Aimee Mann. Though the duo had considerable success playing their own brand of Americana both in California and their adopted hometown of Austin, where

they moved in the early 2000s, Hampton yearned to create music inspired by her 70s/80s pop leanings and so The Belle Sounds was born in 2013. The band released an eponymous first album, then the EP Black Stone, followed by 2018's The Sea Within. The recent releases are introspective journeys through Hampton's inner psyche. "The difference between our woes and other professions is that we get to write our anger, sadness, love, fear and everything else into song. It's the best therapy ever." Praise for the group's new sound began to roll in, including admiration for their "brilliant atmospheric guitar soundscapes" (Austin American Statesman) and "soaring synths and vocal harmonies" (Glide Magazine).

Instead of taking a breather during the pandemic, Hampton dove deep into creating music, culminating in the release of 12 singles, compiled into a Bandcamp album titled, Stay Alive- The 2020 Singles. She took advantage of the extra time and isolation the lockdown provided to work on her production skills which led to the band's more current glossy alt pop sound. Tapping into André's years of engineering and production experience, the couple fine tuned each track, showing once again what great chemistry can do. Multiple videos followed, including the stunning animation/live concept video collaboration with local musician/visual artist Seela Misra for their single, "NOW YOU SEE ME" and a dazzling roller skating collaboration with Sarah Haywood for the "ALL ABOUT LOVE" video. They collaborated again in 2022 with Seela for a beautiful animated video for "UNSPOKEN."

With a history rich with accomplishments and growth under their belts, the band looks forward to 2023 and beyond, as they continue to develop their evocative sound and get back into live shows. A brand new 6 song EP will be released this Spring.