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## Rapper breaks stereotypes with his looks, his music

By **HOWARD DUKES**  
Tribune Staff Writer

SOUTH BEND -- It couldn't just be because Bobby "Double B" Williams is white that he gets attention.

In the 20 years since the Beastie Boys dropped "License to Ill," music's seen the likes of Vanilla Ice, Eminem and Kid Rock and hip hop long ago became the soundtrack of youngsters worldwide.

Being a white rapper is no longer enough to turn heads -- hip hop artists who wear flip flops that look as if they were purchased off the rack at Family Dollar -- that still raises a few eyebrows.

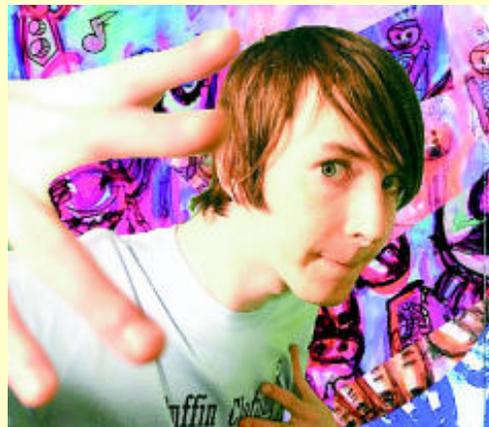
Double B says his CD's title -- "Where Is Your Acoustic Guitar" -- comes from a comment he gets from people who thinks he looks more "emo" than hip hop.

"I would play these shows, and people would see me and assume that I (played) acoustic guitar, or that I play 'emo,' an emotional artist," the 18-year old Riley High School senior says. "The main message of the album is about breaking stereotypes."

Double B might aspire to follow in the footsteps of the alternative hip hop group Blackalicious, but he looks more like James Blunt.

For Double B, the misconception had more to do with style than race.

He says people see rap videos that include artists



Riley High School senior Bobby "Double B" Williams has released a hip hop CD titled "Where Is Your Acoustic Guitar" and a chapbook of poetry titled "My Little Yellow Book of Poetry."

Photo provided

### Book release

Bobby "Double B" Williams will have a party for the release of his poetry chapbook, "My Little Yellow Book of Poetry," at 8 p.m. Thursday at The Beanery, 117 S. Main St., Mishawaka. For more information, call (574) 259-

strutting around the set sporting the ubiquitous bling, grillz, and throwback jerseys, and that becomes the archetypal hip hop artist.

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"I have longer hair, and I dress in sort of casual clothes and, you know, don't wear any jewelry," Double B says. "And people when they watch MTV or BET and they see the rappers on there, they assume that's what a rapper looks like, and I don't fit into that mold."

He believes his lyrics break the mold. Double B says many of the songs are about uplifting people and having a good time -- which may or may not distinguish "Where Is Your Acoustic Guitar" from a lot of the commercial hip hop.

Many of the songs, however, have a self-awareness and sense of irony not often heard in what gets played on the radio.

In "Yourself," Double B raps that he could have "naked girls dancing in my videos, but my mom watches those at home." In the spoken word piece "The Intellectual," Double B flows with tongue firmly planted in cheek about college students who "could say it simple, but I'd rather look intelligent." A negative encounter with a group University of Notre Dame students inspired that piece, Double B says.

In "Dear Nick," Double B raps about both the good times he had when hanging out with a friend who died and the sense of loss he felt at the boy's passing.

Double B's subject matter and his style might keep him underground, but he's comfortable there.

"When I look at (the) rap I hear on the radio, your subject matter is (limited) -- you have this to work with (because) that's what's gonna sell," he says. "In the conscious hip hop, you're not bound. You can talk about whatever you want. Hip hop has the ability to be poetry, and has the power to be really moving. A lot of people aren't utilizing it as well as they can."

*Staff writer Howard Dukes:*

[hdukes@sbtinfo.com](mailto:hdukes@sbtinfo.com)

(574) 235-6369

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