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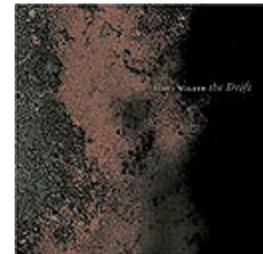
Scott Walker, The Drift

★★★★★ (4AD)

David Peschek
 Friday May 5, 2006
[The Guardian](#)

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The Drift is like little else in music. The melodic austerity, somewhere between plainsong and operatic recitative, may shock fans of Walker's lush 1960s records but, gloriously, The Drift is a record that demands a lot of work and repays tenfold. Bleak, haunting and disturbed, there is narrative here, but it is fragmented, wrapped in allusion, and both bolstered and distorted by games played with the very shapes and sounds of words. The music wheezes, thunders and clatters, continuing Walker's experimentation with chords stretched and held to breaking point. Billowing at its heart, that exquisite voice whose oddly hopeful tenor flails against the death, disease, disappointment and general evil it describes. There's not a minute of The Drift that isn't utterly thrilling. Frequently, as in the deathbed scene depicted with heart-meltingly stark elegance in A Lover Loves, it is also simple, human, and moving.

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