

Floyd's vocals suggest he had Kitty Wells for a baby-sitter.

BY ADAM BLOCK



Hitting the stores this month is *Heart and Mind* (Reprise), which makes good on the near-legendary debut of the 1988 smash-hit group Sister Double Happiness. Their

sound is Southern fried blues-rock (sort of like ZZ Top on mushrooms), with lead singer Gary Floyd sounding like the bastard offspring of Billy Gibbons and Janis Joplin.

The ferocious rock-music disc would rank as one of the year's standouts even if Floyd weren't a self-proclaimed "big fag." But he is, Blanche—the first openly gay gutbucket hard-rock vocalist ever signed to a major label. He walks as fiercely as any queen and as ruggedly as a pit bull. His sexuality provides a perspective, but it is rarely the subject of his songs.

The LP opener, "Bobby Shannon," is a queer but hardly gay blues tune about a dog devotee of the Indian monkey god Hanuman. But when Floyd turns a pained eye on the desperate state of the planet in "Ain't It a Shame," ozone depletion and police brutality are joined by the specter of a boy hungry for risky sex. With dread overtaking lust, Floyd warns, "Your kicks aren't safe. You leave it to fate. You got a dangerous machine." Floyd unleashes an entrancing vocal on "Exposed to You," a nearly unhinged plea to a youth who offers sex but won't return love, that is about as emotionally chilling as anything Chris Isaak ever set his lips to.

Side 2 opens with the passionate politics of the title cut, a blazing ballad indicting the merchants of war, followed by the disc's keynote address, "Hey Kids," a raging anthem about the costs of the closet. Floyd offers encouragement to "the kid whose light has been covered" and a warning to the



Sister Double Happiness's Gary Floyd
A self-proclaimed "big fag"

businessman who has "waited so long to make the love you need" that "some private moment may come back . . . and be handed to you gently or else thrown in your face." The last verse offers love to a sick friend and rage that he's been denied the care he needs. "Hey Kids" is the first rock song about both outing and governmental inaction over AIDS.

Both sides of the disc close with acoustic country ballads, whose unadorned vocals suggest Floyd had Kitty Wells for a babysitter. The LP closer, "(I Love) You for You," hovers nakedly and wondrously. *Heart and Mind* is waiting to touch yours.

RAP-PHOBIC

Queers have had their problems with homophobia in the rap community and with the Public Enemy posse. Still, that made a recent ugly exchange at New York's New

Music Seminar no less depressing. Professor Griff, Public Enemy's former minister of information, who is cited as one of hip-hop's most valuable players on Ice-T's new and stunning LP *Original Gangster* (Sire), was seated on a panel on business and racism. Gay activist and journalist Jim Fouratt asked him, "As a gay man, where do people like me—black and white gays and lesbians—fit into the fight against racism?"

Griff, whose pompous new disc *KAO'S II WIZ*7*DOME* can be avoided on the Luke label, replied that God never intended for there to be homosexuals and "as far as where you fit in is concerned, you should commit suicide."

So that's our role in this prophet's new black order. How long will such moronic offenses be tolerated? When will these dick-grabbing bigots extend to us the respect they demand from others?

NEW TUNES AND A COMMON CAUSE

In the wake of Morrissey's successful U.S. tour, Sire is issuing two of his new EPs. At the end of August, the single "My Love Life" rolls out, backed with "I Changed My Plea to Guilty," along with a cover of Bradford's "Skin Storm." In early September comes *Morrissey at KROQ*, an impromptu live session featuring "My Love Life," "Sing Your Love," "There Is a Place in Hell," and an unlisted track of phone calls from fans declaring their undying love to the Mozzer.

Phranc is slated to join Vaginal Creme Davis as cohost of Project Hope: A T-Cell-Boosting Event at the Palace in Los Angeles Sept. 4. The benefit is for musician-poet-journalist Craig Lee. The show for the beloved pariah promises a brilliant lineup of outsiders, including the Circle Jerks, Red Hot Chili Pepper Flea, El-Vez, Jane's Addiction's Perry Farrel, Mary's Danish, Los Lobos, Steve Wynn, and Ice-T. Lee is a brilliant troublemaker who has stood up for unpopular music and for his own sexuality, taking brickbats for both. The payback couldn't be more deserved. ▼