These two Foetus reissues, originally released only on vinyl by Self Immolation Records in 1981 and 1982, respectively, were remastered by Jim Thirwell himself. Both are laden with synth-pop keyboards and industrial dance beats, yet the music cannot be categorized as such. Mixed with Thirwell's fuzzy vocals are samples of people talking and screaming. Usually accompanied by a keyboard that sounds as if it belongs in an abandoned carnival, the samples play an integral role in constructing a disturbing background that contributes to Thirwell’s equally unsettling lyrics. On “I Started Slogging Today,” Thirwell screams, “You’ve ain’t tasted nothing until you’ve had Foetus on your breath.”

Deaf and Ache together create a vicious commentary on straight-laced WASP culture, resulting in innovative music that fits into a surrealist-movie soundtrack. Old Foetus fans who have had trouble finding Deaf and Ache will be pleased, and anyone wanting to pry into the mind of Thirwell, well this is a great place to start. (Helen Giano)