

Taken from a short feature on Sparklehorse in The Big Issue. Mark spoke to Leon McDermott.

..Sparklehorse seem to fare better on this side of the Atlantic than in The Land Of The Free.

'I think a lot of it is to do with the industry in the States. They underestimate the intelligence of Americans. Don't get me wrong, I think Americans are generally more stupid but I don't see any reason why Sparklehorse or Granddaddy, Mercury Rev, the Flaming Lips can't be popular in America. The music's not that weird - it's not ----ing polka or anything'.

...Does it not bother you that you don't get too much recognition in your own back yard?

'Well, I used to not give a XXXX. And I still don't. But it does frustrate me - not so much for my sake, but for people that I respect like Will Oldham and Mercury Rev'.

...This was the first album you recorded both clean and with a greater degree of outside help, what was that like?

'A typical day would be recording all day and then I'd spend the night erasing what I had recorded that day. I have an incredible fear of pop now, every time I write a pop song I erase it because I don't want to be embarrassed at a later date by anything put on a record'.

...What are your feelings about playing live.

'It used to be tortuous. There was something absurd about us opening for Radiohead in stadiums - we were never able to rock. Well, maybe, in a pathetic way. I still don't think I have any business being up there, trying to entertain people, but I can see it means a lot to people. So as long as it means a lot to even a very few people, I'll keep doping it'.