

# EAR CANDY

EDITED BY JANISS GARZA

way, Tom Jones: No, we are not "Gonna Go Your Way."

As for *Tales From the Crypt*: Rollins—"Fall Guy," get over it already! Biohazard—next time, rehearse before you record. Filter—stop shopping for songs at Alternative "R" Us. And, finally, just what kind of drugs are the Melvins on, and where can I get some?

—S.L. Duff

## FOETUS: *Gash*

(Columbia) ††††

## *Null*

(Columbia) ††††

Long before Trent Reznor programmed his first aggro-industrial computer sequence, Jim Thirlwell (aka Foetus) was creating groundbreaking flurries of mechanical noise and pushing the boundaries of electronic brutality. Since 1981 he has released 12 albums and EPs, assisted on recordings by White Zombie, Cop Shoot Cop and the Swans and produced remixes by such groups as Prong, Fight, Megadeth, Pantera, Front 242, Red Hot Chili Peppers and Nine Inch Nails.

Throughout the '80s, Thirlwell was at the forefront of the caustic industrial movement, earning himself a loyal underground following. But with the '90s glut of newer, Ministry- and Nine Inch Nails-influenced outfits, the artist who started it all has been criminally overlooked. Instead of restructuring his music to remain competitive, however, Foetus has retained his unusual sense of aesthetic

pride.

His latest recordings, the *Null* EP and *Gash* album, might not exactly inspire synchronized headbanging, but they clearly demonstrate Thirlwell's tenacious and multifaceted approach to sonic demolition. *Null*, which features three versions of the "Verklemmt" single and three original tunes, is the more metallic of the two. But while the EP abounds with buzz-saw guitars, pummeling drums and howling vocals, the new songs are more epic and organic than most electro-guitar music, even though the remixes are

## FOETUS' THIRWELL



loaded with traditionally aggressive dance beats. *Gash*, on the other hand, is brilliantly experimental, mixing vaudevillian drama with industrial intensity. Influenced as much by Bertholt Brecht and Wagner as by Einstürzende Neubauten and Glenn Branca, it's the kind of record that defies definition, merging horns and strings with grinding guitars, pounding percussion and lacerated vocals.

For those only interested in blunt, formulaic thrash, *Gash* and *Null* will likely prove annoying and overindulgent, but for loud-music lovers who want to stretch their

boundaries, Foetus' new offerings provide a true aural awakening.

—Jon Wiederhorn

## TAD: *Live Alien Broadcasts*

(Futurist) ††††

There's no denying it—you haven't lived unless you've seen Tad in the flesh. Watching singer Tad Doyle sway like a wounded bull (and with as much fury), experiencing the twisted sounds that come out of Gary Thorstensen's guitar, seeing Kurt Danielson wring mercy from his bass, actually feeling Josh Sinder's drums pound inside your chest...there's nothing more exhilarating than getting a brutal dose of testosterone from these manliest of musicians.

If you've been to a Tad show, *Live Alien Broadcasts* will bring back fond memories. If you are one of the sad souls who haven't yet seen them live, put this record on your stereo, crank

