

CD REVIEWS



YOUNG MODERNS: Silverchair's fifth album shows growth and maturity from the Australian band. Photo/Martin Philbey

ROCK

Silverchair's eye-opener

Silverchair: *Young Modern* (Sony/EMI).

All of 15 when they recorded their 1995 debut, Silverchair takes a huge leap forward in artistry and sophistication with their fifth long player, *Young Modern*.

Those who haven't heard much from the band since the breakout hit *Tomorrow* — a radio favorite in 1995 — should prepare for a real eye-opener. Lead singer, guitarist and songwriter Daniel Johns' eloquent and passionate vocals are a far cry from his pubescent, nasal wailing, and compliment complex arrangements and crack rhythm from bassist Chris Joannou and drummer Ben Gillies.

Only the pulsating title track serves as a bona fide hard rock song, with a majority of the disc relying on acoustic guitars, piano and orchestration courtesy of Beach Boys and U2 collaborator Van Dyke Parks. Highlights include a diverse three-part suite in *Those Thieving Birds*, the light touch of *Reflections of a Sound* and *All Across the World*, and the sweetly romantic *Waiting All Day*.

With soft piano that builds into a baroque pop delight, the soaring and contagious lead single *Straight Lines* affirms just how far Silverchair has come over the last decade. It might be time for an American audience to rediscover them.

— JOHN KOSIK
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