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# OUTBURN



# TYPE O NEGATIVE

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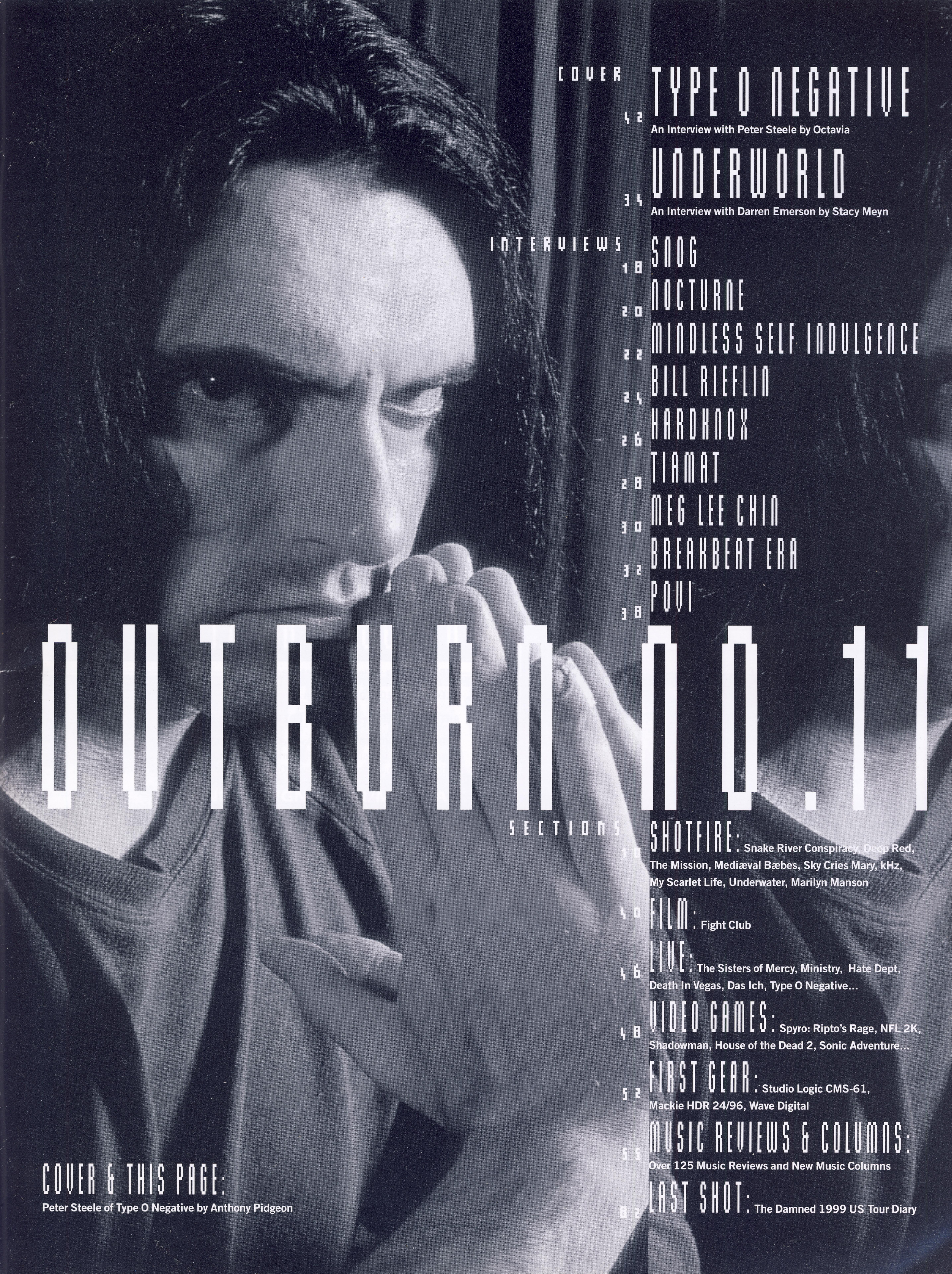


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# UNDERWORLD

OUTBURN #11  
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MEG LEE CHIN BY DAVID SLATTON  
PHOTOGRAPH BY MIGUEL ROSALES



Meg Lee Chin isn't afraid to show her neurosis. The youngest of four daughters of a US Air Force electronics engineer and a Taiwanese mother, Meg grew up traveling the world and seeing its wonderful beauty as well as its dark underbelly, and along the way she developed an uncontrollable urge to scream out her fear and frustration. Her debut album, *Piece and Love*, blisters with heavy electronic beats and a torrent of confused, angst-ridden wailing and confident, in-your-face sexuality. Meg recorded and produced most of the album in her London flat, with later help from Invisible honcho, Martin Atkins, who recruited her for 1998's Pigface tour. But Meg is not without pedigree. Before this release, she had started her own all-girl hardcore band, Crunch, produced a demo for her pals, Faith No More, and auditioned for Shirley Manson's job in the tech-rock supergroup, Garbage. Meg shows supreme confidence in her abilities, and she also flashes some moments of surprisingly vulnerability. The paradox isn't lost on her. "Imperfection, I love it," she says. "It's human, ain't it? In the future, we'll all be perfect, because we'll all be genetically engineered! How boring. I love being a mess."

**Where do you regard as home?**

Home is where my friends are. I value my friends. Most of my friends are outsiders, like me.

**Did moving around so much affect your music?**

Yeah. There's a silver lining to every cloud...I never belonged. This put me in a wonderful position to observe. Then I get on stage and spew it all back. That's my job...I have a place in this big, bad, mad world!

**Tell me about living in San Francisco, when you were going to college.**

I fucking love San Francisco. It's not even like America. It's jam-packed full of weirdos. I took to it like a fish to water.

Those people made me feel down to earth and sensible in comparison, which I like. I was extremely unhappy before I moved there. It was like a shot of oxygen...I met wonderful people there. Also, I fucking hate San Francisco—no sense of humor. By trying to be weird, you automatically restrict yourself. You become just like the rest of the sheep. Some so-called "arty" people are the most conformist in the world. Yuppies are free thinkers by comparison, so are Hitler youth.

**Where did your formidable technical knowledge come from?**

My technical knowledge comes from my brain. The software in it was self-organizing. It organized itself to understand "technical shit" due to hanging out with my introvert, scientist dad, who was unable to converse with children except in binary form...I speak two languages: English and

Bullshit...as you may have noticed.

