

diw

MAGAZINE

Scott Walker

THE DRIFT

(4AD)



Using a slab of raw bacon as a percussion instrument invites superficial readings, but the decade-in-the-making catharsis of *The Drift* forbids such interpretations. Forgotten pop idol Scott Walker is even more uncompromising than on 1995's avant-garde *Tilt*. He expertly wields clumps of sound to underscore the horror of his meditations and deprive listeners of any comfort in the familiar. The only touchstone in this bleak landscape is Walker's voice, still boyish at age 63, and floating operatically above the fray. As harsh and difficult as it may be, *The Drift* is often too successful. The traumatic "Jesse," Walker's conflation of Sept. 11 and Elvis's dead twin, is unnerving enough that it becomes, paradoxically, like a good comedy record: a complete statement you don't need to hear twice. **B- DAN LEROY**