

► **noise** bands to watch

ATMOSPHERE

INDIE HIP-HOPPER SAYS NO TO BLING

Slug may be the first rapper to claim that he's *less* popular than he actually is. "The majority of guys who are exposed to my music don't like it," insists the underground Minneapolis MC who, along with producer Ant, records as Atmosphere. "Maybe, like, ten of them do, and they come to the shows." Then he reconsiders. "Well, actually, they come 'cause there are lots of girls there."

Atmosphere audiences are actually 50 percent female—hardly a common sight at indie hip-hop shows. Then again, there aren't many MCs with Slug's lanky 6'3" slouch and dreamily droopy eyes. Still, he's no kissy-face R&B cat. His third album, *God Loves Ugly*, cuttingly dissects some deeply dysfunctional relationships ("Mistook love at first sight for a sex look / Enough of the blind man's bluff / I want the good stuff") as Ant's minimalist beats simmer.

All self-deprecation aside, Slug, 28, has already dodged several major label deals. He prefers to use the network established by his hometown crew, Rhyme Sayers, rather than adjust to the mainstream game. "My rhymes aren't saying I'm the coolest thing and my dick is 12 inches long," Pause. "Although I *am* the coolest thing," he jokes, "and my dick is 12 inches long." KEITH HARRIS

Slug: packing
12 inches
below deck?



MORE NEW MUSIC TO HEAR NOW: By Jeffrey Rotter



GOGOGO AIRHEART
Exitheuxa
(GSL)

Taking their cues from every art-punk band that nobody's ever heard, Gogogo turn their favorite obsession (Pere Ubu) into warm, fuzzy pop. These crooked tunes, with their bristly guitars and dubby bass, snap together like plastic molecular models—totally elemental but alien as hell.

CATO SALSA EXPERIENCE
A Good Tip for a Good Time
(Emperor Norton)

The Scandinavian garage-rock movement gets more sexed-up as it moves farther from the Arctic circle. While Sweden's Hives are strident, this Norwegian combo is slinky. The album is a funky, amped-up concoction—strychnine and groove juice.

YUNG WUN
The Dirtiest Thirstiest
(Full Surface/J)

The solo debut from this rasp-tongued rapper sounds like it was welded together in a dingy Atlanta chop shop. Revved up on greasy guitar riffage and dirty disco (courtesy of a revived Swizz Beatz), Yung Wun reports on the downside of life Down South.

FROM TOP: JEFF MANTON, V. PORTER

48 SPIN

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