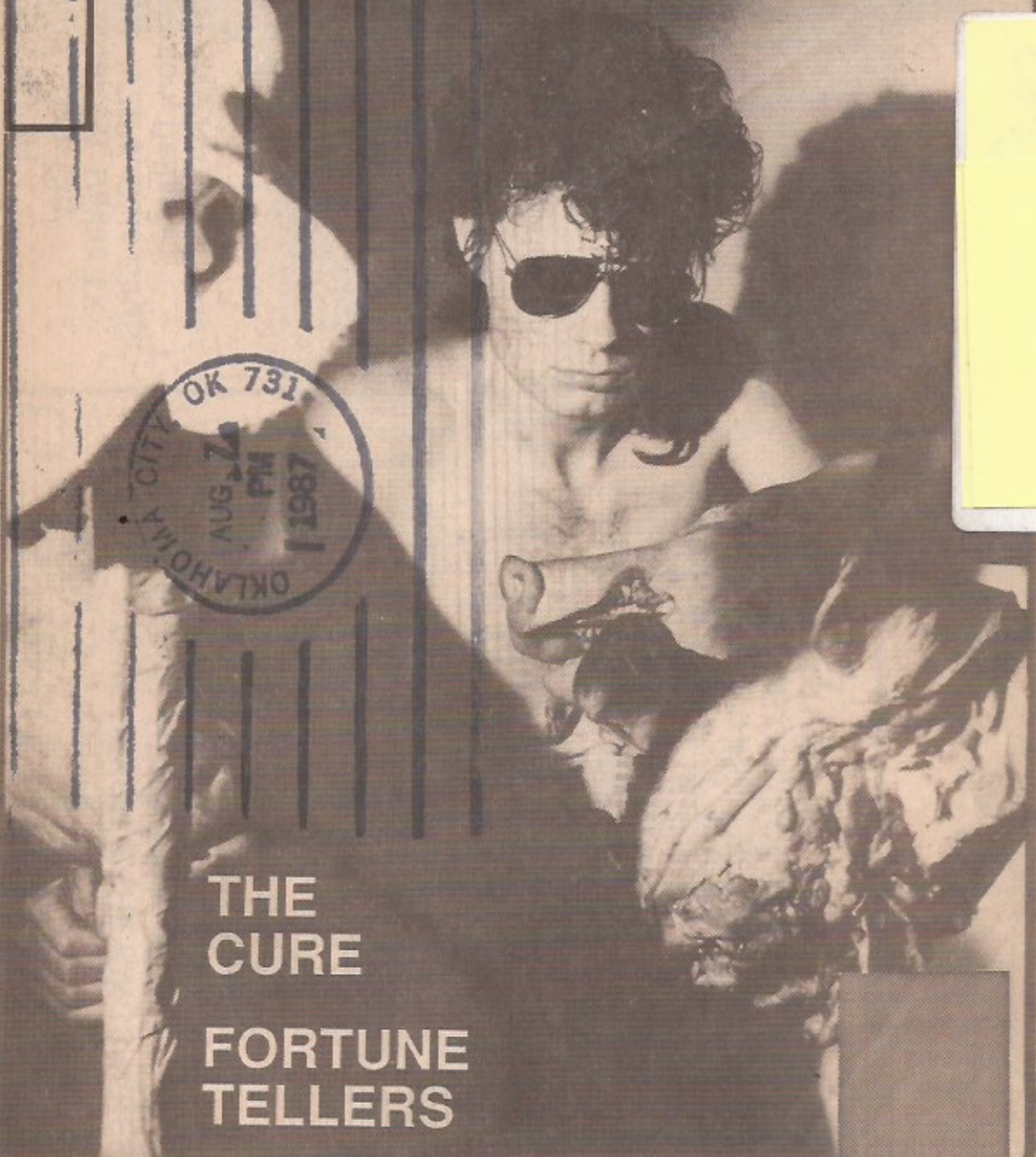




MACADE

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WISEBLOOD



THE
CURE

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TELLERS

RECORD REVIEWS, CONCERT GUIDE **FREE**

THE MAN CALLED FOETUS



By Jon Mooneyham and
Kirk Fillmore

(It's about aesthetic terrorism, "using
the element of surprise through the
usage of past clichés, knowledge and

questions, but not the answers. Each
answer or response is directly to the
question before it...)