**How did you come to audition for Garbage?**

I formed an all-girl band called Crunch. It was my big dream...I always wanted to be one of the girls. I grew up with three, much older sisters who were more like mothers than siblings. They all hung out together, and had a great time shopping, partying, and laughing all the time. I got stuck with my dad, pet dog Fluffy, and their bewildered boyfriends. When Crunch dissolved I was devastated. The Garbage dudes heard about me through Shannon and Meredith, who were Crunch's managers, and flew me out to Wisconsin for an audition. I should have been impressed...I should have tried harder. Butch Vig was famous, but it was like, hanging out with the blokes again. The consolation prize! Stuck with the boring ol' scientist types. And they wanted a dream woman! Me? Ha! You must be kidding. Most guys like the way I look, and then they get bummed out when I start talking. If I learned to shut up, I could probably be a sex symbol.

**Do you regret that didn't work out?**

Do I regret it? No. Shirley's pretty sexy. I like her. And those guys are pretty nice blokes. I like them too. But they had a clear and exact idea of what they were looking for, and that wasn't me.

**How did you connect with Martin Atkins and Pigface? I saw the tour in Seattle, and you looked like you were having a hell of a good time...**

Shannon and Meredith—as always, strong women in my life—introduced me to Martin. He told me about Pigface, and it sounded right. My favorite thing to do is improv, and Pigface is spontaneous! What a fucking blast. I love musical freedom, and Pigface offered it. The Garbage blokes wanted me to sing every inflection of their lyrics exactly like they had written them. Nothing against Shirley—it's good she could do it, and do it so well, but I've got a mind like a sieve, and I'm no good at taking direction. If I don't get it down straight away, I've lost it. That's why I'm crap in the studio. I drive people insane! My own album was recorded spontaneously in my home studio. Pigface was like coming home. Martin has the same attitude that I've got. I like performing to be like being in a race car; It's gotta be dangerous. It's got to demand all your attention, and you should feel like any moment it could all blow apart—this is Pigface. Some people are mortified when they see Pigface because it isn't all polished.

**Lyricaly, your songs seems to be pretty introspective. When you write songs, do you start with the programming and music?**

I'm one of those, what-you-call, "lateral thinkers"...another reason why I'm a nightmare in the studio. I start with anything. I don't get writer's block, because I spew out anything and work from there. I record people talking or ducks quacking and make songs out of them. Throw me anything, and I'll make something out of it. I have spent years being bored as a kid, but I don't write about personal experiences much. I'd rather be a mirror. I get embarrassed meeting fans—they want to watch me, and I'd rather watch them. On Pigface tours I usually sneak away from the rest of the pack and go off adventuring in the towns by myself. I pretend to be invisible and watch the locals. I can be the rock star, too, but only if you pay me.

**Let's talk about your debut album *Piece and Love*. "Swallowing You" sounds like a pretty angry love song. What inspired this track?**

It's about escapism and any excuse to scream. I suppose that's similar to being in love. I scream and cry a lot! I don't know why—my life isn't that rough. It must be in my genes or

**MEG LEE CHIN BY DAVID SLATTON  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PHOENIX**



# CHIN MEG LEE CHIN

metabolism or the stars or something. I wish I wasn't so goddamn emotional; I wish I was one of those stable down-to-earth types; I wish I was quiet; I wish I was like the other girls; I wish I had a boyfriend! But I'm glad I'm not starving in some village which has just been burned down with soldiers raping women and killing babies. I'm glad I'm not being tortured in some death camp. I'm glad all I've got to worry about is the faulty chemical imbalance in my own head. "Swallowing You" is the harmless release of extraneous emotions. Better than smacking someone. If somebody enjoys this, then hallelujah, my life does serve some purpose after all...

**Long term, what would you like to do with your music career?**

I lust after artistic power...that's what really turns me on. You can keep the money and fame and the bullshit that goes with it. I don't mean to sound ungrateful, but celebrity is rubbish. What a joke. Stars are morons, myself included. Andy Warhol said that in the future everyone will be famous for fifteen minutes, but by then, no one will want to be. Everybody will be on *Jerry Springer* by then, and people will envy the ones that managed to remain anonymous. The problem with being a star is that you have to maintain a public image, and that's a lot of work. It's like the little guy behind the curtain in *The Wizard of Oz*. He's got fancy lighting, makeup, video and pyrotechnics, so he comes off like an all-powerful God, but he's really just a little wimp. I had a famous friend who went to see a shrink. She actually lied to the shrink and didn't reveal anything about her true self because she was worried what the shrink would think of her! She was super cool in public, but behind closed doors, her dark side came out. She was a real insecure sicko. You don't have to worry about me hiding my dark side. It'll be there for you in all it's glory, as I air it all in public and through my music. This is just the tip of the iceberg. I did this album on a computer I built myself in my teeny bedroom. I can't wait to get my claws on some of that stuff the Wizard had. I want the means to mass communication. I've got a lot more to say about this world we live in...a lot of it is pretty vile and some of it is rather uplifting, but all of it will be honest. It's a dirty job but someone's gotta do it. I've been watching you, so now it's time for you to listen to me! ★



# MUSIC

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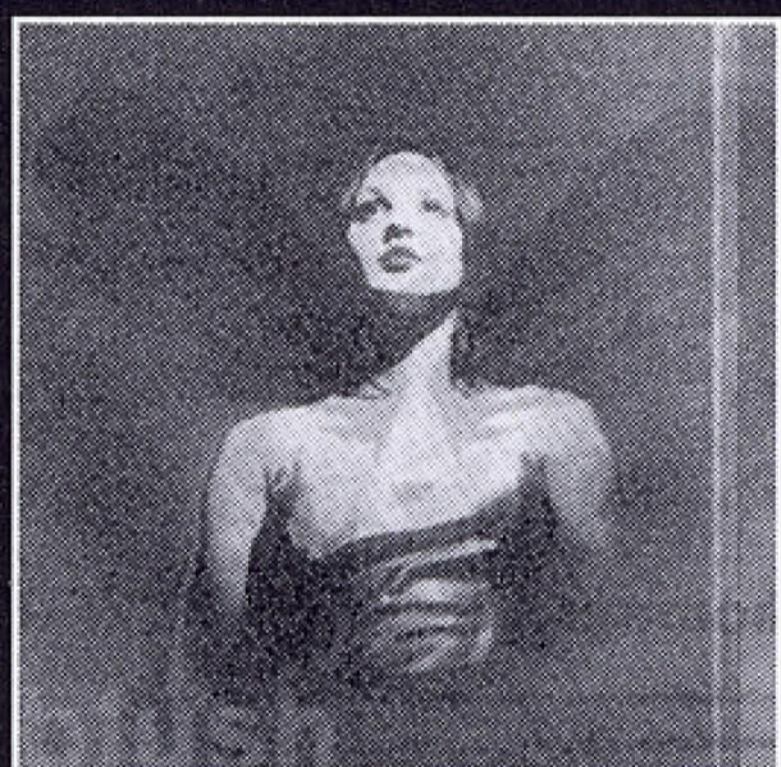
EVA VERMANDEL

