

ALBUM REVIEW

# Fitz and the Tantrums – Self-Titled Album Review

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**Warner Music Canada**

*By Calvin Barr*



The third album in a set of tri-yearly releases from **Fitz and The Tantrums** makes a noticeable shift from the very soul-derived style from some of their previous work to a more pop-inspired collection. Those who remember the bigger hits like “Fools Gold” and “The Walker” from 2013’s “More Than Just a Dream” may agree. But as **Gwen Stefani, Taylor Swift**, or any other musician who has become more pop-oriented during their career may tell you, a meticulously crafted alteration of style can yield some great tunes, backed by high enthusiasm from fans. I’d imagine that anyone who enjoyed dancing it out to **Fitz** before will be a fan of this release.

The application of pop sounds throughout the album isn’t overwhelming, overdone, or conventional, but rather adds a fresh energy to the band’s signature electro-soul style. As in the previous albums, vocals, percussion, keyboard, and saxophone are the driving instruments, as opposed to a lead guitar. The danceable qualities behind the music are largely due to the faster, pattern-oriented beats, as well as the generally relatable, romantic, and carpe diem lyrics.

“Burn it Down” has a mildly atonal feel that’s a bit reminiscent of **Bastille**’s chart-topper, “Pompei.” A thudding bass in the background sounds almost mystical, which works wonderfully with the powerful duet between lead vocalists, **Michael Fitzpatrick** and **Noelle Scaggs**. “Fadeback,” sounds little more **Daft Punk**-like, mixing an electro-80s vibe with hip-hop-adjacent lyrics. It may be the catchiest and most pop-oriented song on the album.

“Handclap,” possibly metaphor for would-be lovers looking for a way to kill time on Friday night (or whatever), delves more into the realm of momentary experiences, by going over a narrative

of circumstances, rather than specific emotions. “Complicated,” on the other hand, blatantly refers to the struggle of emotional snags in a casual relationship. However, it carries a jaunty but laissez-faire attitude about the circular nature of the romantic entanglement. If you listen closely enough, you can hear the first few notes in ‘Ring Around the Rosy.’”

The album’s strength is that while the songs are stylistically similar, the different paces, moods, poetry, and possible meanings give each track their own substance. They each have the potential to inspire one to dance around the kitchen, or take a long, introspective walk on a starry night. It’s definitely worth checking out, whether you’ve listened to their previous work or not.