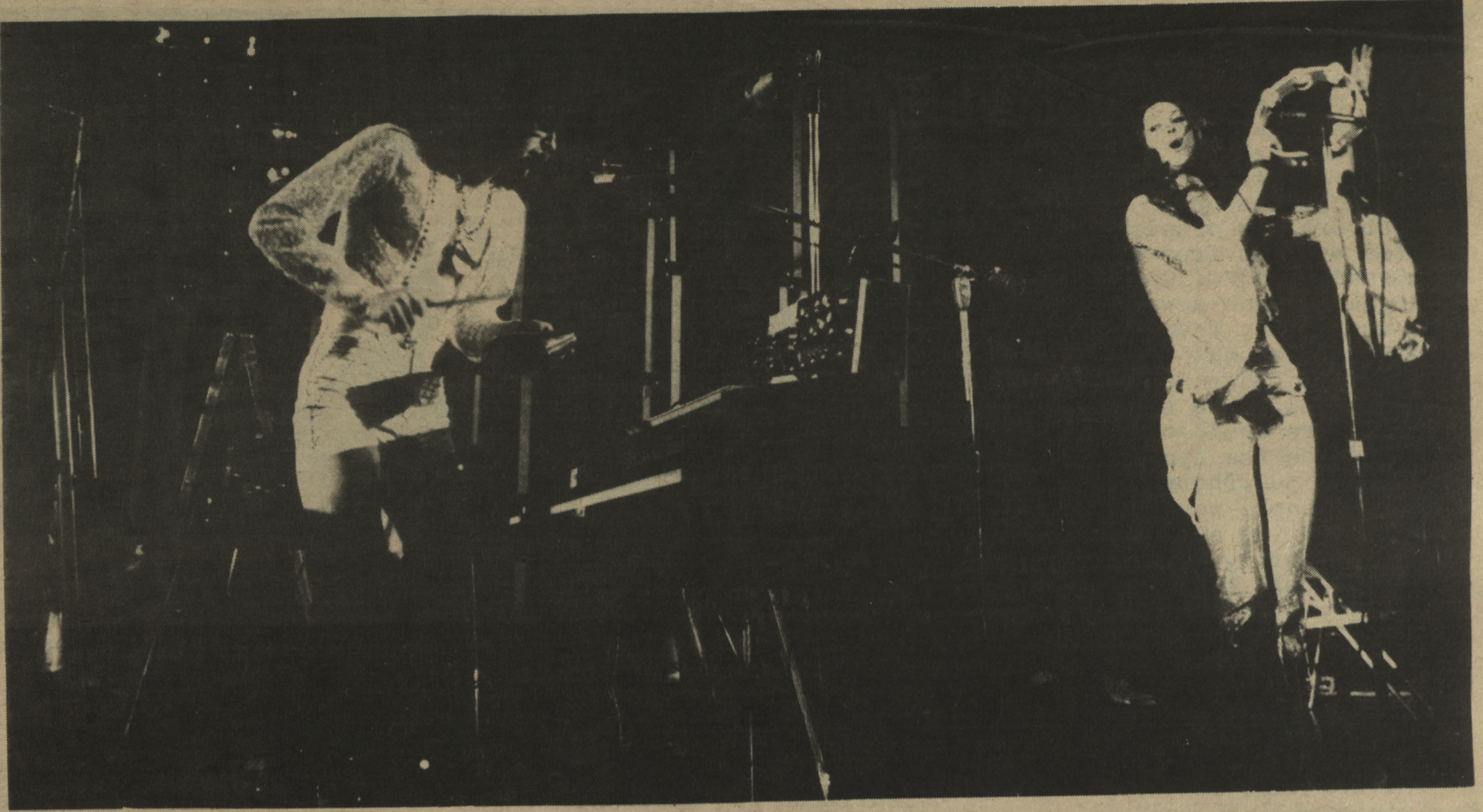


WINTER CARNIVAL '74



EVANSVILLE COURIER

Quatro blends rock with classical style

By STEVE COHEN

From a child prodigy on the Lawrence Welk show to promoter of numerous rock concert tours to rock musician, 20-year-old Michael Quatro has returned to his first love — the performance of music.



MICHAEL QUATRO

The leader of the three-member Michael Quatro Jam Band was in Evansville recently visiting local promoters Bob Folz and Bob Alexander. His group performed at last year's Bull Island rockfest and the July 2 all-day rock concert.

Blending hard rock with classical motifs in his compositions is Quatro's musical style. What sets Quatro apart from other performers in the rock-classical genre is his intense theatrics.

Begins in fog

Quatro begins a performance with a thick fog covering the stage. A roadman dressed as a hunchbacked mad scientist comes forth and turns on the amplifiers. "Someone has to turn the amplifiers on and the audience gives a standing ovation — just for the amplifiers being turned on."

Mike Quatro Band a group to watch

If Suzie Can Can, Why Not Mike?

