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## SPARKLEHORSE

It's a Wonderful Life

Listening to Sparklehorse for any length of time is like being whisked off in a hot air balloon to a magical toyshop kingdom where dinosaurs roam free and mechanical lions gently tickle your ears...

Listening to Sparklehorse for any length of time is like being whisked off in a hot air balloon to a magical toyshop kingdom where dinosaurs roam free and mechanical lions gently tickle your ears.

Well, about as close as you can get without being incarcerated in a lunatic asylum. For the fans of Sparklehorse who have been salivating since *Good Morning Spider* hit the shelves in 1998, *It's a Wonderful Life* is a worthy follow up, swirling all of the imagination-fed fireside tales and fuzzing guitars that have made this band so intriguing. And for those who haven't sampled the unique Sparklehorse storybook take on life, start salivating now.

From the gently hushed strains of the title track through to the album's aggressive peak of *King of Nails* with its spiraling descending chords and the downright surreal wig-out shaker-fest of *Dog Door*, *It's a Wonderful Life* is a listening treat from start to end, with guest appearances from PJ Harvey, The Cardigans' Nina Persson and Tom Waits. In fact, the only downside to *It's a Wonderful Life* is the worry that Sparklehorse have used all their best ideas in one record. Let's hope not.

5/5 Karl Cremin

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