

STP News

People vs. Promoters

Len Schafer

1970

From the *Ann Arbor Argus*:

“Rock promoter Russ Gibb made one of his rare public appearances two weeks ago when he stopped at South U for a while to pass out circulars advertising his and Mike Quatro’s pop festival in Cincinnati. The circulars were full of bullshit hypes like: “14 BIG ACTS IN 12 HOURS” and claimed that the Cincinnati Pop would be “as groovy as Woodstock but without the hassles.”

“As it turned out a few days later, the realities of the festival were quite the opposite of what the promoters had promised. The people in charge of the show didn’t want the people to smoke dope, sneak in for free, or even get within 100 yards of the music.

“The Cincinnati Pop was a pig riot...

“Too many pop festivals this year are being put on by hippy chomps who are out for the fast buck and just don’t know what they are doing. The PA systems hardly ever work, there are never enough johns, the pigs run wild, and the big name bands come on and ON (Maybe we should expect something a little better from Quatro and Gibb, who have had experience in these things, but judging from Cincinnati, we guess not...)

“The time has come for us to stop giving our lives and music and energy and money to the “hip capitalists” and start putting on our own festivals. The pop-star promoters just want to drive around in their Corvettes and Continentals and be COOL and they don’t give a shit if we enjoy ourselves or get thrown in jail or get killed.

“Fuck pop-star consciousness...We have got to stop letting our music make the hip capitalists and the pigs rich. We have got to keep our energy and our money in our communities just so we can survive.

“After reading the account of the Cincinnati Pop Festival, think about the 50 grand or so that Quatro and Gibb made in one day on our music. Think about what that money would do for a free health clinic or a food co-op, or the other things we need so badly every day.”

The people of the Detroit Community have been thinking about the Cinci Pop rip-off and have decided to take some action:

The Serve The People Coalition has demanded of the promoters \$5,000 to pay for legal expenses of the people that got busted and to cover the bonds of the five people still sitting in the Cincinnati Workhouse Jail.

The Coalition has also demanded of the promoters that at any future festivals that involve the Detroit Community, Quatro, Gibb, Begairis, and Glantz must meet certain conditions set by the STP Coalition. (Bob Begairis, who runs the Eastown, and Gabe Glantz, former Grande Ballroom man, are ‘silent’ partners in the rip-off.)

When presented with the demand for \$5,000, Mike Quatro began screening about being the scapegoat and only making pennies from the whole gig. In an attempt to prove his poverty, Quatro asked the Coalition to pay for some of his mounting bills.

The people of the community are tired of this bullshit. Quatro’s attempt to pass the buck failed when the coalition laid a few realities on his head: Whether or not he or the other promoters made five grand or five cents they are

still directly responsible for what happens at their festivals. As promoters, they are acting as agents for the bands, booking agents, stadium renters, "security police," and others making money off the festival and our people.

Seeing the error of his ways, Quatro attempted to pacify the Coalition by promising \$350 from his "own pocket". To prove his good will, Quatro sent a lawyer in Cincinnati to see about the five people still in jail. When asked the next day about these people, Quatro said that his lawyer checked on the names we had given him and sure enough -they are still in jail. Quatro never mentioned anything about having his lawyer get these people out (as of this writing).

The Coalition then met with slick-jive Russ Gibb. What Quatro doesn't know about bullshit, Gibb does.

Gibb's reaction to our demands and the reasons for them was: "I agree 100% and will do everything I can to help." Gibb promised to contact the Coalition Sunday morning and give some concrete results. As proof of Gibb's sincerity, he never called back.

It is not the purpose of the STP Coalition to 'get' Russ Gibb and Mike Quatro. The purpose of our demands is to protect our people from getting busted, put into hospitals, and the multi rip-offs that occur at almost all money making pop festivals. The Coalition plans to extend its energies to all pop festivals that involve the people of the Detroit area.

By their lack of response, Russ Gibb and Mike Quatro made their attitudes about the people who support their business quite clear. We must make all the promoters realize that our people are much more than \$6.50 apiece admission price.

Quatro and Gibb offered to set up a benefit for the STP Coalition in order to raise the \$5,000. What they failed to realize is that the five people still sitting in jail cannot wait until the month or two while its being set up. This would also mean that the \$5,000 would come from people other than those responsible for the Cinci Pop fiasco.

The Serve The People Coalition will meet Tuesday, 7:30 pm, June 30, at the Unitarian Church, on Cass at Forrest, McCollister Hall, to determine the possible actions to be taken against Quatro, Gibb, Begairis, and Glantz.

Among the possibilities is to call for a boycott of all activities of these people. This includes the possibilities of another boycott of the Eastown Ballroom and a ban on all their advertisements in the "underground" media of the Detroit area.

STP meetings are open to all individuals, especially those that were at the Cincinnati Pop, and organizations that are interested in getting together to Serve the People

Sidebar

Who is Mike Quatro?

The following is a biography sent out by Mike Quatro of Cincinnati and Black Arts Festival fame, describing who he is and what he does. It is unedited.

MUSICIAN, world-wide promoter, festival manager, former agent, organizer, public relations man, producer and writer are titles he has attained at the age of 25. Some of the high points of Mike's career are:

- Rock, classical and pop concert pianist, organist, vocal, and recording artist on nationwide television and play dates, and festivals around the world. (Former Lawrence Welk TV artist and child prodigy.)
- Founder of an agency (now called D.M.A.), which became the largest in the midwest.
- Produced, booked, managed, and directed through the Quatro Agency, groups such as: MC-5, Amboy Dukes, SRC, Stooges, Savage Grace, Cradle, Frost, Rationals, Frijid Pink, and many others.
- Organized over 200 concerts and festivals attended by over a million people.
- Youngest producer of the Rolling Stones concert tour, fall of 1969.
- Race driver with many records and championships.

- Owner of MIKE QUATRO INC., a many faceted firm, devoted to youth activities, primarily show promotion.

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Age: 25

Nationality: Italian

Permanent Residence: Grosse Pointe, Michigan

Education: Grosse Pointe High School, Wayne State University

Musical: 12 years Classical training (has perfect pitch)

Instruments: Piano, Organ, Vocal

Sign: Gemini

Hobby: Drag Racing

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