

'Access All Areas'

The Daily Telegraph, Sydney, Australia.

If there's one record AAA insists you go out and get immediately, it's the new one from Virginia's Sparklehorse, *Good Morning Spider*. A record to match it's subtlety and intricate bliss certainly hasn't come across this desk in some time.

But that should come as no surprise. Sparklehorse's debut *Vivadixiesubmarinetransmissionplot* (hey, what are you laughing at?), was a favourite of critics around the world (NME, Rolling Stone, Vox) a couple of years ago.

The man behind Sparklehorse, the quietly spoken Mark Linkous, still gets overwhelmed at the reaction his music evokes.

"I'm still just so flattered by all of that because I never really expected it," Linkous said shyly. "That's one thing that has really helped me keep on making music and keeping it together. I've got letters from people and I just couldn't believe that one of my records could affect people the way it did. That really helped me get through a lot of bad shit."

"Some times I just sit and look at it and hold it and imagine if i was a person who didn't have anything to do with the making of it, what impression would I have? And I always feel like I would be really intrigued. If I was holding that and listening to it for the first time."

Virtually a solo artist, Linkous now makes much of his music by himself at home. With one of the tracks on the new album, *Painbirds*, he spent six months of the mixing alone.

"It's a big advantage having a little home studio, a little 16-track. I'm able to experiment and erase. Whereas a lot of records are done in a fairly sterile, proper recording studio environment and everybody's eyes are on the clock. That's like being at the dentist for me."

Linkous spent several years in minor bands in and around LA but gave that scene away in 1995 when he decided to relocate back home to Virginia and launch Sparklehorse. "Living in LA is the epitome of hype and glam and fluff," he explained. "It was really nice to just abandon all that shit and just be isolated in the country."

Linkous is hoping to bring the live version of Sparklehorse to Australia early next year. If he manages to do so, there probably won't be any AAA that week. We'll be too busy waiting outside his hotel for an autograph, mummy.