

REVIEWS

IGGY & THE STOOGES

**Ready to Die**

[Fat Possum]

Forty years after James Williamson last contributed to a Stooges album, the guitarist makes his presence known right away on the band's latest. Opener "Burn" uncorks with the crack of a drum and is immediately overrun with a tidal-wave riff that's loud, dirty and dangerous—everything that's always been great about the Stooges. There's plenty of that on *Ready to Die*, an album whose best moments strike that careful balance between glorious sleaze and brutish heft. Iggy Pop remains a vivid, potent frontman, drawling his lyrics over a serrated guitar part on "Job" and sneering through a pounding beat on the title track. Steve Mackay adds blasts of skronking sax to "Sex and Money" and underpins "Dirty Deal" with low, moaning accompaniment. Although *Ready to Die* isn't as powerfully raw as *Raw Power*, it's an impressive display of rock abandon from musicians old enough to know better and wise enough not to let that stop them. —Eric R. Danton

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