

reviews:

Foetus

Love

((Birdman))

With *Love*, Jim Thirlwell has orchestrated the soundtrack to a full-blown dope-sick crack up. With a sense of the super dramatic, Thirlwell entwines tones ranging from Hammond organs to flutes to castanets into a monumental knot of sound. And harpsichords! Everyone loves harpsichords, don't they? Huge battalion-sized string sections are ever present, as are arcane samples of god-knows-what. I'm not sure why, but this album makes me want a cigarette.

Love bounds across emotional soundscapes; surprise is one of its major assets, you don't know what's coming. As with a peyote road trip, you will have to be in a very open and unrestricted mental space to digest this record. The only consistent element is Thirlwell's unstable intonations.

Most of the tracks don't really establish a solid identity but are valuable for their mind-expanding qualities. There are some notable exceptions, however. "Thrush," with Jennifer Charles (Elysian Fields) is the record's vertex. Charles' voice is mesmerizing, spread thin over pulsating rhythms and frenetic beats as lemon curd over scone. Preceding that song is "Pareidolia," a melancholy bleeding lullaby introducing Pamela Kurstin on theremin (a rad instrument, look it up). "Mon Agonie Douce" experiments with French concepts and features a trumpet tone that recalls Miles Davis' *Sketches of Spain*, in addition to grand piano, handbells, falling violas, and bursting sax.

Contrary to my initial impressions, this record gets better with progressive spins. There is always something new popping out of the mix. A warning though, this is not the most accessible album around. To avoid injury, be sure to stretch the major muscle groups before committing to Thirlwell's odyssey.

--Chris Logan

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Blitzen Trapper
Bob Dylan and The
Beatles
Boobytrap
Bunky
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Chariots
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Clem Snide
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Crippled by Depression -
- Why Don't Nobody
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Crooked Fingers
Currituck Co.
Damien Jurado
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