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"I don't have a relationship to the rest of the world apart from 'Leave me alone' and 'Get the fuck out of my way.' That's my relationship."

One small slice of the personal philosophy of Jim Thirwell, AKA Foetus. If you know Foetus from his solo work (under names such as Scraping Foetus Off The Wheel, Foetus Eruptus, Foetus Interruptus, Foetus Corruptus, Foetus Under Glass, The Foetus Of Excellence, Foetus Art Terrorism, The Foetus All Nude Revue, Phillip And His Foetus Vibrations, etc.) or his work with ex-Swans drummer Roli Mosimann under the moniker Wiseblood, you know of a surreal puppet show of aberrant behavior. The frequent name changes not only reflect his deliberate attempt to confuse his market, but also to reflect changes in his music, best described as "Spike Jones meets Wagner".

The Australian-born Foetus is a storyteller, but unlike Laurie Anderson, who makes everyday occurrences seem profound, he massages the dark underbelly of society, jumping into the skins of characters like a psychotic incarnation of Speed Racer in "Motorslug," a mass murdering misogynist named "Pigswell," or a dinosaur who drives a Chevy '55 and disposes of unfortunate hitchhikers on "Stumbo." Probably the greatest unspoken irony of the man's oeuvre is that American culture, which adores and glorifies violence, would consider the most frequent motifs of Foetal output abhorrent. The latest vision, Foetus Inc., will appear at Metropol backed by a five piece band, quite a departure when you realize that Foetus albums are recorded with him on all instruments, a sort of lysergic version of Frankie Capri.

On the eve of the release of his new mini-lps — a Wiseblood offering of "sick, macho, violent music" called *Pedal To The Metal*, the premier of his all instrumental band Steroid Maximus on *Quilombo*,

FOETUS A M U C K ! UNABORTED!

by Joseph D'Alessandris

and a CD E.P. with Lydia Lunch of the Blue Oyster Cult warhorse "Don't Fear The Reaper" — I spoke with the maestro from his private recording lair, Self Immolation Studios in Brooklyn, New York.

IP: How much of your music is autobiographical?

F: Quite a lot of it actually. Most of *Hole*, and a lot of *Nail*, and *Thaw*. A song like "Anything

(jViva!)" is totally autobiographical. It's supposed to be a release from the oppression that is built up throughout *Nail*. In a lot of cases my life ended up imitating my art in the forms of oppression. But even with the Steroid Maximus stuff, even though it's all instrumental, I still consider it autobiographical.

IP: What themes differentiate Wiseblood material vs. Foetus material?

F: The fact that I work with Roli as Wiseblood,

plus it started with the macho, violent concept. And also the concept of Wiseblood being an American band, an American band of non-Americans. It was brought to life after I moved to the States. Me and Roli know what it is, but it's not necessarily verbalized. It's kind of an unsaid understanding of what it is. The macho/violent stuff is carried on in the new stuff, but it's a bit more surreal.

IP: Have you noticed a certain type of person who identifies with your stuff?

F: I don't think there is a certain type of person who is a Foetus fan. There's an incredibly broad cross section of people who've told me they like my stuff. It's not necessarily just the alienated. It can be anyone from six to sixty.

IP: What possesses you to do those quotational parodies of American music, like the Mel Torme scat vocals on "Descent Into The Inferno," or the Walt Disney stuff in "Wash It All Off"?

F: I don't think it's exclusively American, and they can be both musical and lyrical. It's like a melting pot of whatever my obsessions are, just sieving through my brain. The sources are not necessarily always conscious. A lot of my new stuff that's coming out is jazzy, or big band kind of stuff. On "Don't Fear The Reaper" there's a song that's a Sergio Mendez kind of thing. But that's not necessarily what I'm listening to. I don't know why that comes out.

IP: John Waters once said that if he didn't have his films as a release valve for his rage, he probably would be a mass murderer. Would you concur with that statement concerning your art?

F: I'd say pretty much 100%.

Foetus Inc. will perform at Metropol on Friday, November 8, at 7 pm with Die Warzau. Foetus is the opening act, so you won't be late if you know what's good for you.