

All Killer, No Filler

Chrysler Theatre's new Classic Rock program brings down the house

As the opening strains of Journey's *Lights* drifted through the towering Marshall amps at St. Clair College's Chrysler Theatre during the evening of June 20, those in the audience of close to 1,000 could close their eyes and swear it was the summer of 1980 again, they were sitting on the grassy hill at Pine Knob, and Steve Perry and Greg Rolie were singing two-part harmonies.



work putting together the guys to make it happen."

Palazzolo enlisted the support of guitarist Lambrick and drummer Bonventre, two of his former mates in London, the late 80's local band that achieved modest commercial success across Ontario and overseas. He also tabbed his current bass-playing sidekick Kohuch and keyboardist Trochhi, before rounding off the line-up with former Jester front man

Cloned Classic Rock, the latest musical feature of St. Clair Centre for the Arts' rock concert series, kicked off the first of a three-concert package, with a tribute show to Journey and Styx. Featuring seasoned Windsor musicians Pete Palazzolo, Charlie Lambrick, Paul Beresford, Jim Bonventre, Mike Kohuch and Joe Trochhi, the group nailed both bands greatest hits, so much so that a former light man for the real Styx who was in attendance said the group sounded even better than the original!

That was the idea in mind when Palazzolo began talking with St. Clair's Rob Masotti about complementing the Chrysler Theatre's existing Classic Rock album line-up. Toronto-based Classic Albums Live has been a big hit with Windsor audiences over the past year, having played the likes of Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band, Dark Side of the Moon and Hotel California track-for-track and note-for-note to a string of healthy audiences.

"They were looking to duplicate the success of the Classic Album Live series," says Palazzolo, the owner/operator of Windsor's Canadian Conservatory of Music, who was approached by Masotti while staging a musical review for his Polar Bear Music Company at the Chrysler Theatre in February. "Rob invited me to check out some of the Classic Album shows and it was clear there was potential in what they were doing. We agreed that a "greatest hits" type format would work best with what they already had and went to

Beresford. The latter's high-ranging pipes provided an impressive duplication of Perry's soaring voice, while the multiple talents of the group as a whole (3 of the members played more than one instrument throughout the show) allowed for ultimate flexibility and precise duplication of both Styx and Journey's biggest hits.

The two-hour show was well-paced, considering the absence of stage technicians to tweak instruments between songs, and was complimented by a video montage (by Windsor-based Intense Media) featuring Journey and Styx facts and trivia. St. Clair officials were pleased with the initial turnout for the new program, which was co-sponsored by The Rock, CKUE-FM (95.1/100.7). Two more Cloned Classic Rock shows are in the works: The Best of Canadian Rock on August 15, and Eric Clapton next February 13.

Palazzolo and Masotti are hoping to take the greatest hits package on the road in future, to small Chrysler Theatre-type settings throughout Ontario, once an inventory of performances have been banked. "It's still a very popular genre and appears to be even more so," says Palazzolo, of the nostalgic classic rock circuit. "We received a lot of great feedback, as did Rob and his people. We're excited about the August show and the opportunity to perform a lot of classic Canadian rock." **TDM**