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## **Personal file: James Mercer**

**Born:** Honolulu, Hawaii, Dec. 26, 1970

**Where do your songs come from?**

"From all of the musical influences I've been bombarded with since I was a kid."

**Can you share any fragments floating around in your head that might become lyrics?**

"No, I can't. The lyrics are the last thing I worry about."

**A songwriter you would emulate?**

"Jeff Mangum. He's the Neutral Milk Hotel guy."

**What do you have against**

**punctuation?** "It was just that once I tried to put punctuation in [the lyrics on 'Chutes Too Narrow'], it became such a task so that I decided just to leave it out. And also, you ruin the double meaning it sometimes has when you use punctuation."

**A way in which you go along with**

**the crowd?** "I sort of dress like your average sort of kid. I've been wearing my jeans tighter lately."

**What's the next big thing?**

"I've been so into this band, the Fiery Furnaces, I think it might be them. I'm not sure though; they might be too strange to be really huge."

GLOBE STAFF GRAPHIC/MICHAEL PRAGER

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