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Thursday, Jun 10, 2004

News

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Posted on Tue, Jun. 08, 2004

Guitarist Robert Quine dead at 61

Akron native became influential in music scene

By Denise Grollmus
 Beacon Journal staff writer

Discordant, volatile and jagged -- the groundbreaking sounds of Robert Quine's guitar have been silenced.

The 61-year-old Akron native's body was found in his New York City apartment by a friend, Rick Kelly, on Saturday.

Kelly said Mr. Quine had attempted suicide a month earlier. Kelly said narcotics officers told him a large amount of heroin and a note were found by the body.

However, Ellen Borakove, director of public affairs for the medical examiner's office in New York City, said the cause of death is under investigation.

Mr. Quine was considered by many to be one of the most influential and innovative guitarists of the last 25 years, having played alongside Lou Reed, Tom Waits, John Zorn, Brian Eno and more. He was also a founding member of the seminal punk outfit Richard Hell & the Voidoids, whose *Blank*

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PHOTOS OF THE DAY



Generation has been hailed as a landmark album of the punk era.

`` He was an absolutely brilliant musician, and unique. He was one of the few heavy punk people that could really play and play in an amazingly esoteric and exotic way," said Chris Butler, a founding member of Akron new wave outfits the Waitresses and Tin Huey.

From the Velvets to the Voidoids, Mr. Quine's contributions to the 1970s post-punk scene in New York City helped redefine the possibilities of contemporary music.

`` He loved to talk about music, and he certainly liked to talk about his role in music," said his cousin, Tim Quine of Akron.

`` He probably had more musical knowledge in his little finger than a lot of so-called rock stars have in their entire being."

Mr. Quine was preceded in death by his mother, father and wife. A brother, Van, lives in California.

Members of his extended family in Akron learned of his death on Monday. Though they were surprised, they said they weren't shocked.

`` He was always kind of a sick fellow," said his cousin, Mary Quine Auerbach of Akron.

`` His wife kept him afloat, and when she died, he sort of just fell off the deep end."

After the death of his mother, Rosalie, in 2002, and his wife, Alice, in 2003, Mr. Quine lost touch with his family and lived a reclusive life in his Manhattan loft.

Relatives said that before his decline, Mr. Quine was temperamental, but opening him up was easy -- you just had to talk music.

`` Music was his universe," said Dan Auerbach, guitarist for the Black Keys and Mary Quine Auerbach's son. He cited Mr. Quine as one of his greatest inspirations.

Tim Quine pointed out that Mr. Quine's uncle was Willard Van Ormond Quine, a prodigious philosopher of the 20th century. `` There was some sort of genius in his blood," Tim Quine said.

In a statement released to Billboard.com, Lou Reed commented that Mr. Quine `` was smarter than them all."

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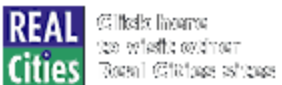
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