

PREMIER ISSUE! CATAMARAN SPA | THE FISHERY | BEACH CRUISING | CAFFÉ BELLA ITALIA

# PUBLIFE

MAGAZINE  
JAN-FEB 2007





Left: "The next best thing to Johnny Cash." Douglas G. Benson (left) and Kevin Manuel of Cash'd Out (Courtesy photo). Right: Jesse Molloy from Stepping Feet (Photo by Mark Lenoce).



# PLAYING TRIBUTE

Whether your favorite band is long gone or favorite musician long dead, tribute bands fill the void by bringing the music of Johnny Cash, Led Zeppelin, Nirvana and others back to life

BY BART MENDOZA

**T**he beach community has long been one of San Diego's major entertainment centers. On any given night, there are endless options for fun available - from DJ's to singer-songwriters- at the area's bars, nightclubs and coffeehouses. Over the last few years, one of the biggest phenomena to hit the beach has been the rise of the tribute band. Giving fans a chance to experience a re-creation of their favorite performer's music and stage act-simulated in the confines of a relatively intimate club setting-has proven to be a strong lure for local venues.

One night spot that regularly features such artists is Mission Beach's Cane's Bar & Grill. "I think that there is a lot of monotony in music these days," said the club's marketing director, Katie Burnett.

"People like songs they can sing along with, so they tend to gravitate towards their old favorites. These bands are the answer to that."

People like songs they can sing along with, so they tend to gravitate towards their old favorites.

KATIE BURNETT  
CANE'S BAR & GRILL

I think that tribute acts are usually a greater spectacle than most cover bands,

David Creviston, owner of The 710 Beach Club, notes that tribute acts can often outdraw traditional cover bands, although it "all depends on the band." For Burnett, the answer to why is obvious. "I

for the simple reason that they're taking on another persona and not just playing someone else's songs. I think that their draw is usually slightly greater because of that," she said.

Both clubs are open to booking almost any type of tribute act. "Never say never," joked Creviston. He maintains that for the moment the tribute band has yet to peak locally; however, there are many more groups available for booking at a national level. Burnett agrees. "There's definitely great variety out there," she stated. "I've seen everything from a man performing as Elvis in a chicken suit to Mini-Kiss, which features little people dressed up to the 'T' with KISS attire."

In many cases, the tribute act fills a void left by the break-up of a band or the passing of an artist. One such act is Deadman's Party, which is an uncanny



Clockwise from top left: Iron Maiden's all-female tribute band the Iron Maidens, Led Zeppelin worshipers Dazed and Confused, Oingo Boingo fanatics Dead Man's Party, bass player Sam Johnson from Stepping Feet.

COURTESY PHOTOS

re-creation of '80s new-wave favorites Oingo Boingo. "In my opinion, the instrumentation should be as precise as possible. Otherwise, why do it?" said frontman Rob Elfaizy. "As far as the right look (goes), it always helps. But if you play the music well, I think the look's basically icing on the cake."

Sean Glithero, bassist for the Johnny Cash tribute act, Cash'd Out, agrees. "We try pretty hard to get it to a 'T,'" he joked. "We utilize the upright bass and vintage guitars and amps to recreate the sound as authentically as possible. We've done a little research and found old videos and live recordings. So if we don't play it like it's comin' right off the vinyl, we play it like you would've seen it if you got a chance to see the Man in Black."

One band that's taken a slightly different tact is Led Zeppelin tribute group

Dazed and Confused. "We try to nail everything the way it sounds on the album," said vocalist Jason Ott. "Our

**We try to nail everything the way it sounds on the album.**

**JASON OTT  
DAZED & CON-  
FUSED**

guitarist owns almost every type of guitar Jimmy Page played, while our drummer owns a duplicate of one of John Bonham's sets, but at this point, we have decided not to dress like them," he explained. "While it can be fun, it just seems a little too much, like an Elvis impersonator... and that's not really

what we're going for. We just want to create great music, kick some ass and for everybody to have fun."

While some musicians might consider playing in a tribute band less important than playing original music, Mike Myrdal, frontman for the Dave Matthews tribute band Stepping Feet, disagreed. "Every person dreams of making a living by doing what they love, and we're no different," he pointed out. "Each member of our band has individual goals in writing their own music, and some of our band members play in projects outside the band and even tour. As a band, we're hoping that the audiences we draw by playing Dave Matthews will result in a nice following when we start performing original material. It's a difficult balance but one that we hope will pay off for us." 🌟