

## Foetus: No Ordinary Industrialist

**H**E HASN'T EXACTLY mellowed, but on his new "Gash" Foetus (Jim Thirlwell) offers some deviation from the pounding, grinding music he's known for making. The most uncharacteristic track on this major-label debut is "Slung," an 11-minute jump-blues piece that suggests Desi Arnez (or at least Joe Jackson) more than the New York-based Australian's customary noise terrorism; but the album also integrates jazz, albeit of a more free-form variety, on such tracks as "Mighty Whity" and "See Ya Later."

The most unusual aspect of "Slung" is its syncopation; elsewhere, the writer-producer-performer remains dedicated to crunching and thudding. Unlike those industrialists who produce essentially disco with a chip on its shoulder, however, Foetus sometimes provides sonic open spaces: "Take It Outside Godboy" features an almost-two-minute movie-music interlude, while the punchy "Downfall" is punctuated by brief pauses. Of course, such tracks soon start slamming again. Foetus's meditations on disease, contamination and the decadence of contemporary society are what might be expected of a guy who named his publishing company Self-Immolation, but he's got the

beats to drive such bad-times music beyond the ordinary.

—Mark Jenkins

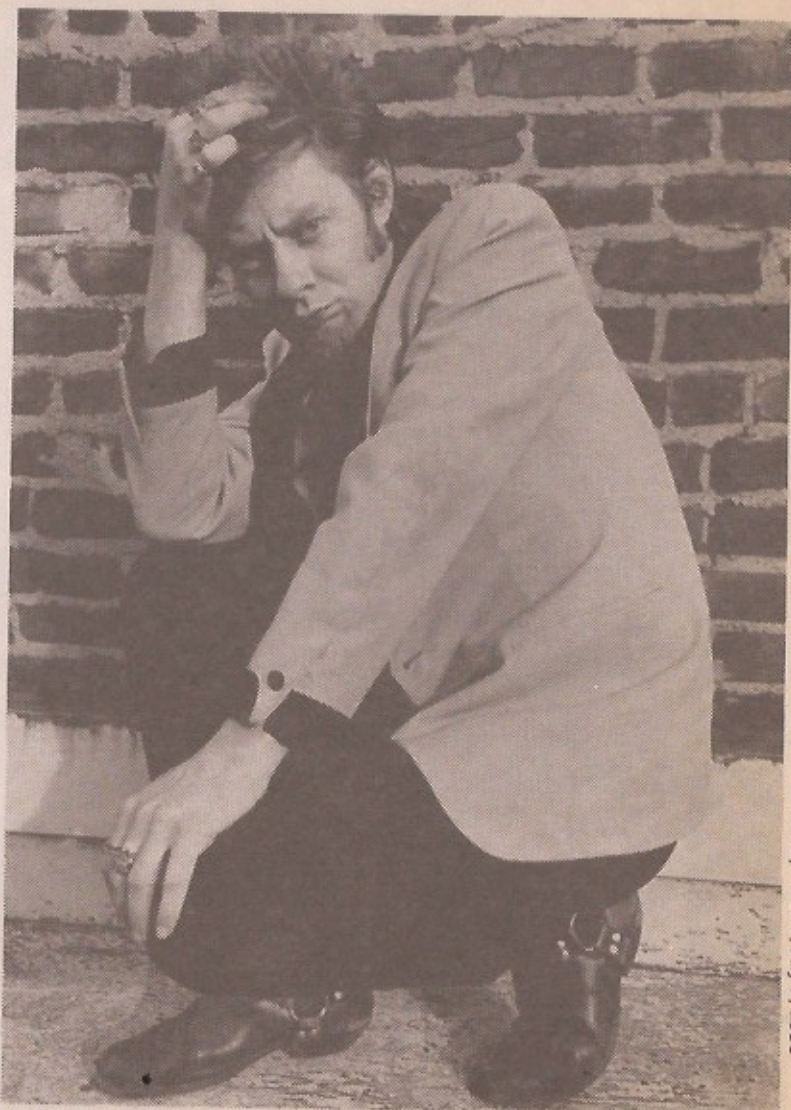
**FOETUS** — "Gash" (Columbia). Appearing Friday at the 9:30 club with Ultra Bide and Halcion. ♦ To hear a free Sound Bite from this album, call 202/334-9000 and press 8105.

## Subtle Charm Of Harris & 'Horns'

**M**ANY LOCAL JAZZ fans will be familiar with the cast that appears on "Rick Harris . . . and the Little Big Horns." In addition to Harris, a trumpeter and arranger best known for his collaborations with singer Pam Bricker, the lineup includes saxophonists Chris Bacas and Bruce Swaim, trombonist Rick Lillard, pianist Robert Redd, bassist Tommy Cecil and drummer Chuck Redd. All are seasoned musicians and they often perform here with the subtlety and grace that Harris's arrangements demand.

That's especially true of "Waltz of Felix," a tender, lilting homage dedicated to the late jazz broadcaster Felix Grant. The warm commingling of brass and reeds, the eloquent sax and bass solos, and the brush-stroked rhythms all add up to a lovely, touching homage. Occasionally the focus shifts to a more extroverted brand of swing, as on the Benny Goodman-Gene Krupa-inspired "Ridin' High" and a bright,

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Foetus (Jim Thirlwell) grows beyond crunch and thud to sonic open spaces.