

Rasp Thorne & the Briars

*“Ya better suffocate that hip sway darlin’
Better shove it in your pocket ‘til you’re set free,
It just aint mere evidence that you’re flauntin’,
It’s the intersection dissectin’ the chaff from the
wheat...”*



Rasp Thorne
& the Briars

Rasp Thorne & the Briars

Rasp Thorne - Vocals, Keys, Guitar
Duncan DeMorgan - Bass
Pete Moriarty - Guitar, Keys
Hugh Zog – Lap steel, Guitar
Joni Nastoya - Drums

Rasp Thorne left his native Montana when he was 16 to live in Eastern Germany before exploring Europe, America, and Mexico. Finding himself in New Orleans at 20, he enrolled at University to study Drama and Literature but dropped out after three months to perform poetry and spoken word whilst hanging himself on the streets in the French Quarter. After a year in Louisiana he made one more trek across America to Los Angeles, Seattle and Montana before moving to Brooklyn.

In New York Rasp quickly fell in with the downtown poetry and art scene along with various warehouse collectives in Brooklyn. He wrote and performed three one-man shows at Manhattan Theatre Source and produced and performed monthly shows at The Bowery Poetry Club, Goodbye Blue Mondays and Zebulon. Bored of the trappings of solo work he founded a highly distorted gothic country band, Ryder Pales, which added a cacophonous music to his poetry and tales. Ryder Pales released one studio album, gigged relentlessly in NYC and toured the UK in 2008 playing Glastonbury Festival and The Luminaire in London with Son of Dave. Shortly after, Rasp made the decision to leave NYC and move to London. Ryder Pales disbanded.

The seeds of what was to become **Rasp Thorne & the Briars** were sown at a G.G. Elvis gig when the chance meeting of **Thorne** and **DeMorgan** over a shared love of suave crooners and chaotic punk led to the notion of a band. A few gatherings later, **Pete Moriarty** showed up with an upside down left handed electric guitar and the line up was completed by **Hugh Zog** (lap steel and guitar) and **Joni Nastoya** on drums.

Songs of cryptic crocodiles, shotgun-sucking porn stars and dystopian wax cults began to form and Rasp Thorne & the Briars unleashed their unruly concoction of carnival dirges, gothic country, and chaotic punk on London's flamboyant club scene. Nights such as **Gypsy Hotel**, **Torture Garden** and **Stranger Than Paradise** embraced the band's decadently deranged live performances and the band successfully curated their own night at Shunt amidst the structure of the theatrical show 'Money'.

With strong connections to the theatre and performance art world, Rasp Thorne & the Briars were commissioned to write the music and perform in the run of Carnesky Productions' **'Dystopian Wonders'** a live-art theatre and circus show at **The Roundhouse** (Camden) which went on to tour to **The Lowry** (Manchester) and **The Crucible** (Sheffield).

Rasp Thorne & the Briars are a band not easily pigeonholed. Their approach to music is idiosyncratic yet immediate, their material is theatrical, murky, and literate and their live shows are ranting distorted sermons of rock and roll chaos. Their debut EP **'Debutante Warnings'** is available for download on 18th April 2011 on Chagrin Records.

Rasp Thorne & the Briars are currently working on their debut album scheduled for release in late 2011.

Management & PR Contact:

Julia Hannan at Peculiar | julia@peculiar.me.uk | 07939 580560 | www.peculiar.me.uk

Rasp Thorne & the Briars

Live Dates

April 9th 2011 - Stranger than Paradise

The Hootananny, 95 Effra Road, Brixton SW 2 1DF www.hootanannybrixton.co.uk

April 22nd 2011 - The Green Door Store

Performing with "Kid Congo Powers & the Pink Monkey Birds" Stay Sick!
Trafalgar Arches Brighton, BN1 4FQ www.thegreendorestore.co.uk

