

# voice moves Austin in sold-out show

*Singing artist masters back-and-forth banter with huge local base*

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A cold front followed native New Yorker Regina Spektor into town Friday night. Luckily, she was prepared to heat up Antone's with her vocal prowess and keen musicianship. Hordes of people clustered together in the dimly-lit venue, awaiting a sold-out show for a songstress gracing Austin with her presence for the first time in her career.

The second Spektor could be seen from the crowd, an eruption of cheers and applause rolled out like her own red carpet. She took the stage alone, picked up a microphone and sang "Ain't No Cover" a cappella. After she finished, Spektor sat down at her piano to play "Summer In The City." She stopped after the first verse to ask a man standing near her who had been loudly disruptive, to please stop "accompanying" her, and rolled right back into the song as the audience laughed and applauded her strength.

For the unfamiliar, "Summer In The City" was a perfect song to introduce Spektor's voice, which overflows with weeping passion. It is strong and clear as a bell, and her range is remarkable. "Flowers," a desperate song about holding onto memories after a failed relationship, followed, and the sold-out

audience ate it up.

One man yelled a request to Spektor, offering her five dollars if she were to play it. His request, "Statue," is a tune about the polarizing power of religion: "All the non-believers get to eat dirt/ And believers get to spit in their graves."

After she had played the song, Spektor was given her five dollars, though she threw it out to the audience later in the set. This kind of back-and-forth banter occurred between the audience and Regina throughout the night. She commented, "This is turning into a question-and-answer session!"

During "Poor Little Rich Boy," Spektor played her keyboard with one hand, and with the other, used a drumstick to beat a chair. Her ability to master dueling and intricate rhythms was dazzling.

After a song called "That Time," in which Spektor accompanied herself on guitar, her full band joined her onstage and kicked off "On The Radio." The audience participation for this and other songs was high, with synchronized claps and a chorus of voices. In fact, during "Sailor Song," Spektor forgot her own words, so audience members helped her fill in the blanks.

Other songs from Spektor's set that stood out included the epic "Apres Moi," the light show-friendly "Edit," and "Carbon Monoxide," which brings to mind Fozzie Bear from the Muppets because of the way Spektor plays with the word *walk*: "As I walk-a, walk-a, walk-



Regina Spektor

Native New Yorker Regina Spektor performed a sold-out show at Antone's Friday, her first career performance in Austin.

a/ Walk you home."

Spektor took the stage alone for most of her encore, which included a vaudeville-like, bar-friendly song, "Field Below," the fluid "Us" and "Samson," about a comfortable relationship with a lover. For the closer, entitled

"Hotel Song," the entire band came back to hug the audience with sound before heading back out into the frigid city.

Regina Spektor is a wordsmith, joker, sweetheart and passionate young woman with a huge voice to match her talent.

For her to never have visited Austin before, her local base is large and incredibly dedicated, proving how special she truly is. She is an artist with the capacity to move people, which is a special treat to be embraced and cherished wherever found.