renders spiritual uncertainty with dramatic vocals and stark piano accompaniment. On "Resurrection," D'Arby contrasts a keening pedal steel guitar, resonant bass vocals and a mellow hollow-body guitar, while "Read My Lips (I Dig Your Scene)" is tricky funk rock, blending syncopated drums, wah-wah guitar and D'Arby's honeyed falsetto. And for the slinky funk of "Supermodel Sandwich W/Cheese" D'Arby builds a sultry groove with dubby bass, clarinet, maracas and tambourine.

Thematically, D'Arby's concerns are love, sex and spirituality. In his world they are interchangeable, and each offers hope, comfort and redemption. In "Holding On To You," he sings, "The soil is fertile where her footsteps tread/She's my new religion/She's all I got" - a sentiment that for him is not hyperbolic.

Sung with a voice like D'Arby's, such words become all the more believable. A graceful, versatile instrument that is a symphony in itself, his voice is the centerpiece throughout the album, evoking Sam Cooke or Stevie Wonder on ballads or rasping dramatically on more kinetic compositions. In that respect, regardless of musical style, D'Arby is a true soulman. — SUZANNE McELFRESH

WILL FOETUS BE THE NEW NINE Inch Nails? Or rather, will Foetus be the new old Nine Inch Nails? With the success of new punk rockers like Nirvana and Green Day, a light bulb popped over the major labels' heads: If the kids like the new stuff, why not originate like X or Social Distortion on them? After watching the success of Nine Inch Nails and Ministry, Sony must have been thinking along these lines when they had Foetus (né Jim Thirlwell) sign on the dotted line.

A founding father of industrial music, Thirlwell has been releasing his brutal metal music under various monikers since 1981. Scraping Foetus Off the Wheel and You've Got Foetus on Your Breath are two of the most, er... colorful. And there's no disputing his influence on Trent Reznor: Check out the tortured vocal and metallic electronic bombard on "Hammer Falls" and "Take It Outside Godboy," tracks from Foetus' newest album, Gas.

Unfortunately, Foetus shares Reznor's predilection for juvenile angst, revealed in simplistic self-mutilating lyrics. Still, when he gets away from himself, on the frantic track "Mighty White," Foetus can be convincingly threatening. Indeed, what sets Foetus apart from his industrial contemporaries and fan-base is the cross-cultural leap by touring with Hossam Ramzy's swinging eight-piece Egyptian dance orchestra. Ramzy and band have been bringing down the house back up Page and Plant on their current tour. A listen to one of Hossam RAMZY AND HIS EGYPTIAN ENSEMBLE's own CDs, Egyptian Rain (ARC Music US, PO Box 1188, Oakland, CA 94611), gives you an idea of why rock bands have found their way into major outlets without the Zep connection! With that cheeky cover photograph of a belly dancer at the Pyramids, it's doubtful...

...For a sense of what Middle Eastern night life might have sounded like 70 years ago, check out the extraordinary collection Istanbul 1925 (Traditional Crossroads, PO Box 20320, Greely Square Station, NY, NY 10001). Istanbul, Turkey, has had a lively multicultural scene for most of the century - a crossroads for Turks, Armenians, Greeks, Jews and Gypsies. Istanbul 1925 resurrects some of the classic cabaret singing and playing of that era - which includes some outrageous jazzlike clarinet solos - all from ancient 78s that were mastered digitally from the original metal parts, and they have a sound clarity that makes it seem as if they had arrived, magically, out of a time machine. An unbeatable world-beat combination: traditional music, given a contemporary twist with electric instruments and a postmodern point of view. It's the formula for the moment for hit records all over the globe. A celebrated female vocal group from the land of Lapps, VÄRTÄNÄ goes power pop on their third U.S. release, Inara (Green Linnet, 43 Beaver Brook Road, Danbury, CT 06810), beefing up their four-part harmonies with drums, bass and electric guitar. Another Värttinä innovation: delightful, tongue-in-cheek original songs (as opposed to their previous covers of Finnish traditional numbers) written by band members Sari Kaasinen about romance, maidens, mothers and, best of all, cattle ("Doesn't the very thought of them...")
spawn—and what may be his commercial downfall—is that he is truly bizarre. "Friend or Foe," for example, devolves into a syncopated Zeppelin-esque blues stomp, and "Take It Outside Godboy" opens with a symphonic flourish more typical of, say, the Gone With the Wind soundtrack. Ministry notwithstanding, Foetus also stands out from his gloom-obessed brethren because of his sense of humor. The sarcastic wit and wacky '40s-style big-band horns (!) displayed on cuts like "Slung" only add dimension to Foetus' Jekyll-and-Hyde persona.

The greatest problem with Gash is that it doesn't significantly add to the sound Foetus established over his dozens of releases, giving the possible impression that in staying the same, he's simply playing to a market now open to industrial music. Still, this doesn't detract from the power Foetus can muster, which, at its savage best, slashes the heartstrings.

—Matt Diehl

**LONG ABOUT THAT TIME**

The Delevantes

Homeless in New Jersey, the brothers made it down to Nashville a couple of years ago, where they met and began working with another Jersey runaway, E Street Band bassist turned producer Garry Tallent. Together they mixed country croon with roots rock, throwing in elements of the Blasters, BoDeans, Buddy Holly and Bruce as they went along. Jangly, chiming guitar riffs and smooth ruminations run side by side with slaps of pedal steel, led always by Bob Delevante's country-chiseled lead vocals and his brother's engaging harmonies. But it all has a blue-collar Jersey grit to it, making the songs sound even more honest than they have to be. Much of the power and rawness that

**Home**

Blessed U

★★★★

EMI

An earnestness is in the Blowfish and Kravitz stamps foursome. Their guys wielding vocals of songs he paired so, too, does the luster, sampled pop, flavor, but ultimately soulful folk music smarts. "I Believe" and "Wide-Eyed Affirmative" are the plucky country finest moment lies for Sloan's grand heart foursquare.

**Come Together**

★★★★★

Liberty

Boasting stars from scrubber tunes, the Come Together de country luminaries, the Tucker, John But

**Role Short**

Nemesisters Back Outlandish yet the fiercest weapon. Lori Barbero the cover of Eric Clapton's free, evidences in their originals that umph. Their Through Fontaine, Bjelland focusing attack; Nemesisters razor fine. "Doom Killer on the Roof" sort of brilliant; thrills Lollapalooza; adventurous, how slow, throbbing strange bolo