May 5th 2011 - Komedia

Performing with "The Urban Voodoo Machine" and "Pussycat and the Dirty Johnsons"
44-47 Gardner Street, Brighton, BN1 1UN www.komedia.co.uk/brighton

May 21st 2011 - Native Tongue

Performing in "Vaudeville Stomp" club night. EC1 9PN www.nativetongue.co.uk

May 27th 2011 - St. Moritz Club

Club For Losers. 159 Wardour Street, Soho W1

June 16th 2011 – Nambucca

Holloway Road, London

June 18th 2011 – Mr Wolfs, Bristol www.mrwolfs.com

with John E Vistic Experience

June 20th 2011 - Sanctum Hotel, London

(Rasp solo performance for Black Spring Press's Film Night)

June 24th 2011 - Bistrotheque, London

(Rasp solo performance guesting for Marcella Puppini)

June 25th 2011 - Bistrotheque, London

(Rasp solo performance guesting for Marcella Puppini)

Sept 10th 2011 – Bestival, Isle Of Wight

Continental Drifts Stage

More To Be Announced

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Julia Hannan at Peculiar | julia@peculiar.me.uk | 07939 580560 | www.peculiar.me.uk

Rasp Thorne & the Briars

“5/5 stars ★★★★★ Yes, the circus had come to town and was adamant to raise hell, and Rasp Thorne was the ringmaster...rolling around the murky floor whilst rolling his eyes backwards... twisting every limb of his body and squirming as if someone had injected him with snake venom.” *Live review, St Moritz – Claudia A, Music News* www.music-news.com (June 2011)

“Rasp agitates and captivates in a beguiling manner as he escorts you on a journey to a dark underworld where bleeding hearts flounder and offer their souls for redemption in the carnage. Expect big things from this band. Getting left behind isn't an option! ” *Review - Lorraine Reeves, Mudkiss Fanzine* (June 2011)

“One of the most unique and charismatic musical talents around” *Interview – Music News* (June 2011)

“The best new band I’ve seen in ages” - **Billy Chainsaw** (May 2011)

“At six songs this EP captures the raw energy of deranged drug-crazy burlesque tents that haunt the wee hours of 21st century festivals” *EP Review - The Arts Desk* (April 2011)

“Decadent, theatrical punk rock with a dark twist...If Derek Jarman were to direct an episode of Tales of The Unexpected the soundtrack would be this... Fabulous.” *EP Review - Mark Cousens, Punk Rock ist Nicht Tot* www.punkrockistnichttot.com (April 2011)

“4/5 stars ★★★★★ – An array of songs as twisted as the bowels of hell, as decadent as Anita Berber’s dance routines and yet as bittersweet as a ‘Three Toed Sloth’ bourbon.” *Live Review, Ryan’s Bar - Music News* www.musicnews.com (April 2011)

“Delicately beglittered and resplendent in a white suit and no shirt, he served up an intriguing collision of glam provocation and Weimar cabaret. Thorne's sin-splattered tales of the demimonde were delivered with lip-smacking relish: whores, murder, revenge, you know the score. While they may be on first, they steal the show nevertheless.” *Live Review, Underbelly Bearded Magazine* www.beardedmagazine.com (March 2011)

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LIVE REVIEW

Rasp Thorne & The Briars

Club St. Moritz

added: 3 Jun 2011 // gig date: 27 May 2011

reviewer: Claudia A



Like Rasp Thorne and one other person like this.

Lyric genius, general *enfant terrible* and London-bred anarcho-cowboy **Rasp Thorne** has done it again: together with his band **The Briars** he delighted and provoked in equal measure in the cool St. Moritz club, Soho. Music-News readers may remember I recently reviewed the band's short set, which they performed in Ryans Bar, so it was great to witness a full set this time around.

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Friday night in St. Moritz and the clock turns eleven. A crowd of trendy bo-ho's and rocksters cram around the stage area. Suddenly, Rasp takes centre stage. Flowing wild, in constant disarray and as

black as the devil's soul... and that's just the hair! In stark contrast, his cream-coloured tuxedo, sideburns and kohl-rimmed eyes give the impression of a spunky glam-goth version of Elvis, albeit with the androgynous look still intact.

