

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 drumbeats, 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, clavinet, 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 trod/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



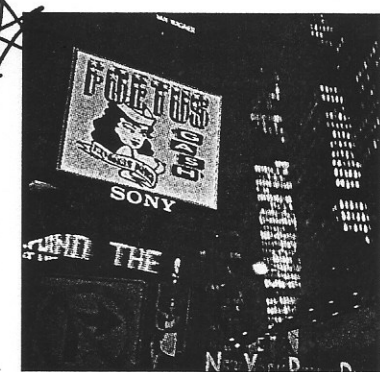
★ ★ 1/2
THANK YOU
Duran Duran
Capitol

IT'S NO SECRET THAT MOST BIG-TIME rock musicians are also big-time rock fans, but that rarely shows in public. Perhaps that's why it's so much fun to hear Duran Duran gee-whizzing its way through "White Lines" along with Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five. Although it's not a terribly inventive interpretation, mixing straight-off-the-record imitation with laughably overblown special effects (the snort and giggle at the beginning of the track), it's hard to argue with the spirit of the performance. Let's be honest: Didn't fans of the original single rap along with Melle Mel as earnestly as Simon LeBon does?

Of course, most of those fans were content to rap in the privacy of their homes, while LeBon and the rest of the Durannies are hanging out their enthusiasm for all to

the daring that goes with it. How many other bands would have had the guts to try to update Sly's "I Wanna Take You Higher," much less work in an allusion to Queen's "Another One Bites the Dust"?

Admittedly, some of the ideas at play here are stunningly wrongheaded, like the easy-listening arrangement given Elvis Costello's "Watching the Detectives" or the version of Zeppelin's "Thank You" that sounds like the band is covering Chris DeBurgh. But it takes a certain demented genius to recognize Iggy Pop's "Success" as the Gary Glitter tune it was meant to be or to redo "911 Is a Joke" so it sounds more like Beck than like Public Enemy. Had the band indulged in more such re-makes, *Thank You* would have been even more welcome. — J.D. CONSIDINE



★ ★ ★
GASH
Foetus
Columbia

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 foist originators 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 machine 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 vocalese and metallic electronic bombast on "Hammer Falls" and "Take It Outside Godboy," tracks from Foetus' new album, *Gash*.

Unfortunately, Foetus shares Reznor's predilection for juvenile angst, revealed in simplistic self-mutilating lyrics. Still, when he gets away from himself, as on the racial button pusher "Mighty Whitey," Foetus can be convincingly threatening. Indeed, what sets Foetus apart from his industrial

W sitar wizardry, and the Stoneshipped us to Morocco's trance kings the Master Musicians of Jajouka. Now Led Zeppelin take the cross-cultural leap by touring with Hossam Ramzy's swirling eight-piece Egyptian dance orchestra. Ramzy and band have been bringing down the house backing up Page and Plant on their current tour. A listen to one of **HOSSAM RAMZY AND HIS EGYPTIAN ENSEMBLE**'s own CDs, *Egyptian Rai* (ARC Music U.S., PO Box 11288, Oakland, CA 94611), gives you an idea why a rock band hooked up with a Cairo belly-dancing orchestra in the first place. Loud, fast, hardhitting and trippy, Ramzy and the group are the Middle Eastern equivalent of classic guitar rock. Would Ramzy's CD have found its way into major outlets without the Zep connection? With that

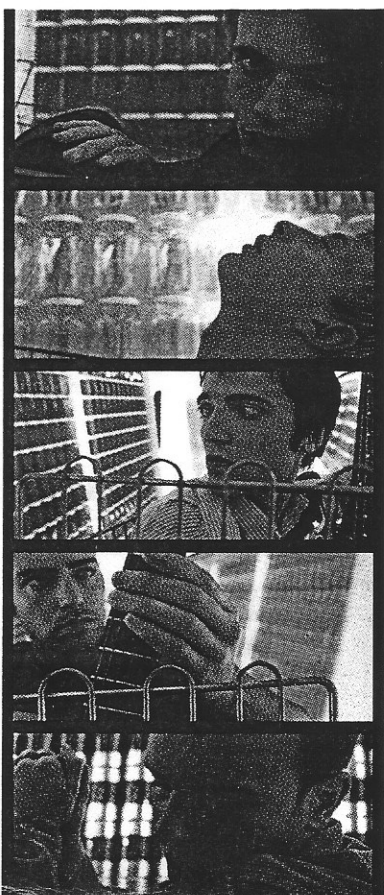
cheesy cover photograph of a belly dancer at the Pyramids, it's doubtful... For a sense of what Middle Eastern night life might have sounded like 70 years ago, check out the extraordinary collection *Istanbul 1925* (Traditional Crossroads, PO Box 20320, Greely Square Station, NY, NY 10001). Istanbul, 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 of the moment for hit records all over the globe. A celebrated female vocal group from the land of Lapps, **VÄRTTINÄ** goes power pop on their third U.S. release, *Aitara* (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 member Sari Kaasinen about romance, maidens, mothers and, best of all, cattle ("Doesn't the very thought of them/Set



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RADIOHEAD

the bends

featuring

"fake plastic trees"

Listen Deeply -
Ascend At Your
Own Risk

"Radiohead is back with *The Bends*, a compelling fusion of lyrical despair and corrosive guitar."

— US Magazine

"The Bends proves that Radiohead didn't shoot their bolt with 'Creep'."

— Alternative Press

"...The Bends, another fine example of the band's ability to combine diversity of musical styles into one listenable collection."

— CMJ

touring this spring

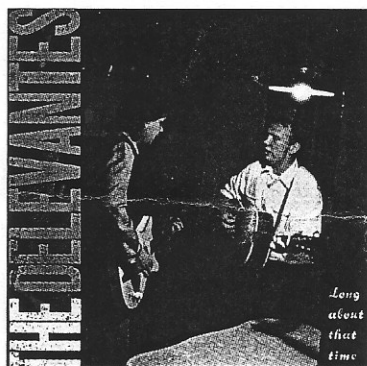
<http://www.musicbase.co.uk/music/radiohead/>

produced by John Leckie

spawn — and what may be his commercial downfall — is that he is truly bizarre. "Friend or Foe," for example, devolves into a syncopated Zepplinesque 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-obsessed 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

Rounder

HOBOKEN, N.J., AND NASHVILLE, Tenn., aren't exactly neighboring towns — geographically or musically — but they would be if the Delevantes were drawing the map. With unpretentious ease, Bob and Mike Delevante link the two locales on their impressive debut, *Long About That Time*.

Originally from 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 rhythms 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.

★ Most of the tracks on *Long About That*

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