

Voice Farm's "Free Love" is a playfully deviant celebration.

BY ADAM BLOCK



"I want Wilhelm Reich and Jesus' secret sister/I want Patti Smith and Mr. Twister/To come into my bedroom and show me the light/Let's connect *all* the dots tonight." So croons Voice Farm's Charly Brown lasciviously on "Free Love."

In the song, a diva admonishes, "I can't understand you when you have that *thing* in your mouth." It promises to be a big hit.

Originally two gay guys (Brown and Myke Reilly) and a synthesizer, they honed their act in San Francisco clubs through the '80s. It was scary and clever but also, too often, smug and cold. Last year the duo added guitarist-bassist Ken Weller, began working on melodies and harmonies, and caught the ear of producer David Kershenbaum (former Tracy Chapman producer).

The result of their collaboration, *Bigger Cooler Weirder* (Morgan Creek), is a wicked delight. The group now brings the wackiness of the B-52s and the perverse sonic silliness of Frank Zappa to the poignant camp of the Pet Shop Boys.

The label's lead releases are the wiggly

dance tracks "Free Love" and "Hey, Free Thinker" (the latter a mega-dance-mix reworking of the songs "Free Thinker" and "Super E.Q. Team" from the band's 1987 Ralph Records LP), but on disc the band's love songs "Earth," "Stand By," and "Don't Know Why" nearly steal the show. It's a silly, subversive, even inspiring spectacle: warped, wistful, and more queer than gay.

Morgan Creek Records is hoping it's got America's answer to the Pet Shop Boys.

CLEAN UP, WOMAN

If you've danced in a queer bar, chances are that you've been goosed and graced by the pipes of Martha Wash. The lady has one of the quintessential HiNRG voices. Along with Izora Rhodes (billed as Two Tons of Fun), Wash backed Sylvester on tracks from 1978's "Dance (Disco Heat)" to "Don't Stop" in 1982. As the Weather Girls, the two roared out "It's Raining Men."

During the last year Wash has been the uncredited voice behind Seduction's "You're My One and Only," C+C Music Factory's "Gonna Make You Sweat," and Black Box's hits "Strike It Up," "Fantasy," and "Everybody Everybody."

A series of lawsuits have earned Wash the right to claim those performances as her own. At a recent performance in San Francisco, she proved that she has charm, range, and charisma to match her girth. A six-record deal with RCA should bring a solo LP in the fall. Meanwhile, reliable sources

(Cold Chillin') featuring "Stay Out of Bars," which includes the Genius's nauseating boast about mowing down every patron in a queer bar after—horror of horrors—a drag queen says hi to him.

Meanwhile, even labels that said they liked the music wouldn't touch the Canadian 12-inch "Homophobia's Got to Go," backed with "Queer Nation," by the group Two Queens, a King & a Drum Machine. The techno-funk HiNRG tracks were laid down by deejays Christian Farley and Kevin Kommoda, with Karen Finley-inspired rant raps by Spikey. (To own the white-label rarity, send \$6 to G. Legault, 5926 St. Urbain, Montreal, Quebec H2T 2X5, Canada.)

Canada seems to inspire queer outlaws. Toronto has spawned the two most radical, sexy queer 'zines on the planet, *J.D.s* and *BIMBOX*. *J.D.s*, which coined the term *homocore*, has its swish issue hot off the Xerox machine, with updates on skinhead sex, queer/punk music and films, original art, and part 2 of its interview with Peter Berlin—the homocore Madonna. (For a copy of Issue 7, send \$4 cash to *J.D.s*, P.O. Box 1110, Adelaide St. Station, Toronto, Ontario M5C 2K5, Canada.) For a free copy of the queer 'zine that has declared war on gay and lesbian culture, write *BIMBOX*, 282 Parliament #68, Toronto, Ontario M5A 3A4, Canada. And beg!

GOOD WORKS

Patti Smith, the punk legend turned housewife (who once cohabited with Robert Mapplethorpe), raised \$9,000 for the Wellness Network's AIDS efforts with a rare impromptu concert at the Nectarine Ballroom in Ann Arbor, Mich. It would be grand to see her take it on the road.

Gay men's choruses tend to hit me like an audio Airwick: prim, unctuous, and suffocating. Still, the New York City Gay Men's Chorus has pledged proceeds from its major-label debut *Love Lives On* (Virgin) to the T. J. Martell Foundation for AIDS Research. The lyrics on the 18 cuts are rendered particularly poignant by the specter of the epidemic. Mail the recording to your local pastor and church musical director as an act of education (or to *BIMBOX* as an act of torture). ▼



ALBERT SANCHEZ/MORGAN CREEK

Voice Farm
Wiggly dance tracks and perverse sonic silliness from (left to right) Ken Weller, Charly Brown, and Myke Reilly