His band, The Briars, might be slightly less dramatic as far as appearance and stage antics are concerned (at least the male members, which are **Duncan DeMorgan**, **Pete Moriarty** and **Hugh Zog**). However, petite female drummer **Joni Dee** made up for it by exposing herself in a Middle Eastern cum fetish-style outfit that morphed bling with cling. Yes, the circus had come to town and was adamant to raise hell, and Rasp Thorne was the ringmaster.

Opening the night with a poem ('I Was In The Desert'), Rasp and his Briars really kick-started their one-hour set with 'Lecher's Waltz'. Next number was '15 Dead Stallions' – an uplifting saga of a limping crooked-eyed man, cracking canes, crack cocaine, porn shops, pockmarked gypsies and well, fifteen dead stallions. Quite how it all fits together and falls into place, oh well; you really got to travel into the weird and wonderfully warped mind frame of Mr. Thorne to understand his poetry but trust me, it's worth the trip!

'Operator Taunt No. 3' crash-landed next, in style a melody-soaked Vaudeville stomper that makes ya want to belly roll down to the murky deep, tra la la. Which is precisely what Rasp proceeded to do... rolling around the murky floor whilst rolling his eyes backwards... twisting every limb of his body and squirming as if someone had injected him with snake venom. Amazingly, even then he's never out of tune!

The crowd was well into it, applauding fiercely and appreciating a band whose musical talent and theatrical uniqueness seemed well placed in this particular venue. Sadly, it still seems not enough to turn them into a headlining act, though one lives in hope...

After 'Gun Barrel Pupils', Rasp revealed the 'Tale Of The Drone And The Beauty Queen Bee' (dedicated to a certain lady in the audience, which isn't me by the way) whilst for 'Delilah 666' (no, not me either) he truly let loose and, not contend with simply writhing around the floor, he writhed around blowing a silver horn - effectively off-setting the song's composition. In between his stage antics (and addressing the audience in American-English as well as in German), Rasp also poured his soul into playing the keyboards – delivering tunes of trashy blues, badass gospel and twisted cabaret rock. All the while, his band remained rather stoically in the background, with Joni simply leaning over her drum kit at one point, simply watching the whole spectacle without as much as contributing one beat.

Closing number was 'Debutante Warnings' and for this ditty Rasp held a special surprise in store (what, another one?). Donning a duet with him was flame-haired beauty Miss Claire Rabbitt, draped in a sparkling red corset and sultry delivering her words like a 21st century Irma la Douce. "Ya better suffocate that hip sway darlin" – my very words!

(Please read my interview with the irrepressible Rasp Thorne in our 'Interviews' section)

www.raspthorneandthebriars.com



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INTERVIEW

Rasp Thorne

Rochester Castle, Stoke Newington

added: 3 Jun 2011

interviewed by: Claudia A



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Sharing an ashtray and a glass of bourbon with one of the most unique and charismatic musical talents around, American-born hellraiser Rasp Thorne introduces me to some friends from New York. Another puff and another gulp, then he's dedicating some time to my questions – clearly reveling in the lowlife atmosphere the Rochester Castle pub is known for.

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Music-News:

Rasp, you're from Montana originally. You don't strike me as the kind of musician one might usually encounter there...

Rasp Thorne:

No, not at all, haha. Yeah, that's why I left Montana... You know, it's very beautiful and is one of the most amazing places I've been to in my life. It was good having grown up there. I come from a small town called Bozeman with about 30,000 people, kinda a college party town. But I always stuck out there as a weirdo, you know. When I first started to go away I went to Iowa, cause my girlfriend at the time was from there. You know, I've been traveling from an early age. Luckily I got a bit of a scholarship and went to Germany when I was sixteen. So I left home at an early age really, just happy to get out and experience the world. And yeah, I do go back to Montana from time to time, it's always lovely to see my family and friends again.

