

KERRANG!
LIFE IS LOUD



Wizards Of Oz

**DIFFICULT BUT UNEXPECTEDLY BRILLIANT
COMEBACK FROM THE AUSSIE TRIO**



SILVERCHAIR YOUNG MODERN

(ELEVEN)

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SILVERCHAIR'S CAREER

has been a bewildering one – equally successful as frustrating. Hurling headlong into the spotlight at 15 when debut 'Frogstomp', then follow-up 'Freak Show', earned his band praise as 'The Australian Nirvana', singer Daniel Johns found such attention, praise and criticism hard to handle, his difficulties manifesting themselves in eating disorders and self-doubt. From here on, Silverchair's recording history was patchy, as Johns battled with expectations and severe arthritis, the band repeatedly being put on hold as he dealt with both. 'Young Modern', then, is the band's first album (their fifth in total), since they announced a hiatus in 2002 when all three bandmembers were still only 23.

Clearly, the time off, and Johns' side project work on dance band The Dissociatives, has worked wonders. Gone are their previous quiet-loud progressions, replaced by a weird vaudeville record of Beatlesque whimsy, complete with masterful orchestrations (once again courtesy of Beach Boys collaborator Van Dyke Parks) and tumbling, epic songs whose vision is so off-kilter as to be wonderfully unique. At times 'Young Modern's breezy melodies can pass as too light, the jaunty guitars too perky or the beats too buoyant but, further inspection reveals a work of much deeper artistic intent and punch. And that's the trick because this record's charms won't be released until plenty of time is spent in its company.

Daniel Johns always wanted to be taken more seriously. This time he's earned that right.

DOWNLOAD: 'Straight Lines', 'The Man That Knew Too Much'.

FOR FANS OF: Smashing Pumpkins, Muse.

TOM BRYANT