That sinking feeling

WHADDA YA MEAN, have I seen Jesus Of Montreal? Peter Anderson

FOETUS INC 'Sink' (Self Immolation/Some Bizarre WOMB INK/C(3) "****")

FOETUS INTERRUPTUS 'Ithaw' (Self Immolation/Some Bizarre WOMB FIPS/CD) "****"

SCRAPING FOETUS OFF THE WHEEL 'Nail' (Some Bizzare WOMB FIP4/CD) "****

SCRAPING FOETUS OFF THE WHEEL 'Hole' (Self Immolation/ Some Bizzare WOMB FOL3/CD) "****

AFTER NEARLY a decade on the loose, it's time Foetus nailed down his past, irrespective of which laconic alias he was using at the time. His previous three Some Bizzare albums, 'Hole', 'Nail' and the unfortunate 'Ithaw' should already be familiar to you, either in their vinyl incarnations or as a major influence on the work of bands such as The Young Gods, Skinny Puppy and Ministry. 'Sink', however, is new, whichever way you look at it.

The product of his six years at Some Bizzare, 'Sink' traces the Foetal route through the Death Race 2000 style impact of '84's 'Calamity Crush' single and the electro-composive 'Wash It All Off' to the deprivation of '87's 'Rumored' EP. In between it captures such lost moments as a Dutch radio session - which contains the previously unreleased 'Anxiety Attack' and 'Spit On The Griddle' (The Drowning Of G Wolffer') - as well as snatches from a variety of hard to get compilations. With the exception of Foetal debut 'OKFM', what it doesn't contain is any traces of the extremely rare pre-Some Bizzare Foetus.

'Sink's problem is that its trying too hard to be both a companion to Foetus' back catalogue CD releases and a compilation of the best of Foetus. The result is that classic moments of Foetal material, like 'I'll Meet You In Poland Baby' (from 'Hole') or 'The Throne Of Agony' (from 'Nail'), which should adorn any, ahem, 'Greatest Hits' package are omitted, a move that really relegates 'Sink' to the sidelines.

'Sink's strength is that it shows the human dimensions of Foetus, the abuse of traditional sounds (the slap bass of 'Bedrock'), the violently acerbic lyricisms and rhythms. What it lacks is the attitude of alienation and exploration that 'Nail' and 'Hole' possess. User-friendly Foetus is, after all, something of a contradiction in terms.

Sam King