Perhaps talent runs in the family. It's happened before with the Andrew Sisters, so why shouldn't it be happening to the Quatro kids. Suzie Quatro is a beautiful American lass who's been knocking her fans dead in England. Her fatality stems from movement of her hips up to her

In addition to the fog machines and hunchback, the band's performance features flashbombs, flame throwers,

MIAMI NEWS

dynamic performance on bass. The result is a super-smash hit single that's ravaging the United Kingdom. The title? "Can the Can."

Meanwhile, back in the States Suzie's brother Michael is turning a few heads of his own. An ex-concert promoter from the Detroit area, Mike Quatro's Jam Band features some of the most complex electronic equipment ever brought to the rock stage, including specially designed Moogs that surround Mike in a semi-circle

sparkling wands, computer controlled lights, and numerous changes in costume.

Quatro uses, he is a dynamic performer.

Utilizing six keyboard instruments, Quatro is in control of over 300 keys and 200 dials. His instruments include a specially designed Baldwin piano which took 15 years to develop, a mini-moog Maestro Phase Shifter, a mellotron, a special bass keyboard, an old Hammond organ, and a moog synthesizer.

Unique wand device

For the Labor Day rock festival which was to have been held in Benton, Tenn., Quatro added new devices to his electronic stockpile which enable him to obtain more feedback and a wider variety of sounds from a wand he waves, operating a six-channel moog synthesizer in tape sequence. The wand device is the only one of its kind in the world.

One of Quatro's most-enjoyed live performances is

King Crimson's "In the Court of the Crimson King." For the Tennessee rockfest, Quatro had developed a new introduction, the most stunning part of his interpretation of the song, and planned a mask "which looks like something right out of hell."

Uses six instruments

Quatro's conception of success is "being able to give every inch of myself to the public as an entertainer." Even without the theatrical devices

KANSAS CITY

MUSIC

in Mid-America

THE MIKE QUATRO JAM BAND in concert at Cowtown Ballroom: Mike Quatro, electric piano, Hammond organ, Mellotron, synthesizers, vocals; Patty Quatro, electric guitar and bass, flute, vocals; John Thorpe, drums. With special guest BRIAN BOWERS, autoharp and vocals, and Whizzo the Clown. A Cowtown-KUDL-Burstein-Applebee Presentation.

By Nancy Ball

Even those who caught Mike Quatro's previous Kansas City appearances could not have been prepared for the sort of show they were given last night at Cowtown's annual Halloween party. The group has sunk a small fortune into costumes, special effects, and an already staggering array of musical equipment, so the element of surprise was working all in its favor.

More impressive than the somewhat elaborate staging was the combination of musicians accompanying Quatro this time around. In fact the playing of Patty Quatro and John Thorpe on guitar and drums, respectively, was in many ways more noteworthy than that of the star. Mike Quatro's keyboard virtuosity has been well established, and his performance was expected to be of fine quality. But the proficiency of his two colleagues was serendipity.

The genre of feedback guitar, long a bastion of male rock and roll chauvinism, is rarely penetrated by female artists. Not

only does Patty Quatro rank ace high among those women who have succeeded (including sister Susie Quatro, herself formerly of the Jam Band), but she seems ready to take on a few of the fellows as well. Her touch is light and tasteful and a definite complement to her brother's musical prowess.

Mike Quatro, a proverbial musician's musician, is as noted for his innovations in electric keyboard equipment as for his writing and performing skill, so he was not to be outdone on this recent tour. In addition to his unique 88-microphone piano, his double-keyboard organ, and synthesizer, he has added no less than six Moog synthesizer units in a "Quatro Box" which is activated at will by an intriguing device called a Wand, which also simulates violin and cello sounds. Thus, the sound is orchestral full, despite the presence of only three musicians.

The temptation is to devote more attention to the equipment than the music, a temptation that Quatro himself seemed to give in to from time to time. His playing seemed somewhat dispersed, as if a bit of concentrated musicianship was lost in the levity of production.

The volume was also occa-

sionally overdone, especially on the Detroit boogie in evidence on the group's new material. This fault masked a lot of the dynamics of the classically influenced pieces such as "Rachmaninoff's Prelude."

The shooting flames and fog bombs that underscored strategic passages of "Court of the Crimson King" were in keeping with the Halloween hysteria. A Quatro road man, clad as the classic laboratory assistant, Igor, made an appearance to turn on the stacks of computers and amplifiers which mix and push out the sound. The audience, clad in all manner of disguise, was almost as entertaining as the program; and Whizzo, everyone's favorite clown, was a delight as he presided over the costume contest.

Of extremely worthy mention was Brian Bowers, autoharpist, who opened the show with traditionally based madrigal and folk tunes. His command of the full range of this greatly overlooked folk instrument was in many instances every bit as impressive as the combined power of the Quatro group.

Another in the well-produced series of \$1 concerts, the event would have been a bargain at twice the price.