

A Tribute To A Hero: Mark Linkous

March 7, 2010 [7 Comments](#)



It was with incredible sadness this morning that I woke to read that Mark Linkous had committed suicide. Just 3 months after the tragic death of Vic Chesnutt another one of my favourite musicians has gone. It's such a sad, sad day. Whilst Vic Chesnutt was an artist who's music I really enjoyed, Mark Linkous is and always will be one of my musical hero's.

There are not many artists out there that I would say that I absolutely love. Sparklehorse would be one of the few. I owe Mark Linkous and his music so much. I mean this both as a musician and as a person. His music and in particular his debut record 'Vivadixiesubmarinetransmissionplot' was a turning point in my musical existence. It actually inspired my very early songs as a writer, which ultimately led to me writing a song called 'miss wonderland'. It's on the Kays debut EP from 4 years ago and is still a tune I am very proud of. I have to admit though, I always wanted the distorted whispery vocal on it that was so prevalent on the debut from Linkous. I never got it. I always wanted it. In fact, you just have to ask Graeme about how much I always used to want to distort my vocals, a trick that learned first from listening to and watching Sparklehorse. So yes, as a musician I was inspired by his songs. By his style. By the subtle beauty of his music.



As a person, I was moved beyond words by the wonderful music he created. Sometimes an artist comes along and you just instantly connect with the music they create. It's not very often that I become obsessed with an artist. Wilco yes. Elliott Smith yes. Tom Waits yes. Radiohead yes. Sparklehorse yes. I could listen to Mark Linkous' music on repeat without ever tiring of it. When Sparklehorse announced tours it was pretty much the same deal to me as Wilco, I had to get myself a ticket. Seeing him perform at King Tuts during his 'It's A Wonderful Life' tour is still one of my most cherished gig memories. That night everything was perfect. The venue. The crowd. The music. I never felt more alive. A wonderful gig where time stops and the only thing remaining is the connection between you and the music. Music which soundtracked your life at more than one point.

The first 2 Sparklehorse records 'Vivadixie...' and 'Good Morning Spider' are brilliant albums. Really brilliant. The 3rd 'It's A Wonderful Life' is just stunning. It really is one of my all time favourite records. Songs such as 'Gold Day', 'Apple Bed' and 'Eye Pennies' are just amazing. It features contributions from Nina Person, Tom Waits and PJ Harvey – such was the popularity of the man as a songwriter. It's an exquisite piece of music which will always have a significant place in my heart. It was number six in my top 50 albums of the past decade. It really is just brilliant and if you can get your hands on any of the 4 Sparklehorse studio albums then I highly recommend that this is the one that you choose

I'm very sad today. Vic Chesnutt's death came with great sadness. Mark Linkous' death is something far more affecting for me. Something that I know is going to linger in my mind for sometime. Mr Linkous, I know you cannot read this, I know you'll never know me, but I want you to know sir that your music has and always will be of incredible importance to me both as a musician and as a person. You touched so many with your beautiful music. I hope that you have now found peace. RIP. I will leave this post with the words of Linkous from his debut album:

sometimes I get so sad
sometimes you just make me mad

it's a sad and beautiful world
it's a sad and beautiful world

sometimes I just won't go
sometimes I can't say 'no'

it's a sad and beautiful world
it's a sad and beautiful world

sometimes days go speeding past
sometimes this one seems like the last

it's a sad and beautiful world
it's a sad and beautiful world