

## The Coil of Sihh: Through (Forsaken Records)

At the age of 14, Sihh Starr Rossi kept a meticulous journal about his dreams. No, this wasn't your ordinary schoolboy diary about fast cars and classroom crushes. Rather, at the recommendation of his therapist, he created a dream world—a place of escape, away from the sexual and physical abuse he had endured since the age of four. He called this nocturnal refuge “The Coil.” There, he fought and conquered demons, which strengthened him enough to survive a brutal childhood. Long after the abuse ceased, Rossi decided to tell all and transcribed his journals as the impetus for music, forming The Coil of Sihh in 2000. More than just one of the area's most innovative Goth bands, COS relays true-life confessions about abuse and the emotional pandemonium that stalked Rossi for decades.

Two albums and thousands of fans later, COS can be heard on underground radio stations throughout the United States and Europe, as well as locally, at places like the Creepy Crawl. Rossi, frontman for COS, has released his third album, *Through*, which resembles a dark orchestra comprised of six macabre overtures. If you love the lowly crooning of the late Ian Curtis from Joy Division, you'll enjoy COS; Rossi's vocals are a dead-on match, especially in “Dream (Not a Monster remix),” although he doesn't showcase his voice on all songs. Occasionally, he allows the music to speak for itself. In “HalfLife (30 Giger Clicks remix),” his vocals become faint, like a subliminal message or tiny ghost. Raw and compelling, the entire album leaves you wanting more, much like foreplay with no sex. *Oh, the glorious torture!*

COS's sound, although unique by today's standards, conjures fond recollections of early Ministry and KMFDM with hints of Nine Inch Nails throughout. The pulsating groove of synthesizer beats, blended with a cornucopia of voice clips from various movies, relay Rossi's story, as if his life were a dramatic motion picture or a horror flick, depending on your perspective. The first song, “Trial,” is one such example, which begins with an audio clip of a woman tearfully recounting a brutal, sexual attack and all the repulsive details therein; her pain is foreshadowed by the eerie and tumid vibrations of Rossi's background music. Not until the second song does Rossi unveil his lyrical genius. His creative reign over the entire album induces some extraordinary highs and lows, like riding the wave of a wild acid trip. Lay back and submit until the demons have left the room, and watch out for the flashbacks. *Or so I've heard.* Expect nothing less from this album.

In comparison, *My World*, Rossi's second album released in 2004, is an angry yet sentimental beast, exploding with emotion and memory. Tales of despair play out like a novel with a total of 22 songs. Here, Rossi's vocals are more pronounced and guttural. Mirroring the vocal range of Goth legends, Fields of the Nephilim, Rossi's voice detonates above a bed of synthesized beats, overshadowing voice clips, the background chorus, and all else that gets in his way. Center stage—his words and heartfelt screaming, along with an interesting twist: riddled throughout are recordings of actual voicemail messages from comrades, which give you a peek into his personal life. Most interesting, you can hear him press the “save” button for various ones, implying which messages were most special to him.

What started as an outlet for a troubled adolescent has grown into a rapturous art form, a fiery one at that, raging and unstoppable. Expect another fireball release from COS this October; Halloween, perfect timing! Glimpses into his world, as well as the blood and guts of his story await you at [www.the-coil.com](http://www.the-coil.com).

Sid Andruska

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