

Rolling Stone

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Lukas Graham

Lukas Graham Warner Bros.

★★★★½

Danish soul man takes us inside his hard-knock life

Balancing old- and new-school soul with Bruno Mars panache, this Danish singer's debut is a fine argument for pop optimism. His string-buoyed hit "7 Years" collapses Joni Mitchell's "The Circle Game" into the Beatles' "When I'm Sixty-Four" for a life-journey meditation. "Drunk in the Morning" is a piano-and-brass-driven booty call conjuring both Drake and Chicago's "Saturday in the Park." Even the album's Auto-Tune hollers come off like heart-warming oldies gestures. On the choir-powered "Funeral," he cautions that "everyone I know better be wasted" at his, remaining adorably earnest even beyond the grave.

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