

Rock 'n' roll still is Quatro's bag

By DIANE ABRAMS

Mike Quatro has gone through many changes since he first appeared on the Lawrence Welk Show at age 11. But one thing is still true: he's all about, as he showed at his New Year's Eve performance in Warren.

"Any kind of keyboard known to man is my thing," said Quatro, who plays a menagerie of instruments including a Prophet synthesizer that is programmed to make combinations of up to 40 different keyboards.

A background of classical training is reflected in Quatro's music and the results have been compared to the sounds of Keith Emerson, as well as the Moody Blues.

"I was doing the ELP (Emerson, Lake and Palmer) thing in 1975," said Quatro, a Livonia resident. "But I moved away from it the next year. That kind of sound is dead now."

ASIDE FROM the magical sounds that flow from a collection of keyboards surrounding Quatro at his concerts, he keeps audiences spellbound with a variety of theatrical effects in "Court of the Crimson King."

Amidst dramatic costume changes, smoke bombs and special lighting, Quatro has been known to tease his fans with a portable wand synthesizer that shoots sparks and creates an atmosphere described by many critics as "demonic."

Momentarily relaxing in his simple home, Quatro talked with great enthusiasm about the entertainment business and his place in it. His three young children and his lady, Belinda "Bomb" McClure, who is also a member of the band, gathered around to join in the interview.

"The Quatros appear to be a close knit family. It is obvious that the children look up to their father. They encourage each other and there's no telling what

great feats are yet to come in the Quatro domain.

PLAYING THE DRUMS in tune with his father's latest creation, 13-year-old Mickey looks deep in concentration as he tosses the sticks in the air, only to have them land squarely in his hands in time for the next beat. There's speculation in the household that he will join the Quatro Machine (Mike Quatro's Band) in a couple of years.

"I would like to have Mickey playing the drums, but he would like to become a skateboard champion," said Quatro. "Scottie could also join the group, but he wants to be a hockey goalie. I think he would be really good at it, too. He's got the potential to be a great professional player."

It seems like any dream is attainable in the Quatro home. The children are encouraged to turn their aspirations into realities. The hard driving ambition of Quatro appears to be contagious.

The same fervor goes into Quatro's music. As a performer his one and only concern is his audience.

"I think about devastating the audience," said Quatro. "I want to take them into another world. I'm always psyched up and ready. I don't have down days. If I do, it never shows on stage."

QUATRO HAS easily accessible inspiration always close at hand during his concerts.

"I'm usually looking at Belinda 'Bomb' on stage because she's so pretty," he said. "She always manages to bring me up."

The "Bomb" has been with the group since February. She plays percussion instruments and does back-up vocals. Not only does Belinda sound good on stage, but her flashy style and pretty face undoubtedly contribute to the group's success.

Each member of the Michael Quatro Machine has a nickname which Quatro revealed with obvious amusement.

"Teddy Hale plays lead guitar," said



Mike Quatro, a Livonia resident, is interested in any new experience in music, especially in rock and roll. Quatro performed in Warren on New Year's Eve with his band, the Michael Quatro Machine. (Photo by Bill Bresler)

Quatro. "We call him the 'Cocker Spaniel'."

"TOMMY CIUPAK also plays guitar, we call him the 'Whale'. Bill Reyna, our drummer, is the 'Mexican'. You can find him at your local chili dog stand any day of the week," said Quatro.

"John Macintyre plays base and he's the 'Scotsman'. You see, we have a totally international band."

Although they don't play any ethnic rock 'n' roll songs, Quatro finds the combination beneficial in other ways.

"We never lack for hub caps on our limousine," he cracked jokingly.

Quatro prides himself on the fact that the band writes all their own material. He does, however, admire some

of today's prominent groups.

"I think Led Zepplin is the biggest act," he said. "Second would be the Rolling Stones and The Who."

ALTHOUGH DISCO music is popular in many circles, Quatro is completely rock 'n' roll.

"I think disco is finally coming into its proper place in the music spectrum," said Quatro. "Slightly below boring. That is to say, I enjoy dance music and occasionally do stuff that may resemble disco, but my heart is in rock 'n' roll."

Having been in the music business since he was a child, Quatro has seen many changes in the music world.

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