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Melleny Melody and the Pop Machine

Super Happy Darkness

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Upon first glance, this album looks like it would be the project of some experimental Japanese pop outfit, however Melleny Melody is a Torontonians notorious for her lounge queen persona, cartoon character voice work, and her fantastically decorated pink Cabriolet. Make no mistake - Ms. Melody is not a pop-culture poseur. The Pop Machine that accompanies her are none other than Dave Howard and Peter Jarvis, known for their DJing, remixing, and multimedia work. The music is pretty much what you would expect - kitschy dance beats with nonsensical bubbly lyrics. There is occasionally a deeper, more serious groove that sneaks in, like on "Love Shower," which dives into Roland 303 bass lines with a harder, thumping backbone. "Eight Inch Pumps" slinks along into deep house, "Cocktail Time" gets the lounge flag flying, and there are occasionally speedy break-beats, like on "401," which owes a sonic debt to the work of Fantastic Plastic Machine. I'd like to be

able to dismiss this project as a flippant, almost insulting take on Japanese pop (especially with a title like Super Happy Darkness), but this is actually a lot of fun to listen to. Granted, this style of pop-dance music has a pretty niche appeal, but hey, it worked for Dee-Lite. For those who need a little more bang out of MMPM, there is an additional remix CD, with work from other DJs including DJ Iain, who gives "Love Shower" the epic hard trance makeover. Deep and meaningful? No. Fun? Yes.
(Gay (<http://www.gayrecords.com>))

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