How did you and Roll link up?

"Motorslug" sounds more like
Foetus than other Wiseblood
stuff?

Whether it's Wiseblood or Foetus... It's
kind of a nebulous crossover because
it's coming out of the same (source).

So you don't make any effort on
your part to keep them apart?

At this point, no. It's just how I feel at
the time.

explain the material, I'm just
interested in your impressions...

(Agreeably) Yeah, sure. My ultimate
goal is to become as deep as possible.
So, yeah, I mean I feel that I'm
succeeding with songs like "Someone
Drowned In My Pool" and stuff like that.

It was really nice to see some
other names like Norman
(Swans) Westberg and Robert
Quine on the Wiseblood album.

"It's a very specific
kind of emotion
that I'm trying to
get across in a very
pointed,
electrifying and
embarrassing kind
of way..."

But Wiseblood, at least on
Dirtdish, has a very definite
theme ("sick, macho and
violent"). What got you into the
idea of exploring the male myth?

Well, the fact that it's intrinsically
something that is shoved down your
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Yeah, Thurston Moore from Sonic Youth
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(It's about aesthetic terrorism, "using the element of surprise through the usage of past cliches, knowledge and... 'home truths' being flung out of joint and therefor used as possibly a weapon or subversive force." It's also about positive negativism, the idea that "that which may initially seem purely negative often produces positive results by it's very existence." It's a complex presentation of disturbing ideas presented in an aggressive music that's damn near impossible to describe in any sort of universal terms. At the center of it all, trying to explain that it can't be explained is Jim Thirlwell (a.k.a. Clint Ruin) --- the man called Foetus.

More recently, Thirlwell has temporarily departed from his one-man aural army to collaborate with former Swans drummer Roli Mossiman. Starting out as Foetus Flesh, Wiseblood have grown and developed at an amazing rate. By the time their album, Dirtish, was recorded, they were indeed a "finely honed machine."

We wanted a closer look at the man behind all this --- we didn't get one. Despite the fact that he feels everything he has to say is in the music, Thirlwell was very cooperative about doing this interview which occurred over the phone on two separate occasions, two days apart, by two different people. In the interest of easy reading we have compiled the interview

questions, but not the answers. Each answer or response is directly to the question before it...

How did you and Roli link up?

Well, Roli was in Swans at the time and I knew Swans so I got to know Roli through that. He was the first person I approached with the idea of putting together a New York based sort of ensemble which was originally gonna be all percussion but we took into a more, uh, different direction but it's still the most important part --- the voice and the drums.

I was surprised when you actually went through with it, remembering not so long ago that you had vowed that you were gonna stick to the one-man stuff --- that you were sick of rock bands.

Well, I can channel ideas in many directions at this point. I have a lot of projects going at once.

The focus of Wiseblood seems to have shifted somewhat since the "Motorslug" single.

"Motorslug" was written at the time as a lot of the Dirtish songs. It was just the first thing that we recorded really. It's just another side of the beast.

Would you agree that

But Wiseblood, at least on Dirtish, has a very definite theme ("sick, macho and violent"). What got you into the idea of exploring the male myth?

Well, the fact that it's intrinsically something that is shoved down your face, being in the United States. And I consider Wiseblood to be an American band, as Grand Funk would say, despite the fact that it's two main members are displaced non-Americans. To me that makes it all the more valid, to be an American band. The (subject) we just touched on at that point in time. It's just to be taken as it is, pretty purely. I think it's a pretty pure statement.

I don't know how else to word this. Is there an exorcism of sorts that occurs when writing or performing Wiseblood material like "Prime Gonzola" or "Someone Drowned In My Pool"? Do you get a lot things inside you worked out?

