

THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY

GUARDIAN

MAY 7, 2008

STEBMO _Stebmo _(Southern Lord)

Stebmo — a mostly instrumental, partly jazz project overseen by Seattle session keyboardist Steve Moore — opens like an Imax film. Panoramic piano chords create a brief tableau before the band cuts to a loping groove. Crunchy guitars and earthy string pads glide past the edges of the frame. What follows — with pop allusions roaming from "Linus and Lucy" to Radiohead's *Kid A* (Capitol, 2000) — is a concise series of inventive, meditative, and often joyful scenes, incorporating sonic and melodic exploration in equal measure. Doug Wieselman's understated banjo and clarinet refrains encapsulate the feeling of unhurried storytelling. **(Dina Maccabee)**