For 20 years now, JG Thirwell has been warping minds as the man behind **FOETUS**. Blame his therapist...

**FOETUS** was making industrial music before industrial music was invented: discuss. JG Thirwell: "The cue identifying factor in my music is that it's hard to put a label on it. I came up around the time the term 'industrial' was coined and I got lumped into that category. But there's a mental process we're totally into; we're into the electronic drum 'n' bass world, then the noise realm. We've got eight you could call all our shows."

You've remixed everyone from Nine Inch Nails to Megadeth to Marc Almond. Is there anyone you've refused to work with? JG: "There's things I've turned down because I felt that by the time I put them through the Foetus mangler, there'd be nothing left of them. There's a certain amount of product on the market that's tuned down too, because people want to spend 10 minutes in a room with snazzy boys sitting in smaller-than-normal acrylic boxes."

Sony released your 1995 album, 'Gash'. Did the label think they were getting a day to day deal? JG: "They knew they were getting Foetus. You're dealing with this corporate monolith, and the people that you're dealing with on a day to day level don't necessarily have the final say in what goes down. Some number-cruncher in Japan might come down and say, 'We're not going to do Foetus', which is exactly what happened. I just didn't expect it to be a week after the album came out."

Although you're Australian, you've lived in New York for nearly 20 years. What's the attraction? JG: "It's a 24-hour city. It's got this energy and excitement and strange and otherworldly all in one package. It's changed a lot since I've been here. A lot of what made it attractive to me — the urban decay — hasn't been wiped out now."

You've made over 20 recordings in 14 years under 19 different identities. Will the real JG Thirwell please stand up? JG: "That's what my therapist keeps telling me. I think I'm a red monogamous person, and sometimes I wonder if I've been doing it in a few years' time. I'll be walking down the street leaving an argument with myself. But I wear a lot of different masks and I'm not always sure where to put stop and go."

**FOETUS**' new album, 'Flow', is out now.
Foetus

Flow
(Nois-O-Lution)


Long-awaited return of the industrial daddy.

THOUGH CRIMINALLY underrated and often overlooked, Melbourne-born Jim Thirlwell has a much better claim than most to the father of modern industrial rock tag. His wildly cross-generic cohesion of stark electronica, bombastic orchestral swoopings and driving metal dynamism (released under a mind-boggling selection of Foetus-based monickers since 1980) spawned the likes of Ministry, NIN and, indirectly, Marilyn Manson.

Yet, unlike most pioneers, Foetus still clings limpet-like to truly cutting edge status. Witness ‘Flow’, a storming sonic assault that blends the blazing killer loops of Quick Fix to the ferocious big band frenzy of Heuldoch 7B, takes aural discomfort to the brink of sonic diabolism, and with uncompromising intent presents a fresh emotive challenge with every single deliciously twisted groove. Marvellous.

IAN FORTNAM