



By **Stephanie King**

With its booming drums, drilling guitars and echoey production, Emily Haines' uber-girlie voice brings together the perfect combination of noisy guitars and candyfloss vocals in Metric's [Help I'm Alive](#)

There is more than a touch of Nina Persson's flirtatious snarl from late-90s [Cardigans](#) when Haines sings *you're going eat me alive*, and a climbing lead-in to the song's catchy chorus, *beating like a hammmmer*, rolls out those 'm's to their full, lip-puckering potential.

Okay, so it's not the most groundbreaking song I've ever heard; in fact, with its stubborn lack of either orchestra or synths and a die-hard reliance on the minimum number of chords it sounds

like an early 90s relic. The chord-heavy strumming and snarling Frank Black guitars recall [The Pixies](#)

at their most radio friendly, while the fact that in her huskier moments Haines' voice definitely has shades of Kim Deal only reinforces the song's pre-grunge feel. I only wish Metric had been around 15 years ago, as they would have answered all my pre-teen musical prayers.

It's so refreshing to hear a pop-rock track which doesn't feature a [whining man-boy](#) , acoustic guitars and manufactured pianos. And while we're on the subject, I'm sick of [60s-throwback girl pop](#) and wish all those Kate Bush try-hards would cool it with all the marimbas and harps and whatever.

Plus, I've missed seeing bands that are actually that, and not just a set of apparently expendable session musicians known as "the machine" propping up a solo artist who takes all the glory at the front. [You know who you are](#) .

I'm delighted bands are still making this kind of unpretentious, hormonal love song, although Metric had to extricate themselves from their record deal to release *Fantasies*. This seems barmy, as *Help*
I'm Alive

is nothing if not commercial. Like

[Cannonball](#)

by The Breeders, it relies on a couple of killer hooks exploited to exhaustion, so the entire song

is constructed around a driving chorus and an upbeat, stupidly simple alternation between a handful of chords, with the verses acting like middle-eights or lead-ins to the main hook.

When matched with the way Haines semi-speaks and semi-coos *Help I'm alive, my heart keeps beating like a hammer* treading that spine-tingling line between tough and fragile, the effect is sexier than a cage-ful of [Shakiras](#).

Help I'm Alive has been kicking around for a while, but with the release of the deluxe edition of 2009's *Fantasies* next week, now seems the perfect time to spread the joy to anyone who missed it first time around. If you love this as much as you should, Metric are playing London next week and tickets are still available. Grab them while you can.