

Pop history suggests that superb song making can occur if hormones and harmonies mix at just the right time. Take Annie Lennox, for instance, whose 1992 postpartum pop disc *Diva* was groundbreaking. Or the recordings made during 'Little' Stevie Wonder's golden but awkward period in the early '60s. The latest in well-crafted pubescent pop comes from teenaged Canadian **KYLE RIABKO**. Riabko's reputation for being the youngest old soul singer in Saskatchewan emerged at the tender age of 11, when he began performing live in his hometown of Saskatoon. Now, at 16, Riabko has already paid some dues, spending the past two years sharing the stage with the likes of Fefe Dobson and the venerable John Mayer. Recently, the talented teen released his first EP, a *début* so far from immature that he could be mistaken for a pop veteran. The seven-track disc offers a sophisticated fusion of R&B, jazz and velvety soul that brings to mind pros such as Prince and fellow Canuck Remy Shand. From the cucumber-cool crooning of "Waiting" to the sweltering ballad "Half as Much," the only song that hints at his age is the hormone-hefty "Estrogen," where Riabko playfully whines "gimme, gimme, gimme some ladies." ~ ELIO IANNACCI

