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Foetus

Love

Birdman

In high school, I thought Jim Thirlwell was capital-S Scary. His band names (Scraping Foetus Off the Wheel was the best-known, Foetus All-Nude Revue the funniest) were deliberately off-putting, the cover art was inexplicably creepy and the music was a bewildering mixture of electronics, martial rhythms, disjointed song structures, and full-on noise. At the time, "Death Rape 2000" (the b-side of his '85 single "Motorslug," released under the name Wiseblood and recorded with Swans leader Roli Mosmann) was the most deliberately annoying song I had ever heard: it's a one and a half second sample of a stabbing three-note synth figure, looped and repeated ad nauseam for seven and a half minutes.

These days, he makes music for cartoons (seriously, watch *The Venture Brothers*, it's awesome), and following 2001's creative rebirth *Flow*, *Love* continues the kinder, gentler trend of Thirlwell's muse. It's not that he's wimped out in any way, simply that while the songs on *Love* are no less intense — "Aladdin Reverse" is seven and a half minutes of grinding, hyper-dramatic angst in classic Foetus style — they're much more varied in their musical approach, dynamics, and arrangements. The ghostly, mostly percussionless creep of "Pareidolia" is just as wound-up as the more overtly aggressive "How To Vibrate," but it's also weirdly, unexpectedly pretty.

—STEWART MASON

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OUT OF THE W

GARBAGE - Goi

PLUS:

Ian Hunter, The Sights, Outrageous Cherry, Mardo,
Joy Zipper, Bettie Serveert, Benevento-Russo Duo,
Robert Schneider, Keane, Modest Mouse,
Jimmy Chamberlin Complex, Cruiserweight, Mia Doi Todd



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