

Rolling Stone

REVIEWS NEW CDS



Silverchair

Young Modern *Eleven Music*

After five years off, former teen rockers return with a strong, mature album



IN THE MID-NINETIES, the Australian trio Silverchair was a true boy band – very young men playing strong, original hard-rock songs on their own instruments. Drummer Ben Gillies, bassist Chris Joannou and singer-guitarist-songwriter Daniel Johns are still young (in their late twenties). They are also aggressively modern in the long reach of *Young Modern*, their first studio album in five years, from the balled-fist fuzz of “Mind Reader” to the sumptuous glam of “Strange

Behaviour” (with strings scored and conducted by Van Dyke Parks) and the glassy jangle of “Waiting All Day.” Johns is just as wracked by doubt and betrayal now as he was in the iron growl and distortion-mountain rock of “Israel’s Son,” on 1995’s *Frogstomp*, and the self-loathing title track of 1997’s *Freak Show*. He’s also wiser in the ways of pop wow. In “Young Modern Station,” he fires dirty-tremolo gunfire at a disco clip. “Insomnia” is a wake-up bomb of marching metal and bright chorale. And the Beatlemania lurking in Silverchair’s early big-rock records comes out first in the solo-John Lennon-like creep of “The Man That Knew Too Much,” then in “Low,” which, with its dirty-angel-army harmonies and the diamond-wire whine of a slide guitar, sounds like early-Seventies George Harrison – high on teen spirit. DAVID FRICKE