## BOWS

**Blush** (Too Pure/Beggars Banquet)

**:A HYBRID OF ETHEREAL AND CLASSICAL STRINGS WITH DRUM & BASS ELEMENTS:**

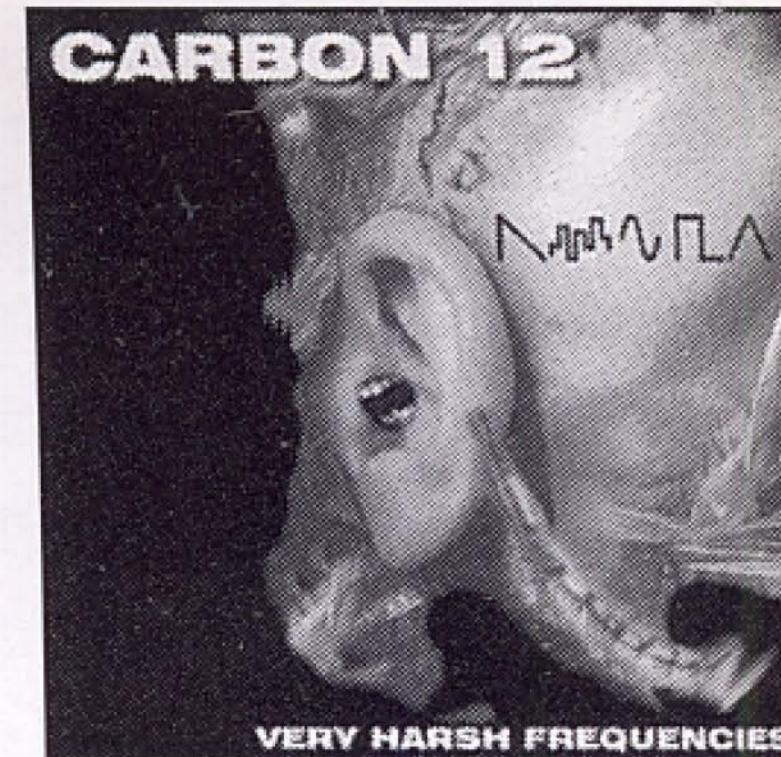
Destined to become an instant classic, Bows' debut CD, *Blush*, refreshingly combines guitars, violins, and sax with elements of drum & bass. *Blush* is a surprising delight with its stunning and varied vocals that makes each song a masterpiece. Bows may appear to be a newly discovered artist, but the mastermind behind the band, Luke Sutherland, has paid his dues with stints in several British bands. Luke first caught the attention of Too Pure when he was in the sonic guitar band, Fen. According to the label, "All along, we could see Luke was a real star—had real presence....intelligent and eloquent." But it wasn't until Luke's next band, Long Fin Killie, that the label agreed to release his material—two LPs, which Too Pure describes as "undiscovered gems." Thanks to Beggars Banquet's licensing, *Blush* will stand out as a discovered gem, and be held as a prized possession by all those who hear it. Lush atmospheric soundscapes of surging strings form a strong base for the melodic songs, while delicate female vocals, provided by Ruth Emond and Signe Høirup Wille-Jørgensen (from the Danish band, Speaker Bite Me), blend gracefully into the male vocals by Luke. He also performs the guitars, violins, and saxophones on *Blush*, and brings in Robbie McKendrick for drums and Colin Greig on bass. Not only is Luke an accomplished musician, but he's also an acclaimed author who released his debut novel, *Jelly Roll [Anchor]*, in 1998. Future plans include a spoken word four track CD out later this year with contributions by four different bands who will create the music to accompany Luke's vocals. The beautiful artwork and presentation of *Blush* add to the refined artistic feel of the album, and the soothing sounds of Bows are just what my frazzled nerves need in order to relax and enjoy the simple pleasures of life. ~ Octavia



## CARBON 12

**Very Harsh Frequencies** (Brain Surgery)

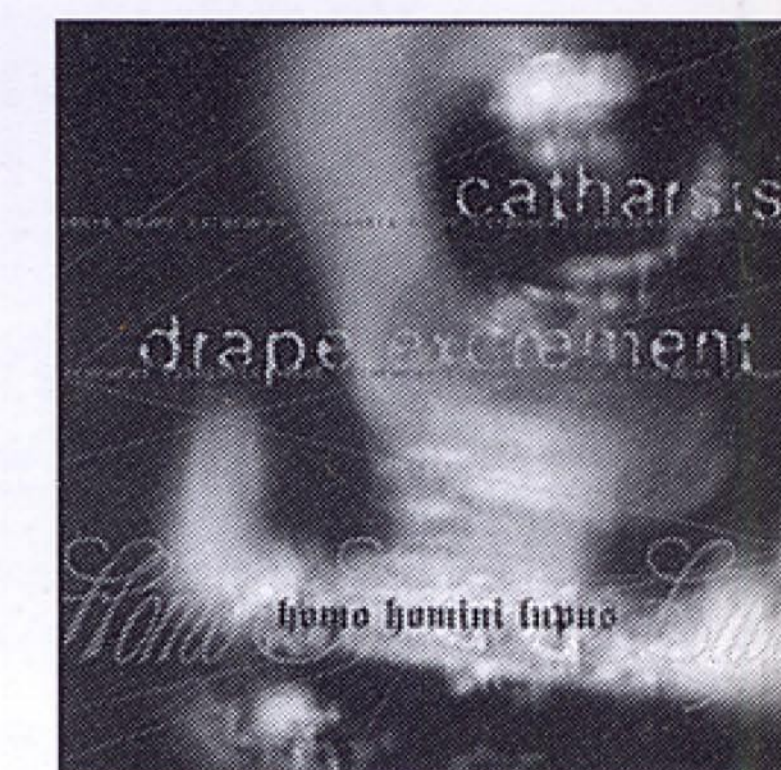
**:STEVE TUSHAR MARKS HIS SOLO DEBUT WITH A GOOD FOURTEEN TRACKS OF BLUDGERY:** The title of this disc does it more justice than any review ever will. With equalizer filling capacity, Steve Tushar single handedly manipulates Carbon 12's debut release. Although far from being a dead ringer, this should appeal to the same group of kids who think Wumpscut is the next creation of God. Carbon 12 is harder, fiercer, and downright nastier than anything Rudy has laid hands on. *Very Harsh Frequencies* fills the room with a well textured discordance that hardly ever becomes undanceable. The two strongest cuts on the album are the opener, "Solitude," and "Puncturing" which both cross the line from studio pieces to grinding mayhem. Even as a sometimes nondescript industrial album—including a cover of 80's tune "Burning Down the House"—Tushar is armpit deep in talent. Carbon 12 proves to be a welcome addition to the seemingly growing roster of Brain Surgery. It is easily foreseeable that the next time we hear of Tushar, it will be the result of a studio collaboration with a bunch of remixes in tow. ~ Skippy Longstocking