MN:

Do you get on ok with them, or are you the black sheep of the family?

RT:

Oh I'm definitely the black sheep of the town, but they've always embraced me. For all the weird things that I do, they still love me. Which is good, haha.

MN:

You've been around... first former Eastern Germany, then New Orleans, then New York, now London. Why these places and why in that particular order?

RT:

It's just what was in the cards I guess. I was in Germany and met a German woman, and we got married in Vegas. Then we traveled around but things didn't really work out and then we went to Los Angeles where she left me. So I hitchhiked up and down the west coast and started traveling again. By then I was nineteen, still really young. One of my good friends, Lauren who's was in Oregon said "You're too smart to be hitchhikin' around and be a punky bum, go back to school" you know. So I thought, "Where should I go to school?" and decided I try out New Orleans, you know, a place furthest away from Montana. So I went there for about three months but dropped out to start doing performance art on the streets instead. I used to 'hang' myself in the French Quarter by Jackson Square. I put my fetish boots on and my leather pants and painted my face white like Pierrot. I had a wooden black bar stool and a five-foot pole with a rope tied to the top of it which came down into a noose, and I'd get up on the stool and hang myself... Then I would resuscitate an' start to recite poetry, Dark shit like Poe and Rimbaud, Baudelaire, some of those really spiteful Shakespeare Sonnets, I was starting to do my own poetry too, and I'd stop midway through one of them and just pull a pose and hold it until someone gave me a few bucks and then break back into the poem. So these were my first performance art pieces really.

MN:

How much of the lyrical content in your songs is based on real life experience, and how much is artistic vision/fiction?

RT:

Oh that's a good question! I've always had a narrative. Like, I've written a few plays and am working on a novel, I've always been a writer. So there have always been characters and archetypes that moved around in my poetry and my songs. It's actually like a loose thread that goes through it. If you listen carefully to all the lyrics there are characters that kinda come and go and come back. Then there are my 'theatre songs' where there are also these very random and abstract poetry lyrics that just come out of nowhere really. I usually get a melody in my head and I work that out on piano with the chord changes and then it waits till the lyrics bubble up. For example, there is this new song I've been writing in the past week. I got chords on the piano and I just played it all obsessively till it hurt my fingers and then I just wait for lyrics. If you try to force the lyrics they don't come, but sometimes you just wait around and suddenly it fuckin' hits you, you know. It just comes from nowhere. Of course, I read a lot of books and literature and draw from a lot of anecdotes in my songs, but well, it's an artist thing. It comes when it comes.

MS:

How many instruments do you play?

RT:

I play piano reasonably well, I play accordion, I play a decent harmonica, I play theremin and I play guitar. I'm not the best guitar player but I'm good at rhythm guitar. Actually, I can't play lead guitar to save my life, but rhythm guitar is cool.

MS:

Rasp Thorne... the perfect rock 'n' roll name. But not your real name I take it.

RT:

Of course it is my real name (twinkles).

MS:

Have you always considered becoming a performance artist/musician to be your true vocation?

RT:

Oh definitely, it could never be anything else. I've tried, you know. I've had to work shitty jobs. I used to be a bartender and count and change light bulbs and to do dodgy deals which I can't really talk about. But yeah, I was rubbish in those jobs. I was really angry about serving coffee and drinks, I was just really not into it. I've always been an artist, I've always written and luckily now, it's actually happening! You know, the goal for any working artist is to make money in life and travel, and just do what you do without having to work in a shit job – know what I mean? I was always a terrible employee, but I guess my charisma kind of carried me through. Just about. So well, now I can't see myself doing anything else but being me. I could never see myself again buckling down and getting a 'real' job. I would rather be poor and live in a real shit place, but still just do my thing.

MS:

Compared with your earlier stage performances, during which you usually wore more flamboyant costumes and displayed a lot of theatrical gimmicks, your act is more toned down these days with emphasis on letting the music speak for itself...

