

Proceeds from group's 'Watch Us Now' tape to help the homeless

Chris Allerheiligen
Staff Reporter

Most rap bands have a message, but II Def, a Lincoln rap band, is using money from its tape, "Watch Us Now," for a cause.

Fifty cents of each tape sold will be given to Habitats for Humanity, an organization that builds homes for the homeless, according to band members.

"The homeless is a good cause, it appeals to more people," said Grant Kauffman, also known as Klassy K.

"We're going to break even, but we're also going to get a point across," he said.

DJ Romeo, a.k.a. Donnell Jones, said the band is contributing to the homeless because it is something the members could do as a band.

Klassy K said their tape was featured on KHAT's morning show around Christmas for a donation drive for Habitats for Humanity. He said that the response was very good and many people donated time and

money.

Richard Conratt said the band also promotes a message of racial unity. He said the arms on the tape's cover make a peace sign to show racial unity.

"We're trying to get our message across to all people -- old, young, everybody," Conratt said.

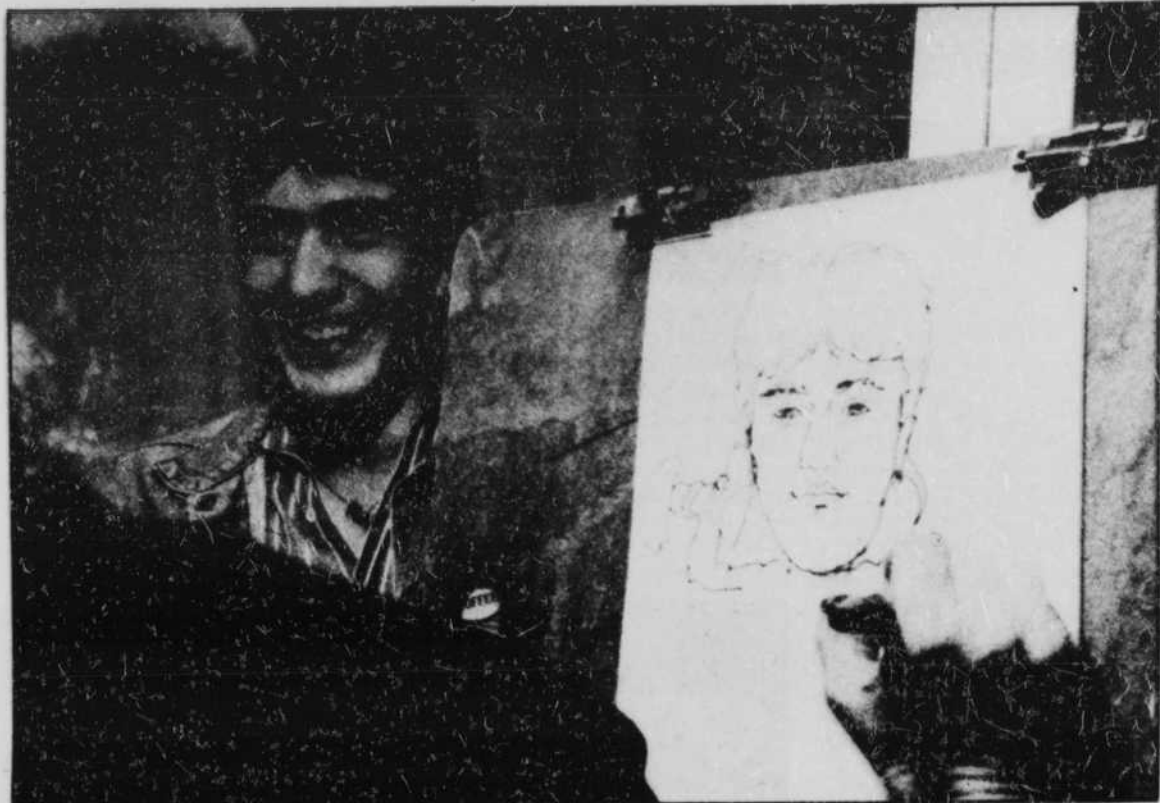
Klassy K is the band's singer, otherwise known as the rapper. He also writes lyrics to all songs, he said. Klassy K is a sophomore majoring in broadcast journalism.

DJ Romeo is the band's disc jockey. He said he does all of the scratches on the tape.

"Scratching" means that the DJ takes records and runs the needle over a certain part of a record in order to get a particular sound on part of a song.

Romeo said he uses the Mormon Tabernacle Choir's "Joy to the World" in one song, "Give Joy." He said his scratches are original and not

See II DEF on 7



William Lauer/Daily Nebraskan

A Walpurgisnacht caricaturist draws Jeff Montes, a freshman electrical engineering major. Montes' friends coaxed a smile by heckling him. The caricaturist was just one feature of Friday's festivities, which included a hypnotist, an illusionist, belly dancers and P.O. Pears' "Kourki" machine.

Music censorship efforts lose public eye

By Lane Van Ham
Staff Reporter

It was 1985. The Parents' Music Resource Center was holding hearings on "porn rock" in the U.S. Senate, and musicians and free speech activists were digging in for a long fight.

