

THURSDAY, JULY 22, 1982 B4

Undiluted guitar flash

SanTERS quenches that rock thirst

A review

SANTERS at Lucifer's through Saturday.

By Roman Cooney
(Herald staff writer)

It's a matter of selling the right rock at the right time.

These days, discerning rockers quench their thirst with something that provides that little extra kick. It's not the best time to introduce a brand of Lite Rock (a little less power and a lot less punch), or Rock and Roll with a twist of Pop.

SanTERS is undiluted, over-proof, straight-up, rock. There's a reason for the survival of guitarists who can play faster than most of their brethren think, with more ferocity than a starving wolf digs into raw meat. It's all coming back to me now, through a haze of heavy metal acts that bastardized the word rock.

Remember the guys who played hard and fast just because they could? Where did I stush that old Grand Funk Live album anyway, the one where Mark Farner whips up a frenzied solo? Where's the vintage Nugent? Frank Marino?

The truth is, I put them away (maybe even threw them away) because there were better things to listen to. But just this once I've got to concede a satisfying twinge of deja vu, seeing a guitarist like Rick SanTERS churn up a sweat in front of a stack (alright then, a little stack, just two high) of Marshall amplifiers, the powerhouse hardware of choice for many a rocker in times and trends past.

Showing off, just showing off for the fun of it. That's the reason, plain and simple.

With three men on the payroll SanTERS is certainly not over-stuffed. But that's the way it should be. Lean and visibly voracious.

SanTERS, who is also the band's singer (passable) and occasional keyboard player, could use a reminder that speed isn't everything. Blind aggression is fine as long as the crowd's attention is intact. Once that's lost the only way to get it back is silence, a heartbreaking alternative for any rocker.

Bassist Rick Lazaroff doesn't take a back seat to SanTERS. He mixes up his bass lines instead of laying down a bed of booming, droning one-note back-grounds, as would his counterpart in most heavy metal acts.

That's part of the reason why heavy metal is an unfair tag for the band. SanTERS, Lazaroff and Mark SanTERS on drums are better than that.

Their vinyl output includes one album, *Shot Down In Flames*, and a recently-released EP called *Mayday*. Not bad, but much better live.

Hard rock is like this: If your god is a simple one, all other things being equal, what's the difference between a 12-year-old scotch and a 2-month-old ripple? That's rock.

The show was simulcast on CKK-FM. Even though live concerts on the air are one of the best things to happen to radio in this town, it also proves irrefutably why live shows will never be replaced. You can't smell burnt flash powder over the radio (that was the boom around 10:30) you can't see the band work for a living (and I do mean work) and you can't tell your friends "I was there."



Kim Stahlkecht, Calgary Herald

Guitarist Rick SanTERS, left, shows off his instrumental prowess at Lucifer's

SanTERS - Calgary Herald, July 22, 82

Clipped By:



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Sun, Oct 27, 2019