

Retribution Gospel Choir

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SUB POP

Slowcore vets satisfy their need for speed

In recent years, slowcore pioneers Low have forcefully shaken their defining somberness and dabbled in what actually might be called rock. So it wasn't a total shock in 2008 when singer-guitarist Alan Sparhawk formed Retribution Gospel Choir—essentially Low minus angel-voiced wife/drummer Mimi Parker—to canoodle with more classic sounds. What's more surprising is how naturally he's made the shift. The band's second album gets a bit hackneyed at times (bar-rockin' trifle "White Wolf"), but Sparhawk generally seems re-energized, channeling Crazy Horse ("Poor Man's Daughter") and crafting the sort of genuinely rousing chorus ("Hide It Away") that Low never would've indulged. *JOSH MODELL*

