

Sparklehorse

Why did it take Mark Linkous five years to make his new record?

By [Rob Trucks](#) Thursday, Feb 15 2007

For all intents and purposes, [Sparklehorse](#) is [Mark Linkous](#). And yet, despite a welcome move to a western North Carolina mountaintop and noteworthy assists from [Tom Waits](#), [Danger Mouse](#) and the [Flaming Lips'](#) [Steven Drozd](#), his latest release, *Dreamt for Light Years in the Belly of a Mountain* (full of rural atmosphere and pain and served with a light psychedelic dressing), took five years to produce. We spoke with Linkous before he headed out on tour and asked him what took so damn long, exactly.

Westword: *I would imagine, living in the [Smoky Mountains](#), that oftentimes you'll walk away from the house and find a place to just sit for a while.*

Mark Linkous: Oh, yeah, definitely. I like doing that. I did that a lot as a kid growing up in the South. I spent so much time out in the woods, just walking for hours and just days. You know, summer seemed months and months and months longer when I was a kid, because I was outside in the woods every day.

Would it be a violation of nature if you took along a pen and a notebook, or maybe even a guitar? Do you do that when you go out, or is it pretty much just you and the dog, and the peacefulness shouldn't be interrupted?

Unfortunately, I need to be more disciplined about doing that. I don't do that often enough. I think I get lazy sometimes and I'd just rather watch a black-and-white movie on [Turner Classic Movies](#) and be content.

But laziness isn't the answer to "Why five years since the last record?"

No, that was more just I felt like I couldn't work, because I think I got in a real bad state of depression, and I got in this kind of void that I couldn't really get my head up out of. It's always been there, I think, since I started making records, but I was always able to keep my head above water.

It sounds damn near agonizing. Did you have any fun writing these songs? Is "fun" even in the vocabulary anymore?

They were pretty hard to write. And there were probably more songs written out of pretty bad pain than the last few records. I don't know why they came out as pop songs, but it's funny that a lot of them did. I can't really explain that.