

FOETUS INC.

Lord, is the crowd ever pretentious. It's 9:45, and the show was billed for 9 PM. Dark looks and haircuts roaming the Marquee with drinks in hand, all but the most intense conversation fortunately obliterated by the sounds of the industrial blizzard.

On Skinny Puppy, Ministry, and "bands" of that nature: "To me it's all pretty lame, that stuff. It's kind of production line; sounds like someone sat down at a computer with no ideas and came up with what they thought would sell a few copies."

Ten o'clock, and the guy in front of me is drunk and snotty, pawing his girlfriend, much to her giggling delight. One of them has tossed a lipstick-written message up on stage regarding Lydia's virtue, and they seem to be pretty pleased with themselves.

Lydia Lunch is in New Orleans right now, reading and writing. She is directing a film for Dutch TV called "Kiss Napoleon Goodbye", starring Henry Rollins, among others, and for which Jim has done the soundtrack.

Much past ten, the relentless industrial buzz gives way to the

intro tape, a voice loop a la Steve Reich. This runs for minutes, and any hope I have of making out what it says is soon crushed as the mindless repetition turns it into meaningless syllables.

"What were we talking about?"

Our musicians descend the stairs to grateful cheers, and then we are hit with the first blast of smoke (did you know they do that with vegetable oil?). Blind and choking, I nonetheless take in a deep breath as the band, made up of drums, bass, guitar, keyboard (read: programs), and guest electric fiddle borrowed from Hugo Largo, crushes deep into "Free James Brown (So He Can Run Me Down)."

Jim and Lydia are doing a cover of Blue Oyster Cult's "Don't Fear the Reaper", to be released in November.

This isn't much of a dancing crowd; attention is focused on Foetus' nasty posturing. He wears the trademark sunglasses, and cut the usual menacing figure. Wow, what a growl on this guy!

Tomorrow he will be heading to DC to play the 9:30 Club. How does he feel about touring? "I just hope my voice holds out, you know, I'm not Henry Rollins."

Foetus, Inc. is a well-oiled machine, and a damned loud one, at that. Every effort from each musician provides the fury

thrust, Jim sliding along with them, leaving a gleaming, sticky trail of evil behind him. Spotlights shine through a cutout of the Japanese-style characters from the cover of "Sink", a double-album compilation released by Waxtrax.

"I did attend school for art at Melbourne State College for two years; dropped out." Why? "Because I wanted to split to the States and, you know, discover myself." Has he discovered himself? He smiles. "Well, it's an ongoing process."

One song grinds into the next, with no release in sight.

Richard Kern's most recent film offering, "Sex vs. Guns", features segments of Killdozer, Cop Shoot Cop, and of course, Richard's favorite ingenue, Jim Foetus. Jim notes Cop Shoot Cop as one of his favorite current bands, along with The Unseen, Tad, Nirvana, and White Zombie, the perennial favorite. Likes White Zombie so much, in fact, that he has produced a demo for them, and hopes to produce the album once they settle the Big Record Deal.

I have moved towards the back of The Marquee, where I relax and remove myself from the tension that hangs so oppressively in front of the stage. No one said Foetus was a happy experience. All four members of White Zombie brush



PHOTO: PAUL YATES

by me as one body. Becky of the Lunachicks is handing out passes for their show at The Chase on October 5th.

Jim fidgets, and he jiggles his left leg, finishing his cup of tea. I ask him who his favorite Sonic Youth is. "Thurston's the cutest." And Kim? "Yeah, she's great, too."

The clock strikes midnight, and the band vacates the stage in preparation for the encore. My conversation is abruptly abandoned as I hear the opening of "Butterfly Potion", a song from the new 12 inch.

"Butterfly Potion" is about Joseph Collinger, a notorious murderer. His strict upbringing included having his hand held above a flame for effective discipline. Our murderer friend saw the butterfly as a symbol of freedom. I comment that "Butterfly Potion" is appropriately musically nasty in light of its lyrical content. Jim smiles: "I think Joe would like it."

The show is at an end, and the crowd looks visibly shaken. The Marquee is empty almost immediately, and I silently send my best wishes to Jim, who will be doing this a few zillion more times in the next couple of months.

And what does he think of Jane's Addiction? A shake of the head. "No?" He smiles. "They suck."