

# ANGLES

(Album, 2011)

Album by The Strokes  
Review by James Madden

It is hard to believe that The Strokes debuted quintessential garage rock album *Is This It* ten years ago. It has been five years since their last combined effort *First Impressions of Earth* was released, with solo projects emanating from most of the band members in the interim. Now, the band is back with *Angles* and brings forth a piece that seems to team their original garage rock sound with some slicker sounds from *Room on Fire*—and *First Impressions*.

*Angles* opens with “Machu Picchu,” which apart from sounding like a Pokémon song, begins with the very appropriate lyric “I’m holding your patience to the test” and works well as the album’s first bookend. However, lead single “Under Cover of Darkness” is easily the greatest cut on the album. A love song about loss, the song hits home with potent lyrics in between rocking guitar riffs. “Gratification” has a similar rock vibe, as does “Metabolism,” which has a sound reminiscent of “Reptilia” from *Room on Fire*.

“Two Kinds of Happiness” opens with an eighties beat and rhythm, however the chorus combats this relaxed progression with a double-timed energy. Perhaps the blackest sheep of the album is “You’re So Right,” which has a darker and mellower energy

and a rather repetitious riff and melody in the verses. “Call Me Back” also sees a mellow sound, but contrasted with a much better chorus. “Life is Simple in the Moonlight” closes the album with this similarly smooth feel, appropriately acting as the second bookend.

Energy is picked up with “Taken for a Fool,” which features a great bass line within the verses as the lyrics lament over a gullible person(s), adding speculation queries with “I hope this goes well on the toxic radio.” “Games” hears a rather electric opening with a synth dance vibe. This sound lessens within the verses, but reappears in the chorus with the repeated lyric of “Living in an empty world.”

*Angles* sees The Strokes emerging with a matured sound with some familiar guitar riffs. With only ten tracks, *Angles* clocks in at just less than 35 minutes. Thankfully, frontman Julian Casablancas’s vocals are a few pitches higher than his last recorded solo effort, Nick Valensi’s lead guitar solos sound better than ever, and Albert Hammond Jr.’s rhythmic guitar, Nikolai Fraiture’s bass and Fab Moretti’s drums all tie the sound together with great skill.