

thirsty ear



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FOETUS DEAF / ACHE

(THIRSTY EAR/OUTSIDE)

FOETUS & MARC ALMOND SLUT

(SOME BIZARRE/THIRSTY EAR/OUTSIDE)

Jim Thirlwell's one-man band started in London in the early '80s when several singles and two albums were released by his Self Immolation label. The albums, *Deaf* and *Ache*, have been out of print and collectable ever since, but now are finally on CD (albeit in limited editions of 4,000 copies each). Released under the name *You've Got Foetus On Your Breath*, *Deaf* and *Ache* set the stage for the fuller produced mayhem on the albums released by Some Bizarre a couple of years later. Based around Farfisa organ, lo-fi drum machines and multi-tracked vocals, 1981's *Deaf* featured the classic rant "I Am Surrounded By Incompetence" and the crooked funk of "Today I Started Slogging Again." The Foetus sense of industrial-pop produced several noisy moments, including the early manifesto "Negative Energy." 1982's *Ache* displayed Thirlwell's obsession with propagandistic graphics, and more of his mixed-up Merry Melodies-gone-berzerk style. Foetus' "hard art" concept was to mix and match these cultural extremes, regurgitating them with a cynical and violent edge. On *Ache*'s "Kid Hate Kid," he distorts the safe, happy theme of the Monkees' show for this tale of a budding psychopath. Thirlwell was also tuned into the avant garde, so the Foetus chorus treats the "rolling, rolling" lyric from "Rawhide" as if it was arranged by an Einstein-era Philip Glass on "Whole Wheat Rolls."



Also out now is a collection of collaborations between Jim Thirlwell and Soft Cell's Marc Almond. Almond, for all his hits and pop crooning, tried his hardest to dirty his commercial image by participating in leftfield activities like PTV's pierced play times and a tour with Nick Cave and Lydia Lunch as the Immaculate Consumptives. His first collaboration with Foetus was on the Marc & The Mambas album *Torment & Toreros* and a subsequent remix that was credited to Karl Satan & The Transvestites From Hell. Their second work together was the *Slut* EP, containing three tracks released in 1987 under the name The Flesh Volcano, which sported a cover painting by Robert Williams. On the title track, Almond emotes his balls off in an attempt to match Thirlwell's feedback-laden track, which was actually made for the transgressive 1985 Richard Kern film *Manhattan Love Suicides*. "The Universal Cess Pool" was also in that film and is one of Jim's better instrumentals, all layers of drums, industrial percussion and pounding piano that build up to a frenzied climax. The final four cuts on this CD are from the Marc Almond single *Violent Silence*, which was released only in the Benelux in 1983 to commemorate a festival dedicated to the writer Georges Bataille. "A Million Manias" (originally from *Torment & Toreros*) is the most Foetus-like track, as riotous drums and circus organ back Almond complaining about his adoring fans. Marc and his management don't approve of this release so if you don't have the originals, buy it while you can.

-Chris Twomey

thirsty ear recordings, inc., 274 madison avenue, suite 804, nyc 10016

vox: 212.889.9595 / fax: 212.889.3641 / e-mail: thirstye@aol.com