

Words: **Catherine Yates** Photo: **Lisa Johnson**

Born Dead

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 one 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 nu-metal people who are totally into Foetus, then people in the electronic/drum 'n' bass world, then the noise crowd. We even get eight-year-olds at 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 production work I've turned down too, because who wants to spend two months in a room with sweaty boys interested in smelling their own bodily secretions?"

Sony released your 1995 album, 'Gash'. Did the label think they were getting NIN?

JG: "No, 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."

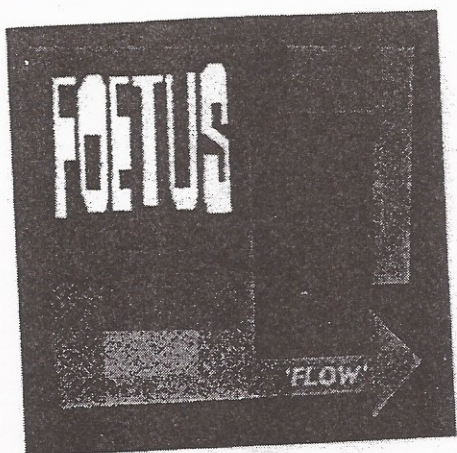
Although you're Australian, you've lived in New York for nearly 20 years. What's the attraction?

JG: "It's a 24-hour city. It's got this energy and excitement and seuzziness and griminess 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 -- has been wiped out now."

You've made over 30 recordings in 14 years under 19 different identities. Will the real Jim Thirwell please stand up?

JG: "That's what my therapist keeps telling me. I do talk about myself in the third person a lot, and sometimes I wonder if in a few years time, I'll be walking down the street having an argument with myself. But I wear a lot of different masks and I'm not always sure where Foetus stops and JG Thirwell begins."

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



Foetus **Flow**

(Nois-O-Lution)

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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.

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