

Australian-born rocker likes

"I'm an angel who's had his wings clipped — an angel in devil's boots! Slings-back pumps for a cloven hoof! Someone's tied tin cans to my tail! Someone's always driving in one last nail/I'm trying to use my halo as a life preserver but it's sprung a leak/THIS IS HOLY MURDER."

Jim Thirlwell — "Street Of Shame" There's no way of knowing what prompted the self-disgust and desperation at the heart of Australian-born rocker Jim Thirlwell's devastating songs. He won't say.

And he won't say whether risking public ire and outright misinterpretation by calling himself *Scraper Foetus Off The Wheel* on his agonizingly addictive *Hole* LP has proven worthwhile. He's using the same name when he makes his Toronto debut at Bam Boo, 312 Queen St. W., on Wednesday.

Hole is available as an import on Thirlwell's own Self Immolation label through British independent Some Bizzare Records.

What he will say is that his deliberately provocative credo is something he calls "negative positivism."

"I make negative statements to ensure a positive outcome," he told me yesterday from the New York apartment he shares with his lover, punk poet Lydia Lunch.

"Besides, I welcome misinterpretation. It makes things interesting. But I find most people take my work in the way it's meant. I've never felt the need for explanatory sleeve notes."

Explanatory sleeve notes? How could you begin to explain "I'll Meet You In Poland, Baby," in which an imagined post-non-aggression pact conversation between Hitler and Stalin becomes an allegory for contemporary marital warfare? Or "Satan Place," a twisted reworking of the "Lonely Surfer" idea, in which Thirlwell sees himself as the last man in a sea-green purgatory, riding forever "the wild surf in the bowels of the earth?"

Thirlwell's songs, despite their dank, fetid imagery, are uplifting. His music is unbearably fierce, an ultimately life-affirming, Lear-like howl.

Thirlwell, also occasionally known as Clint Ruin, will perform alone at Bam Boo, backed by pre-recorded tapes.

"Mine isn't the kind of work you can't share with other people," he told me. He tried to work in a band in London between 1978 and 1980, "but it was horrible. I think most of what I do now is an attempt to purge myself of the memories of that experience."

"I spend most of my time by myself in the studio, editing my songs to ever more concise forms. That's why I prefer rock 'n' roll to literature. The song is very precise; it imposes a very rigorous structure."

Besides, work is his only pleasure. He detests the machinations of the music industry and wants to maintain a distance from it by keeping his act small and self-contained.

"I'll do the odd interview," he said. "I don't wilfully avoid the media. They're a



GREG QUILL
Club notes

necessary evil.

"I subscribe to that old saying, 'Don't stick it out if you don't want to share it.'"

☆☆☆

Myles Hunter, leader of and songwriter for Toronto rock band *Refugee*, had a

rough time in New York last week. He and his cohorts spent Saturday and Sunday wading about in the ruins of civilization, which can be found in a swamp on a soundstage somewhere outside Queens.

Refugee can be found at The Diamond, 410 Sherbourne St., Tuesday night.

At the behest of American video producers John Small and Jeff Shock, who have also produced clips for Billy Idol, Chicago and Billy Joel, the band trekked south to shoot promotional footage for the song "Exiles In The Dark," from its re-recorded and re-released *Affairs In Babylon* album.

"We played on this stylized stage in what was supposed to be a reconstructed



Jim Thirlwell, due at the Bam Boo next Wednesday, sets out to be deliberately provocative. Thirlwell's songs, despite their dank, fetid imagery, are uplifting, says Quill.

ROCK

Bam Boo The pride of Queen West offers musical exotica, mostly dance, and a Caribbean/Thai menu. Compass tonight and tomorrow, Sisters Steppin' Out Sunday with Ladies Choice, The Gwen Swick Band and Ona Radio, Reggae dance party Don Carlos, Roots Radics and The Itals Monday, (\$8 in advance, \$10 at door) jazz with Platform 7 Tuesday, From NYC Scraper Foetus Off The Wheel Wednesday, El Salvador benefit Etranger and Rheostatics Thursday Heavy weekend lineups, \$3-\$5 cover, 312 Queen St. W. 593-5771.