

UNLV students break the Sound Barrier

By Francie Angelov
Staff Features Writer

When you walk in it's like being beamed to the Melrose district in Los Angeles. Industrial music thumps in the background, and the walls are full of cool clothing, footwear, music posters, videos and CDs.

Towards the back of the store, one can chill with a soda and watch television, while his partner tries on the clothing. It's hot, fresh, rad, cool, hip, retro, choice and awesome. Whatever word you choose to describe the newest music and clothing store in Las Vegas, if you're into current fashion and the hippest music or if you want to update your wardrobe with some vintage used clothing, the Sound Barrier is the place to run.

The store is owned and operated by UNLV economics sophomore David Huffacker and his childhood friend and partner Mike Zobrist. The two 20-somethings were inspired by the Los Angeles independent music scene and the clothing worn by the music lovers.

"We used to joke around about opening a store like this," said Huffacker. "We would go around to clothing shows and conventions, concerts and clubs. We saw what styles we liked. We saw the styles couldn't be found here, so we brought them here."

The store is no joke now, after kicking the concept around for a few months, the two got private financial backing, and with the encouragement from a friend in Vermont (who owns his own



Hanging out among the freshest summer clothing are Sound Barrier owners David Huffacker (left) and Mike Zobrist (right).

by Francie Angelov / The Rebel Yell

Sound Barrier), the store became a reality during the week of spring break.

"The reaction has been really good," said Zobrist. "This is just the beginning, so we're working on getting the word out."

While browsing through band T-shirts and vintage clothing, including Hawaiian prints, camouflage prints and hot-pink T-shirts with a picture of Isaac Washington on the pocket (from the original Love Boat series), a full range of ages came through the door. A

couple of pre-teen skater dudes were looking for new stickers to decorate their boards ("Hey dude do you have a razor blade, so I can cut the sticker into my board?" "Yeah, right, and we carry razor blades. I don't think so.") A teenage girl was looking for some new summer gear. A 30-something guy investigated the imported videos and independent label CDs. The atmosphere is mellow. There's no hard sell here.

"We want people to be able to come in and hang out," said

Huffacker. "We want them to be comfortable in here."

"This is just the beginning," said Huffacker. "Our focus right now is low-key. Then, as the word gets out, we're going to fatten the place up and get bigger and better."

The store already has 600 music titles, most of which are punk and independent labels and a handful of import CDs and videos. The guys are currently working on expanding their music library, including working with lo-

cal bands like Swallow This and Soto's Fault, to help promote their music.

"This is where it all started," said Huffacker. "It first started with the love of the music, like the Beastie Boys. Then it turned into the clothing, some of which were inspired by the Beastie Boys' Mike D., and it will just continue to grow from LA's independent fashion scene."

As far as running a business, there are the normal everyday headaches, but both Huffacker and Zobrist are enjoying the ride. So far, there are no employees to worry about, and one of them is always there. Between the two of them, the store is open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

"We're still in the process of trying everything out," said Zobrist. "We'll order new things and send some stuff back and keep stocking up our walls."

Already, Sound Barrier has the freshest summer wear, including Fresh Jive Summer Gear for guys and gals, the popular Puma sandals, Golf Punk and Golf Punk Girl, X-Large and X-Girl. There are prices from every range, so almost anyone can afford to buy something they like.

The Sound Barrier, which is located in west Las Vegas at the corner of Sahara and Fort Apache, will celebrate its grand opening around the release of the Beastie Boys' new album July 14. For more information about the store call 228-2763.

PRIMAL SQUAT

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