

THE FLAMING SIDEBURNS CD

The Flaming Sideburns rock venerable American verities with the gusto and flare only Europeans seem to be able to muster. Their scholarship and taste is fuckin' impeccable. They unearth and conserve the best bits of pre-Brit Invasion proto-garage à la Sonics and Raiders as well as of post-garage nascent hard rockin'—read Stooges 'n' MC5.

From the latter, they cop basic compositional tropes: incest between blues' slutty stepchildren, big sis r&b and lil' bro rock 'n' roll. In that, they mint chord progression so full bodied and distinctive that these changes function as hooks on their own. To underline these allegiances, the lead singer punctuates a lot of songs with a mike-busting screech that's pure Greg Rosalie (Sonics). From the Detroit boys, the Sideburns have adopted: a toughened up, streamlined sound, vein-popping intensity, frantic pace. To highlight these connections there are many obtrusive Iggy-isms interpolated into the vocal performances.

Of course this recapitulates developments in the history of Amerockan music. Iggy's vocal fillips were natural extensions of Rosalie's signature excesses. Likewise, the overall instrumental sound of the Stooges was largely a simplification and exaggeration of elements of garagey style. What makes the Flaming Sideburns especially hep is that they focus on a nexus where these aspects of the old and new are balanced perfectly: the flava and spontaneity of the former leavens the obsession and intensity of the latter. Lotta folks tap this basic formula but these guys are unique in the strength of their songwriting and the marvelous guitar texture they utilize throughout: crisp, clean, yet bristling and steely. Again, right on the razor's edge between playing Mosrites through a home hi-fi and a Les Paul driving a Marshall stack. Fucking outstanding is what it is. This is what At The Drive In shoulda sounded like instead of like the Bloodhound Gang covering Rage Against The Machine. [Bad Afro] Howard W.

**FLUX INFORMATION SCIENCES Private/Public CD**

I walk into the warehouse, 20 people sitting around in black—boots, shirts, pants, socks, fucking eyes, fer Crissake. All scowling. Threaten to have a good time on my watch, buddy. I saw Sprockets for real, in Berlin, back in the day, you fuck. So *no smiling!*

And this was in 1983.

So when this...band...decides to drop the bomb of Dieter on our ass in this day and age, well, forget it, we've been angry and moody long

enough. Jumping metallic percussion, yeah, go on, roving sampler with angry liits, sure, I can follow. Even the moany vocals of discontent, sure. But fuck; I wanna have a good time. Hey, I do get with the topless girl on the cover with the SS hat and the braces. Big among teenagers in those days. Now, it's just so... '80s and so... *depressing.* [Young God] Miller

FOETUS Flow CD

After an extended hiatus from his pioneering industrial (not the dorky industrial disco variety, mind you) persona, Jim Thirwell has returned under the Foetus moniker with his best album to date. His signature snarling bombast batters and cuts, while the requisite dingy lounge-swing songs jab and crawl with all the intensity of his previous efforts. However, the sheer imagination and flawless composition of this 10-song album outweighs the now archaic efforts of earlier Foetus recordings. Opener, "Quick Fix" kicks things off heavier, meaner, and clearer than ever before, backed by a flurry of drums, screeching guitars and harmonized vocals as he repeats, "you reap what you sow/And I oughta know." But even though the lyrics are as biting, clever and accurate as ever, the music seems to benefit from the advancement of technology, because Thirwell loops and intertwines sounds that merge swing, kitsch pop, rockabilly, beat lounge, noise, metal, and myriad mysterious sources. Although it may seem that such pastiche work requires little musical skill, Foetus demonstrates that in order to remain a true master of such technology and intrepid intensity, one must have the skill to compose songs as impressive and flawless as this album's seamless, um, *Flow* of sounds. Like a sonic Zarathustra, Foetus has transcended two decades of rabble and returns to deliver yet another template to up the ante on the innumerable chumps that aim to take his crown. Highly recommended...perhaps even urgently recommended. [Thirsty Ear; www.foetus.org] Dave Clifford

FONTANELLE F CD

Actually, I'd give it a C. More of the sparse, Rhodes keyboard-driven fusion that Andy Brown and Rex Ritter have immersed themselves in since disbanding Jessamine. The music is too soft and spineless to be funky and not cosmic enough to show the obvious Krautrock influences. Brown, Ritter, and their cohorts can't seem to decide whether they are a serious improv outfit or a jam band—and most of the material constantly wavers between the two. They might want to forget the days of Jessamine, but this certainly doesn't give me temporary amnesia. [Kranky] Les Scurry

FORGOTTEN REBELS Executive Outcomes CD

Evidently one of those "seminal" Aussie bands, oldie-school punk, poorly cobbled together in a basement studio back in '78 or so (can't be troubled to look, really). Forgotten, are they? Certainly by me. But you hear a song title like "In Love with the System," and if you're an ossified late-thirties fucker like me, you immediately get a bit nostalgic for the glory days of xeroxed flyers and stupid short hair and what not. But punk hasn't aged at all well; the current crop of "punk" bands (can't believe anyone would willingly tar themselves with that epithet these days; rather like being a Sha Na Na tribute band, isn't it?) are worth more as dog food or fertilizer than they are as musicians or human beings, and even a cursory listen to most of the class of '77 is...well, just embarrassing in its obviousness. So, where does this sorta disc fit in? Well, they do an "ironic" retake of "The Kids Are Alright" called "The Punks Are Alright," and on the live segment they do an "ironic" remake of Napoleon XIV's "They're Coming To Take Me Away, Ha Ha." Makes me wanna shoot myself. [Bacchus Archives] David B. Livingstone

THE 440s "Flamethrower Love"/"Satan's at the Spot" 7"

Out of the gutters of Philly come four rock 'n' roll rat fucks called The 440s. Setting themselves apart from the crush of limp-wristed hopefuls, lead screamer/guitarist Sparkle Plenty has more balls in her delivery than RuPaul, and her bandmates ain't too shabby either. This is a must for fans of Girlschool and The Runaways. [Steel Cage] Troy Brooks

FRANCISCO LOPEZ Untitled #104 CD; Untitled #92 LP

The almost ceaseless output of Lopez continues, and with both these releases he challenges patience. *Untitled #104* uses as its source material faceless speedmetal, and while there's certainly an intensity here which calls to mind Merzbow, I can't see that he makes anything

