

There's a Star For You – RIP Mark Linkous

Posted by [Martin S Pribble](#) on March 8, 2010 in [Thoughts](#) | [8 comments](#)

“There will come a time gigantic waves will crush the junk that I have made. When the moon explodes or floats away I'll lose the souvenirs I've saved. La la la.” - Sparklehorse, [Sunshine](#) from “Good Morning Spider” -1998



Mark Linkous

Imagine a universe which was at the same time incredibly oppressive and overwhelmingly beautiful at the same time, where sex, death and insects each hold a special place of power, where horses symbolise the strength of loneliness, angels are the mothering of a loved-one, where other people are both distant and close. Imagine a universe where the sunshine and the water are living beings, so beautiful and terrible as to awe and reverence. Imagine a universe with more questions than answers, where the depths of depression and the highs of jubilation walk hand in hand.

This is the universe of Sparklehorse.



Sparklehorse

I first heard Sparklehorse in 1997 on a compilation “Diversion – A Slow River Compilation”, a CD my friend Stephen had given me, with the song [“Heart Of Darkness”](#). In the context of the compilation, this song really stuck out as some of the most heartfelt and tortured music I had ever heard. Later, in 1998, Stephen also gave me a copy of “Good Morning Spider”. This album changed my life.

Listening to Sparklehorse, for me, is a place of perpetual twilight, floating on a boat in a lake at sunset, watching autumn leaves fall, sitting alone in a room listening to old scratchy 45s, the moments between waking and sleeping. The lyrics are full of opposing sentiments, and strange and surreal metaphors.

“I’m the dog who ate the birthday cake.

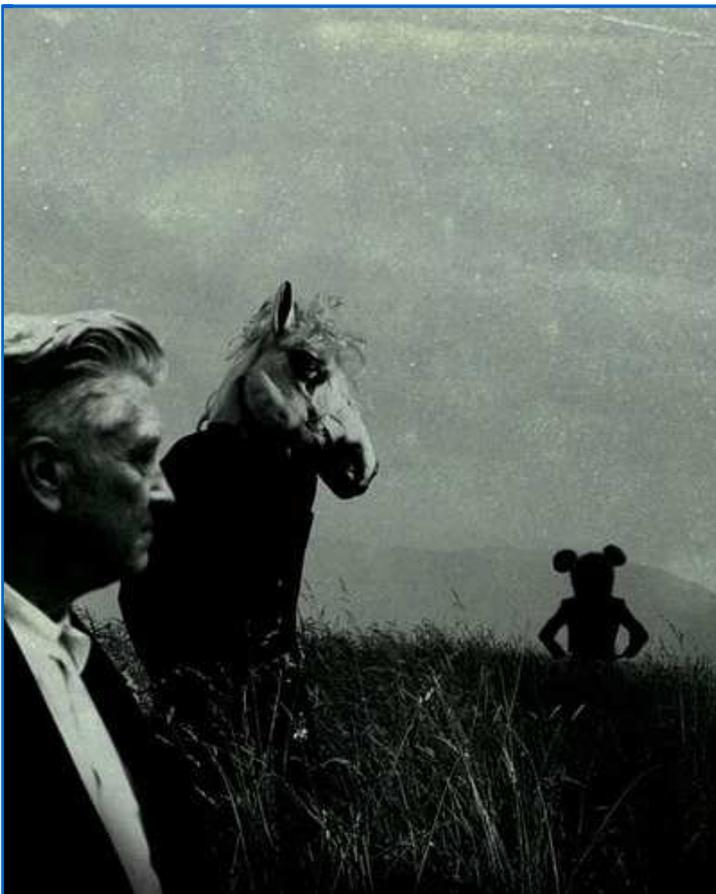
It’s a wonderful life.

It’s a wonderful life.”

- Sparklehorse, [It’s A Wonderful Life](#) from “It’s A Wonderful Life” -2001

Sparklehorse’s songs, and Mark Linkous’ lyrics, can at times be so gut-wrenchingly painful as to draw tears, at other times so beautiful and romantic as to make your heart sink, so uplifting sometimes as to cause a deep sense of belonging to the universe, and so isolationist at times as to throw you into the pits of despair, right there along with him. He lived a life of the losses of others and rallied against that with anger and defiance ([“Sick Of Goodbyes”](#) - from “Good Morning Spider” – 1998), and at other times as if reassuring a friend in need of comfort at the end of their life ([“Hey Joe”](#) - from “Good Morning Spider” – 1998, written by Daniel Johnston).

Mark Linkous collaborated with some of the best, including PJ Harvey and Tom Waits, and recently in a duet album with Dangermouse, teamed up with Frank Black, Iggy Pop, David Lynch and Wayne Coyne among others for the brilliant album [“Dark Night Of The Soul”](#). (The entire album is [available to listen to here](#).)



Dark Night Of The Soul

Mark Linkous' songwriting comes from a place deep within his tortured being. In his brilliant mind, he saw connections between things, patterns and meanings that the rest of us are unaware never know. It seems, in order for someone to make a real and profound difference in music and art, one has to live a lonely and tortured existence, one has to see the beauty, but is also intensely aware of the ugliness of the world. Mark Linkous lived this tortured existence, and, on March 6th 2010, died as a result of it.

RIP Mark Linkous. "[You are worth hundreds of sparrows](#)".