## CAUL

**Light From Many Lamps** (Malignant)

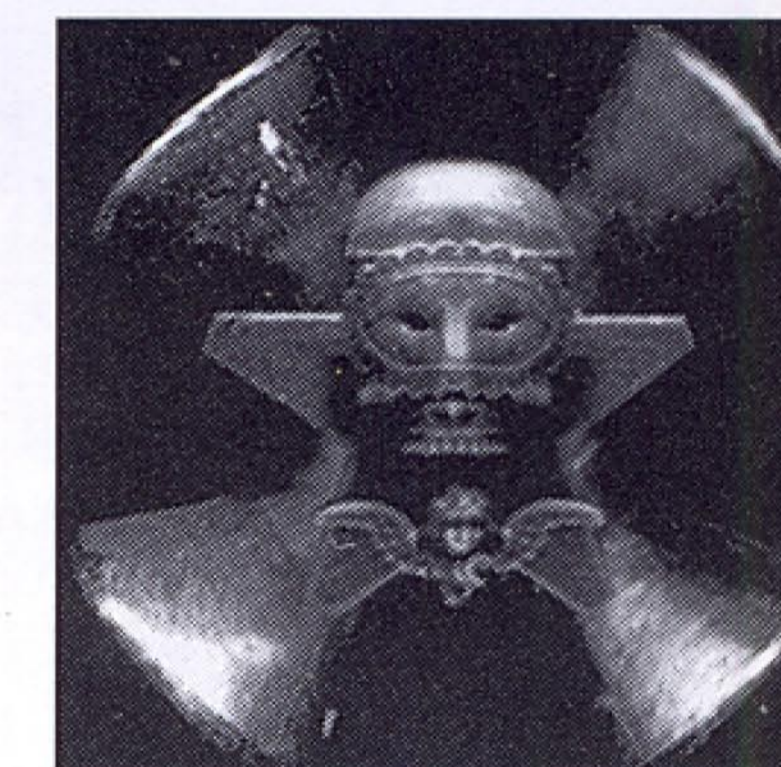
**:THE AMBIENCE OF INTERNAL DESOLATION, OF FAITH IN LIMBO:** The chill wind of solitude augmented with desolation's barren chimes blows through the first track, "I Will Awake The Dawn," a crisp wind resonating through a soul made of glass, a soul seeking faith, but finding uncertainty. The stark, sonic canvass of Brett Smith's spiritual explorations as Caul continues to evolve with the release of his fourth CD, *Light From Many Lamps*. Where his previous release, *Reliquary*, seemed to be on the verge of touching the light, of finding answers to the internal (and eternal) questions of self, spirituality and even God, his latest offering meanders in the murky haze of contemplation. The somber synths of "O Thou Bright Crown Of Pearl" are adorned in bleak shadows, dawn's weary eye opening to reveal nothing. (Again, no answers, no revelations, just questions...) "At Midnight I Arise To Give Thanks To Thee" seems less a thankful trek, more a mysterious venture: what exactly do these anxious tones proclaim to give thanks to? "By The Breath Of God, All The Stars" encompasses a tenebrous empathy, so very heartfelt as to elicit tears, stark and amazingly somber (much in tune with the always soul wrenching denouements created by Howard Shore in his soundtrack work for David Cronenberg), one of the most pure, emotionally gripping pieces of music this listener has ever heard. A weary female voice, dry and poetic, leads one into the strange, dust laden domain of "Midnight's Tongue," melancholic tension plucked throughout. The hollow strains into luminous church organ of "A Tapestry Of Bone" veers into the "something is wrong" territory of "The Twelfth Golden Swan,"—is the clutter indicative of faith stumbling? (More questions) Finally, the immense sadness of "La Sua Volontate e Nostra Pace" seems hopeful, yet so very brittle, the glass of the soul cracked, but still encompassing something as the final wisp of wind that ends the journey fades, sorrow incomparable, resolution incomplete. One's spiritual journey should be solitary, a quest harbored within one's self and not corrupted by TV influx and the lies of (dis)organized religion in general; therefore, the questions Brett is sonically asking hold more validity under these circumstances, more inherent honesty. Still, the answers remain hidden, or at least shielded by his own inconclusive examinations of faith, self, or something more elusive. And desolation, the key element found in all of his work, remains the most powerful providence here. ~ JC Smith



## CATHARSIS / DRAPE EXCREMENT

**Homo Homini Lupus** (Black Plague/Malignant)

**:A DEATH INDUSTRIAL DOUBLE HEADER:** The second release on Malignant side label Black Plague (mis)treats the listener to two of death industrial's finest underground purveyors, Catharsis and Drape Excrement. The gruesome entertainment commences with Catharsis as the iron jaws of Death's blood stained abattoir slam down, metallic molars like a skull crushing sledgehammer on the souls of the tormented, the rhythm like fists pummeling with relentless, lackadaisical insistence. The souls are ground into pulp, adorned in the distressing ambience of agonizing moans; even as the assault ceases, strange, indecipherable rambling is heard—there is no end to the suffering, as the tortures displayed here are eternal (you cannot kill what is already dead). The title track builds slowly, aligning a strategy for attack, before a caustic squeal and percussive clutter batter Hell's gates off their hinges and all madness ensues; when the fiery, melodic screech is layered over the top, a vicious, cataclysmic edge is consummated—torture of a more brutal design. Drape Excrement is the side project of the raging, power electronics infused Soldnergeist; they create a forbidding, thick ambient stew that percolates intensely, a miasma of noise that hints at power electronics without engaging the all out attack; more subtle, dangerous "Birds, Only Birds?" is constructed around a dull, machinery throb laced with radiation and voices chirping away underneath; upon the layered, disorientating drones of "Lullaby For A Society," haunting, anxious synths and reverberant, dismaying tones blossom; "Engramm" starts with chants, priests of the undead raising demon hordes from fathomless depths, the simmering atmosphere of Hell's droning and whining machinery growing more obtrusive as the track progresses; "Totenrichter" bangs on a submarine's metal walls, drills attacking from the outside, a brittle synth spray raining tension on the proceedings. Both bands specialize in the putrefying ambience of the slaughter, a slaughter of a most insidious, lethal design. Mandatory! ~ JC Smith



