

New direction

FOETUS KEEPS THE IDEAS FLOWING WITH NEW ALBUM

BY CHAD RADFORD

CHAD.RADFORD@CREATIVELOADING.COM

FROM THE BEGINNING of recorded history, every culture has dreaded its own myths about the end of the world. For Jim Thirlwell, the driving force behind the symphony of destruction known as Foetus, doomsday is just another day on the job. Since 1981, the Australian-born, New York City transplant has given birth to a soundtrack for Armageddon via an amalgamation of musical styles. After a six-year hiatus, Foetus has reemerged with *Flow* (Thirsty Ear), a second coming that breathes new life into Thirlwell's apocalyptic vision.

Performing under the guise of various Foetal monikers (Scraping Foetus Off the Wheel, Clint Ruin, Wiseblood), Thirlwell combines quirky industrial clatter with scorching sambas, jazz and crunching guitars. Coming of age alongside pioneering industrial acts such as Cabaret Voltaire, Einstürzende Neubauten and Throbbing Gristle, Foetus transcends the confines of industrial music by

punctuating machine-like rhythms with a heavy dose of shock value.

"The 'I' word really devalues the musicality of what I do," explains Thirlwell. "[Foetus] gets lumped in with industrial music because I'll use found instruments, but in reality I'll be a singer/songwriter with a prepared piano in one breath and an electronic artist in the next. I know these things are misconstrued by people, and it all feeds into my demented sense of humor."

With song titles like "The Only Good Christian is a Dead Christian," "Mighty Whitey" and "English Faggot," the musician's message often is misunderstood as well. But don't expect to find some spiteful, racist homophobe at the helm. Rather, Thirlwell is an artist with a sense of humor that's as twisted as his music.

"The song 'English Faggot' comes from a message left on my answering machine by a guy who wanted to beat me up," Thirlwell says. "He called me an English faggot, and being that I'm neither English nor a faggot, I found the whole thing quite amusing and wrote the song from his perspective."

With his 1995 recording, *Gash* (Sony), Thirlwell reached further into the depths of aggression and sheer loathing than ever before. See **FOETUS**, page 81



FOETUS

from page 79

sealing his apocalyptic vision in an envelope and pushing it over the edge. Shortly thereafter, his contract with Sony was terminated, and Thirlwell dropped out of public view.

Six years later, Foetus signed on with Thirsty Ear to release *Flow*. He hit the road with a lineup featuring former Swans/Unsane percussionist Vinnie Signorelli, Congo Norvell bassist Brian Emrich, Frodus guitarist Howard Pyle and keyboardist Paul Benomo. In addition, Thirlwell unveiled *Manorexia*, a new instrumental project available exclusively through his website, www.Foetus.org, as well as *Blow*, a remix album which features contributions from Kid 606, Pan Sonic and several others. Each project acts as a step in a brave new direction for Foetus.

"When you've made the ultimate statement about the end of the world, you can't keep saying, 'and another thing.' It's already been said," says Thirlwell.

"At that point, you have to take a step sideways and move on. The very title of *Flow* suggests a continuum of ideas instead of finality."

From the deluge of mechanical beats in

"Quick Fix" to the genre-bending mambo and film-noir soundscapes of "Suspect," *Flow* surges with unexpected arrangements. But the most poignant offering is *Flow*'s 13-minute climax, "Kreibabe." Cluttered distortions and unforgiving vocals conjure the brutish course of Foetus' entire body of work. As the music progresses into classical melodies that move from




Jim Thirlwell (aka Foetus)

brooding to creepy, the song takes shape as a passageway to the next step of Foetus' vision — a hellish image of what happens after the end has come and gone, and crosses into the unknown. ♦

Foetus plays the Echo Lounge on Tues., June 5. Doors open at 9 p.m., Show starts at 10 p.m. Admission is \$10.

KARAOKE



Billy's
3180 Roswell Rd. ...a tavern
"Not Quite in Buckhead" 404-365-0447

Monday	Fun!
Monday	Industry Night
Monday	KARAOKE

EVERY MONDAY
KARAOKE INDUSTRY NIGHT
DRINK SPECIALS!

EVERY TUESDAY
MARTAY'S DANCE PARTY

EVERY WEDNESDAY
AN INTIMATE EVENING WITH
HEATHER LUTTRELL

THURS: BLUES BLUES BLUES
ERIK VIEL WITH BELLUM ROSE

FRIDAY
UNPLUGGED W/ BRIAN JONES & FRIENDS

SATURDAY
UNPLUGGED W/ BRENT LUNDY & FRIENDS

Roswell Rd. ←

BILLY'S

→ Peachtree Rd.

KIO

ROXY

3180 Roswell Road • 404-365-0447

The Blue Raccoon

A Blues Bar and a Little Bit More
Live Music • Great Atmosphere • Good Food • TVs

The staff of *The Blue Raccoon* would like to
THANK YOU for making our first year a success.
Join us as we celebrate our one year anniversary!

JUNE 1-2
FRIDAY: BILL SHEFFIELD & THE RINGTAIL ROUNDERS
SATURDAY: KODAC HARRISON

Specials all weekend long!
For more info... 770-426-6400

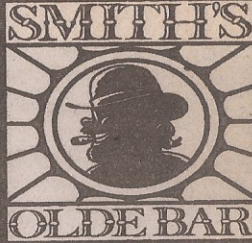


Closed Sun & Mon. Open Tues.-Sat. 4pm-close

188 Garrison Road

1 Mile South Of Marietta Square

770-426-6400



SMITH'S
OLDE BAR
A NEIGHBORHOOD JOINT

Wednesday, May 30
BROWN
SOMETHING 5
\$6
VIRGIN RECORDING ARTIST
MIRANDA LEE RICHARDS
\$6 / EARLY SHOW DOORS @ 7PM

Thursday, May 31
CD RELEASE
AN EVENING WITH
MOYE
\$6

Friday, June 1
BRADLEY COLE SMITH
STEWART & WINFIELD
\$8

Monday, June 4
ROYAL 7
ROUND
THE ELLIOT HOLDEN GROUP
\$1

Tuesday, June 5
CD LISTENING PARTY
SLANG
W/ DAVE SCHOOLS &
LAYNG MARTINE III
FREE CD W/ ADMISSION

Wednesday, June 6
JANAH
\$6

Thursday, June 7
SLOBBERBONE
RED LETTER BLONDE
ETHAN & THE EWOK
\$7 / EARLY SHOW DOORS @ 8PM

June 8 & 9
REBIRTH BRASS BAND
\$10 ADV

Sunday, June 10
BETH WOOD
\$6 / EARLY SHOW DOORS @ 7PM

Tuesday, June 12
NANYANA
\$5

Wednesday, June 13