Little Dark Age

Artist: MGMT
Non-Airable Tracks: 3, 10
Label: Columbia Records

In 2013, MGMT released their third album, self-titled, which divided fans and critics. Afterwards, the band went on a four-year hiatus and only began to release new music again back in October. Now, MGMT is back with their long-awaited fourth studio album, Little Dark Age. The question that may be on everyone’s minds is: was it worth the wait? After listening to this album, I think it most certainly was.

The album opens up with “She Works Out Too Much,” a song that is just as energetic as the title suggests. The quirky downers, mixed instrumentation, exercise samples, and hyperactive bassline gives the track its own chaotic charm that makes it irresistible. This song also provides an ironic contrast to the rest of the songs, which have more of a chill vibe to them, successfully conveying the protagonist’s message.

Just as the album suggests, it has its dark moments every once in a while; a good example is the third song “When You Die.” Unlike the two songs before it, this track relies more on guitars rather than synths. The lyrics are also colder, with talks of suicide. The composition also becomes wonky near the middle, and samples sardonic laughs, further complimenting the twisted nature of the song. Just because the album may have “dark” in the title, does not necessarily mean that there are no lights at the end of the tunnels. “Me and Michael” is a great example. It is a heartfelt song about friendship, the good times and the bad; and it may even hint to a little more than that (but that will be up to the listeners). The track’s upbeat sound is brilliantly crafted with bells, chimes, and other kinds of joyous synths. The lyrics are also very relaxing, and do a great job conveying visual representation.

Near the album’s closing, there are two songs that really stick out in terms of high-quality composition and production. “One Thing Left To Try” is a song about not giving up, not wanting to die, accompanied by a tasteful array of 80s synths, and an infectious beat. “When You’re Small” is a song about being powerless, not being able to rise above, and the way it is produced actually makes it seem like the listeners are shrinking in the evolving musical environment.

Overall, Little Dark Age is extremely well produced, well thought out, and was well worth the wait! Definitely recommend this album!

(5/5)

Sounds Like:
Animal Collective
Sounds Like:
Peter Bjorn and John

Recommended Tracks:
She Works Out Too Much: A track that’s just as energetic and fun as it is quirky. (5/5)
Me and Michael: A heartwarming song about friendship with imaginative lyrics and melodies. (5/5)
One Thing Left To Try: An upbeat, energetic track that has an 80s vibe and infectious beat. (5/5)
When You’re Small: A song about being powerless, accompanied by ingenious production that makes it seem like the listener is actually shrinking. (5/5)

Name: Nick Ramos
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- Alt [1]
- Psychedelic Pop [2]
- synth-pop [3]
- [4]