

“One Another” are insidious earworms.

Here, his dopey melodies are enhanced by more synths than before, their warped sounds harkening back to *Salad Days* standout “Chamber of Reflection.” He has fun with an old Roland CR-78 drum machine, which he doesn’t just set to pitter-patter but milks for its lo-fi quirks. “Baby You’re Out” is particularly delightful in how a sort of tinny synthesized pop adds carbonation to the otherwise conventional acoustic-guitar landscape. His distinctive electric guitar tone—sort of like Vini Reilly soaked in vegetable oil—is largely absent here. But in the interim between records, he seems to have spent his wads of touring money on new toys.

Does all of this distract from the pathos of the record? No, because he’s not necessarily going for pathos. Making sad music comes naturally to any musician who’s thinking sad thoughts, and as powerful as some of these songs are, it doesn’t seem like DeMarco’s going out of his way to make a stark statement of personal anguish. He doesn’t let his pain elevate his art into the realm of capital-A Art. He’s just making a Mac DeMarco album within his present mindset, so we end up with a great pop record that’s just a little sadder and world-wearier than what’s come before.

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Captured Tracks
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