

MELODY MAKER

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MUSIC

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SPARKLEHORSE
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 sparkle — like Palace
 on Codeine, claims
SHARON O'CONNELL.
 Gee up: ANNA PENA

9990
stalk to me

Here, horsey horsey



"I'm not really into speed," Mark Linkous of Sparklehorse tells me quietly. "I'm more into smelling the roses." Mark's talking about the Italian motor bike he rides around the mountain roads of his Virginia home, but it's a neat metaphor for the temper of his mostly slow, sweet and brooding songs. Imagine Palace Brothers shacking up with Codeine, chuck in a couple of Neil Young-style stormers and some short-wave radio weirdness to chop the whole thing up and you've nearly nailed Sparklehorse's debut LP, "Vivadixiesubmarine transmissionplot", which Mark describes as having "an overall sense of a television documentary, although I'm not really sure

about what, but there's some kind of spirit of a place — something dark and Southern." That won't be dazzling you until next year but, in the meantime, you can pledge your heart to the single from a band that favours lapsteel guitar, double bass and a home-built theramin — "because they're very expensive and Jon Spencer wouldn't tell us where he was renting his." Mark admits he writes most of his songs when he's in what he calls a "spirit ditch". Is he a gloomy guy, then? "Not since I started my medication," he deadpans. 'Hammering The Cramps/Too Late' is out now on Slow River