

Out & A&E WEEKEND OUTLOOK about

Well-nourished American Indian poet's new album rich in song, harmony and tradition

By Jill O'Brien
Staff Reporter

John Trudell, American Indian poet and orator, will enlighten the audience at UNL's Winter Council.

Trudell, a Santee Sioux and once known for his activism in the American Indian Movement, lost his wife, three children and mother-in-law in an arsonist's blaze in 1979.

After he started writing poetry, he enlisted Quiltman, an American Indian from Oregon, to back his words with traditional powwow singing.

Further electric exploration in music resulted in Trudell recording several tapes with Kiowa guitarist Jesse Ed Davis, formerly of the band Taj Mahal.

Although Davis died in 1988, his rocking guitar refrains can be heard on "Graffiti Man," Trudell's debut album released last year on Ryko Records. Davis is also featured on at least one track of Trudell's latest album, "Johnny Damas and Me," slated for a March 1 release date.

Trudell said the new album was an extension of the first.

"There's more singing, harmony, and more traditional influence in it, but it's basically doing what I do — rhyme," he said. "There are more songs with background vocals and harmony, and the musical style is still electric, but it's a little bit different."

His low-key delivery and mesmerizing voice inflicted with sarcasm and world-weariness hasn't changed. Neither has guitarist Mark Shark's gritty vocals, except Shark appears to have more singing roles than before.

Unlike "Graffiti Man," the 11

tracks of "Johnny Damas and Me" contain fewer word-bombs aimed at corporations and politicians. That doesn't mean Trudell is lacking in political verve.

In fact, he has argued before that love songs count as political songs because of the mistrust and misunderstanding between the sexes.

Trudell's songs and poems are unique because he writes convincingly from the perspective of both genders. It's eerie how accurate he expresses female emotions.

"I don't want these songs to be 'here's a man trying to say how a woman feels.' I want to convey 'this is how a woman feels.' There's a fine line," Trudell said.

"Baby Doll's Blues" and "Shadow Over Sisterland" are two songs from the new album that get right into it.

Another similarity to his first album is how Trudell closes with lines about Tina, his wife who perished in the fire. In a voice, transparent with sorrow, he remembers her in the tender verses of "After All These Years."

Okay, enough similarities. Actually a chasm of difference divides the two albums.

Singer Jackson Browne produced "Graffiti Man" but did not produce "Johnny Damas," Trudell said.

Then who did?

Trudell answered with a sneaky laugh. "Iktomi," he said.

The Spider?

Yup.

In Sioux culture, moral lessons are introduced in stories about Iktomi

See TRUDELL on 10

Films shed light on stereotypes

By Jill O'Brien
Staff Reporter

Sunday, free awareness and entertainment take the form of a nine-week film series, "The Indian of the Imagination: A Film Retrospective and Reconsideration."

The films, co-sponsored by the Native American Public Broadcasting Consortium and the Nebraska State Historical Society, can be viewed at 1:30 p.m. every Sunday through March 27 at the Museum of Nebraska History, 15th and P streets.

Launching the retrospective is "Images of Indians," a five-part series of half-hour films analyzing Hollywood's stereotyped characterization of American Indians.

Andrea Paul of the Historical Society said the purpose of the retrospective was to look at how the movie culture of Hollywood contributed to the perception of American Indians.

"This project will also examine the work of Native American producers and assess their role in reshaping that perception," Paul said.

Jan. 30 "Images of Indians"

Produced by filmmakers Phil Lucas and Robert Hagopian.

Feb. 6 "Cheyenne Autumn"

Director John Ford missed the mark when he tried to sympathetically portray American Indians of the West.

Feb. 13 "Little Big Man"

Dustin Hoffman's performance offers a different portrayal of American Indians.

Feb. 20 "Buffalo Bill and the Indians or Sitting Bull's History Lesson"

Director Robert Altman's film looks at the relationship between the American Indian and the white man.

See FILMS on 10



SARAH DUEY

Get ready to rev up the laugh engine this weekend

Why was six afraid of seven?
Give up?

Because seven ate nine.

Yeah, I'm counting on Comedy Central calling next week.

Am I getting my hopes up too soon?

OK, OK, I'll stick to journalism and spare the world from the lame humor of a young, inexperienced Midwestern girl.

Destroying the idea of a little comic relief this weekend was the last thing on my agenda.

I think everyone should laugh more often. I recently read somewhere that just smiling

triggers the brain to emit feelings of joy.

So, c'mon — show those pearly whites. Let out a few sniggles. I've got just the right medicine that will let those grins and chuckles loose.

Two professional comedians are coming to campus who are definitely worth checking out.

David Naster and Sam Griesbaum, two of the most popular college comedians on the cir-



cuit, will perform tonight in the Nebraska Union Ballroom. The show is sponsored by the University Program Council.

Roland Pinto, UPC spokesman, said, "These guys are top quality."

"We saw them and we were completely amazed. They put on a good show."

Naster is a veteran performer on college campuses, with eight years of performances all over the country and a reputation for being outrageous on stage. He has been nominated for College Comedian of the Year by the National Association for Campus Activities

every year he has performed. Naster, a Kansas City native, has appeared on the A&E Channel, Showtime, HBO and the Comedy Channel.

Griesbaum has also performed at colleges and clubs across the country as well as on the Comedy Channel, Showtime and Comedy Central. He is also from the Midwest.

For only \$3 students can go get some comic relief. Hey — I may not be a comedian, but I can always use a good laugh.

Duey is a senior news-editorial major and the Arts & Entertainment editor.