

## **ACL review: Delta Spirit**

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The onset of fall is simply a rhetorical conceit in this neck of the woods. So the music of Delta Spirit, as the sun began its seemingly imperceptible descent behind the Austin Ventures stage, was entirely in keeping with the climate—a parting shot of summery indie pop and country-inflected rock.

No strangers to Austin (they took a moment to plug their upcoming Thanksgiving gig at Emo's), the San Diego-based quintet had a bigger canvas to paint on than their customary local club gigs afford. Changing between instruments as the songs demanded, the group set up a rolling thunder of guitars, two-fisted keyboards and floor toms that alternated with more nuanced pop and confessional songwriting.

One common denominator in the musical checkerboard were the forceful vocals of frontman Matthew Vasquez (particularly as vocalists often represent the Achilles heel of even the most high-flying indie groups.) Multi-instrumentalist Kelly Winrich and drummer Brandon Young also stood out during this particular set.

Delta Spirit has drawn comparisons to Drive-By Truckers and the Waterboys (Reckless Kelly might represent the local template). But their multi-instrumental versatility, strong vocals and infectious presentation, at least to these eyes and ears, set them apart.

Songs like “Streetwalker” and “People Turn Around” painted a dour lyrical picture juxtaposed against exuberant melodies, while “Trashcan” (which, like the previous titles, derives from their sole 2007 release), with its irresistible, percussive piano line, was clearly a crowd favorite.