Australian-born rocker likes

"I'm an angel who's had his wings clipped — an angel in Detroit's Stooges/Sleazy-gangster package for a colonized soul. Someone's tied the gun 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 sprouting a leak. THIS IS HOLY MURDER." 

Jim Thriweil — "Street Of Shame"

There's no knowing what progress there is, self-dissatisfaction and desperation at the heart of Australian-born rocker Jim Thriwell's devastating songs, from NYC to LA.

And he won't say whether risking public ire and outright misinterpretation by calling himself Scraping 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, March 29.

Hole is available as an import on Thriwell's own Self-Illusion 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-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 Thriwell sees himself as the last man in a sea-green purgatory, riding forever "the wild surf in the bowels of the earth?"

Thriwell's songs, despite their dark, field imagery, are uplifting. His music is unbearably fresh, an ultimately life-affirming, hearth-like howl.

Thriwell, also occasionally known as Clan Baka, will perform alone at Bam Boo, backed by pre-recorded tapes.

"Mine isn't the kind of work you can sit there 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 defies the mechanization of the music industry and wants to maintain a distance from it by keeping his act small and intimate.

"I'll do the odd interview," he said. "I don't wildly avid the media. They're a rough time in New York last week. He and his cohorts spent Saturday and Sunday wandering about in the ruins of civilization, which can be found in a swamp on a soundstage somewhere outside Queens. Refuge can be found at The Diamond, 410 Shearbourne 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 promotion 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..."