



By **Stephanie King**

It has taken me a while to warm to MGMT's latest album, *Congratulations*. After the immediacy of 2008's *Oracular Spectacular*

, on first listen the new LP sounded like a mushy, self-indulgent stew of swirly, proggy soundscapes, which, despite my concerted efforts, failed to reveal any buried gems.

Andrew VanWyngarden's squeaky vocals sounded disappointingly whiny, and while others praised MGMT's rich, multi-textured song-writing, their hazy sound just put me to sleep.

Thankfully I persevered, and, if you concentrate and use good speakers, parts of the new songs have flashes of beauty.

However, I'm not going to write about any of those. Like the philistine I am, my favourite track is a silly homage to Brian Eno. VanWyngarden has described it as "kind of a vampire-punk-rock song about finding Brian Eno in a cathedral in Transylvania. He's like a dark wizard."

With goofy B-movie instrumentation that recalls [The B-52s](#) at their trashiest and [Sparks](#) at their most ridiculous, MGMT's

[Brian Eno](#) is a silly, super-charged pop-punk track about being haunted by the brilliance of you-know-who.

The song hurtles along at a heart-stopping pace with freak-show organs, spitting drums and jingle-jangle guitars as it charts Eno's creepy, Svengali-esque hold over its narrator. A sleazy lounge-show middle-eight sounds like it could have been lifted from an especially sinister moment in [The League of Gentlemen](#), bleeding into a false ending, before – Boo! – those breakneck hooks are back.

The childish sing-along chorus, backed by echoing, joyful vocals is irresistible: "I can tell that

*he's kind of smiling, but what does he know? (what does he know?), We're always one step behind him, He's Brian E-no (Brian E-no), Brian Eno (Brian E-no)"*

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And who says flippant pop tunes aren't influential? After repeat listening to this, I'm not sure I'll ever pronounce Brian's name again without teasing out the 'E' and stressing the 'no'.

The live version posted here (on BBC 6 Music... c'mon, please can we keep it Auntie, *please?*) is even better. The song rattles to its end, backed by weirdly elegiac piano chimes at odds with the fairground pantomime of the song, before dissolving into a cranked-up guitar solo, yelps, yawls and screams, and what sounds like a Wurlitzer sliding down a helter-skelter. Daft? Yes. Disposable? Yes. Fun? Big yes.

While I'd never be so impolite as to boo MGMT for refusing to play [Kids](#), I'm afraid I won't apologise for liking them at their tightest, poppiest and most playful. Whimsy is all well and good, but sometimes, all a girl wants to do is knock back another rum and coke and do the [mashed potato](#)

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Heck, if I want something avant-garde and challenging, I'll listen to [Brian Eno](#) .