

SOUNDBITES



Jeff Buckley and Gary Lucas
 "Songs to No One 1991-1992"
 Knitting Factory Records



Jeff Buckley had a beautiful voice.

"Songs to No One," gives the world some of the earliest recorded documents of that voice. Chronicling his work from 1991-1992 with former Captain Beefheart guitarist Gary Lucas, "Songs" includes previously altogether unreleased tracks as well as early versions of Buckley staples "Grace" and "Mojo Pin."

The quality of Buckley's voice is already becoming evident. His wails are incredibly emotive, and his still developing range, at this point, is impressive.

This album has some really good music on it, and any Buckley fan would do well to pick it up, but for the uninitiated, a better starting point would be his seminal 1994 album, "Grace."

The music on "Songs" is, for the most part, just Lucas' guitar and Buckley's voice. They get out some experi-

The chameleon

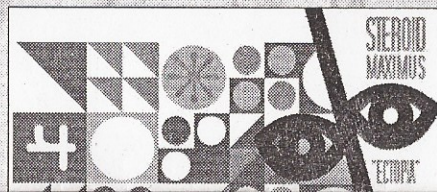


JIM THIRLWELL WILL ASSUME THE CHARACTER STEROID MAXIMUS OFF OF HIS CURRENT ALBUM 'ECTOPIA' THURSDAY NIGHT AT THE KNITTING FACTORY

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Jim Thirlwell, aka Steroid Maximus, Clint Ruin, DJ OTEFSU, Wiseblood, Baby Zizanie, Manorexia and numerous incarnations, will perform Thursday night at the Knitting Factory.



name."

Thirlwell's name-changing fetish no doubt causes confusion for fans. However, he believes it is only natural for some fans to be turned off by his stylistic variations.

"Someone who likes Manorexia might

nations centered around the name Foetus, either has a multiple personality disorder or way too much imagination for his own good.

"Different projects have different intentions," Thirlwell said. "Steroid Maximus is a different kettle of fish from Foetus. They're different entities unto themselves."

Though most popularly known as Foetus, which in itself includes names like Scraping Foetus Off the Wheel, Foetus Under Glass, and You've Got Foetus on Your Breath, Thirlwell will assume his Steroid Maximus identity for two shows, at 7:30 and 10:00 p.m., featuring arranger and trumpeter Steve Bernstein and a 19-piece ensemble at the Knitting Factory this Thursday.

A Melbourne, Australia native who moved to England in 1978, Thirlwell has dabbled in the arts of "sonic manipulation" for two decades. However, working with a 19-piece ensemble will be a new experience for him.

"A sound that was created by manipulation will be played with an instrument that is going to emulate, not necessarily that sound exactly, but the spirit of that sound," Thirlwell said. "You're getting a whole different feel."

Though most of his sound-oriented music is done in the studio, Thirlwell is no shrinking violet on stage. Don't worry about his personas getting blurred under



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The cover of Steroid Maximus' new album "Ectopia." The performance will also feature Steve Bernstein and a 19-piece ensemble.

the bright lights.

"I can't say I get the same sort of juice," Thirlwell said. "I get a certain juice when I perform with Foetus, where I've got a throbbing rock band pounding behind me. It's a totally different experience when I'm working electronic equipments with a psychedelic, hypnotic visual show behind me."

On a first listen, Thirlwell is like David Bowie on acid. Both share a penchant for adopting different names for different aesthetic purposes. However, the similarities end there, for Thirlwell is more than a musical chameleon. While Bowie transforms himself according to his ever-changing tastes, Thirlwell evolves without discarding any of his identities from the past.

"All my projects can run concurrently in different stages," Thirlwell said. "Depending on my calendar, I can work in any one day, on all of those projects. I might be planning a tour on one thing and finishing up a mix on another, then go out that night to perform under a different

not like Foetus," Thirlwell said. "Some might not like Steroid Maximus. There's a lot in me that I want to fulfill and not any one project fulfills them all."

If his long and winding road of a career is any indication, Thirlwell is unlikely to be musically fulfilled anytime soon.

"The new instrumental thing that I've created is Manorexia," Thirlwell said. "It's from a different place – a more subconscious place."

Known for creating a menacing ominous atmosphere in his music, Thirlwell has served as producer and mixer for fellow industrial rock icon Nine Inch Nails as well as Pantera, White Zombie and the Red Hot Chili Peppers. But while these artists have claimed their separate niches in the musical landscape of their times, Thirlwell continues to push forward like the technology he exploits.

"Since I started, the technology has evolved a lot," Thirlwell said. "In my humble beginnings, I was working with synthesizers and 8-track analog where I played all the instruments myself. Fifteen years ago, the sort of studio set-up that anyone can have now could cost you a million bucks. There are people making music now that couldn't be made fifteen years ago."

Steroid Maximus performs at the Knitting Factory Oct. 17 at 7:30 and 10:00 p.m. Tickets are \$25-35, \$15 for students.