

**The Stratford 4**  
**Love &  
Distortion**  
Jetset Records



With the revival of England's "shoegazer" movement, the Stratford 4 have come out above all the others and delivered an album that will send you back to the record bins to find Britain's late 80s "superstar" acts while continually playing the album in your headphones. Following up their 2001 *The Revolt Against Tired Noises*, the San Francisco quartet's melancholic guitar ballads drift beyond former bandmates in Black Rebel Motorcycle Club to perfect the sound made famous by bands like My Bloody Valentine and Ride. Swirling by with the opener "Where the Ocean Meets the Eye" Stratford pulls you in with hypnotizing guitar effects and soaring vocals until the last track "Swim Into It." *Love & Distortion* pours animosity in a poppy sort of fashion with NY grittiness and UK swank. Highlighting the album is the autobiographical "Telephone" in which lead singer Chris Streng sings about calling his mother and asking if it's okay to sit at home listening to records and getting stoned. After telling him that it depended on what he was listening to she blurts back, "when I was 22, I was a lot like you," then tells him not to forget Dylan and the Stones.

— Dan Marek

THE STRATFORD 4

