

of Montreal brings colorful theatrics to The Grey Eagle

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Kevin Barnes lifts the ends of his scarlet chiffon caftan high above his head as giant grim reapers, girls with whips and cauliflower aliens with beady, neon eyes swoop across the stage, twirling amongst each other in a deliberately uncoordinated dance.

Confetti fills the air out of the mouth of what appears to be a velvet dragon and rains upon the audience, enchanted with the visual and aural feast that pours forward from The Grey Eagle's intimate and dimly lit stage on the evening of Sept. 16.

It was, in short, a typical of Montreal show.

The night started on a predictable but also unpredictable note, in the sense that there were bad opening acts precluding the dynamic headliners. Australian comedian with a lethargic sense of humor and the rather unmelodic duo of Showtime Goma and Nancy Feast graced the stage with discordant harmonies beforehand.

After the crowd unleashed their disdain at the comedian and imbibed more alcohol, it was time to party.

"There's something artistic, aesthetically pleasing and theatrical about their performances," said Catherine Noel Thrasher, a 27-year-old musician from Greenville, South Carolina.

Barnes, the notoriously enigmatic lead singer, assumed a variety of personas throughout the band's set, including a middle-aged housewife in a peach-colored blazer and periwinkle pants and, bedecked in a cerulean silk robe, Marie Antoinette. He switched seamlessly from guitar to tambourine to simply being the ringleader of

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his own show.

"I think Kevin Barnes might be a one-man show but he definitely relies on the influence of others to change the chemistry that exists within the environment and still keep that addictive personality or quality type that appeals to his original audience," said Gilbert Bentley Jr., a 27-year-old barista from Toledo, Ohio.

Originally from Athens, Georgia, Barnes has fronted the band since 1996 and has overseen its creative evolution from a twee, jangle-pop outfit in the early 2000s to the bombastic, glam funk collective for which they are now known.

Their latest full-length album *Innocence Reaches* combines dark electro pop with psychedelic elements and features some of the band's most catchy anthems to date, including "let's relate" and "it's different for girls."

Both of these songs deal with the subject of gender, which is something that Barnes, who oftentimes performs as his transgender alter-ego Georgie Fruit, is passionate about. He said he "totally supports anybody that feels trapped in the wrong body, or feels like it's more complex than just being a man or woman."

Written and recorded primarily in Paris, Barnes escaped to the City of Light to cre-