## MEG LEE CHIN

**Piece and Love** (Invisible)

**:PIGFACE FRONT WOMAN SOLOS THROUGH AN UNDERSTRUCTURE OF MACHINES, PERCUSSION, AND BRILLIANCE:** Of course the name sounds familiar, Meg Lee Chin has been fronting Pigface for some time now. Meg Lee and Martin Atkins team together for her solo debut that makes comparisons embarrassing. With Atkins involved, the quality of percussion work should be a given. He pushes it to the front of the mix with a blur of fuzzy electronics dinging in and out between Meg Lee's partly spoken, partly screamed, and almost always beautiful lyrical work. It seems a shame to liken this to other female artists, as most rely on their ability to be pretty to draw in a fanbase. Meg Lee Chin rocks. Plain and simple, she tells it as it is with her down to earth delivery of each track. The album has the pop sensibilities that make the listener sing along even if they don't know the lyrics filling in with la-de-da's and hand gestures where applicable. Easily one of the best records of the year, this should find its way in the hands of many people who might have thought Pigface was a little too experimental for their tastes. This is one of those instances where pointing out

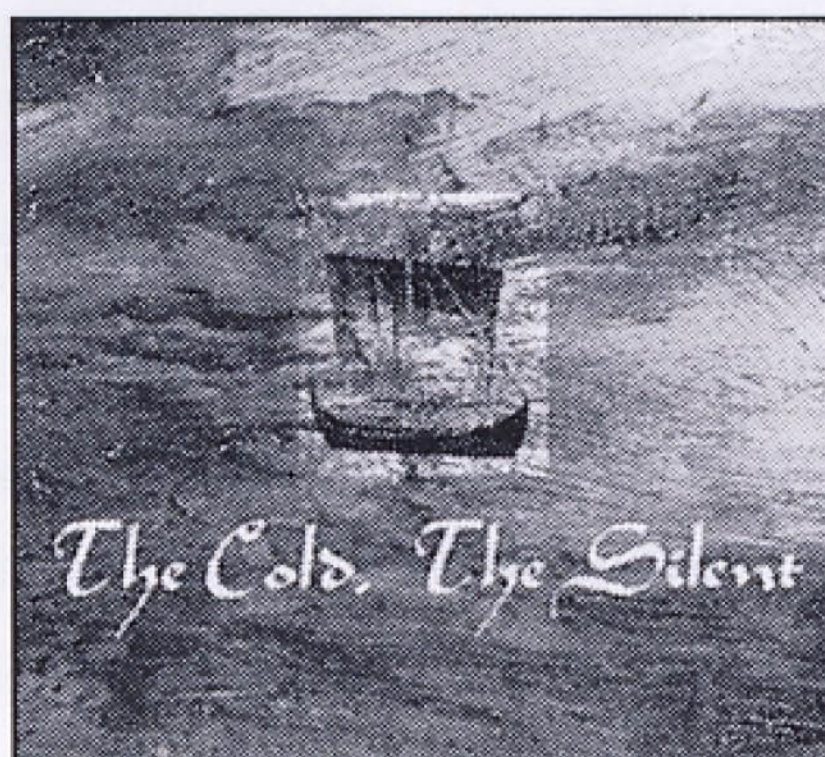


select tracks is useless; this whole record is brilliant. The best part about it is where most bands can't figure out how to end a song when they should, Meg Lee Chin brings it to a halt. *Piece and Love* is full of honesty in music. If ever there was a record that was done right from beginning to end, this is it. ~ Skippy Longstocking

## VARIOUS ARTISTS

**The Cold, The Silent** (Dragon Flight)

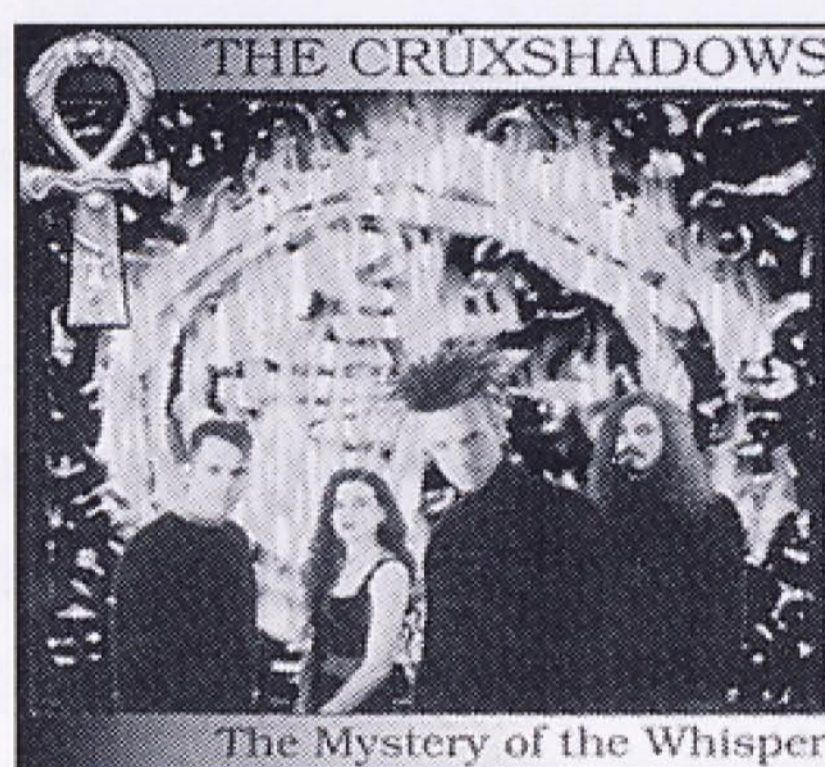
**:DARK AMBIENT, BLACK METAL, DOOM, AND GOTH:** I first had a chance to listen to *The Cold, The Silent* on Halloween night, which turned out to be an appropriate occasion. This compilation presents the extremes of dark music in the duration of thirteen diverse tracks. Quite an international assortment of bands is featured here, including artists from Finland, Portugal, France, Norway, and Italy. The delightfully dreary, eerie ethereal outset of the album includes tracks from Dream Into Dust, 4th Sign of the Apocalypse, and As All Die. There is a brutal transformation into climactic black/doom metal midway, highlighted by bands such as Skepticism and Novembers Doom. Then this violent intensity just as suddenly gives the moment over to a strange, beautiful gothic influx from Shellyz Raven and Canaan. All in all, there's likely something here for any fan of truly spooky music; I was definitely pleased and surprised by much of what I heard here, including some of the really heavy stuff. Of course Dragon Flight took the risk of combining brutal metal with gentle, dark ambient music, and fans of one or the other genre may not appreciate everything found on *The Cold, The Silent*. But I admire the kind of risk taken which allows the listener to expand his or her horizons—and to check out some underground bands for the first time as well. ~ Lara Haynes



