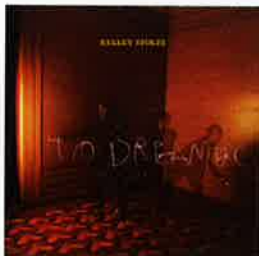


SNAP JUDGMENTS



ALBUM
KELLEY STOLTZ:
TO DREAMERS
(Sub Pop)

Over the past decade, Kelley Stoltz has proven adept at re-creating—and weaving together—'60s garage rock, '70s psychedelic folk, and '80s post-punk. On his fifth LP (not counting a song-for-song cover version of Echo & the Bunnymen's 1980 *Crocodiles*), the San Francisco musician narrows his focus. Yes, there are still pretty, mournful acoustic numbers, such as "Pinecone," and blazing, synth-heavy new-wave tunes, such as "Keeping the Flame." But for the most part, Stoltz keeps his way-back machine dialed to 1965, aiming for when bands like San Jose's Count Five concocted bristling pop inspired by the Rolling Stones and the Kinks. Perhaps working with local garage acts Sonny & the Sunsets and the Fresh & Onlys has influenced Stoltz, because *To Dreamers* is his most straightforward, guitar-centric album yet. The giddy blues number "Little Girl" and the horn-driven "I Like, I Like" feel utterly, deliriously live, while Stoltz finds the perfect balance between serrated snarls and goofy romanticism in his cover of Big Boy Pete's 1965 cult classic "Baby I Got News for You." Having already demonstrated his love of Brian Wilson on previous albums, Stoltz now displays his appreciation for Kinks frontman Ray Davies—with stunning results. **A**

DAN STRACHOTA