

BLURT

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Best Kept Secret

FOR KELLEY STOLTZ, IT WAS ONE FINDING ANOTHER.

KELLEY STOLTZ IS NOT normally big on covers. In fact, you'd have to go all the way back to his one-off 2001 CD *Crock-A-Dials*, a tribute to his beloved Echo & the Bunnymen, to find much in the way of other people's songs in Stoltz's catalogue. His own five full-lengths are full of *allusions* to older songwriters—Beatles, Kinks, Beach Boys and others—but freshened up and touched with a sweet, faintly goofy intelligence that is all Stoltz's own.

That's why it's so surprising that *To Dreamers*, Stoltz's sixth album (Sub Pop), has a cover right at its heart. The song "Baby, I've Got News for You," was written by Pete Miller, a *Nuggets*-era rocker, who ended up playing guitar for Stoltz on the track.

"It was just such an incredible song," Stoltz remembers, explaining that his Australian guitar player Mike Young had turned him onto it. "Mike and I couldn't

believe it was really from 1965. There were elements of Troggs, but then other parts that sounded so advanced. We thought maybe it was an internet hoax... somebody from now putting on a 1960s persona."

Through the internet, Stoltz began putting Miller's story together. "He had recorded with Joe Meek in the 1950s and played 130-odd shows with the Beatles," said Stoltz. Even odder, it turned out that Miller had moved to San Francisco in 1970. He had opened a recording studio and recorded early Bay Area punks like the Avengers.

Stoltz tracked Miller down and started bugging him, finally getting him to sit in when he recorded "Baby I Got News for You" for his new album. "He's a real inspiration, still making records of his stuff and popping out new songs and ideas," said Stoltz. "He's still chasing his muse." JENNIFER KELLY