## THE CRÜXSHADOWS

**The Mystery of the Whisper** (Dancing Ferret)

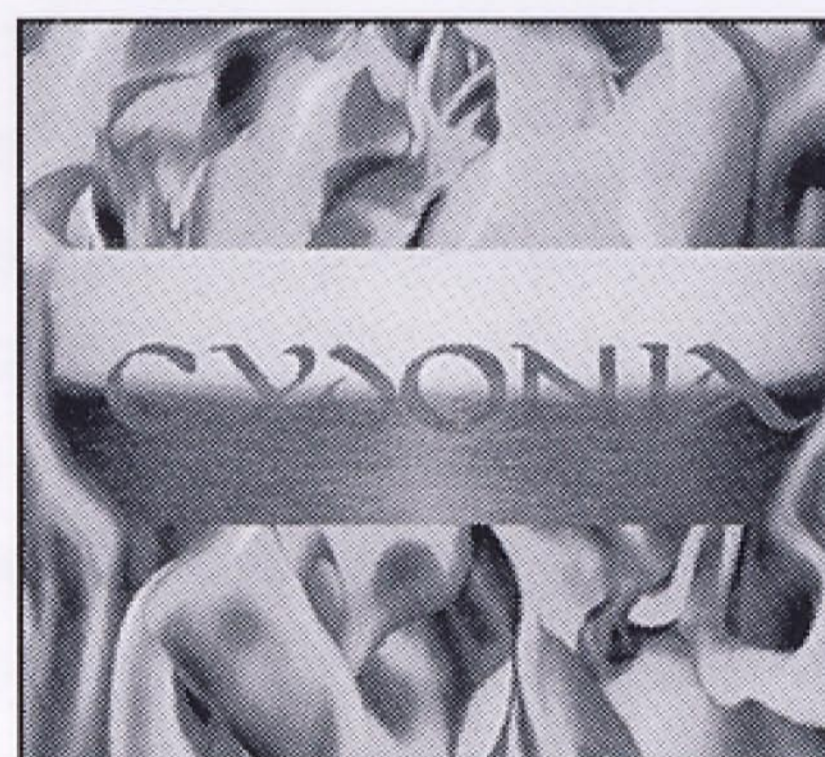
**:NEW WAVE GOTH:** A huge smash hit in the underground gothic scene, The Crüxshadows are back with their second full-length release and follow-up to the EP, *Until the Voices Fade*. Their latest CD, *The Mystery of the Whisper*, far surpasses 96's *Telemetry of A Fallen Angel* in its quality and diversity of styles. The shift in sound is partially thanks to a complete line-up change—all except for vocalist, composer, and visionary, Rogue, who's immediately identifiable by his crazy spiked hair. Joining him now are Rachel McDonnell on keyboards and violin, Chris Brantley on keyboards, and Kevin Paige on guitars. The Crüxshadows have a unique blend of styles with their gothic take on 80's new wave, and fans of Gary Numan, Peter Murphy, Duran Duran, and a-ha will probably enjoy their music. A key element to their imagery and overall theme is Egyptian spirituality, which adds a refreshing and interesting component to the music. The Crüxshadows' vocal and synth driven sound does stand out against their more rock driven contemporaries and may be worth trying out if you're looking for something new. ~ Octavia



## CYDONIA

(Tinman)

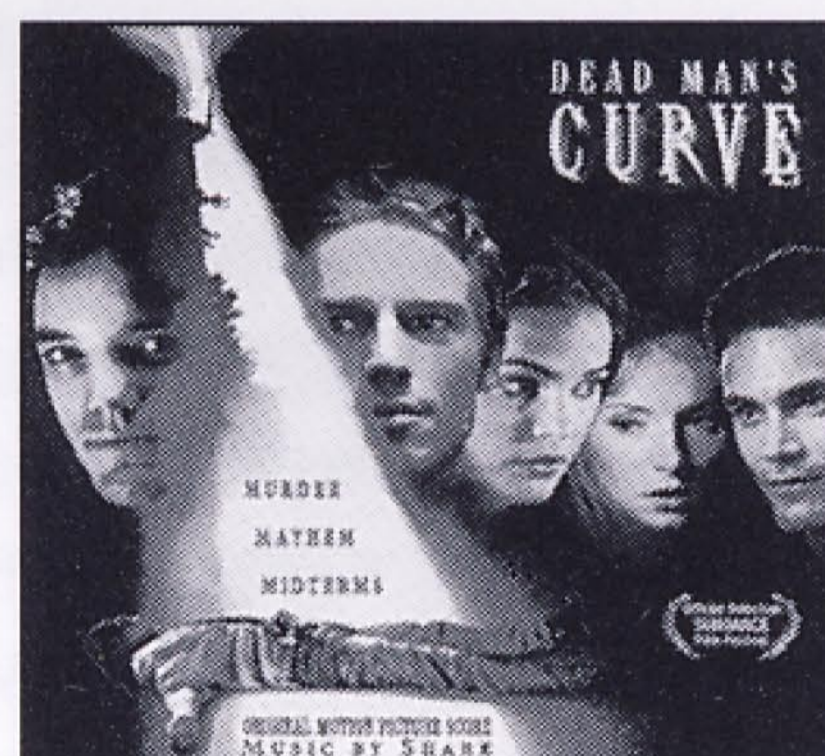
**:ELECTRO INDUSTRIAL:** The solo project of New Yorker Anthony Leone, Cydonia deftly combines machine gun beats and sinister electronic textures with Leone's preternatural whisper. The monotonous, tinny drum machine rhythm and sparse, synth melodies recall those early days of European EBM. While electronic gear has certainly become more sophisticated, Leone timewarps back through the 80's on the first several tracks—as if he's giving us a sense of his own evolution during the years he put this debut together. The drill bit whine on "Veil" sounds nostalgic rather than fiercely mechanical, but songs like "Sacred" and "Threads" burn with a familiar post-industrial rage that can provoke angst ridden club goers to punish a dance floor. Covering a range of apocalyptic themes, Cydonia obsesses on human futility and the oppression of an impersonal, post-modern culture. "I've seen the consequences of serving the machine," Leone rasps on "Confessor." We've certainly heard these morose proclamations before, but Cydonia succeeds in fulfilling the electro industrial prerequisites, making this a well rounded first effort. ~ David Slatton



