

out of my head | Band emerges from closet; enters 'punk' rock scene

By Michael Zangari

The band has only two hours to practice tonight. Everyone is on a tight schedule. About mid-set, someone knocks on the door and five burly, subterranean residence hall-dwellers stand in the doorway glaring at us. Civilly, though obviously annoyed, the leader says he and the others are having difficulty studying because of the band's volume level. He wants the band to quiet down.

The lead guitar player slowly looks up, and without twitching a muscle, answers, "Got a match?"

After the door closes, the keyboard man suggests maybe they should turn it down. The lead man smiles slightly and says, "I already have. . . ."

On stage, Crumbhunger is dark and lurking, what one local fan calls "Lincoln's own version of 'punk' rock-and-roll."

When not in public, lead guitarist Jeff Taebel, a sophomore botany and psychology major from Atlanta, Ga., is less concerned with slinky movements and more aware of the music emanating from the practice amp.

The band's projected image could be the subject of a lengthy debate. Although no one doubts it exists, no one is saying exactly what it is.

Crumbhunger is slightly ahead of that hidden minority of closet musicians and high school garage bands who dream of glory as they play in closed quarters for an audience of two.

The group has a small circle of fans and friends who undoubtedly will come to hear them. They also are much tighter musically than they initially appear.

Still, they lack enough polish to play up to their potential.

Rick Nelson, a senior psychology major from Lincoln, is the rather frantic rhythm guitarist who, along with Taebel, co-authors most of the band's material.

He is responsible for the lyrics to Taebel's tune "The Worms of Wrath," and at least six other songs written concerning worms.

Bassist Rich Tillson and John Fleck on keyboard each have contributed their own songs. Tillson, a zoology major, and Fleck, a horticulture major, are both Omaha seniors. Additional material comes from older and more obscure groups such as the Fugs and Family of Man.

Tim Booth, a freshman English major from Beaver Crossing, completes the group with very capable and stylized drumming.

Crumbhunger seems to be stuck with on-campus performances, and band members say they want to play elsewhere.

"Playing at a prom right now would be a dream," Nelson said.

Although money isn't flowing yet, there are benefits. Because they have no gigs, the band plays the music they like without fear of losing employment. They say they have enough time to work on their own music, and most attractively, practices aren't as frequent.

Their music is difficult to describe. Taebel's lead playing obviously is influenced by the collision of Country-Western and hard rock 'n' roll, and his solos can sound like Roy Rogers laced with acid.

His songs usually are driving rock, and the lyrics are growled just as forcefully.

On stage, Nelson and his music are more complicated and rambling than the others'. At times the meanderings are abrasive.

The group's sound is up-tempo, and the lyrics range from interesting to absolutely decadent. Crumbhunger takes some getting used to. But it is basically a good-time band. If you take Crumbhunger too seriously, you could get into trouble. Crumbhunger plays tonight at 7:30 at the second annual Walpurgisnacht at the Nebraska Union.

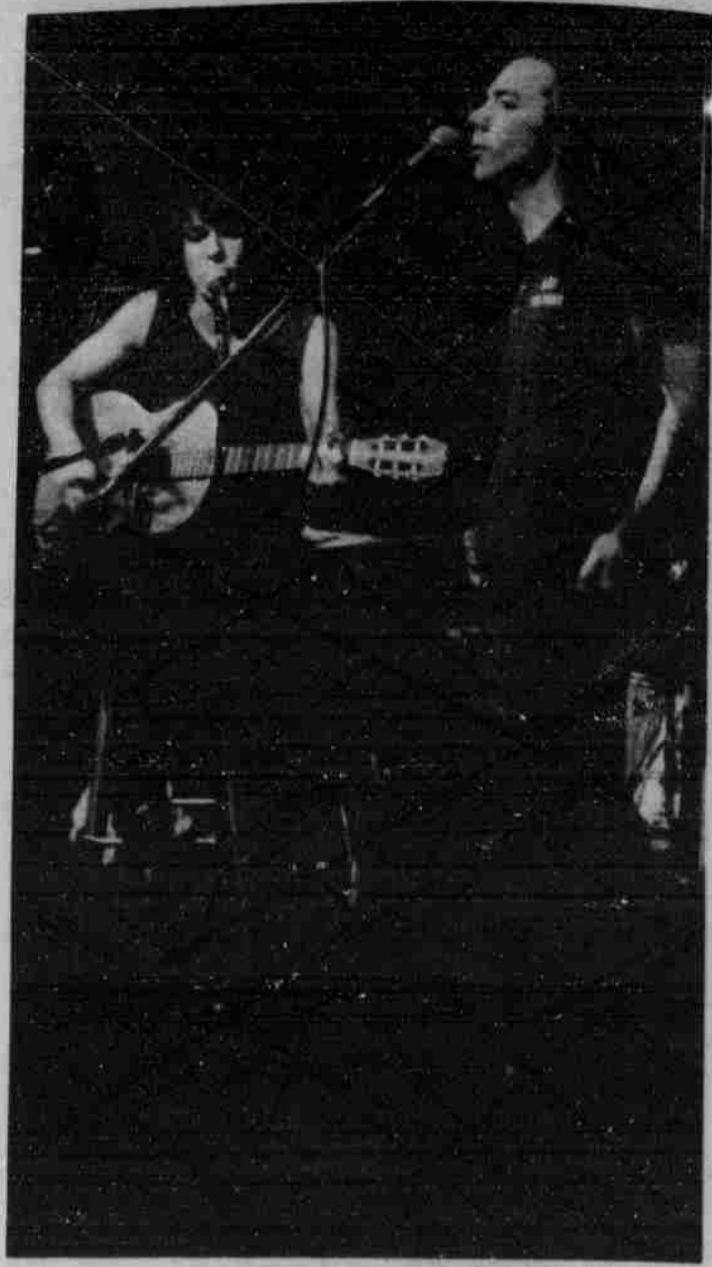


Photo by Steve Boerner

Crumbhunger lead guitarist Jeff Taebel and guitarist Rick Nelson, producers of "Lincoln's own version of 'punk' rock-and-roll," will perform tonight at 7:30 during Walpurgisnacht at the Nebraska Union.

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