So what happened? Since the initial media blitz, there has been little news on attempts to censor or establish a ratings system for rock records. Comments from local record store retailers indicate that efforts by groups such as the center are currently at a low level of

success.

"It seems like it's not very strong right now," said Pat Wilkens, assistant manager of Pickles, 1637 P St. "We've had a few complaints from parents locally, but as far as the national organizations -- their power comes and goes."

One possibility regarding the current low power of such groups lies in the aftermath of the Dead Kennedys' "Frankenchrist" case from 1987.

The case challenged the inclusion, in the Dead Kennedys' "Frankenchrist" album, of a poster by Swiss painter H.R. Giger, which the prosecuting attorney called "obscene."

The center, too, issued a statement calling the poster a "blatant example of pornography."

In August 1987, the defendants were found "not guilty" of "distributing harmful material to minors," and the center, though not intricately involved in the prosecution, suffered something of a setback.

But some of center's earlier publicity and work has found its way into the rock record industry.

"I haven't seen much in the way of censorship lately, but we're seeing more and more warning labels," said Ken Adams, store manager of Twist-ers at East Park Plaza.

Although a label is not a warning in and of itself, its meaning may go in that direction, he said.

"It's like a PG warning," Adams said. "Parental guidance suggested. Something of that nature."

Jeff Gilbertson, assistant manager of Pickles, 3814 Normal Blvd., said in one way or another, the warning labels came out of groups like the center, but that they don't have much effect.

"I think the labels are a direct result of earlier efforts, but I don't think it really helps," he said. "It's a safeguard to protect the artist and the company."

Wilkens shared Gilbertson's observation.

"There are more labels, but it hasn't had any effect -- in some cases, it's sold more."

But not all records containing possibly offensive material are labeled, which sometimes creates problems for parents.

"A lot of groups, especially the rap groups, are very explicit," Gilbertson said. "Groups like Public Enemy and Two Live Crew. I've received a couple complaints about the Two Live Crew record, and

See CENSORSHIP on 7

'The January Man' leaves reviewers feeling cold

The New Shut Up and Watch the Movie is written by William Rudolph, a sophomore English major, and Lisa Donovan, a junior news-editorial major.

Lisa Donovan: OK, OK, it was my idea to go see this one.

movie REVIEW

William Rudolph: I promised not to rub it in, but I'm going to allow myself one small gloat. "The January Man" was the worst thing I've seen in a long time, and I mean the worst.

LD: Right on. I was embarrassed for Kevin Kline, Susan Sarandon and Hollywood. I was embarrassed to be seen coming out of the theater.

WR: What I don't understand is how Norman Jewison, the guy who gave us "Moonstruck," did such a rotten job with "The January Man." I guess I also don't understand how Kline, Sarandon, Rod Steiger and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio agreed to star in this piece of trash.

LD: I don't even know how it began. Oh yeah, this serial killer terminates a friend of the mayor's daughter. This was one of the most laughable strangling scenes I've witnessed. Truly something right out of a Freddie Krueger flick.

WR: I especially liked it when the victim was telling her fish to kiss her right before the killer struck. How stupid. But that was the whole movie. Before- you

knew it, you were into this stupid mishmash of a calendar killer strangling women once a month. And the only one who can save the day is Nick Starkey (Kline), a former police lieutenant who resigned under mysterious circumstances. Oh yeah, also his artist friend Ed helps, too. And a parrot. Whee!

LD: God, I hate regurgitating this whole thing. Who the heck was Ed? The parrot was sort of funny. But subplots -- I wanted subplots.

WR: What, you missed the subplots? How could you? And they were so deep, too. Like the one about Nick's police commissioner brother stealing Sarandon away from him. That was heavy. And the one about all the police department hating Nick. And the brother versus brother conflict, as well. That was really groovy. Like I said, it was deep.

LD: Rudy, my boy, you forgot about when the mayor's daughter, Bernadette (Mastrantonio) falls in love with Nick. Truly a sex scene straight from "Quest For Fire."

WR: My personal favorite part of the movie was every scene with Rod Steiger as the mayor. It was great. For no reason, he'd get all red in the face and start screaming at the top of his lungs. I thought I was watching a movie about the Mafia. I expected people to cut open their wrists and offer him their blood. I was waiting for him to have a stroke. That was the exciting thing for me. It's a pity the rest of the actors were so dead.

Poor Rod. He tried.

LD: My favorite part of the movie was when Bernadette and Nick were in the cafe. They were being really philosophical about how life was too short and so you should do the things you want to do. Like having sex. Well, my life is too short to sit through flops like this.

WR: Let me see if I can figure out what was wrong with this

movie. OK, here goes. It tried to be funny and it wasn't. It tried to be deep and kind of quirkily romantic. And it wasn't. And they solved the mystery within two minutes and tried to make the ending really hilarious. And need I say, it wasn't.

LD: There's nothing humorous about apprehending a person who has strangled 11 girls. There was no reason to have a slapstick struggle down 20 flights of stairs.

WR: Where was the laugh track? I'd rather have watched Suzanne Somers in "She's the Sheriff," and that's saying a lot. For that matter, I'd rather have had amoebic dysentery than sit through this.

LD: But remember, like all months, this movie came to an end -- before it even started.

WR: If you see this movie turning up in the video store -- and you will -- run.

