

# BULLIT

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## **CANTINERO** **CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING** **Artemis/Rykodisc**



Even though singer-songwriter Cantinero – alias Chris Hicken – lives in New York, his Britishness is written through

him like a stick of seaside rock. 'So Low' starts off with a lot of Keane-style earnest piano and vocals in a torch song vein but a slurred guitar here and there shows he doesn't share their particular aversion to the six stringed plank of wood. 'I'd like to know you but I don't know how to' warbles Chris on 'The Machine' but it's somehow endearing rather than face-slappingly drippy. Maybe it's due to the fact that there are so many layers that have gone into making this record that it's very difficult to get bored. One minute he's pouring his heart out in an epic piano-heavy ballad, the next he's rapping in a Yello-style ('Tuesday') - with the overall effect being like a glorious gloopy mish mash of all your favourite flavours rolled into one. Occasionally, you find your attention drifting (as on the overblown 'Jesus Loves You') but mostly he weaves a little glimpse of magic to bring you back around – such as during the whirling waltz of 'Astronaut' and the acoustic-yet-strangely-funky 'Beautiful Mistakes'.

Too many singer-songwriters stick rigidly to one kind of song, but fair play to Cantinero for trying his hand at a bit of everything. If it sometimes misses the mark, he's had fun trying and you've enjoyed listening to him along the way, too.

**Becky Ross**