

Hollywood Palladium: Light it up!

The rad return of a Hollywood gem

By Scott T. Sterling

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Credit:COE Architecture International

It's hard to believe it's only been a little over a year since the Hollywood Palladium dramatically closed after an eight-night residency by former Smiths lead singer Morrissey. Though the run was originally scheduled for 10 nights, two shows had to be scrapped due to decrepit plumbing.

But on Oct. 22, after a \$20 million renovation, the historic venue that opened on Halloween night in 1940 with the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra and a young Frank Sinatra—and went on to host bands as diverse as the Grateful Dead, Bjork, the Strokes, Missy Elliott and Portishead—will once again take the Hollywood stage. Some of the biggest upgrades? Acoustic paneling, state-of-the-art lighting and reasonable security. “We promise a much more fan-friendly experience,” says Rick Mueller, Live Nation’s L.A. president whose company has signed a 20-year lease with the hall. “We promise that no one will be forced to throw out key chains and lipstick like in years past.”

Fun facts: Hollywood Palladium



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Palladium - Now

Known for its enormous ballroom and showcasing big name acts such as Frank Sinatra, the Rolling Stones and Morrissey, over the years, the Palladium has become one of Hollywood's musical monuments. But there's more to the Palladium's history than the bands that played on stage.

Special thanks to historian Marc Wannamaker

Credit: Coe Architecture International

Palladium - Then

Built where the original Paramount lot once stood, the art deco Palladium was designed by Gordon Kaufmann, who also oversaw construction of the L.A. Times building, and was the architect of the Hoover Dam, Santa Anita Race Track and early Cal Tech dorms.

Credit: LAT

Good prices

When it opened, the Palladium had six bars that served liquor, and two others that served soft drinks and milk. In the 1940s, the cover charge was \$1. Dinner was \$3.

Magazine imitating venue

The Palladium had its own magazine in the 1940s called Hollywood Palladium Life.

Fun facts: Hollywood Palladium (continued)



Lawrence Welk



Stevie Wonder



"Almost Famous"

As seen on TV

The Lawrence Welk variety show put the Palladium on the map during its hugely popular run there in the 1960s. Wunnerful, Wunnerful!

Call the police

1964: The Palladium was trashed when it was announced that none of the jazz bands scheduled would be paid. The show was canceled, resulting in a riot.

Incorrect introduction

1973: Stevie Wonder performed at the venue with Taj Mahal. Wonder's name was noted on the bill as "Steve" and he was introduced that way as well. The event was billed as an "Afrocentric concert," benefited African refugees and brought in one of the largest crowds of the decade.

On lockdown

1993: Curfews started. A Marky Mark show was called off because of a brawl that occurred at the venue nights before. The city council got involved to curb unruly behavior.

Scary security

1998: A Rolling Stone review of a Kraftwerk show called out the venue's notorious security: "One guy was forced to prove his Visine was, in fact, Visine by placing the drops in his eyes while another frustrated concert-goer commented, 'What do they do when Master P plays?' Kraftwerk are from Germany, but didn't World War II end somewhere around 1945?"

Movie history

Movies filmed at the Palladium include The Day of the Locust, Skate Town USA, 1941, The Blues Brothers (the famous final concert scene), Richard Pryor Live on the Sunset Strip and Almost Famous.