RT:

Yes, that's true. I would agree with it, so thanks for saying that. When you speak of my earlier performances you're talking about my other character, Mr. Crazy. That's a different project that I've done called SPAR HORNET which started in New York. It's my nihilistic jester act, you know, just completely annihilate everything. But my music side, you know, right now it's Rasp Thorne & The Briars and yes, I have peeled back my layers there a lot. And it feels really good to do that, there's more options in the songs this way. You don't always need to SCREAM it like you really mean it, which is what I did with my old band Ryder Pales in New York a lot. Whereas now, I tend to give it more of a whimper. But you know, you choose and sometimes you gotta scream and sometimes you gotta whimper or find any quotient between the two. I like both parts of me, I like SPAR HORNET, but with the Briars it's more about the music and the craft. The audience should be brooding and listening to the lyrics really. I want them to listen to the lyrics.

MS:

So what can we expect from the new album that's coming up?

RT:

Well, the new album its gonna be really amazing. I think it's gonna be called 'The Crooked Eyed Man'. I did this one-man show in New York called the Crooked Eyed Man, it's about this weird sociopath who has a half-blind eye and crooked cane and he walks around and is kinda a judge of the world. He appears in some of the songs which will be on the album, some of the other characters in different songs have interactions or are directly or even indirectly influenced by him. There's a loose thread of the Crooked Eyed Man in some of my older songs and poetry and also relates to the novel that I'm writing, so it all links together.

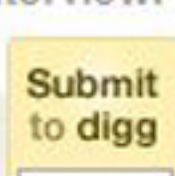
MS:

Many thanks for the interview, Rasp, and I look forward to getting caned by the crooked eyed man when the album comes out.

(Please read my 'Rasp Thorne & The Briars play St. Moritz' review in our 'Live gigs' section)

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Single Review: Rasp Thorne & The Briars – Debutante War



If there's one thing I like more than punk rock it's decadent, theatrical punk rock with a dark twist. As you can imagine this is not something that comes my way very often. As luck would have it, that's exactly the kind of rock peddled by Rasp Thorne & The Briars. The London based quartet have spent the last two years honing their unique sound and the result is this fabulous debut EP 'Debutante Warnings'. The EP's lead track and my favourite song is the splendid 'Operator Taunt' which utilises Hammond organ to magnificent effect; if Derek Jarman were to direct

an episode of Tales of The Unexpected the soundtrack would be this, a deliciously over the top song with Rasp sounding like Vincent Price. Elsewhere on EP there are songs featuring shotgun sucking pornstars ('you look so pretty sucking that old shotgun'), Cruella DeVille and dystopian wax, such is the world in which Montana born lyricist Rasp Thorne lives. A world worth visiting!

Mark Cousens

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Rasp Thorne & The Briars

Ryans Bar - Stoke Newington

added: 18 Apr 2011 // gig date: 8 Apr 2011

reviewer: Claudia A



Rasp Thorne and one other person like this.

The title of Faulkner's most thought-provoking novels, but its title and themes of morality, sin and redemption certainly can be applied to Rasp Thorne & The Briars.

Montana-born performance artist, poet and musician Rasp Thorne invited to an array of songs as twisted as the bowels of hell, as decadent as Anita Berber's dance routines and yet as bittersweet as a 'Three Toed Sloth' bourbon.

While on this occasion Rasp and his band The Briars did not perform a full set, they certainly delivered their goods to the full. Playing tracks from their newly released EP 'Debutante Warnings' (see

separate review) as well as selected other material, the small but atmospheric basement venue of Ryans Bar added to the intimate ambience.

