

Ministry/The Young Gods/Foetus - Roseland, New York, NY

by Derick Evans

Industrial music, the bastard son of the Factory Age and art school pretensions, my how you've grown! Of course, it's Nine Inch Nails that really cashed in as of late, but since Trent Reznor readily acknowledges that he got his whole act from Ministry and since Foetus influenced everyone, this show offered more than just a culmination of the state of the art.

Why Foetus had to suffer the indignity of opening up for The Young Gods, I'll never understand. Once again, the fascist management of Roseland started the show early and I missed the first half of their set. The crowd had not yet gathered and there was a feeling of something missing in the air, which was readily reflected back from the stage.

Still, Jim (Thirwell) Foetus is a professional and made a good effort at entertaining a crowd so young that most of them were in the early years of elementary school at the time of his first release. His full band — two guitars, bass, drums and keyboards (the same as Ministry's lineup) — made a spirited attempt to keep up with his antics, but there was no denying that the intelligence and creativity of this visionary artist were under attack from external forces — and they were taking

their toll on the level of excitement that was generated. Playing much new material and a surprisingly conventional version of "I Am The Walrus," Foetus' set was nonetheless entertaining and left me wanting more.

The Young Gods were a different story. Only three players graced the stage: singer, keyboardist and drummer. It was impossible to tell how much of the synth and sample sounds were played live, but it couldn't have been very much based on all the buzzing guitars and whip sounds that came out of the keyboardist's modules. They did put some effort into the light show, which the growing audience appreciated, but I couldn't get past the feeling of being used by some clever musicians who value fashion over passion.

Ministry is great, and despite an effort to shift its fan base to the more metal among us, I have remained as faithful as ever. They started their set with "Psalm 69," then moved through a large chunk of material from the new album, including the haunting and heavy title track, "Filth Pig." The focus and power of the band was evident immediately, and the contrast they made with The Young Gods may go a long way to explaining the order of the bands this evening.

Leader/singer/guitarist Al Jourgensen seemed pretty nonchalant; not really concerned with coordinating his movements with the rest of the band and apparently on friendly terms with his demons. The set continued with the best of the older songs and ended with the regular tirade during "Stigmata" (where the audience is abused) that appears on the live album.

If you were wondering why tickets were \$25, my guess is that the money went to pay Con Ed for all the electricity used on lights and sound. Those strobe lights ain't cheap to run. It was not the most spontaneous show I've ever seen, but it was still brutally liberating. Much of the credit goes to Ministry. Jourgensen is the organizer, the brain trust and the inspiration, but his players make it happen live.