I'd like to think so but at this point in time it's more of an actual exposition of those things as opposed to working anything out in public. That's like a total fallacy that (the latter) should happen. It's hard enough to expose much less psychoanalyze and then I try to take people away from the idea of being public psychoanalysts.

It's a hard thing to avoid, given the material...

Well, yeah, sure... I mean, I don't feel that I have to get on the actual psychiatrist's couch. You can just take it for what you will.

Well I'm not asking you to

You got more stuff like that, roping people in to do specifically?

Yeah, Thurston Moore from Sonic Youth is doing some stuff with us. In fact, there's even talk of a collaborative LP between he and Lydia. That would be coming out under Lydia's name on Widowspeak probably the first half of next year.

Man, you gotta goad Lydia into doing more stuff. She's pretty vital.

I just remixed Honeymoon In Red for her...

The album that was owned by the studio and all that mess?

Yeah, she got the tapes back off that --- that's all finished, that LP. Thurston plays on that as well. Then before that there's a 12-inch coming which is a duet between Lydia and Thurston. I kind of took the backing track from the end of song on Honeymoon In Red and put a lot of new stuff on it --- a lot of treatments and weird shit. It's the most nihilistic, savage song I've ever heard. It's everything the PMRC condemn rolled into one. It's great. It's really very violent.

Now that you've got the Wiseblood album out, are the video and cassette out as well?

No, they were supposed to be out at the same time as the LP because it's pretty much the same set but it's been held up by a lot of red tape and random asshole-ism but hopefully they'll be out in the next couple of months.

RUIN cont'd

What is the purpose of the video (Yank 'Em, Crank 'Em...)?

It's a document of our European tour last year. It was supposed to come out right after it but it's been really hard to get together. It's just a document of our show in Berlin.

What about the Foetus stuff that's forthcoming? Is the Foetus All-Nude Revue single out?

Yeah, that's out in England now and it's coming out here in a month. It's called "Bedrock". It's like a thirty minute EP. About two months after that comes out will be the Scraping Foetus Off the Wheel EP, "Ramrod", which has three tracks on it. Then I'm starting a new Foetus LP.

Any particular unifying theme on this stuff?

Well, when you hear it it kinda does, yeah. The All-Nude Revue pretty much speaks for itself. That's kind of what it sounds like although there is a thirty minute instrumental suite on the b-side, the core of which is this song called "Diabolis In Musica", which is based on a chord which was banned and frowned upon by the Catholic church for five centuries. You get into a lot of trouble if you played it because it was used to summon Satan.

And this piece really hammers on that point pretty powerfully and has been known to induce Satanic hallucinations.

Interesting. Any response like that from your use of it?

Yeah, someone actually said they had Satanic hallucinations and they didn't know that that was what was behind it.

What about collaborative stuff you've got coming?

Well, there's an EP in the works from Lydia and myself which is called "Stinkfist"...

Yeah, but that's been "in the works" for like half a century...

I know, I know. It'll come out someday. We've three versions of it finished. There'll have to be more stuff on it. Then there's the "Flesh Volcano" EP which is me and Marc Almond. That was started in like 1984 and I just finished it off last year. That should be coming out this year, I don't know when, on Some Bizarre. Some Bizarre will be re-releasing Ache in 1989 and I'll be re-releasing Deaf in 1989.

How do albums like Deaf sound to you now?

Really bad.

You're not embarrassed by them are you? It's good work, you were just held back a technical ignorance at the time.

All I can say is that I don't really like them despite the fact that I'll be reissuing them.

Will you rework 'em when you do that?

Yeah, I'll rework 'em. They don't sound good because I feel my recent (work has become) totally, incredibly refined along the way. Unfortunately, the stuff that actually hits the stands is usually two years behind what I'm actually saying at the time. I feel that I've really left those kind of statements way behind.

In your own recordings, you have a very fascistic approach, but then again there's no one to argue with. What attracts you to an outside production? You and Roli have done Bewitched and Don King and you've worked with Matt (The The) Johnson and Coil... say a band like Fur Bible, what attracts you to produce a band like that?

All those things that you've mentioned are because I knew those people and they asked... I mean, I don't usually get off on doing production stuff.