It is difficult to pinpoint the music of Rasp. Perhaps it is best described as a mixture of Southern Gothic country punk with added elements of experimental cabaret – an intriguing and rhythmic concoction influenced by the likes of Nick Cave, Tom Waits, Screamin' Jay, Bilka Bargeld, ... you get the idea. At the same time, it doesn't sound like it's a copy of the aforementioned artists. It sounds like Rasp Thorne & The Briars. Period. Lyrically, well, here is an artist who has walked the sewers accompanied by lowlife and emerged to tell the tales. Someone who lives by his own unholy gospel, though often with an underlying current of morality.

The title of the songs performed say it all: 'The Lechers Waltz', 'Pornstar Shotgun', 'Gun Barrel Pupils' and 'Delliah 666' to name but a few.

The evening started with a poem called 'I Was In The Desert'. Next came the 'Lechers Waltz' and here's an example of Rasp's wonderfully warped lyrics:

"A stranger promised me ecstasy
For cat fare and a pint,
But my pockets had holes and my coins had flown
So I said "Another time."
Ever notice how werewolves and wolverines
Both sneer before the bite?
But the way they consume the throat and the womb
Are as separate as day and night."

While bassist Duncan DeMorgan, guitarist Pete Moriarty and Hugh Zog –on lapsteel guitar – displayed a rather content stage presence, it was the charismatic Rasp (striped bare of any make-up) who contorted his body around the tiny stage whenever he wasn't playing the keyboards. In contrast, petite drummer Joni Deehan made up for physical restriction by applying mock-demented facial expressions.

'Wicked Weather' and 'Gun Barrel Pupils' received especially loud applause from an audience that predictably enough seemed to consist mainly of psychobillies, punks and other truly god-fearing types. During the last number 'Debutante Warnings', Rasp moved towards the audience in peculiar motion, twisting his face, rolling his eyes and – in between singing - knocking back his drink, albeit without swallowing. Seconds later it was spat out again, though thankfully not into my direction.

Yes, Rasp Thorne & The Briars are such a cheerful bunch really. Come join the circus when they play the TBC In Brighton with Kid Congo on April 22nd.

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A Valentine's Massacre @ Hoxton Underbelly

12.02.11

For those music-lovers in search of a slightly edgier Valentine's soundtrack than usual, the good folks at Peculiar Management showcased a recession-tastic three bands for six quid. How's that for the Big Society, Mr Cameron?

Feb 12th, 2011 at Hoxton Underbelly / By Ben Wood



The American Mid-West has inspired many a rock'n'roller to kick against the pricks – and Montanan gutter-crawler **Rasp Thorne**, with his band **the Briars**, is no exception. Delicately beglittered and resplendent in a white John Travolta disco suit and no shirt, he served up an intriguing collision of glam provocation and Weimar cabaret.

Thorne's sin-splattered tales of the demimonde were delivered with lip-smacking relish: whores, murder, revenge, you know the score. The band – featuring a foxy female drummer and what appears to be The Actor Kevin Eldon – kept the drama going as their charismatic frontman groped himself and pinballed around the stage... occasionally launching himself head-first at the dancefloor (£8 per dry-clean, we're told).

The vibe is a rockier take on Tom Waits' freakshow carnival and Nick Cave's tales of sin, sex and death. It's probably nothing you haven't heard before, but done darn well by a bloody good band having a whale of a time. And while they may be on first, they steal the show nevertheless.

That isn't to say the two following acts aren't pretty handy too. **Nick Marsh** knows his way round a stage (he was frontman of 80s alterno types **Flesh For Lulu**), and his latest incarnation is as the mellow, more reflective Nick Marsh and **The Waltzing Bones**. An affable presence decked out in 50s finery (impressive quiff'n'all), he plays much of his new album *A Universe Between Us*.

Very nice it is too – a cinematic blend of twangy desert blues and affecting crooning; with the occasional detour into a more uptempo rockabilly feel. "I'm a love volcano" he informs us – and this fingerclicking dude is having a darn good time up there, which transmits itself to the audience. Mr Marsh is a showbiz trooper, one of the most admirable of all the tribes. Long may the lights twinkle on him.