## VARIOUS ARTISTS

**Dead Man's Curve** (Chromatic)

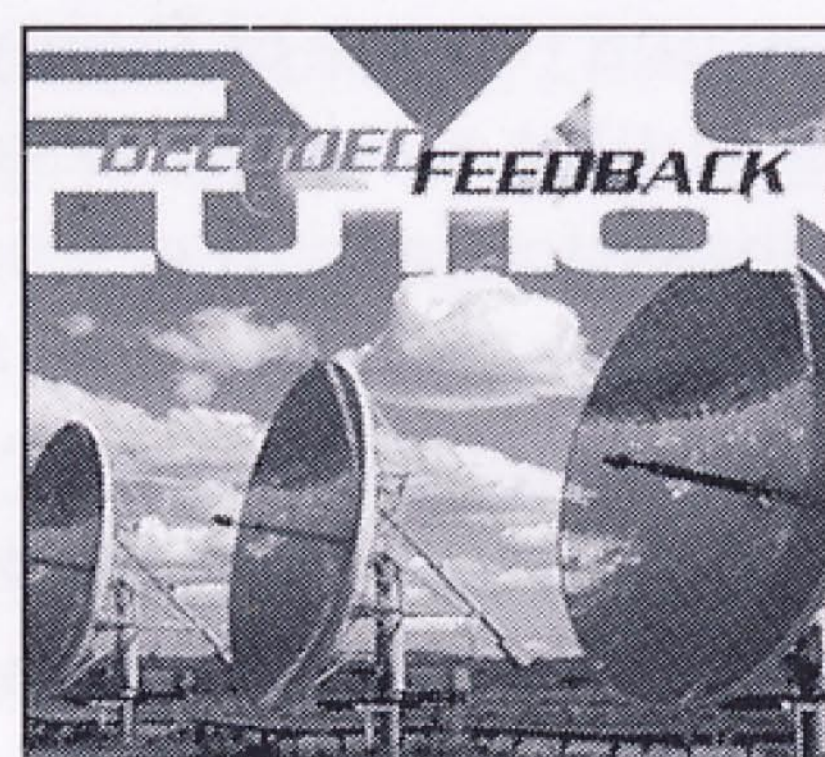
**:BAD MOVIE, BUT GOOD ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE SCORE:** Despite *Dead Man's Curve* (*The Curve*) being the absolutely worst movie that I have ever seen (even TV's *Felicity* couldn't save this dismal and hateful un-thriller with a cast full of characters who I would like to see all dead), the original motion picture score, composed and produced by Wild Colonial's guitarist Shark, is much more entertaining and enjoyable on its own with a dark 80's dirge swirl pop sort of feel. I am actually surprised at how cool the simplistic instrumental interludes and moody themes are, and how much I like all the selected vocal tracks. I really don't understand at all why the effective music on this disc wasn't better utilized in the movie itself? Maybe I shouldn't have watched the pitiful film before I listened to this well produced and assembled CD. Starbelly's "Die" is especially admirable with the upbeat lyrical delivery of "You'd be more interesting dead." The Wild Colonial's turn in a splendidly dark techno goth remix of "Wake Up Sad," and while The Cure, The Smiths, and even my all time favorite Joy Division are mentioned in the movie, it's Bauhaus' always welcome "Bela Lugosi's Dead" that appears on this disc. The original motion picture score to *Dead Man's Curve* by Shark goes far beyond the quality and limitations of the film, and proves that music can make a bad movie sound good. ~ rodent EK



## DECODED FEEDBACK

**EVOLution** (Metropolis)

**:NEW AND REMIXED DARK ELECTRO INDUSTRIAL:** The third release by Decoded Feedback is a sonic triptych that unfolds as follows: Part I: D.N.A., six new tracks highlighted by the jittery sequencer jumble, insistent beats, lightly distorted vocals, and trademark emotionally vibrant synths of the title track, as well as the glacial synths into scat-sequencer progression and loping beats of "Frozen." Part II: Genetically Altered, focuses on six remixes, the best versions being Aghast View's "Intense" remix of "Relic," spastic and noisy, driven by out of sync, stuttering percussion, and Din-Fiv's take on the same song, an aggressive, sequencer frenzy, electro stomp. Further alterations are performed by In Strict Confidence, Fictional, Funker Vogt and Decoded Feedback themselves. Part III: Cloned, showcases Frozen Autumn's streamlined, electro goth (complete with brooding vocals) cover version of "Bio-Vital." An interesting intermission, abating the appetite of the fans hungry for more. ~ JC Smith



