



Get tangled up in *Tangalooma*

REVIEW
By NOEL MENGEL

THE local, by definition, should be familiar. But you've probably never heard south-east Queensland sounding quite so strangely colourful as it does on the psychedelic summer haze of the debut album from the John Steel Singers.

It's called *Tangalooma*, which is a locality on Moreton Island. But judging by those horse-headed creatures swimming in the shallows on the cover, John Steel Singers like to mess with your local reality.

And the music inside might come as a surprise to anyone who only knows the band from their cheeriest pop clothes on Triple J-favoured songs like *Strawberry Wine*. "We knew we wanted to make an album that would be a grower," explains the band's Tim Morrissey.

"Some people might have been expecting an album with 12 songs like *Strawberry Wine*, but I prefer to think of people giving it time, finding them something that will stay with them so they can discover different aspects of it.

"Here we have the time to explore the quieter parts of the band, the songs that might have been put to one side when you are focused on putting together a tight five-track EP."

Those quieter moods prove to be just as essential as their sunny pop moments, especially on the epic beauty *Sleep*, which closes the album.

You can tell you're listening to an interesting band when it's difficult to explain just what or who they sound like.

"We're in our mid-20s, and as you mature you have a wider palette of music to draw from as influences," says band mem-

ber Scott Bromiley.

"You come to it with a different perspective when you are older," says Morrissey. "We don't kid ourselves we would sell a million records or anything like that."

What they want, rather, is to sound like themselves and see how far that can take them.

They've been exploring a wider palette of sounds, from Brian Eno through to art-noise Brit veterans Wire, and had Robert Forster of The Go-Betweens to guide them along the path to *Tangalooma* as producer.

The album's lyrics took inspiration from Ernest Becker's book *Denial of Death*, for which the premise is that civilisation is ultimately an elaborate defence mechanism against the knowledge of our mortality.

➔ **Tangalooma is out now.**





Berried treasures

FOR ages, Sunny Ridge Strawberry Farm has been among the cream of Australia's growers.

Last week it took another luscious bite of success when it was named the National Australia Bank Agribusiness primary producer of the year.

Started by the Gallace Family 40 years ago, Sunny Ridge has spanned three generations to become one of Australia's pre-eminent strawberry growers. More than eight million punnets of the strawberries are packed at the Main Ridge property every year, many of them making their way on to shelves at major supermarkets.

Director Mick Gallace said the award was a positive measure of performance for the company. "We are passionate about the products we grow and I have dedicated my working life to finding the best strawberry varieties in the world."

The award is judged on community leadership, innovation, sustained long-term growth and an understanding of supply chains and customers. The accolade is the culmination of a successful year for the Gallace family. Son Mathew's Rebello Wines 'Strawbellini' entry at the San Francisco International Wine



Berry good: Sunny Ridge strawberry farm is a popular peninsula attraction.

Competition was awarded a double gold medal and was in the top five in the open sparkling category.

The public can pick Sunny Ridge strawberries at the farm from November to April.

For more information visit www.sunnyridge.com.au