The place is pretty packed by this stage, and more stream down the stairs as nu-gypsy sensations **Chancery Blame and the Gadjó Club** take to the stage. A smooth, good-looking young dude fronts a super-competent band wielding a double bass and clarinet with serious intent. Soon, alcoholically impaired people are leaping around to some extremely groovy twirl-around-til-you-fall-over music. Sorry I can't be any more precise – I was leaping around too much to take many notes – but it's good time gypsy music and we had a good time. Job done.

All in all, a bargain bill and a great night out.

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Rasp Thorne
& The Briars



Debutante Warnings

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there are nods to Tom Waits, Nick Cave and even The Cramps – while topically, the aforementioned artists as well as Diamanda Galas can also be cited as possible influences. However, it becomes clear from listening to the album that each song is Rasp's own unique composition and above all, is drawn from his own experiences.

After all, here is someone who was born in the Western United States but later moved to (former Eastern) Germany, then lived in New Orleans and New York respectively and is now based in London. There's got to be enough material to record at least five albums!

Opening track 'Operator Taunt' has a distinctive Brecht/Weill vibe to it – like a rock 'n' roll version of 'The Threepenny Opera'.

'Pornstar Shotgun' leaves little to the imagination and has a wonderfully sleazy sound to it that works well with the lyrics, emphasized by some cool backing vocals and keyboard work.

*"Ya look so pretty sucken that old shotgun,
The condom on it protectin yer lips from rust,
Ya know yer wanted all the booth boys spurt yer worth,
Jus' pull the trigger and your legend is self-assured.
But ya look so pretty sucken that ol' shotgun..."*

A slow-burning affair is 'Cruella DeVille' and this particular track is the perfect for highlighting Rasp's eh, raspy voice. Title track 'Debutante Warnings' is fierce with a choppy rhythm and is getting edgier and rockier as the track progresses. "Ya better suffocate that hip sway darlin..." advises Rasp aggressively, unfolding a story that would do the darkest David Lynch movie justice. Same goes for '15 Dead Stallions'. Closing track 'Dystopian Wonders' has a prophetic and doom-laden entrance. It's a nightmarish vision delivered by a talented and unique band that revels in the darker side of things and does so with apparent relish. With a full album in the making, I am curious what Rasp Thorne & The Briars come up with next though I expect the unexpected.

(Find out more about the band on www.raspthorneandthebriars.com)

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London-born performance artist, poet and musician Rasp Thorne and his band The Briars unleash their debut EP upon the world, aptly titled 'Debutante Warnings'.

Having witnessed the band perform live just over a week ago (see separate review), the EP certainly delivers what I expected: six tracks telling twisted tales of good and evil, of sin and redemption, of the human condition and the abyss of the mind.

Musically best described as an intriguing and rhythmic blend of Southern Gothic country punk with added elements of experimental cabaret,

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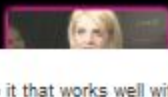
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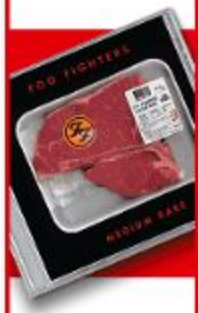


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Rasp Thorne & the Briars,
Debutante Warnings EP (Chagrin)

At six songs this EP offers the value for money of a mini-album. Better still, the songs have a madcap theatrical energy, akin to Nick Cave playing it for kitsch kicks. It also captures the raw energy of deranged drug-crazy burlesque tents that haunt the wee hours of 21st-century festivals. Rasp Thorne sounds like a cross between the late great Lux interior of The Cramps and the very much alive Marc Almond at his sleaziest. Words pour out of Thorne as he tells his greasy stories – "You look so pretty sucking that old shotgun" – and The Briars muster a tasty racket somewhere between The Bookhouse Boys and The Fall, which is surely no bad thing. As a debut release it sets out a tempting stall laden with Deep South sin and the promise of a rumbustious live show. (THG)

- [Hear Debutante Warnings EP on MySpace](#)



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