# brainsurgerymusic



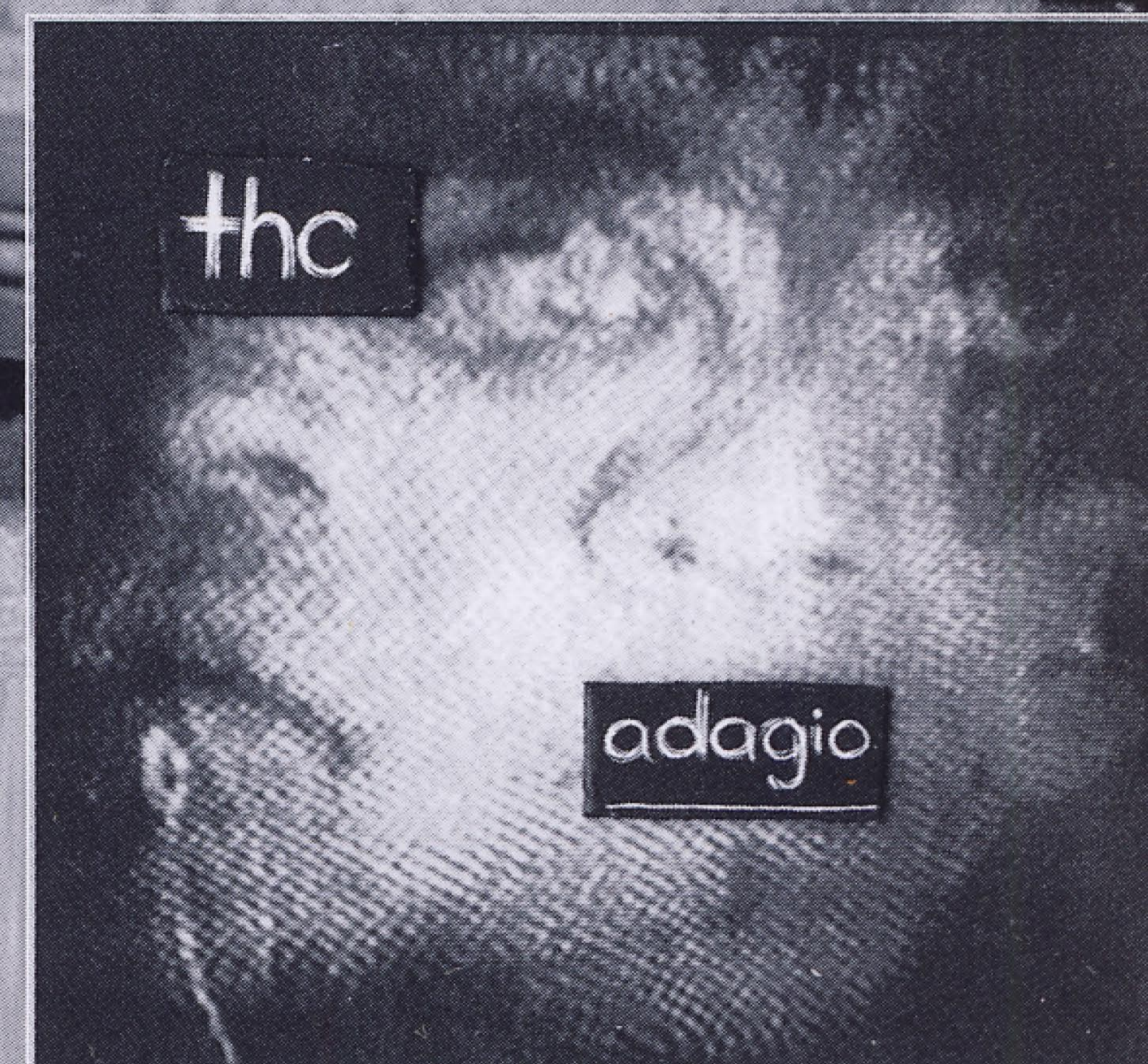
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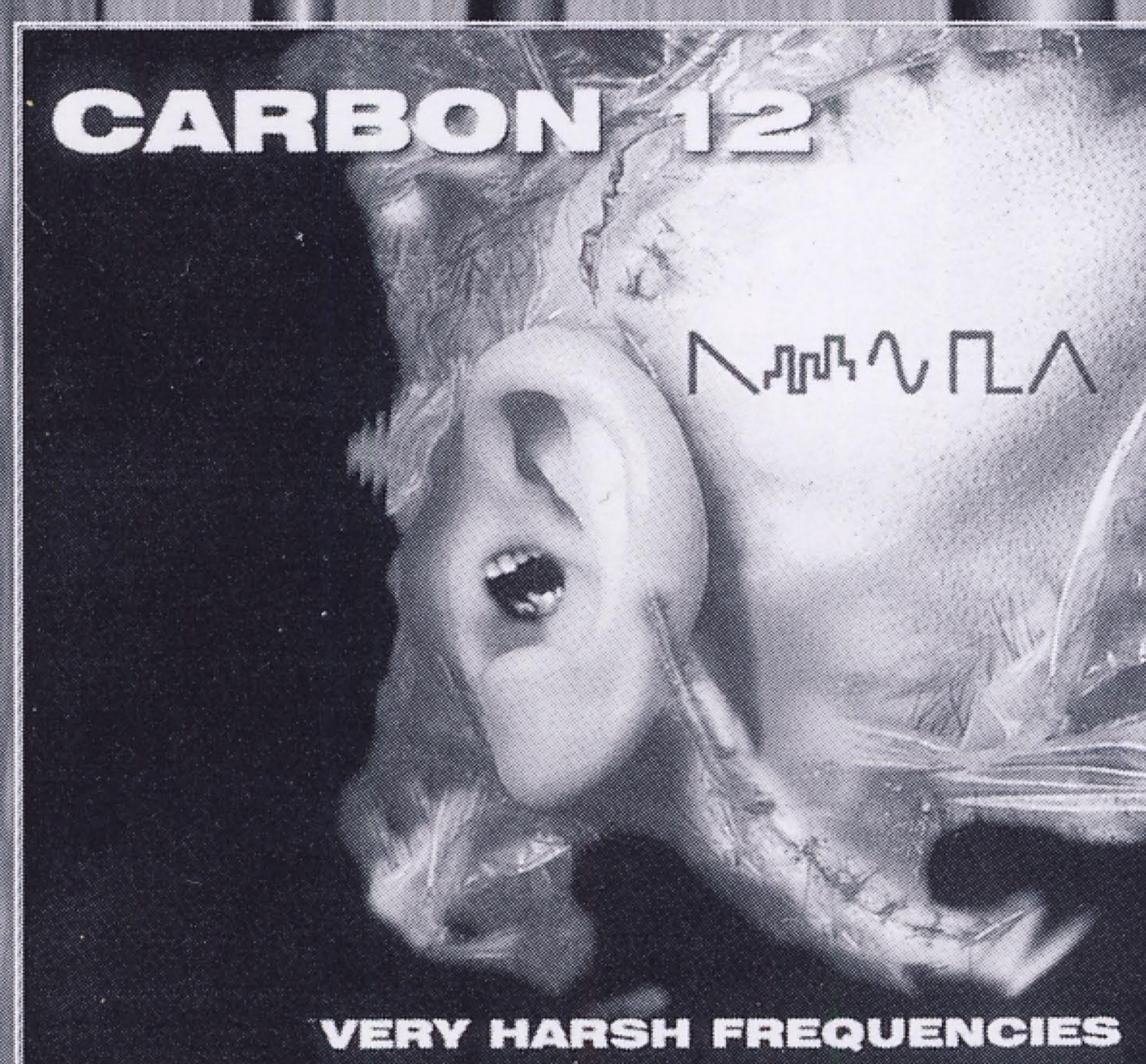


## CARBON 12:

VERY HARSH FREQUENCIES

Bludgeoning industrial lobotomy leaves blood on the dancefloor.

Includes:  
'Burning Down  
The House'



Heavy Water Factory:  
Fluid & Meat  
Their long out of print  
debut re-released

Yes, it's really coming out...they keep adding tracks: 4 brand new songs, 3 previously unreleased remixes, plus the full original album with all new artwork.

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